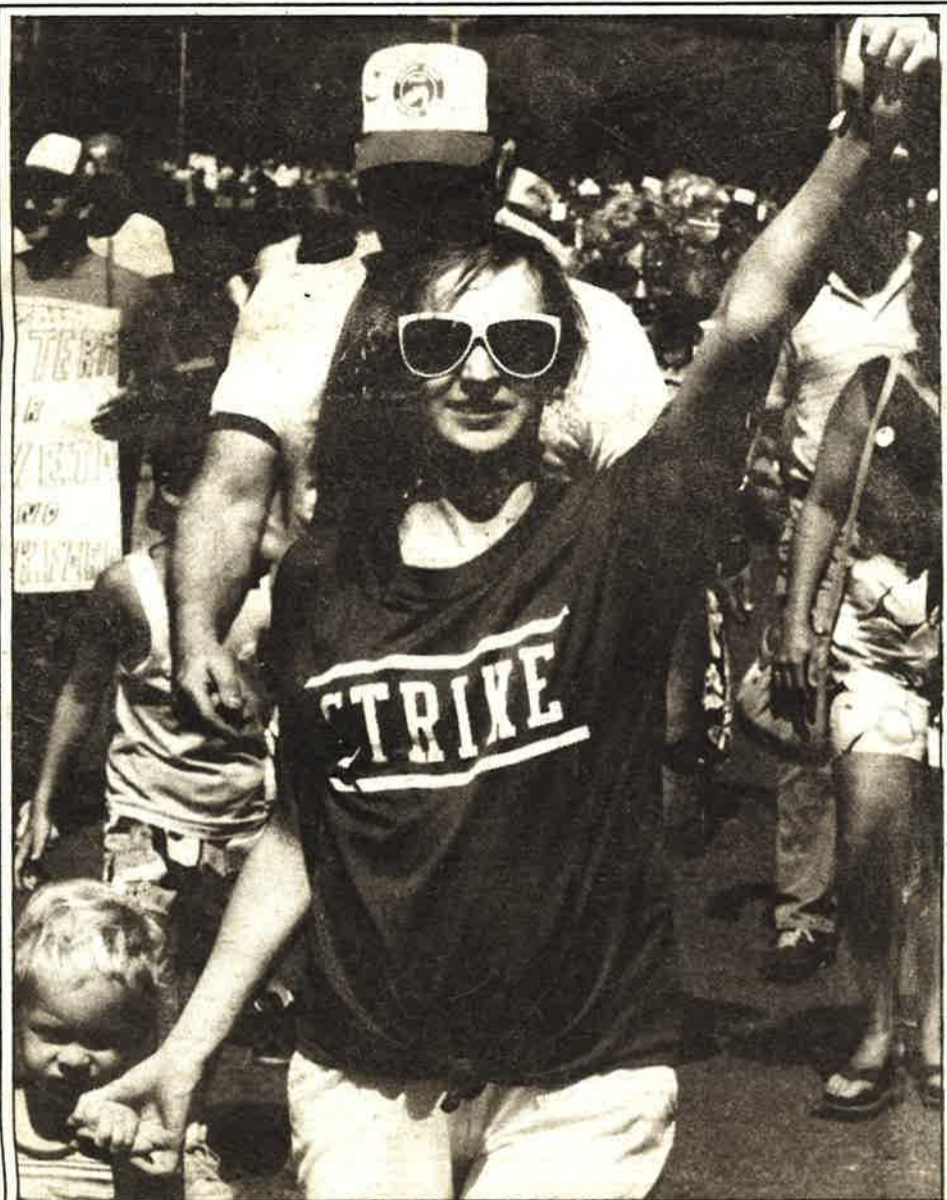




workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

X-523



SOLIDARITY
Workers striking International Paper in Jay, Maine drew 9,000 supporters to a march. **3**



GENERAL STRIKE
Aroused by high unemployment and higher food costs, workers in the Dominican Republic shut it down. **7**



HOUSING
A New Jersey community group put their bodies behind a court suit to use a half-billion state surplus for low-cost housing. **3**

Big blowup feared in Persian Gulf

Allies want no part of U.S. war moves

By Andy Stapp

All eyes are now focused on the Persian/Arabian Gulf as the threat of war between the U.S. and Iran comes closer with each passing day.

The blame for this situation lies squarely with Washington. The war menace seemed far away, until the Reagan administration announced that it would be "reflagging" Kuwaiti super-tankers and running them through the Gulf with U.S. naval escorts.

As Kuwait is an ally of Iraq in the fighting against Iran, this intervention by Washington deliberately places U.S. combat units into the battle lined up against Iran.

The attacks on shipping inside the Gulf were initiated by Iraq in the spring of 1984, with the bombing of tankers loading at Iran's Kharg Island. Following this, the Iranian government struck back at tankers calling at Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries trans-shipping weapons to Iran.

This tanker war has gone on for years, but only now, when the failure of its covert policy has been exposed by the Iran-contra scandal, has the Reagan regime discovered that "vital supply lines are threatened" and it must charge in.

So far the results have not been so good for the Pentagon. The first "reflagged" ship being escorted, the 401,382-ton Bridgeton, ran into a powerful mine and is still penned up in Kuwait. U.S. warships "protecting" the Bridgeton were ignominiously forced to line up behind it as the partly-disabled tanker continued

through the minefield.

The Pentagon had provided enough fire-power to blow up half the Middle East, but no minesweepers! Britain, the Netherlands and other U.S. NATO allies have refused to send any of their own minesweepers to assist. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will not let the Pentagon land mine-sweeping helicopters at bases on their territory, fearing the popular wrath of their own people.

Four U.S. servicemen have already been killed. A navy helicopter crashed July 30 while trying to land on the ship LaSalle.

On Aug. 3, the government of Oman warned the U.S. military to keep clear of Omani airspace and territorial waters.

No one wants to openly aid U.S.
No one, anywhere in the world, wants to have anything to do with publicly giving direct assistance to Washington's naval provocations in this dangerous region.

The Saudi regime of King Fahd did, however, tip its hand on Aug. 1, when Fahd's security police fired machine guns on Iranian religious pilgrims in Mecca. Somewhere between 400 and 650 people were killed in this massacre, for which the Iranians blame the U.S. government as well as the Saudi crown.

King Fahd has been the closest client of Washington in the area since the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979. Part of his airforce is actually flown by U.S. pilots, and for half a century U.S. oil companies have boasted a "special relationship" with

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ALL OUT FOR AUG. 30 See page 11

SOVIET REFORMS
In the third of a series, Sam Marcy examines the economic changes in the USSR, with special attention to the new law on joint ventures. **9**



NO BACKPEDALING Barred from midtown traffic, thousands of New York's superexploited bicycle messengers are fighting back. See page 4. WW PHOTO: MARY OWEN

Contragate — Questions we'd love to ask

By Andy Stapp

It had to be one of the really rock-bottom moments in the Iran-Contra hearings. At the witness table sat Attorney General Ed Meese, one of the big criminals at the center of the affair. Across from Meese sat Senator William Cohen (R-Maine). The Senator was praising Meese for showing "honor." The next speech came from Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Texas), who extolled Meese's "courage." Honor? Courage? Ed Meese?

We've put up with 40 days of this stuff. "Thank you Mr. Ripper for your cooperative and forthright testimony. None of us doubt your sincerity and your deep love for America. May I call you Jack?"

But what if it had been a different kind of panel, one made up of everyday people: a Vietnam vet, a welfare mother, a laid-off worker, a Central American refugee?

Then we might well have heard questions like this: "Col. North, I see that you've come

in here wearing a lot of medals from Vietnam. And I've read in the newspapers that the Marine Corps has classified 'secret' the reason you were awarded these medals. Isn't it true that a portion of your career in Vietnam is being kept secret from the public because you were part of a mass murder program called the 'Phoenix Operation,' which was responsible for the execution of thousands of unarmed civilians?"

"General Secord, isn't it true that you care nothing for any hostages

held in Lebanon, but only used them as an excuse to raise money for funding Nicaraguan terrorist contras and to get \$8 million for yourself?"

"Mr. Calero, I noticed that in your testimony you referred to CIA director Casey as 'Uncle Bill.' Isn't it the case that your whole contra movement is nothing but a creation of the CIA and that almost every top position in that movement is headed by officers of the former Nicaraguan dictator Somoza's National Guard?"

"You are a businessman like General Secord, Mr. Calero. Isn't your real motive in all this to make a lot of money for yourself? Isn't that why you want to get rid of the Sandinistas? So you can return to Nicaragua and exploit the people the way Somoza did?"

"Mr. Hakim. You have admitted putting aside a lot of money for the personal account of Col. North. You say you did this because you 'loved Ollie.' Isn't it true that as a former operative of the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, you showed a heart of stone to all those torture victims and that your actual motive in relation to North was not 'love' but a corrupt pay-off because his arms dealing was making you rich?"

"Admiral Poindexter: You said 'The buck stops here.' Is that your way of telling us that high Pentagon officials like you are really running the country and that the president is just some buffoon who signs documents which you shove under his nose?"

"George Shultz: You have told us that no one ever informed you what was going on in the government in relation to Iran and Nicaragua. You

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Activists vow to fight charges from Michigan protest on layoffs

By Kris Hamill
Detroit

August 1 — "We're not going to stop fighting until all the charges are dropped and everyone is free!" explained Gertrude Cook, a senior activist who was arrested for demonstrating outside the National Governors' Conference in Traverse City, Mich., on July 26.

Charges against Cook and six others were dropped by the Grand Traverse County Prosecutor's Office this week. Bill Roundtree and Gabrielle Gemma, national organizers for the National Job Is A Right Campaign, are still being charged with criminal trespass and disturbing the peace. Their organization called the July 26 demonstration to demand a moratorium on layoffs and plant closings, guaranteed jobs for all, extended unemployment benefits and

expanded social services.

The day before the July 26 demonstration, Roundtree and Gemma had confronted Michigan Governor James Blanchard in the lobby of the Grand Traverse Resort, site of the plush governors' conference, accusing him of catering to the Big 3 auto companies at the expense of the workers and poor of Michigan.

Seven of the nine demonstrators arrested were Black or Latin, pointing up the racist character of the all-white cabal known as the National Governors Association. Several of those arrested were disabled or seniors, auto workers and unemployed. Leaders of the demonstration told Workers World they believe the police arrests were directly ordered by Gov. Blanchard.

Staff members at the Detroit office of the A Job Is a Right Campaign report that spirits are high among those who took part in the action. David Sole, a

member of UAW Local 15 at the GM Fleetwood plant due to close at the end of the year, reported that he and other union members collected donations on the assembly line this week to help cover legal costs.

Liz Love, one of the arrested auto workers from Local 599 UAW, Flint, Mich., collected \$125 for legal defense as she and fellow unionists made the bus trip to Detroit to picket GM on the opening day of contract bargaining. Her plant is going to only one shift in the fall.

Telegrams and letters demanding the charges be dropped against the remaining two can be sent to Gov. James Blanchard, State Capitol, Lansing, Mich., 48933.

Contributions to cover legal costs and to sustain the fight to win a moratorium on layoffs and plant closings can be sent to the A Job Is a Right Campaign, P.O. Box 08141, Detroit, Mich., 48208.

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Maine workers stage huge rally for paper strikers

Close to 9,000 march on International Paper's Androscoggin Mill

By Phil Wilayto
Jay, Maine

Saturday morning broke high, wide and beautiful here August 1 as 8,700 union members and their supporters got ready for Maine's biggest labor march and rally in living memory.

By 10:00 a.m., a convoy of pick-up truck "taxis" full of women, children and men was rumbling down a hilly country road, headed for the gathering site for the march up to the International Paper Company's (IPCO) Androscoggin Mill. The march and following rally were the highlights of the "Solidarity Day" called by the state AFL-CIO to show support for 1,100 workers on strike against the giant corporation.

"It was the Rumford strike that did it," said a mill worker, hanging onto

the side of our truck-taxi. "The Boise-Cascade Company broke that strike, and then Champion forced through a rotten contract at Bucksport. After that, it just seemed obvious to everybody that we had to draw the line, and I guess Jay is the place we're going to do it."

IPCO had obviously forced this strike on locals 14 of the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) and 246 of the Firemen and Oilers Union. Company demands in contract negotiations had included subcontracting and work rule changes that would have cost 500 jobs and gutted the seniority system, brought a wage cut of \$5,000 a year, and eliminated premium pay for Sunday and holiday work. Plus the company demanded that people work on Christmas Day, the only holiday on

which the mill doesn't now operate.

The Jay workers walked out on June 16, joining 275 UPIU members on strike since June 8 in De Pere, Wisc., and 1,200 workers locked out since March 21 in Mobile, Ala. Four days later, 720 more paperworkers struck at Lock Haven, Penn.

Unions negotiate as a bloc

In every case, the issues were cut-backs, give-backs, and loss of jobs. For the first time, all the locked out or striking locals are negotiating with the company as a bloc, and each is vowing not to go back until they all get a decent contract.

In addition, in contrast to the Rumford struggle in which a number of the hardest fighting union members lost their jobs, the union is demanding that all its members be allowed to return to their jobs upon conclusion of the disputes.

A delegation from the Lock Haven local was in Jay today, along with UPIU members and their families from across the state. And plenty of other unions were there as well, including shipyard workers from Bath; electrical workers from Augusta; teamsters from Lisbon Falls; teachers from Jay; nurses from

Continued on page 4

'Guaranteed jobs' main issue at auto contract talks

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

August 3 — Last week contract bargaining began between the UAW and both General Motors and Ford. Contracts between the union and the two largest auto companies expire September 14.

The contract talks come at a critical juncture for auto workers. Despite huge profits for the auto companies over the past few years which continue unabated (GM netted \$1 billion between just April-June 1987 and Ford \$1.5 billion in the same period), 170,000 auto workers permanently lost their jobs between 1979 and today.

Now thousands more workers face the elimination of their jobs in the auto companies' drive for greater and greater profits through the introduction of high tech, the shifting of operations to Taiwan, south Korea and Mexico to take advantage of slave-labor conditions, as well as outsourcing to low wage, non-union firms here in the U.S.

The backdrop to the talks was GM's announcement last November of 11 plant shutdowns idling 30,000 workers. This announcement has been followed by further large scale reductions in the name of cost cutting. These moves by the automakers are part of the overall trend of the capitalist class to drastically reduce the work force and drive down the wages of the workers who remain.

That is why the UAW's proposals to both GM and Ford for guaranteed jobs are an important step forward. The union has demanded that GM preserve the jobs of its 335,000 active UAW members, as well as another 40,000 who were on indefinite layoff as

of June 28.

Included in the demand for guarantees are the jobs of 30,000 workers slated for shutdowns in the November announcement. The union indicated that it hoped acceptance of the job security proposal by GM would prevent the plant closings. UAW Vice President Donald Ephlin, head of the union's GM department, also stated that GM would have to create new jobs or bring in work from suppliers, if necessary, to achieve the approximate level of jobs outlined in the demand.

The job guarantee proposal apparently would require the companies to hire replacements for any of the UAW's hourly workers who leave because of retirement, resignation or death.

To further protect jobs, the UAW is seeking to restrict the company's ability to send work performed by UAW members to outside suppliers, a practice known as outsourcing or subcontracting. Under a new proposed definition, outsourcing would include work sent to any non-UAW plant.

The union's demands also include the outlawing of any overtime as long as there are people on layoff. This practice is especially notorious at Ford. For example, at the Michigan Truck Plant, workers have been forced to work 10 hours a day with one whole shift laid off since 1982. At Ford Sheldon Road, the plant is working 12-hour shifts with 700 workers on layoff.

The same demand for guaranteed jobs was also presented to Ford Motor Co. The UAW contract with Ford covers 105,000 workers.

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WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Part of march of 8,700 workers and unemployed backing the strike of International Paper in Jay, Maine.

Housing fighters in Jersey take battle to courthouse door

By Vince Copeland
Jersey City

July 31 — The working poor and oppressed people of Jersey City are fighting back against the big real estate developers who are trying to push them out of the city. Today, in the words of one of their militant slogans, they "took the fight to the courthouse door."

Demanding that a state "surplus" of over \$500 million be spent for low-cost housing, the Billion Dollar Housing Coalition of this city was in Superior Court in connection with the case. The suit specifically calls upon the governor to declare a housing emergency in Jersey City and release a part of the state surplus to address this emergency and build at least 1,000 low-cost housing units immediately.

Thomas Kean, the governor, tried to get the suit dismissed. But Superior Court Assignment Judge Burl Ives Humphrey refused to do this and remanded the case to the Appellate Division.

Over 60 men and women of all nationalities were gathered in front of the court house for a press conference before the hearing. The Spanish language media was there and conducted interviews in that language. John Jones, coordinator of the group, explained the case and condemned the governor for his failure to loosen the purse strings for the people.

While television cameras were grinding away, a dozen uniformed police and plainclothes detectives tried to disperse the crowd, but Jones called on the people to stand firm on their Constitutional rights.

Black, Latino and white speakers addressed the militant crowd and

called for still more struggle to help the homeless, the almost homeless and thousands more who are so hard hit in Jersey City (which is just across the river from over-crowded, rent-gouged New York City).

After police tried to disperse the crowd, and when it was time to go up into the courtroom, the six elevators in the quite modern building mysteriously broke down.

The hearing was to be on the ninth floor.

The people simply walked to the staircase and climbed up to the ninth floor — eighteen flights. A young woman with a two-month old baby in her arms and a 65-year old man with a recently implanted pacemaker for his heart were among the forty-five or more who made the climb.

And when the judge carried the case over to the afternoon, all but two or three of the crowd stayed and refused to go downstairs, even though the elevator service was by this time miraculously restored.

Rachel Duell, in overall coordination of the affair, remarked that the people "had to contend with three arms of the state just to be heard" — that is, the police, the court and the press.

The Coalition's attorney, Thomas DeLuca, met with the people after the hearing and explained that the deflection of the governor's motion to dismiss was a real victory and that in the next step of the case, he intended to pursue a still more aggressive strategy against the governor.

Meanwhile, the Coalition is gathering many thousands of petitions and preparing a housing convention in Jersey City for the end of October.



Jersey City coalition members beef up their suit to win state funds for housing. WW PHOTO

Bicycle messengers pedal against New York City ban

By Mary Owen
and Gavielle Gemma
New York

An announcement on July 27 by New York City's Mayor Koch that, effective August 24, portions of Fifth, Park and Madison avenues will be off limits to cyclists between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays drew an angry response from bicycle messengers.

Since that day, hundreds of bike

messengers have been tying up traffic in daily rush-hour "slow rides," slow pedaling in a sidewalk-to-sidewalk roadblock up 6th Avenue and down 5th Avenue, protesting the ban which, if it takes effect, will amount to a direct cut in their wages.

"We work on commission," explained a young Colombian messenger during the July 31 protest. "We get paid a percentage of the amount of jobs we deliver. If certain streets are

closed to us, it will take longer to make deliveries and we'll make less money."

There are between 4,000 and 7,000 bicycle messengers in New York City, mainly male, Black, Latin, Asian, Native and white working class youth who make their living pedaling up and down town and to the boroughs in sweltering heat, rain and snow. They have to dodge trucks, buses and cars to deliver documents, checks and other messages that are vital to the big corporations.

Because they work on commission, a form of piecework, instead of drawing a living wage from their agencies, they receive no medical and dental benefits, no pension, no paid vacation and no paid sick days for a high-risk job. They are also often subjected to racist remarks and treatment.

"We all have injuries," a messenger told this reporter. "I have seven stitches above my eye and a broken nose and I had another minor fall just today," he added showing a scraped knee and hand.

Another messenger, a Black woman, said that in her company you can receive Workers' Compensation if you have a serious injury, "but the waiting period is very long, around three or more months before you see any money." When they work, bike messengers can make \$250 to \$300 a week if they work very fast. They have to provide and maintain their own bicycle, clothing and protective gear.

Wrongly blamed for accidents

The city's so-called justification for the ban is the pedestrian/bike accidents. Bike messengers resent being blamed for what is really the failure of the city to take into account a whole new industry that has emerged in the light of the computer age.

Wall Street, banks, advertising and publishing companies often compete based on the speed of a delivery. They and the messenger companies are making huge profits, while bike messengers are forced to go as fast as possible.

Some big businesses are also opposed to the bicycle ban, but of course, only to protect their profits, not the messengers. They have called for

more fines, licensing and straight salary. However, messengers justifiably feel, in light of the low minimum wage, that this would cut their wages in half.

Instead, many messengers raise the demand for a guaranteed wage equal to what they can earn now, based on hours worked rather than the number of deliveries. They also want benefits such as vacations, pensions, sick days and medical insurance. If the messenger companies cry false tears over this, the big companies should be forced to pay into a fund, like they do with unemployment insurance.

Support for the bicycle messengers is evident everywhere along the route of their protest. From workers gathered for a curbside beer after a day's labor to the nighttime cleaning staffs of some of the large office complexes in midtown, the protesters got cheers and greetings from windows raised fists in salute as the messengers passed by chanting, "Fifth, Park and Madison" and "Koch Can't Ride."

And when the messengers reached a major intersection, they stopped to hoist their bikes above their heads, tires aloft, in an enthusiastic and defiant gesture that started horns tooting and pedestrians applauding. In addition, several organizations of bicycle commuters are also opposing the ban and have joined the protests.

The messengers' immediate goal is to pressure Mayor Koch into meeting with them and lifting the ban. But in the process, messengers are also demanding respect as valuable workers and are beginning to organize for wages and benefits. As one messenger put it in response to heckling by a well-dressed businessman, "We do your dirty work for you, we risk our lives to deliver your messages. We deserve a pension, some health benefits, a paid vacation and to be treated decently!"

Steve Athenios, one of the organizers of the protest, said there will be a city-wide "slow ride" on August 12 at 6:00 p.m. He encouraged everyone to come out and show their support. For petitions, protest updates and information on how you can help call 212-421-0600.

— Jay, Maine

Continued from page 3

Farmington; and newspaper workers, merchant sailors, and postal workers from Portland.

Local 2208 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers was there. They've been locked out in a contract dispute for the last twelve months by the Simplex Wire and Cable Co. in Newington, NH. There were delegations of paper mill workers from New Hampshire and New York, as well as Local 26 of the Hotel Employees, Restaurant Employees of Boston.

In addition, Central America solidarity activists from Augusta and Alfred circulated leaflets drawing the connections between labor struggles in Maine and the national liberation struggles in Central America, and a delegation from the National "A Job Is a Right" Campaign distributed copies of the Campaign newspaper calling for a national moratorium, or ban, on plant shutdowns and layoffs.

Scabs out, union in!

As the long, serpentine march stretched out down the road, across the Androscoggin River bridge and up to the plant gates, the main chant of the day echoed off the hillsides: "Scabs out — union in!" The chant

was led mainly by the women, who make up 25% of the mill's work force. Women family members have also played a strong role in the strike, keeping the picket lines going when union members are in negotiations or at local meetings.

"We stand at a crossroads for organized labor in Maine," stated AFL-CIO President Charles O'Leary told the crowd. "Union workers throughout the state realize this and are giving tremendous financial and moral support to their brothers and sisters who are fighting to keep their jobs and their hard won work rights at International Paper."

This was the central message of the day — that working people across the state of Maine had decided that they had had enough, and that this was the place to make their stand.

"You can't just care about yourself," one burly veteran of the Rumford battle told this reporter. "You got to care about that worker over in Kittery, down in Portland, or out in California. It's about love of humanity."

And in the afternoon sun, a young man hung on the cab of a truck rolling behind the thousands gathered at the rally and yelled out over and over, "We are the working class — and we're proud of it!"



WW PHOTO: MARY OWEN.

Exploited by their bosses, despised by the wealthy, New York's bicycle messengers win respect.

On the picket line

IBP safety, settlement, sale. Workers at the IBP Inc. meat-packing plant in Dakota City, Neb., are back at work after approving a contract settlement and ending their seven-month strike. The strike was a hard-fought battle, initially a lockout, that pitted the Food and Commercial Workers against a notoriously anti-union company out to slash the workers' standard of living at its only unionized plant. The strikers were able to beat back IBP's wage giveback demands, winning slight raises in the new contract along with a new company-paid pension plan, and all strikers are getting their jobs back, displacing scabs hired during the strike.

The settlement came just a week after IBP was hit with a fine for \$2.59 million, the biggest ever, by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), for an appalling record of murdered and maimed workers and a systematic cover-up of that record. IBP spokesperson Gary Mickelson downplayed the fine, saying it "refers only to paperwork issues that have no real bearing on worker safety or health." Rose Sparks and her husband Jimmy of IBP's Emporia, Kan., plant might disagree — her arm was mangled in an unguarded conveyor belt recently, while he was fired after losing three fingers to faulty machinery. Then there's James Rigby, who was fatally electrocuted while working on an unsafe band saw at the Joslin, Ill., plant; he never got near any paperwork.

Occidental Petroleum, owned by famed "humanitarian" Armand Hammer, is reportedly considering offering up IBP for sale for upwards of \$1.5 billion. According to stock analysts, IBP's Dakota City lockout in December, followed by hiring of scabs, was all designed to save money and make the company more attractive to potential buyers.

General Dynamics strike.

Over 4,000 workers at General Dynamics' Convair division in San Diego, Cal., walked out on strike July 21, and the military contractor immediately responded with a major advertising campaign to hire scab replacements. Workers at the Convair plant manufacture Tomahawk cruise missiles and Atlas rockets for the Pentagon, and General Dynamics appears determined to maintain full production through union-busting. Spokespeople for Machinists Lodge 1125, however, told reporters that the strikers plan to wage a strong battle and stay out on the picket lines as long as necessary.

Fantastic Sam and Bubbles. Striking hairdressers at Fantastic Sam's in Kennewick, Wash., returned to work in early July after winning an important ruling that may have an impact on tens of thousands of workers in the small shops of franchise operations around the country. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found in favor of union charges of unfair labor practices by the hair salon's owner, who threatened to fire strikers. Most significant, the NLRB ruled that both the parent corporation, SMR Enterprises, and the franchise operators of individual Fantastic Sam outlets are to be considered the business's owners — and that therefore franchise workers are eligible to organize and strike on either a shop-by-shop or company-wide basis. The hairdressers had struck over low wages, unsafe working conditions including exposure to toxic chemicals, and insulting, sexist treatment like mandatory use of names like "Bubbles" and "Peaches." Beth Shulman of the Food and Commercial Workers' haircare division said the Fantastic Sam's struggle should help pave the way for organizing hairdressers, along with other workers in small shops.

Gulf crisis — what do the sailors think?

By Michael Bar-Am

The Navy's slick glossy recruiting brochures say, "It's not just a job, it's an adventure." These days there are lots of pictures of women and Asian, Black, Latino and Native youth. Some of the brochures are even in Spanish.

But it wasn't much of an adventure for the 37 sailors who were killed aboard the U.S.S. Stark on May 20 of this year. For them and their families, it was and still is a tragedy.

And these days it's not much of an adventure for the rest of the rank-and-file sailors aboard ships of the Navy's Mid-East Task Force. Even the Task Force commander, Rear Admiral Harold Bernsen, was quoted on CNN, "It's tough on the sailors. It's hot here."

Hot is an understatement. Not only does the temperature hit 115 degrees Fahrenheit during the day, but yesterday, Aug. 2, just a few hundred miles from where the ships are operating in the Persian Gulf, over one million Iranians held a demonstration denouncing the U.S. naval presence.

And two days ago the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait, whose ships the Navy is protecting, had to be evacuated because of a bomb threat.

The big business newspapers and electronic media have been covering the activities of the Task Force every day. The last time the Navy received so much press was four months ago when David Robinson was sinking hoops for the Navy's basketball team in the NCAA tournament.

Then, the press not only covered the game, but let us know what was happening in the locker room before and after the game.

Today, in the Persian Gulf, we know that ships are moving around and that the oil tanker Bridgeton hit a mine. But what's going on in the enlisted personnel quarters and what are the E-2s and E-3s talking about in the messrooms is never mentioned.

Thousands of working class youth serving as trip wires for the more massive U.S. military intervention in the Middle East and we don't know how they feel about things, like heroes on a great adventure, or like sitting ducks in a hot pot about to boil over.

And what are they being told by their officers as to why they may have to die? You can be sure that there is no mention of protecting the superprofits of the transnational oil companies like Exxon and Texaco. In fact, since the U.S. has escalated its activities in the Persian Gulf and increased the threat of direct military intervention, the price of oil has gone up!

These are very dangerous times for the thousands of working class and oppressed youth who joined the Navy for an "adventure" or because there were no other jobs around except for flipping Big Macs.

At any moment a missile may slam into the ship or the ship may hit a mine. The hours are long with plenty of forced overtime.

When you're tired is when accidents happen, and the most dangerous place to be, anywhere, is the flight deck of an aircraft carrier on three hours sleep. Of course, the Navy has not released any information as to the number of sailors who have been injured aboard the ships operating in the Persian Gulf.

Those slick brochures have a lot to say about travel to other countries and educational opportunities. But there is not one single word in them about disability or death benefits.



Lying in 100-degree-plus heat in the gulf, these sailors may be thinking, "Get me out of here!"

— U.S ships threaten war

Continued from page 1
the Saudi throne.

Because he is a puppet, Washington refers to King Fahd as a "moderate," but actually he presides over one of the most reactionary regimes in the world, one whose reputation for sheer brutality will not be improved by the mass murder of unarmed Iranian pilgrims.

Censored news

The news reporting coming into the United States from the Gulf is being both delayed and censored by the Pentagon under the new "Grenada rules" set up by the military in 1984.

But this much is known. On Aug. 6, another convoy of Kuwaiti tankers is scheduled to sail through the Strait of Hormuz and into the Gulf, right in the middle of Iranian naval maneuvers! Rear Admiral Harold Bernsen, the

man in charge of U.S. naval forces in the Gulf, has warned the Iranians not to do anything "to inflame the situation."

The Pentagon sends a battleship like the Missouri, loaded with missile batteries and huge 16-inch guns, to stream off the coast of Iran in the middle of a war, and gives lectures about "inflaming" the situation!

But that's the way imperialists talk. To hear them, only they are for peace, and only they have a destiny to go anywhere in the world to "fight for peace." They say everyone else is threatening them; the Nicaraguans, the Iranians, the Libyans. Strangely, these countries seem to be able to "threaten" Washington, even though their soldiers never leave home and never get anywhere near the continental U.S.

— Contragate

Continued from page 2

said that this makes you 'sick.' Do you feel 'sick' because the Pentagon and CIA are running everything without telling you since you are a mere civilian? Or do you feel 'sick' because they did tell you and getting caught gives you an upset stomach?"

"Donald Regan, you say that you were impressed by the president's sincere surprise when told of the illegal diversion of cash to the contras. 'I'd give him the Academy Award if he knew anything about this,' you said. Are you aware that the president is a former actor?"

"Ed Meese, you have claimed that the witnesses from the administration who have constantly contradicted each other are not lying but are simply 'differing people with differing recollections.' Isn't that just another lie? Aren't you afraid that if the public found out what's really going on all of you would wind up in prison?"

"You have also told us that the Iran-contra affair has been like a nightmare, that 'when you watch something going along, you know it's going to end badly, and yet you seem helpless in order to affect the outcome.'"

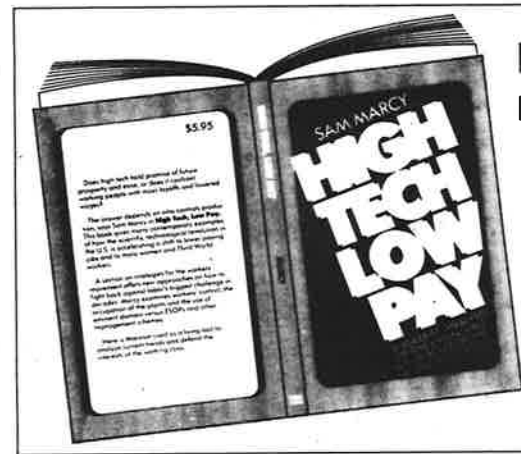
"Isn't that the whole problem in a nutshell? Things are going wrong for Wall Street and Washington in Nicaragua, in the Persian Gulf. None of the Reaganite schemes to get back Iran or crush the Sandinistas have worked out and now all you top administration officials are being dragged before Congress to explain your failures.

"You set up a secret government, a military clique to push your counter-revolutionary wars, but as you admit, you were helpless to affect the outcome, especially in Nicaragua where your contras are still losing. The imperialist politicians on Capitol Hill are mad because you bungled everything.

"The world's people have a different view.

"We are glad you fell on your face. We are happy you are humiliated. And we look forward to the day when you won't have any power to murder and oppress and exploit anyone ever again."

The rank-and-file organizers who have carried the fight to challenge the right of the corporations to shut down plants, lay off workers and destroy whole communities have an opening now that the UAW International has taken the demand for guaranteed jobs into contract bargaining. It is critical that the members be mobilized and prepared for the kind of battle that can win this fight for jobs.



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— Auto contract

Continued from page 3

The UAW proposal for guaranteed jobs certainly has the potential to become a rallying cry for a genuine struggle by the entire working class against the tremendous job elimination and wage reductions being suffered at the hands of the bosses.

On the first day of bargaining, the UAW published a public survey taken by Lauer, Laller and Associates of Washington, D.C., from a random sampling of 1,011 adults. When asked to choose between two statements, 61% said a corporation's top priority should be to provide jobs for people and help the community and the nation. Only 28% said a corporation's first responsibility is to make a profit. Some 72% agreed that big business makes too much profit at the expense of the workers and community.

If the UAW contract is fought as part of the overall political struggle for

the right of all workers to a decent job and for the reopening of all shutdown plants, then the demand for guaranteed jobs can be won. What is essential is mobilizing the weight of not only the hundreds of thousands of auto workers, but the entire working class for the upcoming fight.

On the other hand, if the demand for guaranteed jobs is simply viewed as a bargaining chip, to secure a few jobs in exchange for further concessions in wages, benefits, working conditions and production standards, then it will fall flat.

It has been shown over and over again that auto workers are tired of further concessions. The recent large "no" votes on concession contracts at Rouge Steel (UAW 600-Ford) and GM's Grey Iron Foundry (UAW 668) certainly showed that dissatisfaction. Workers are especially tired of the continued practice of whipsawing, pitting local against local under the threat of job loss in order for the corporation to achieve further takebacks.

The 2,000 workers who came out to

demonstrate on the opening of talks with GM on July 27 indicated the growing fightback mood among the rank and file. They were primarily from plants facing shutdowns and mass layoffs — from UAW 15 in Detroit, UAW 1341 in Tecumseh, Mich., whose plant is scheduled for shutdown in February, and from the UAW locals in Flint, hardest hit by the GM announcements.

The workers are beginning to recognize that the rallies organized by UAW Locals 15, 674, 233, 588 and others, as well as the A Job Is a Right Campaign, demonstrations which have raised the demand for a moratorium on plant shutdowns and layoffs and the reopening of closed plants, are having an effect.

Louie Freeman, a Jobs and Justice Fightback Committee organizer from UAW 598 in Flint, told Workers World that this week many of his co-workers raised that they felt the UAW demands for job guarantees were a direct product of these demonstrations.

South African army barracks ripped by 'biggest bomb to date'

By G. Dunkel

A large bomb exploded last week near the army barracks in Pretoria which houses the headquarters for the Witwatersrand Command. Since it was payday, a large crowd of soldiers had gathered to pick up their pay. Seventy people were injured from the explosion, 20 cars were damaged or destroyed and windows were broken in a five-block radius. The South African cops called it the "biggest bomb used to date in South Africa" and reported that 40 Black people were among the injured.

This bombing follows the recent death of the prominent anti-apartheid activist Eric Mxolise Mntonga, found bludgeoned to death in his car, which the United Democratic Front termed a "political execution." South Africa

commandos also killed two civilian refugees in Swaziland recently and have conducted many raids against civilian targets in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Last fall the Pretoria fascists even assassinated the president of Mozambique, Samora Machel, by luring his plane off-course into a mountain.

According to a report in Newsday, among the Black South Africans who fled to a nearby park to escape the effects of the blast, there were a number who said that the bomb was well done and well placed. One woman was reported to be dancing with joy, apparently pleased that the racists were being paid back for their murders. Further details on the bombings were suppressed by the South African censors.

INS response to Salvadoran refugees 'outrageously insensitive'

By Gloria La Riva
San Francisco

July 28 — Salvadoran and sanctuary activists responded with outrage at the statement yesterday by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) western regional director, Harold Ezell, that the death squad-style kidnappings and threats on the Salvadoran refugee community, were "an orchestrated PR campaign" by the refugees, with "no credence."

According to the Los Angeles Times, he also said, "One was molested . . . but that happens all over the state. There were 40 murders in Santa Ana last year, but do we blame those on death squads?"

For Yanira Corea, a Salvadoran who was kidnaped on July 10, raped, burned with cigarettes and had her hands and tongue cut with a knife, this was not exactly a case of mistakenly blaming death squads. She had also been abducted by the National Guard in El Salvador before escaping to the U.S. And recently her father had received a letter in El Salvador, warning him to stop his daughter's political activity in the U.S.

Thirty other Salvadorans have received death threats in letters sent to their homes.

Mary Brent Wehrli, director of the Southern California Ecumenical Council's Interfaith Task Force on Central America, said, "I find this the

most outrageously insensitive response I could imagine from anyone."

Ezell, a rabid right-winger, formed his own vigilante group, Americans for Border Control, in the San Diego area two years ago. It has conducted a campaign of hysteria, using TV ads to blame undocumented workers for everything from unemployment to Los Angeles traffic jams. He and his racist ABC group accompany many factory raids of the INS Migra agents.

Ezell's conduct is the callous and racist attitude that is typical of the whole INS. His latest statement is "orchestrated PR" to let the Salvadoran fascists know that they have a green light to terrorize the Salvadoran community by extra-legal means, if the INS can't do it openly.

After the INS secretly infiltrated the sanctuary movement last year, eight activists were convicted on felony conspiracy charges of helping Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees come to the U.S. for asylum.

But this repression has failed to break the sanctuary movement. In fact, this movement has grown to over 42 separate sites in the southern California area alone.

And as Marta Rivera Lopez, another Salvadoran also threatened by the death squads, said at a rally in Los Angeles yesterday, "We will not take one step backwards."

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By Luis Lopez

Workers World newspaper prints international and domestic news and information from a Marxist, working class perspective. In the pages of Workers World, you also get a clear, scientific analysis of the current issues — issues such as high technology's impact upon production, which especially cries out for clarity and a strategy so that wage earners of all nationalities can unite and struggle against the capitalist bosses.

The important struggles against national oppression and racist violence are reported on by participants in these struggles. Whether it is the lesbian and gay pride marches around the U.S., the struggle for women's liberation, or the struggles of seniors, youth, students, disabled and homeless people, Workers World is there in the heat of the fight, telling our readers what's happening.

Workers World is also there, bringing its analysis and news to the people. During the recent lesbian and gay pride march in New York City, which attracted tens of thousands of people, 3,000 copies of the paper were distributed to onlookers and marchers, 71 subscriptions were sold, and \$500 raised from paper sales. And at the July 16 demonstration against the Reagan administration's celebration of the Constitution in Philadelphia, 26 subscriptions were sold.

If you would like to receive bundles of Workers World for distribution in your area, or if you can sell the paper, contact the party branch nearest you (see listing, page 11) or the Workers World Party national office at 46 W. 21 St., New York, N.Y. 10010 (212) 255-0352.

Workers and oppressed people need to get this newspaper into their hands. Help distribute Workers World newspaper today!



WW PHOTO: JOHNNIE STEVENS

300 say no! Over 300 people marched from the CIA building to the Salvadoran consulate in San Francisco on July 30 to militantly say no to the kidnappings, torture and death threats against Salvadorans in Los Angeles and to the increased repression against the mass movement in El Salvador. The marchers attempted to take the street, but were met with hundreds of riot-equipped cops. Chanting, "Stop the Death Squads, stop the war, U.S. out of El Salvador," and "Ollie North, we say no, intervention has got to go," the march was applauded by the hundreds of people out on Market Street on their lunch hour. At the Flood Building, site of the Salvadoran Consulate, the cops had set up police lines. Protesters faced off against the cops, chanting, and about 50 set up a picket behind police lines. Representatives of CISPES and the Coordinadora de Comites Salvadoreños spoke, explaining that the Salvadoran government was increasing the repression because the mass movement and the FMLN in El Salvador were getting stronger every day.

Jane Cutter

Socialist Korea calls for nuclear-free peninsula

By Bill Doares

Although the Korean war ended 34 years ago, the southern half of Korea is still occupied by 40,000 U.S. troops and 42 U.S. military bases. It is also the site of over 1,000 U.S. nuclear weapons — the densest concentration of nuclear weapons in the world. In addition, the south Korean army, which is under the direct command of a U.S. general, has received billions of dollars worth of the most modern weapons from the Pentagon.

The Pentagon claims this massive military build-up is needed to "defend" south Korea against an "invasion" by much smaller north Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea). But two recent proposals by the government of the DPRK have given the lie to the generals in Washington.

On July 14 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK issued a call for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone on the Korean peninsula. And on July 23 it proposed massive mutual troop reductions by both the DPRK and the U.S.-armed and U.S.-financed south Korean regime. Under this proposal, armies on both sides of the demilitarized zone would be reduced to under 100,000 by 1991, at which time U.S. troops would be withdrawn.

These proposals come at a time when people in south Korea have taken to the streets in massive demonstrations demanding an end to the U.S.-backed Chon Do Hwan dictatorship and to U.S. domination of their country.

In the July 23 statement, the DPRK said it would unilaterally reduce its army by 100,000 by the end of this year to show the seriousness of its proposal. It also reiterated its long-standing pledge that it would not allow the testing, production, or storage of nuclear weapons on its soil, or allow the establishment of foreign bases, nuclear bases, nuclear or conventional. It pointed out that the only nuclear weapons or foreign troops in Korea are those of the United States, and that

the United States has frequently made nuclear threats against the DPRK.

U.S. nuke threat

For example, in the Pentagon's 1983 Defense Report, U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger said that in the event of a war in the Middle East, the U.S. would try to "distract" the Soviet Union by launching a nuclear attack on the DPRK. And on a visit to Seoul in February 1983, Gen. Edward Meyer, then U.S. Army chief of staff, said, "The use of nuclear weapons is easier here than in Europe where consultations have to be made with 15 different sovereign nations." Racist U.S. generals have also called Korea an "ideal testing ground for the neutron bomb."

The DPRK pointed out that such statements highlight the danger of a U.S.-provoked nuclear confrontation in Korea, which could easily escalate into a global conflict. It called on the United States and the south Korean regime to immediately remove nuclear weapons from south Korea.

In a statement issued on July 20, the U.S. Out of Korea Committee, a U.S.-based anti-war organization, condemned the U.S. government for its failure to respond to the DPRK's peaceful proposals. It said that this refusal must be seen in light of the long history of U.S. military aggression on the Korean peninsula and of the huge profits this has brought to the U.S. military-industrial complex. For example, the Chon Do Hwan regime bought \$3.2 billion worth of arms from the United States between 1982 and 1986 and is expected to buy over \$8 billion more before 1989.

What the Pentagon and the south Korean regime really fear, the statement says, is not "north Korean invasion" but a rebellion by the south Korean people themselves, who are tired of their country being used as a U.S. military base and economic colony. As the events of the past month have demonstrated, however, this is exactly what they are going to see.

Dominican general strike provoked by debt burden

By Estela Vilchez
New York

July 29 — About 100 Dominicans, Puerto Ricans and North American progressives gathered in front of the Dominican Consulate on West 60th Street here today to express solidarity with the July 28 general strike in the Dominican Republic. According to organizers of the picket line, the 24-hour general strike called by all the major Dominican labor confederations and peasants' organizations, totally paralyzed this Caribbean nation.

Reports in the Dominican press confirmed the effectiveness of the general strike, called after weeks of negotiations with the government of Joaquin Balaguer had failed to bring a reply to the labor unions' demands. Among the demands raised by the Dominican labor movement were: the raising of the minimum salary from 250 pesos a month (\$70) to 400 pesos (\$114) and the immediate lowering of the prices of basic food items.

Throughout the country hundreds of poor and working-class communities held public demonstrations on July 28 in support of the general strike. These actions were met with government repression.

In the 27 de Febrero neighborhood of Santo Domingo, the capital, a 5-month-old girl died as a result of asphyxiation from the massive tear gassing of that community. In many cities around the island dozens were wounded and hundreds arrested as the Dominican military tried to squash the nationwide massive popular outpouring of support for the strike.

Behind the conditions that forced this strike is the \$4 billion foreign debt burden on the Dominican Republic. To pay this debt and to be eligible for new loans, the current Dominican government headed by Joaquin Balaguer has sought to toe the line imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The U.S.-led world banking body demanded austerity measures such as the removal of food subsidies and the increase in the privatization of government-owned corporations.

The Dominican Electrical Corporation (CDE) figures prominently among the corporations that the government is seeking to transfer to private ownership. In recent weeks more than 300 workers from the CDE have been fired from their jobs, including many workers with 25 and 30 years seniority on the job and leaders of the



In the poor neighborhoods of Santo Domingo, women, children and men are forced to go out in a daily search for drinking and cooking water.

PHOTO: E. VILCHEZ

workers' labor union, SITRACODE.

The government's attempt to bust one of the longest established and most militant unions in the Dominican labor movement is seen by many Dominican observers as part of the overall attempt to undermine the Dominican labor movement in order to more easily force the IMF austerity measures on the population.

The demand for the immediate reinstatement of the 300 workers of SITRACODE figured prominently in the July 28 24-hour general strike.

The momentum which culminated in the general strike had been built by numerous organizations, including labor, peasant and other popular mass organizations, in the last few months. Widespread discontent has grown rapidly, brought about by the high unemployment and underemployment, combined with rising food prices. Together these have deepened the already staggering poverty in the

island.

In poor and working class communities in every major city throughout the country, neighborhood committees built around the demands for schools, health centers and running water to impoverished communities, have been organized. These Comites de Lucha Popular, that is, Committees of Popular Struggle or neighborhood committees, have in the last few months held "paros barriales," neighborhood strikes, to protest conditions under which the majority of the country's residents live.

The \$4 billion foreign debt combined with the lower prices for sugar on the world market and the U.S. reduction

in the Dominican sugar quota have made living conditions throughout the country unbearable. Widespread hunger and malnutrition and massive unemployment have become the daily staple of many Dominican families.

While the government of Joaquin Balaguer and the Dominican bourgeoisie seek to transform the country into another Caribbean tourist paradise, most Dominicans find themselves reduced to a life of bare subsistence. Labor leaders have announced that if their demands for higher salaries and lower food prices are not met, an indefinite general strike will be called again until the government answers their demands.

Poetic justice in Punta Rucia

In Puerto Plata province at the hotel "Orquidea del Sol" (Orchid in the Sun) Dr. Antonio Pisenchia, an Italian television producer, and his wife found themselves in an unexpected adventure not outlined in their travel brochure.

The hotel, located in Punta Rucia in the Puerto Plata province on the northern shores of the Dominican Republic, was built at a cost of 20 million pesos to attract international tourism. Nearby is a small fishing village, forgotten in time, without schools, health facilities or running water. But, for the tourists, the government and the secretary of tourism had built water lines that brought drinking water to the Orquidea del Sol.

For many weeks the local fishermen had tried unsuccessfully to beg the right of access to drinking water from the hotel facilities. The families of Punta Rucia even collected 200 pesos to pay for the installation of a public faucet.

On July 19 the residents of Punta Rucia finally got fed up with the injustice which denied them drinking water and, at machete point, took the hotel facilities and the Italian TV producer and his wife.

For five days the fishermen and their families held the tourists hostage in the hotel, barricading themselves in and preventing the arrival of an Italian technical crew that was coming to the area to begin filming a documentary about the landing of Christopher Columbus in the area in preparation for the celebration of the 500th anniversary.

Only after the secretary of the armed forces and the secretary of tourism of the country gave assurances to the fishermen and their families that water pipes would be installed in their community did the families of Punta Rucia release their guests on July 24. But at least for the few days that the fishermen and their families liberated the hotel facilities they had, for the first time in their lives, the opportunity to sleep in a place with electricity, air conditioning and running water.

Columbus may have found smiling Taino Indians to greet him when he landed almost 500 years ago in Puerto Plata, but today's tourists may find a different reception from a population angered with the diversion of meager resources to the tourism industry while the local population finds itself without the most basic necessities of life.



Haiti general strike. A general strike over the Aug. 1-2 weekend organized by the Democratic Front, a coalition of 57 groups, paralyzed sectors of Port-au-Prince and other cities in the Republic of Haiti. One of the main demands of the people is the resignation of the military junta which governs Haiti. This junta, led by Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, is seen by the workers and peasants as a puppet of the transnational corporations, especially those from the U.S. On Aug. 2, three people in an open-air food market in the center of Port-au-Prince were killed by gunfire from soldiers. At least 10 were killed the week before when soldiers fired on a crowd.

EDITORIALS

Right to choose

In a backhanded maneuver, the Reagan administration last week came up with a new way to attack women's reproductive rights and curtail the right to abortion — a right won in the streets by millions of women. The government is proposing a new set of regulations that would bar federally-funded family planning clinics from counseling clients about abortion procedures.

These regulations will harm the work of 4,000 clinics which serve 4.3 million clients a year, and which currently receive \$142.5 million annually in federal funds. Over 85% of their clients are poor and one-third are teenagers. Many clinics will be forced to curtail their services should they lose these funds, or they may even be forced to close. This will severely deprive poor and oppressed women and teen-agers who need their services most.

This whole process is highly illegal, violating the whole legislative process. The Reaganites couldn't win passage of anti-abortion laws in Congress because there is mass sentiment against such repressive laws in the population, where the majority support instead a woman's right to choose. Just as the Reaganites had a covert foreign policy carried out by the Contragate gang, so are they trying to sneak in their reactionary anti-woman program through the back door. They are also violating the constitutional right of women to choose abortion.

The new rules will be published in the Federal Register and will become final 60 days after being open for public comment. Women's groups have denounced this reactionary proposal and are vowing to fight it. In this battle they should get the support of all progressive and working-class organizations.

U.S. out of Sri Lanka!

What is the U.S. government doing on the tiny island of Sri Lanka, half-way around the globe in the Indian Ocean?

The pro-U.S., right-wing regime in Sri Lanka headed by Junius Richard Jayawardene (known to his opponents as "J.R." and "Yankee Dickey") has waged a 10-year-long terror campaign against the oppressed Tamil

people, who have been struggling for independence for decades. Eighteen miles away, in neighboring India, the state of Tamil Nadu is home to 50 million Tamil people. In the 1800s, when both India and Sri Lanka (then "Ceylon") were colonies of Britain, the British brought the Tamils from India to Sri Lanka as indentured servants to work their tea plantations.

Last week, the Sri Lankan government signed an accord with India. Indian troops are now in northern Sri Lanka to enforce a cease-fire agreement. The accord calls for the Tamil liberation groups to give up their arms. As of this writing it appears that large sections of the Tamil population are refusing to surrender their weapons, fearing that if they are left unarmed, the government will be free to wage the type of wanton massacres that have been commonplace for the last decade.

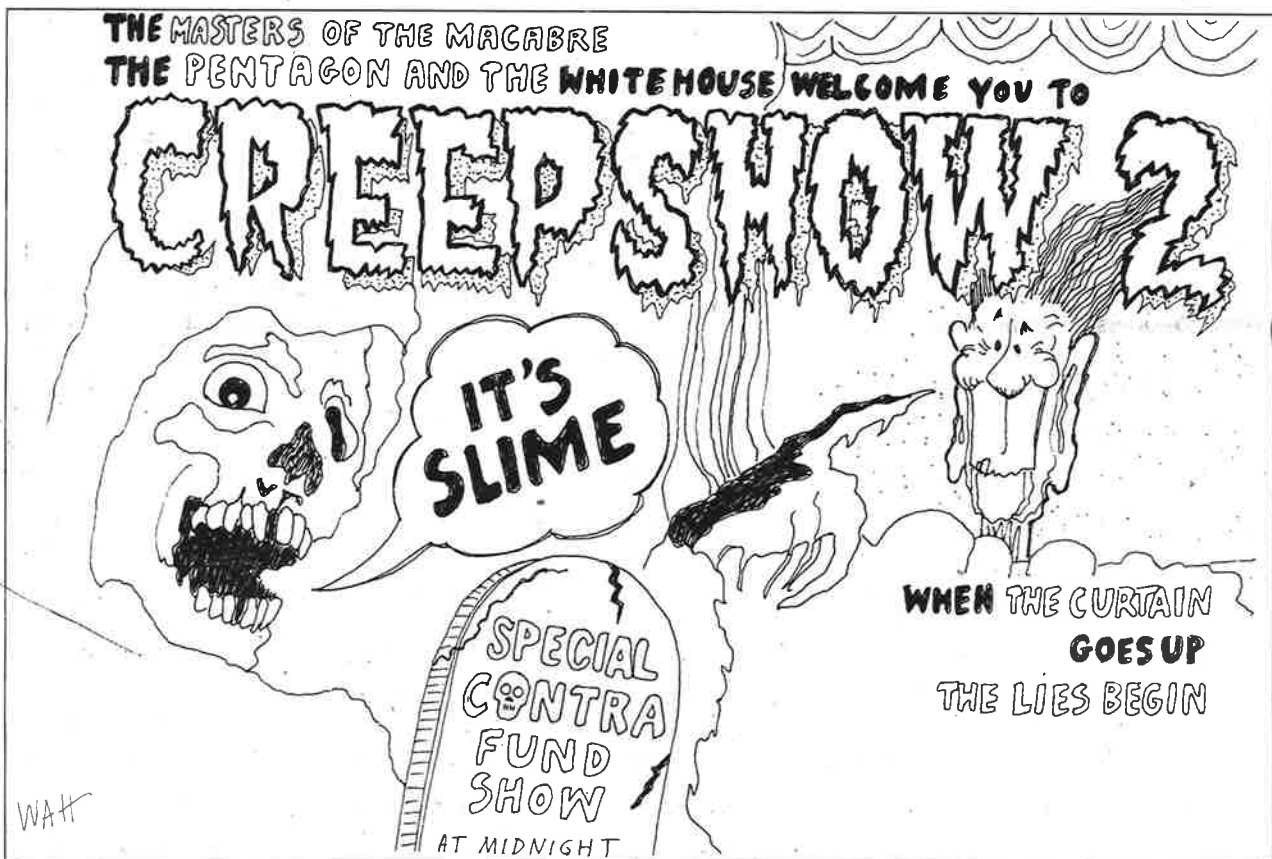
But what does all this have to do with the U.S.? And why has the Reagan administration suddenly intervened into this conflict by announcing that it is prepared to send logistical support, including helicopters, troop transports and other military equipment, to the Sri Lankan regime to enforce the accord?

For one thing, Sri Lanka is a neo-colony of Western imperialism. The country has a per capita income of less than \$200 and its chief crop, tea, is exported mostly to the U.S., Britain and West Germany. Throughout the Indian subcontinent the regime is considered a staunch U.S. supporter. And within the country the U.S. Embassy in Colombo is a regular target of student and worker protests. The

building was stoned by angry demonstrators several years ago.

But the island plays a larger role in terms of U.S. strategic interests throughout Southern Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. The Pentagon wants the island as a military base, a foothold in a region where U.S. imperialism is despised and hated and where the slightest mention of U.S. troops provokes gigantic protests and rebellions. Sri Lanka is one of the few countries in the area that has granted the U.S. Navy supply facilities on its shores, at the port city in Trincomalee. The U.S. quickly tried to expand the facility into a military base, but a firestorm of protest forced the Sri Lankan government to shelve that idea. Nevertheless, in early 1985 it was announced that a duty-free zone would be established there and an airport built by Boeing Aerosystems International, a subsidiary of Boeing Aircraft, one of the largest U.S. defense contractors.

The U.S. has aided the Jayawardene regime in its 10-year genocidal war against the revolutionary Tamil movement. It is utilizing the present situation to try to worm its way in even more. The U.S. has no business in Sri Lanka, just as its warships have no business in the Persian Gulf and its military bases no business in south Korea or the Philippines. They are there to be used against the workers and peasants, to enforce brutal exploitation and oppression and to threaten war. Workers here must demand the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. military and economic interests from Sri Lanka, and throughout the Asian continent.



Letters

Panama

I was glad to see that you have the right perspective on recent events in Panama. As one who grew up in the old colonial Canal Zone and who still maintains ties to Panama, I fear and loathe what our government does down there.

Noriega is not the sort of progressive leader that the late General Omar Torrijos was. Yet both of these military strongmen put Panama first, insisting on Panamanian control of the canal and opposing the Contra war. The sins of which Noriega is accused by our government might be real, but of course they are not the reason for U.S. interference.

One of the commonly-believed accusations against Noriega is that he caused the murder of Dr. Hugo Spadafora. Spadafora, who served as minister of public health for a time under the Torrijos government, participated in the later stages of the Nicaraguan revolution. Later, he threw in his lot with renegade ex-Sandinista Eden Pastora and his faction of Contras.

In September 1985 Spadafora tried to slip across the Costa Rican border into Panama, riding incognito on a bus. A few miles inside Panama, several men hustled him away, and his decapitated corpse was found stuffed in a U.S. mail bag on the Costa Rican side of the border some time later.

While some who support Noriega believe that rival Contras killed Spadafora, many Noriega supporters concede that the army did in fact kill the man. However, they believe that Spadafora was on a Contra mission that compromised Panamanian sovereignty, and that it is the duty of the army to eliminate such threats to the nation.

Can Panama find a better leader than Noriega? That is possible. Can the U.S. impose a better leader upon Panama? No way. Neither Reagan and his crowd nor the congressional liberals who have joined the administration in demanding Noriega's resignation have the right or the competency to run Panama.

Eric Jackson,
Ypsilanti, Mich.

Matagalpa

Fifty thousand people crowded into the small mountain village of Matagalpa in central Nicaragua to cele-

brate the 19th of July, the eighth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Under a cloudy sky, Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress, joined President Daniel Ortega in denouncing the imperialist policies of the U.S. in both Central America and South Africa and calling for an end to the state-sponsored terrorism that, if continued, will result in a full-scale invasion of Nicaragua.

Clad in his standard fatigues and army cap, Ortega took the podium, immediately alerting the country to the likelihood of a direct U.S. invasion and warning the U.S. Congress of its complicity in Reagan's terrorist policies if it approved further aid to the Contras. Under Reagan, he stated, the U.S. is only waiting for the opportune moment to invade, already having prepared 150,000 troops and made extensive logistic plans for the purpose.

But invasions of either El Salvador or Nicaragua would have serious consequences for Central America, the U.S. and the world, as Nicaragua would not stand by passively. Despite the massive U.S. economic aid to the Contras, "Nicaragua has the mercenaries running backwards like crabs."

In the hour-long address, Ortega cited statistics from every year since the revolution, showing the destructive effects of U.S. intervention on the Nicaraguan economy, its trade balance and the people.

In 1980, before Reagan came to office, four Nicaraguans fell victim to the terrorist actions of former Somoza henchmen, who caused \$1.5 million in damage to the economy. Defense expenditures constituted only 20% of the Gross National Product (GNP) and exports totaled over \$400 million.

The war-related death toll increased to 134 victims in 1981, to 834 in 1982, to 5,053 in 1983, and in 1984 reached 8,334 victims. Damage to the economy in 1984 exceeded \$305 million, while the defense budget constituted 25% of GNP and exports fell to \$385 million.

Last year was the most severe for the nation, Ortega explained, as 12,194 Nicaraguans lost their lives in the conflict, while defense consumed 38% of GNP and exports fell to \$229.8 million.

Paul Hockenos
Matagalpa, Nicaragua

Workers World welcomes letters from its readers. Send correspondence to: Workers World, Letters to the Editor, GPO Box 948, New York, N.Y. 10116.

The Soviet reforms and the capitalist market

By Sam Marcy

(Third part in a series.)

August 4 — It is impossible to fully consider the Soviet reforms without again and again taking into account the global economic situation. The current phase of relative capitalist expansion, which may be nearing its end sooner than most capitalist economists anticipate, has been accompanied by a most intense assault on the principle of socialist planning.

While the planned economies in the USSR and other socialist countries are their real target, the ruling class ideologues also continually focus their efforts on discrediting and disqualifying any attempt at government planning in the capitalist countries. While the masses may derive some limited, peripheral benefits from capitalist planning, it still doesn't have the remotest connection with planning in a socialist country.

However, the assault keeps gathering momentum under the signpost of deregulation and free market mechanisms. One would think that capitalism had entered a new era in its economic evolution and that the unbridled forces of production were once again experiencing a revival of the conditions that existed at the dawn of the capitalist era.

It is not surprising that the sheer volume of this propaganda has also had its effect in the Soviet Union. Developments in China, Hungary, Poland and certainly Yugoslavia have had their impact in the USSR as well.

First Soviet 5-year plan and the Great Depression in the West

How different the situation was during the first Soviet five-year plan! The monumental success of the 1929-34 plan electrified the worldwide working class and oppressed people and everywhere put the capitalist ideologues and propagandists completely on the defensive.

The Soviet plan had gone into effect only months before the stock market crash in the U.S., which came in October of 1929. There soon followed a devastating collapse of all the capitalist economies, and this made socialist planning attractive. There ensued various forms of capitalist state intervention, which got a great deal of their inspiration from the success of the five-year plan. Why don't the bourgeois press ever seem to remember this?

The then-famous school of bourgeois liberal economists known as the Keynesians, and particularly those early intellectuals in the Roosevelt administration who helped to frame much of the New Deal legislation, including the National Recovery Act (NRA), were the architects of state capitalist intervention. Their enthusiasm for it came in the wake of the capitalist economic collapse and in response to the desperate situation of the economy and the revolutionary and near-revolutionary pressures of the working class, in the U.S. as well as elsewhere.

The era of planning in the capitalist West, while of course mostly the result of the unprecedented economic dislocation, nevertheless owed a great deal to the planning in the Soviet Union. The planning principle had indeed become a magnet, a source of creative ideas and inspiration, even to the bourgeoisie!

Phase of capitalist expansion puts pressure on socialist countries

Of course, socialist planning fits on the capitalist system like a saddle on a cow. Nevertheless, that was what happened.

It should not come as a complete

surprise, therefore, if today, as a result of a momentary global economic conjuncture, a somewhat reverse situation exists and a current of thought has emerged in the USSR which is influenced by the glories of the capitalist market. We are not at this point discussing the Soviet reforms as they have unfolded since this June's Central Committee meeting. It's too early for that. But it is instructive to take notice of a tendency which has emerged in the Soviet intelligentsia and which reflects pressures from the current expansionist phase of the world capitalist economy.

Take, for instance, a letter in the May 1987 issue of *Novy Mir* (as reported in the *New York Times* of May 9) from Larisa Popkova, an economist who describes herself as a doctoral candidate of economic science. "Where there is socialism," she writes, "there is no place for markets and liberal spirit. And I repeat, there cannot be. It is my conviction that this is also true about today's [Soviet attempts] to tune the national economy to the frequency of the consumer. You cannot be a little bit pregnant," she says. "It is either plan or market, either directive or competition."

What may surprise most of us here in the U.S. is that this letter was not an attack on the capitalist tendency toward the free market, but the very opposite! She is a proponent of capitalism. She and others like her have been given wide publicity in the capitalist press.

Clearly, Popkova and others openly represent a tendency for the restoration of the bourgeois free market as the regulator of the Soviet economy.

Pro-capitalist group critical of official Soviet position

Popkova's outlook is not at all the view stated in the Soviet government's plans to radically restructure the economy. To say so is to create a false impression. But her view is representative of a tendency. How deep or widespread it is in the Soviet intelligentsia remains to be seen, but it is not to be confounded with the position of the Soviet government.

This has to be stressed, for the capitalist press uses the existence of this bourgeois tendency as the basis for interpreting the Soviet reforms rather than reporting what they actually are. They are building up a tendency which may turn out to be an utterly inane and innocuous group of bourgeois-oriented restorationists in the Soviet economic establishment.

Thus, for instance, the *New York Times* in its editorial of July 1, 1987, entitled "Revolution 1987, Soviet-style," states: "Yet another communist giant, the communist giant, now sets out to undo the Revolution of 1917 with the Revolution of 1987." Similar editorials appeared immediately after the New Economic Policy introduced by Lenin in 1921. They all made dire predictions of a counterrevolutionary overthrow of the Soviet government.

Another critic of the reforms who wants the restructuring to go even further is Nikolai Shmelyov. In the June issue of *Novy Mir* (reported in the *New York Times* of June 4), he proposed that central planning be eliminated altogether, along with subsidies and fixed prices, in favor of the capitalist free market. He wants "central planning to be virtually eliminated"; also that "the ruble be devalued to its real price in the world market and that the leaders accept some unemployment as a natural byproduct of the economy."

"Just as we did in 1953 and 1965," complained Shmelyov, "we are again dooming ourselves to half-hearted measures. And half-heartedness, as

we all know, is often worse than inactivity." His arrows are directed against the Soviet leadership and its plans.

Other economists who lean toward capitalist market

Of course, these are the views of the bourgeois tendency who call for the restoration, either in whole or in part, of capitalism. But there are also others who are not in the Popkova-Shmelyov camp but who are advisers to the government and who occasionally are held out as spokespersons for the Soviet government on critical economic issues in the reforms. They are frequently quoted, but seldom by name, in the capitalist press.

This group includes Leonid Abalokin, director of the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences, and Abel G. Aganbegyan, secretary of the economics department of the Academy of Sciences. They present the most gloomy prognosis of the reforms and certainly evince a tendency towards the capitalist market.

During the Khrushchev period, there were any number of economists like them, including Professor Yevsei Liberman, who also seemed to reflect the views of the Soviet government and the rapidity with which it was going to embrace not only bonuses and incentives but the entire gamut of capitalist free market mechanisms as well. It turned out later that the Liberman influence was very limited indeed and in the long run proved to be of little significance.

It's important that progressives in this country understand all this because, as Marx said, the prevailing ideas in any society are always the ideas of the ruling class, who are protecting, preserving and trying to expand their influence. Not all in the ruling class, however, share the view of this editorial in the *New York Times*.

Views of U.S. big business on Soviet reforms

In an earlier article we discussed the trip to Moscow taken by a high-level delegation from the Council on Foreign Relations and an account of that meeting given by Senator Mathias. We find it of some value to now present the views of another group from the Council that met with General Secretary Gorbachev and other high Soviet officials this spring.

It should be remembered that the Council on Foreign Relations is not just another Rockefeller entity. It is generally recognized as having the cadres of an alternate U.S. government, the so-called "invisible government" which is frequently the target of attacks by ultrarightists. These

attacks, of course, are fraudulent to the core. Ronald Reagan, for instance, was fond of such anti-Rockefeller demagoguery before he became President, but he soon enough made his peace with Rockefeller and the Council.

As we said, these delegations included not only Mathias, Kissinger and Vance but also Jeane Kirkpatrick, Harold Brown, General David Jones and a number of high-ranking officers from the multinational corporations. The delegation this spring also included Peter G. Peterson.

Peterson was long involved as an adviser and functionary for the U.S. government in matters of international economic affairs. He was Secretary of Commerce for the Nixon administration, attended numerous international conferences on behalf of the U.S. government, and then became chairman of the board of the banking investment firm of Lehman Brothers (which subsequently merged with Shearson-American Express).

In the June 25 issue of the *New York Review of Books*, Peterson takes a more sober view of the Soviet reforms. He doesn't hold the apocalyptic view about a counter-revolution in the USSR which the *New York Times* seems still attached to, but he is nonetheless a conservative representative of big business and the banks who is vitally interested in the Soviet Union's new opening in international economic affairs, of which joint ventures are a key element.

What are joint ventures?

Before we go any further with Peterson's view of the Soviet reforms, we must examine how joint ventures have operated in other countries past and what limitations will be put on them under Soviet law.

Joint ventures are a notorious form of imperialist penetration of the less developed and especially the poorest and most oppressed countries. They are one of the most significant instrumentalities of multinational corporations to expand their interests and are the source of fabulous superprofits.

In outer form they are supposed to divide the profits derived from the operations of the joint venture according to some definite proportion, usually 49% for the foreign corporation and 51% for the home country. But in reality, the multinational corporations extract extortionate profits from the exploitation of the working class, the take being more enormous where neocolonialist elements run the regime. The legal form of the joint venture has little to do with the reality of the actual relationship, which is one

Continued on page 10



SAM MARCY

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GENERALS OVER THE WHITE HOUSE

THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

— Soviet reforms and capitalist market

Continued from page 9
of super-exploitation.

So the question arises, how will a joint venture between the imperialist countries and the USSR operate? Is it at all compatible with socialist planning?

We recall that Lenin in the 1921 New Economic Policy (NEP) offered the imperialists a great deal more than a 49% interest, but there were few takers.

At least one of the important differences between then and now is that during the NEP period, the Soviet Union was not yet a planned economy; it had yet to institute a comprehensive economic plan. Since then there have been many five-year plans, and today the USSR is a strong, centrally planned economy.

There have been all sorts of trade deals and transactions over the years between the USSR and Western Europe, and to a lesser extent with Japan and the U.S. Some involved large construction projects in the USSR. But they have been one-shot deals which ended when the project was completed, and they were based on compensation to the foreign corporation.

A joint ownership project is different, however. Under the Soviet joint venture law, enacted Jan. 1, 1987, the USSR contributes the leasing of land and will make available labor and perhaps some technology. The foreign company contributes technology, knowhow and what is referred to as management skills. The profits derived from the joint project will of course be taxed. Whether the products will be wholly destined for the Soviet Union or whether some portion will be for export is not clear.

The venture will have a board of directors on which the foreign corporations may have representation, but it is not clear how much. The chairman of the board of directors, however, and the chief operating officer will be from the Soviet Union. There are other provisions, such as those referring to the currency used and how it can be converted into foreign currency so as to make it easy to transfer it out of the country.

And, of course, the operation of the venture will be done under Soviet labor law requiring strict compliance with its provisions. The foreign companies will not be allowed to roam through the land seeking cheap labor, as they would in a country ridden with the vast and intractable unemployment characteristic of the bourgeois system.

Nevertheless, about 100 giant corporations are now discussing joint venture proposals with the USSR. Also, letters of intent have already been signed with about 70 of the giant corporations. Some of them are old-timers in dealing with the USSR, such as Occidental Petroleum, but others, like Monsanto, Dresser Industries and Combustion Engineering, are new (see Aug. 4 New York Times, Business section).

Under the present Soviet law, these corporations may deal directly with about 70 large state enterprises, as mentioned in an earlier article, which of course is a new element in Soviet

foreign economic relations.

This decentralizing of the former foreign trade ministry and permitting as many as 70 enterprises to deal directly with the West does constitute, at least in a formal sense, a breach of the monopoly of foreign trade, which until now has been an indispensable element in the socialist economy. However, this decentralization does not necessarily mean that they have been given complete and unconditional independence free from government control. No government in the world would permit that, least of all the USSR.

Joint ventures not part of planned economy

The most important part of the law, however, is that the joint venture companies will exist only outside of the planned economy. (See the Journal of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council, Vol. 12, No. 2.) This is of singular significance, because if they were to operate within the planned economy, the joint ventures would have to be integrated into the Soviet economic system, which is based on planning years in advance.

The capitalist entrepreneurs get no economic advantage out of this. On the contrary, it restricts the political leverage they could exert otherwise if they threatened to pull out, suddenly remove their technicians, advisers, executives and so on.

U.S. businesses are arguing that they should be allowed to operate within the framework of the planned economy. How can they get raw materials or other supplies, they say, since most of that is within the planned economy? Nevertheless, this is what the Soviet law on joint ventures stipulates.

To those corporations concerned with joint ventures from a narrow economic point of view, this may not be an obstacle. But from the point of view of the overall political motivation of the U.S. in relation to the USSR, they want the joint ventures to become as fully integrated in the planned economy as possible so as to be able to exert not only an economic but a political influence.

The Soviet stand on this is an attempt to insulate the socialist economy from the free capitalist market. However, it should be noted that this is precisely what the Chinese experiments have tried to do with respect to the special zones they granted to the capitalist countries. The rationale China used is that these special zones are separate and apart and this safeguards socialist construction. A large segment, of the masses, however, see it as a return to colonialism, especially since China, unlike the USSR, is still largely an underdeveloped country. Nor should it be forgotten that China has established a virtual military alliance with the U.S.

The joint ventures in the USSR, even though insulated from the planned economy, do introduce free market capitalism so far as the external manifestations are concerned. Overall, the coexistence within the USSR of this incursion or invitation, whichever you call it, of capitalist

enterprise points up the basic contradiction between capitalism and socialism. The basic motivation on the capitalist side of the joint venture is maximum profit. There can be no doubt about that, whether it is long-term or short-term.

With the Soviet Union, however, and presumably with China, the motivation is to acquire technology and knowhow, and to provide the types of products that are necessary either for consumers or for production. In other words, the long-term goal of the socialist economy is to utilize the capitalist enterprises to produce use values, whereas the capitalist goal is to extract as much profit as possible, which is in stark contradiction to the needs of socialist construction and of socialism in general.

It's important to differentiate between those imperialist corporations which would participate in joint ventures from a narrow economic point of view and those which are more concerned with long-term contracts and expansion and hope to use their economic links in the USSR for political leverage in the broader struggle between socialism and capitalism.

This is not an inconsiderable factor in the calculations of the U.S. ruling class as a whole and of the U.S. government in particular.

Let us return now to Peterson, who is as representative as an individual can be of the U.S. ruling class as a whole, being a banker-government representative and entrepreneur. He confines himself to saying that the joint ventures are "worth exploring."

"Fundamentally," he says, "the Soviets are trying to reconcile market forces with a planned economy. They are seeking a modernized two-sector economy of the kind that was tried in the 1920s [the NEP under Lenin — S.M.]. There is no question that the market is going to start driving them one way in resource allocation while central planning and their concept of social values [socialism] will drive them in the opposite direction. . . . They now wonder how to reconcile market-drive enterprise centers and joint ventures with the central planning."

Within the context of understanding that Peterson represents the enemy and is an inveterate opponent of socialism, he is putting it plainly. The joint ventures are an attempt to find ground on which the two systems can coexist. This is what the NEP was. But as Lenin warned in his October 1921 speech which we quoted extensively in an earlier article: "Our Party must make the masses realize that the enemy in our midst is anarchic capitalism and anarchic commodity exchange. We ourselves must see clearly that the issue in this struggle is: Who will win? Who will gain the upper hand?"

Now, nearly 70 years later, and even though the Soviet Union has become well-nigh invincible as a fortress of socialist planning, this is still the issue. But in a certain sense, the danger was less in Lenin's time, precisely because they didn't have a planned economy that the joint ventures could disrupt.

U.S. has broad military-political as well as economic interests

It's worth mentioning that immediately after the Iceland summit between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev, there was a meeting in the Kremlin with close to 400 U.S. businessmen who came to investigate what the new possibilities were for trade. The gathering was addressed by Secretary Gorbachev on Dec. 10, 1985. (See his "Remarks on U.S.-USSR trade," reprinted in the Harvard Business Review of May-June 1986.)

What surprised Secretary Gorbachev

was that instead of all the executives being from corporations mainly interested in trade and commerce, he found that "there are among you senior executives of companies that are prominent in American military business."

"Let me say this frankly," Gorbachev told the group. "We believe that military business exerts a dangerous influence on politics. In fact, we are not alone in thinking so. The very concept of the military-industrial complex was not formulated by Marxists but by a conservative Republican, President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States, who warned the American people of the negative role that can be played by that complex."

"I'm not saying this to reproach those of our guests who have contracts with the Pentagon." What Gorbachev was interested in was the extension of peaceful commercial and trade relations.

[Editor's note: Eisenhower's farewell address containing references to the military-industrial complex is included in the appendix to Sam Marcy's book, "Generals over the White House." See ad this page.]

In examining joint ventures, which seem to be such a narrow economic field, it is important to view them against the overall relationship of the U.S. and USSR and not for a moment to forget the military-industrial complex that is everywhere. Secretary Gorbachev must have been mindful of this.

Not long ago, it was none other than Richard Perle, one of the most right-wing opponents of U.S.-USSR arms negotiations, who said in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "I asked them [meaning the U.S. team at Geneva] how much information did you extract from them? That much!" he said, derisively holding up a piece of paper.

Extracting information is one of the underlying U.S. motivations in all negotiations with the USSR.

From whichever angle one discusses relations between the U.S. and the USSR or between the USSR and the West in general, the underlying fundamental problem is still this: that the social system of the USSR is diametrically opposed to the capitalist system and that any meeting ground can under the present circumstances be only peripheral. The USSR will not allow imperialist monopolies to become so embroiled in its economic structure as to give the imperialists the kind of foothold they last enjoyed in czarist days.

Nevertheless, it is a development that has to be carefully assessed and its evolution watched to see where the process leads. It has thus far not been a plunge, as least as far as foreign relations go, into the free capitalist market come-what-may, as the Times editorial obituary for the October Revolution declared.

Lenin clearly explained the dangers

Lenin, as we showed earlier, was firmly convinced of the need for the New Economic Policy that partially restored capitalism. But at the same time, and this was the important point which we believe is still relevant almost 70 years later, Lenin clearly said that the enemy is commodity production.

And it still is today. If it has to be accommodated, it should be in the same spirit of profound class irreconcilability; of delineating and clearly stating that which is progressive and necessary and that which is regressive and dangerous, of explaining that it must be done as a matter of necessity rather than embellishing or disguising it.

We hope to return to this in a later article.

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Political prisoners

Puerto Rico 16 activists hit FBI role Demonstrations set for Aug. 30

By Peter Goselin
Hartford, Conn.



Following the news in early July that the Puerto Rican police, aided by the FBI, have maintained a list of "subversives and separatists" on the island, lawyers in the case of the Puerto Rico-Hartford 16 announced a motion to investigate the role of government prosecutors in creating the hit list.

The request, bolstered by a decision in a Puerto Rico Commonwealth Superior Court, would, if granted, put a spotlight on the repressive role of the FBI in its blacklisting and harassment of pro-independence forces.

Although only a small fraction of the list — containing some 60,000 names — has been published to date (Workers World, July 30, 1987), already it has been revealed that 15 of

the Puerto Rico-Hartford 16 are on the list, as well as many members of their families and almost all of their defense team.

The lawyers maintain that the list makes a fair trial of their clients impossible, since potential witnesses may be intimidated into silence by the fear of also being blacklisted.

In one instance, a lawyer from Connecticut, who had never traveled to Puerto Rico, was placed on the list for having agreed to act as a public

defender for Isaac Camacho Negrón, who was unable to afford an attorney. A local supporter of the Puerto Rico-Hartford 16 noted that such a practice was common during the days of military dictatorship in her native Argentina.

Defense efforts to expose the FBI's repressive role will be supported by events unfolding in Puerto Rico, where revelations about police surveillance and blacklisting have led to an investigation by the Puerto Rico Human Rights Commission and a significant court ruling against the police and FBI.

The ruling by Commonwealth Superior Judge Arnaldo Lopez Rodríguez declared it illegal for the police to maintain files on people because of their political beliefs and ordered the surrender of all such files to the people and groups on the list.

For travel arrangements to Hartford, Conn., for the Aug. 30 demonstration in defense of the Puerto Rico-Hartford 16 contact the city nearest you:

Baltimore (301) 235-7040
Boston (617) 424-1176
Bridgeport, Conn. (203) 366-7195
Buffalo, N.Y. (716) 881-1525
Hartford, Conn. (203) 233-7996
or (203) 244-3963
Jersey City, N.J. (201) 433-2332
Monmouth Cnty, N.J. (201) 741-7097
New Brunswick, N.J. (201) 246-7420
New Haven, Conn. (203) 562-2398
New York City (212) 741-0633
Philadelphia (215) 724-1618
Portland, Maine .. P.O. Box 8372, 04104
Providence, R.I. (401) 274-7668
Rochester, N.Y. (716) 544-5409
Washington, D.C. (202) 332-5041
Western Mass. (413) 584-7050

Meanwhile, activists on the island and in the U.S. are gearing up for the second anniversary of the Aug. 30, 1985, arrests. Major demonstrations are planned in Puerto Rico, Hartford, Conn., and San Francisco calling for freedom for the Puerto Rico-Hartford 16 and an end to the U.S. reign of colonial repression in Puerto Rico.

Join us in the struggle

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples in this capitalist society. All work together in this organization — Black and white, Latin, Asian and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian and gay, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or if you would like to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you:

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Thurs., Aug. 20: Film — "With Babies and Banners." The great Flint sit-down strike of 1937. 7:00 p.m. At 1608 N. Milwaukee Ave., call (312) 489-3829.

Thurs., Aug. 27: Film — "Occupied Palestine." A documentary portrayal of Palestinian struggle for self-determination. 7:00 p.m. At 1608 N. Milwaukee Ave., call (312) 489-3829.

Fri., Aug. 28: Eyewitness Belfast — the struggle against British colonialism. Presented by Ed Childs, recently returned from one month in Ireland. Forum and slide show. 7:00 p.m. At Wellington Ave. Church, 615 W. Wellington, call (312) 489-3829.

NEW YORK CITY

Sat., Aug. 15: A Workers World Party Forum, "Free all political prisoners: U.S. to Puerto Rico to South Africa," with guest speakers: Susan Mnumzana, Women's Section, ANC and Esperanza Martell, Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression. 7 p.m. At 146 West 25th St., New York, N.Y. (212) 255-0352. Donations, refreshments, accessible.

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"The Constitution then and now" — a three-part series. **Sun., Aug. 9:** "Who wrote the Constitution?" **Sun., Aug. 16:** "The Civil War, Reconstruction and the State." **Sun., Aug. 23:** "The Constitution today — Who really rules?" All these talks at 7:00 p.m., At 2489 Mission St., No. 30, call (415) 826-4828.

Sat., Aug. 15: Barbecue fundraiser at El Rio club. Relax under palm trees. Generous entree portion plus all the salad you can eat. Benefit to buy coin-operated boxes for Workers World newspaper. \$7. 5:00 p.m. At 3158 Mission at Precita, call (415) 826-4828 for advance tickets.



Clarence Brandley supporters encouraged by upcoming hearing

By Joanne Gavin
Houston

The Coalition to Free Clarence Brandley says that the evidentiary hearing Brandley will have on Sept. 8 is a first step to a new trial that will free the death-row inmate. In spite of the mountain of evidence for the innocence of Brandley and pointing to the guilt of one or more of the people on his janitorial staff in the 1981 murder of a visiting student, Brandley's supporters do not expect an easy victory.

Brandley, who is Black, supervised an otherwise white maintenance crew at Conroe High School not far from Houston. Part of the frame-up was to add a "rape" charge to the murder in order to whip up racist hysteria over the killing of a young white woman and turn public sentiment against Brandley. Many believe this charge

was fabricated.

The frame-up of Brandley is only part of a corruption scandal involving Conroe officials that would be uncovered if Montgomery County were to admit that Brandley was innocent. And it is in Conroe, Texas, Montgomery's county seat, that the state of Texas has ordered the evidentiary hearing to take place.

To increase pressure for a just decision, the Coalition is urging everyone who possibly can to be present on Tuesday morning, Sept. 8, in Conroe, and for those who can to continue to pack the courtroom throughout the hearing. It's expected to last a week or more.

Those who cannot attend are urged to send letters of support to: Clarence Brandley, No. 680, Ellis Unit — Death Row, Huntsville, Texas 77343.

Save Carlos Garcia Herrera!

By Casa Chile

On June 23rd and June 24th, the case of Carlos Garcia Herrera went before the Supreme Court of Chile. This was the last stage of appeal. In the two-day proceeding the Supreme Court heard both the defense lawyers and the prosecutors.

Carlos Garcia Herrera was first sentenced to death in May 1984 for his alleged participation in the 1980 murder of Army Intelligence Chief Lt. Col. Roger Vergara.

Arrested on January 25, 1981, with his companion and daughter of 16 months, Carlos Garcia Herrera was held for 20 days by the Central Nacional de Informacion (CNI-Secret Police) during which time he was tortured. His companion was also tortured and their daughter, held for 10 days, was mistreated.

The Supreme Court of Chile rejected Garcia Herrera's appeal. Casa Chile opposes the death penalty in the cases of all political prisoners. Due to international pressure, up to the present no political prisoner has been executed by the death penalty. We must continue our pressure to make sure Carlos Garcia Herrera is

not the first political prisoner to be executed.

Urgent action needed

Telegrams must be sent today! We recommend that you use the BAUD Human Rights Telegram Service because of its lower rates. Their number is 1-800-544-0052. Sample message: (in English) I oppose death penalty in case of Carlos Garcia Herrera. (in Spanish) Opongo pena de muerte en caso de Carlos Garcia Herrera. Send telegrams to: Sr. Rafael Retamal, President, Supreme Court, Plaza Montt Varas, 4 piso, Santiago, Chile.

Send letters to the U.S. ambassador in Chile, and the Chilean ambassador in Washington, D.C. expressing your opposition to the use of the death penalty on political prisoners in Chile; U.S. Ambassador Harry Barnes, Agustinas 1343, Santiago, Chile; Chilean Ambassador Hernan Errazuriz, 1732 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

For information write to Casa Chile: P.O. Box 3620, Berkeley, CA 94703. Let them know if you have sent a telegram.



Huelga general en la República Dominicana paraliza el país

Por Estela Vilchez
Nueva York

Aproximadamente 100 dominicanos, puertorriqueños y norteamericanos se juntaron al frente del consulado dominicano en la calle 60 para expresar su solidaridad con la huelga general del 28 de julio en la República Dominicana. La huelga de 24 horas fue convocada por todas las principales confederaciones sindicalistas y organizaciones campesinas dominicanas y lograron paralizar totalmente esta nación caribeña.

Reportes en la prensa dominicana confirmaron el éxito de la huelga que se llevó a cabo después de semanas de negociaciones con el gobierno de Joaquín Balaguer. Estas negociaciones fracasaron pues el gobierno no dió ninguna respuesta a las demandas de los sindicatos. Entre las demandas se exigía subir el salario mínimo de 250 pesos mensuales (US\$70) a 400 pesos (US\$114) y la rebaja inmediata de precios de ciertos alimentos básicos.

A lo largo del país cientos de comunidades pobres y de clase trabajadora sostuvieron manifestaciones públicas el 8 de julio en apoyo al paro general. Estas acciones fueron repri-

midas por el gobierno.

En el barrio 27 de Febrero en Santo Domingo, una niña de 5 meses murió asfixiada como resultado de la cantidad masiva de gases lagrimógenos usados contra esa comunidad. En muchas de las ciudades de la isla docenas de personas fueron heridas y cientos arrestados en un intento por los militares de aplastar el apoyo popular por esta huelga.

Las raíces de las condiciones que forzaron esta huelga es la deuda externa de la República Dominicana de US\$4 mil millones. Para pagar esta deuda y para poder sacar nuevos préstamos, el gobierno, encabezado por Joaquín Balaguer, van a seguir las exigencias del Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI).

El FMI, que está bajo el control de los EE.UU., exige medidas de austeridad como la eliminación de subsidios alimenticios y el incremento en la privatización de las corporaciones del gobierno.

La Corporación Eléctrica Dominicana (CED) es una de las corporaciones que el gobierno quiere transferir a manos privadas. En las últimas semanas más de 300 trabajadores del CED han sido suspendidos de sus tra-

bajos, esto incluye a obreros con 25 y 30 años de antigüedad en el trabajo y a líderes del sindicato SITRACODE.

Muchos observadores dominicanos ven este ataque contra los trabajadores por el gobierno como un intento para destruir uno de los sindicatos más antiguos y militantes del movimiento sindical dominicano; y así el gobierno podrá imponer las medidas de austeridad del FMI más fácilmente a la población.

Una de las demandas de la huelga general del 28 de julio fué que le devuelvan los puestos de trabajo a 3.090 obreros del SITRACODE.

Huelga Vecinal

En comunidades pobres y de clase trabajadora en todas las principales ciudades, comités vecinales se han formado llamados Comités de Lucha Popular. En los últimos meses han llevado a cabo paros barriales para protestar las condiciones en que la mayoría del pueblo dominicano se ven obligados a vivir.

El incremento de la cesantía combinado con el incremento de los precios de alimentos ha resultado en más pobreza aún en la isla y también ha resultado en más descontento en la población.

La deuda externa de US\$4 mil millones combinado con la baja en los precios de azúcar en el mercado mundial y la rebaja en la cuota que EE.UU. compraba han hecho insostenible las condiciones de vida en el país. Hambre, desnutrición y cesantía masiva es la realidad cotidiana para muchas familias dominicanas.

Mientras el gobierno de Joaquín Balaguer y la burguesía dominicana quieren transformar al país en otro paraíso turístico caribeño, la mayoría de los dominicanos se encuentran apenas subsistiendo.

Líderes sindicalistas han anunciado que si sus demandas para mejores salarios no son realizados, un paro general indefinido será convocado hasta que el gobierno responda a sus demandas.

Intervención de EE.UU. genera crisis en Panamá

Por Teresa Gutierrez

La situación en Panamá ha escalado a niveles peligrosos. Los intentos de Washington para desestabilizar el gobierno de Panamá se han intensificado.

El lunes 27 de julio el gobierno arrestó al coronel Roberto Díaz Herrera, un derechista pro-norteamericano. Esta acción tuvo lugar varios días después de que la administración Reagan suspendiera toda ayuda militar y económica a Panamá, esto se puede ver como un acto para incrementar las hostilidades.

Hace más de un año que el gobierno de los EE.UU. ha dirigido una campaña maliciosa, en contra del líder militar Manuel Antonio Noriega y el presidente Eric Arturo Delvalle. EE.UU. ha acusado al general Noriega de narcotráfico, corrupción, asesinato y fraude electoral, haciendo con esto un llamado a la destitución del actual gobierno panameño.

Esta abierta intervención en los asuntos internos de Panamá, por parte de Washington, no tiene nada que ver con drogas o corrupción. Lo que está en juego son más bien los intereses militares de los EE.UU., vitales en esta región. Noriega, un nacionalista ha rehusado arrodillarse ante EE.UU., y en cambio ha indicado que procederá de acuerdo con el tratado Torrijos-Carter que estipula la entrega del Canal a Panamá para el año 2000.

Es de agregar que Noriega ha rechazado aliarse a los EE.UU. en sus esfuerzos para derrocar la Revolución Sandinista en Nicaragua. Por el contrario ha participado activamente en los esfuerzos de varios países centroamericanos por conseguir la paz y ha continuado sus relaciones amistosas con el gobierno de Managua.

Estos son los motivos del porque el gobierno de los EE.UU., ha intensificado su campaña de desestabilización. La administración Reagan se ha

venido reuniendo, y apoyando a ricos empresarios pro-norteamericanos en su tarea de incrementar las tensiones. Cuando varios de los manifestantes anti-Noriega fueron arrestados el mes pasado, William Walker, un asistente a la secretaria de estado y el embajador en Panamá Arthur David se reunieron con líderes panameños, para demandar la liberación de los detenidos. El gobierno de los EE.UU. no ha hecho lo mismo con el gobierno de Sudáfrica para demandar la liberación de Nelson Mandela. Tampoco ha hecho esto con víctimas de la cruel dictadura chilena, donde miles de detenidos políticos están siendo encarcelados en condiciones inhumanas.

Varios periódicos en este país han denunciado incidentes donde altos militares norteamericanos, se han reunido con militares pro-EE.UU. en Panamá, indicando así el papel que este gobierno juega en los asuntos internos de ese país. Un buen ejemplo de lo anterior sería la reunión de un reconocido industrial panameño Gabriel Galindo con oficiales de la Casa Blanca (Detroit Free Press, 16 de junio) como también con el general Fred Woerner, comandante de la fuerza estadounidense en Panamá.

Mientras el gobierno de EE.UU., y los empresarios de derecha niegan sus constantes intrigas contra el actual gobierno de Panamá, es evidente que esa unidad ha causado esta crisis. La magnitud de la interferencia de EE.UU. en Panamá es desconocida, como lo es la fuerza anti-imperialista y como esta podrá soportar las presiones intensas impuestas por EE.UU. Si el gobierno del general Noriega es derrocado, será una victoria para el imperialismo de los EE.UU. en su batalla por el control del Canal de Panamá. Lo mismo que sería un paso atrás en la lucha de los pueblos latinoamericanos y especialmente los de América Central por mantener las sangrientas manos del imperialismo fuera de Nicaragua.



Demostación en Haití.

Continúa la lucha en Haití

Por David Perez

Una huelga general, organizada por el Frente Democrático, que centraliza a 57 grupos, paralizó sectores de Puerto Príncipe y otras ciudades en la República de Haití.

La renuncia de la junta gobernante, encabezada por el teniente general Henri Namphy, es una de las demandas principales del pueblo. El gobierno de Namphy es visto por los trabajadores y campesinos como un títere de las corporaciones transnacionales, especialmente de los EE.UU.

La represión contra el pueblo haitiano sigue creciendo. La semana pasada, 3 personas fueron muertas a balazos por soldados en un mercado de alimentos al aire libre en el centro de la ciudad.

Además, el miércoles pasado, soldados dispararon contra una multitud y mataron a 10 personas e hirieron a 12. Estas cifras son de acuerdo a fuentes gubernamentales que siempre son más bajas que la realidad.

Esto fué bien demostrado el 24 de julio cuando matones fascistas empleados por los ricos terratenientes

mataron a 300 campesinos cuando marchaban hacia la ciudad de Jean-Rabel a 140 millas de la capital haitiana. Cientos más fueron reportados desaparecidos o heridos. El gobierno dice que solo murieron 30.

Los asesinos fueron identificados por oficiales gubernamentales como los antiguos miembros de los Voluntarios para la Seguridad Nacional, conocidos también como los "Tontons Macoute." Este grupo, al servicio de la dictadura de la familia Duvalier, asesinaba y torturaba para mantenerlos en el poder.

En febrero de 1986 fue el pueblo de Haití que forzó a Jean-Claude Duvalier, que también era apoyado por los EE.UU., a huir de Haití.

Hoy, una de las quejas más comunes en contra del nuevo gobierno militar es la amenaza constante para los trabajadores y campesinos proveniente de los 300,000 miembros de esta milicia fascista.

El pueblo tan valiente sigue luchando para la justicia, el 24 de julio, 10,000 trabajadores cesantes protestaron en contra del régimen Namphy en Port-au-Prince.