



workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE!

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BOYCOTT GRAPES!

The hunger strike by Cesar Chavez has entered its third week. The Farmworkers union leader is demanding that grape growers end the use of deadly pesticides. **6**



TEXAS INJUSTICE!

Hundreds marched in Hemphill, Texas, where three cops beat an unnamed Black man to death. **3**

FREE SHARON KOWALSKI

In over 20 cities actions were held in support of Sharon Kowalski, a disabled lesbian being forcibly held against her wishes in Minnesota. **5**

A LABOR VICTORY

Three decades after unionists first began a fight for it, a new law now requires companies to give notice of layoffs and shutdowns. **7**

EQUALITY OF NATIONS

Socialism and the equality of nations is the focus in the continuing series examining the current changes taking place in the USSR. Sam Marcy writes on the meaning of the 1986 rebellion in Kazakhstan. **8**

'Gentrification stops here!'

New York City community defends park against police riot

By Michele Finkelman
and Michael Swietnicki
New York

Following an all-night battle with the police on Aug. 6-7, residents of the Lower East Side here won a key victory over the pro-landlord administration of New York City Mayor Ed Koch and against the ongoing attempts to gentrify them out of their own neighborhood, a multinational community of Latino, Black, Native, Asian and white people.

Koch had tried to impose a 1 a.m. curfew on Tompkins Square Park. By the afternoon of Aug. 7, Koch was forced to lift the curfew.

The struggle began as a community protest against years of gentrification,

racism, police harassment and homelessness. The immediate reason was the curfew, which was ruthlessly enforced by the cops. The protest developed into a battle for the streets between the police and the people of the Lower East Side.

A militant, multinational crowd numbering over a thousand came out to defend the park. The police responded by mobilizing over 450 of their troops and a helicopter. Club-swinging cops attacked everyone indiscriminately, beating protesters, residents and by-standers alike.

Angry over the closing of the park and an earlier police attack on an anti-curfew protest the week before, residents had gathered for the 10 p.m. protest.

Surrounded by police, the protesters marched through the park chanting, "No police state!" "Pigs out of the park!" and "Take back the park!" They also carried banners reading, "Gentrification is class war" and "The park belongs to the people."

As the curfew approached, the crowd became increasingly militant and the number of police steadily grew. Shortly after midnight the protesters left the park and took over the streets, blocking traffic on Avenue A and St. Marks Place. A line of mounted police confronted the crowd on Avenue A.

The angry demonstrators forced the police to retreat to 7th Street, but as the crowd turned to re-enter the park the police charged and the crowd broke and ran.

Nearly 700 cops, mounted and on foot, charged through the streets swinging clubs and randomly beating anyone within range. Residents and protesters were beaten around the head, face and ribs by the police, who screamed racist and sexist slurs at the people of the neighborhood. The cops had removed their badges so that they could not be identified.

The media reported 54 were injured, but since the majority of those who were injured did not receive medical attention, community leaders are estimating that the injuries number in the hundreds. People were chased into doorways, pulled off stoops, bloodied, beaten and knocked unconscious as the police continued their assault.

The area resembled a battleground as a police helicopter flew dangerously below roof level, creating a wind strong enough to break windows and knock down people in the streets.

As the wind from a helicopter whipped dirt and debris into the faces of these reporters, Joann Tactikos, a neighborhood squatter, said, "I was just sitting in the park and the cops grabbed me by my hair and dragged me out of the park. I live in a squat and I rely on a park like this. All the people who sleep here—where are they gonna go?" As the helicopter hovered over our heads, Joann raised her fist in anger.

Despite rampant police brutality, the people of the Lower East Side heroically stood their ground, grouping and regrouping throughout the night. Increasing anger at the police turned what began as a protest into a united community-wide uprising as even people who were not involved in the protest joined in when they witnessed their friends and neighbors being savagely beaten by the cops.

Everyone in the community is united against the forced gentrification.

Continued on page 3

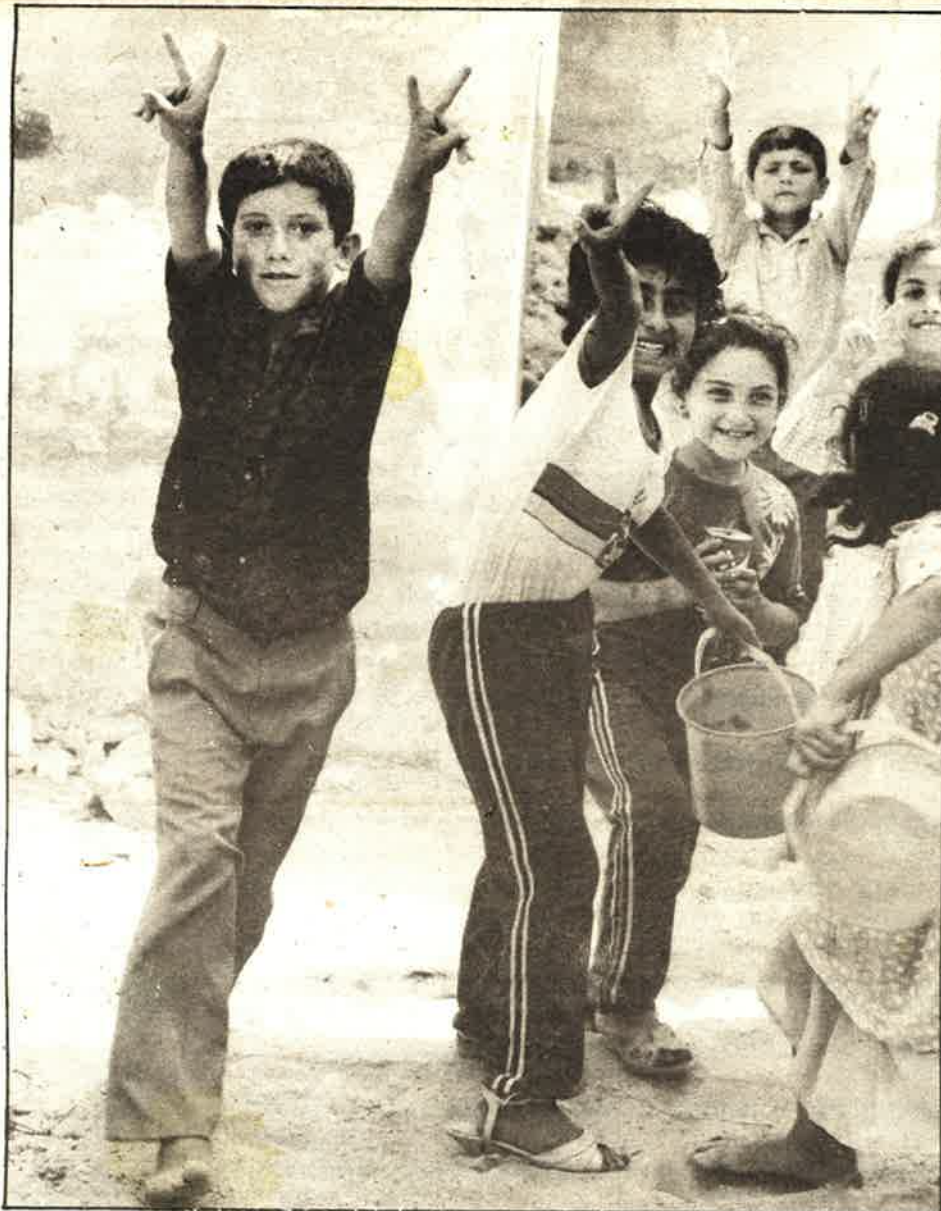


PHOTO: RICK REINHARD/IMPACT VISUALS

PALESTINE WILL WIN!

West Bank Palestinians are anxious to take over the administration of their own land following the recent exit of Jordan's King Hussein. Optimism and confidence is being expressed not only by the militant youth, but even by those who have the most to lose. **11**

On the picket line

Writers Guild settles. After 154 days on strike against the biggest powers of the entertainment industry, screenwriters won a settlement on Aug. 3. The new contract was approved by a vote of 2,111-to-412 and on Aug. 8 writers in Hollywood and New York were back at work. The most remarkable feature of the Writers Guild strike was unity; some 9,000 screenwriters resisted continual attempts by TV and movie producers to break down the union's wall of solidarity and stood their ground in a fight over residual payments for their work.

While a few writers make lots of money for big box-office scripts, most

scramble to support themselves in side jobs during the long stretches between writing assignments—that's why residuals are a bread-and-butter issue. The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers repeatedly served up ultimatums and final offers, but strikers responded with resounding votes supporting their negotiating team's tough stance, and with picket lines and rallies on both coasts.

NYU strike deadline. Clerical and technical workers at New York University (NYU), the biggest private university in the U.S., have set a strike

deadline for the end of August. The 1,500 workers, 70% women and 50% Black, Latina, Asian, Native and Arab, have been without a contract since last November. Some of these workers are faced with homelessness because pay is so low. Margarita Aguilar, president of AFT Local 3882, said this "is not only an indictment of the housing system in New York but is an indictment of NYU which, through its low salaries and poor benefits, forces people like Linda Washington into poverty." Linda Washington is a NYU worker who is homeless because she isn't paid enough to afford an apartment. Her struggle recently received some media attention. The strike date is set to coincide with fall registration at NYU.

Eastern Air struggle. With the unions at Eastern Airlines fighting for their lives, the latest round went to the workers—but the unionbuster of the sky is poised for the next attack. The Machinists and Air Line Pilots unions obtained a temporary injunction preventing Eastern from laying off 4,000 workers until Aug. 19. The unions say these layoffs, which would discard 12% of the airline's workforce, are entirely designed to intimidate the remaining workers into accepting drastic concessions, while at the same time allowing parent company Texas Air to shift much of its operation to non-union Continental Airlines. Union lawyers presented the court with a confidential management memorandum they obtained, which argues for the strategic "shock value" of Eastern's layoffs and restructuring as a means of undermining the unions.



Jones for Congress! The opening rally of the John Jones for Congress Campaign in Jersey City, N.J., was held in 103 degree heat. Jones' program for the workers and poor is being taken to the churches, housing projects, tenants' meetings and the streets. Above, A.J. Thomas, one of the speakers, explains the campaign of the All-Peoples Congress to run John Jones, the chairperson of the Billion Dollar Housing Coalition, for the 14th Congressional District. "Let it be known that we were the first to force the city to declare an emergency in housing," Thomas said.

WW PHOTO: PAT HILL

Support Mexican workers.

Trade unionists from the U.S. went to Juarez, Mexico earlier this summer to show support for strikers at a maquiladora (a multinational corporation's factory exploiting Mexican workers at bare subsistence wages)—the Eureka Co.'s vacuum cleaner parts factory. The 1,200 workers, who have no union, had walked out to demand a 50% wage increase—they get less than \$25 per week—and were met with tear gas attacks from the police and company goons. The U.S. labor support included a donation of several thousand pounds of food and participation in a daylong rally by members of the Teamsters, Communications Workers, Sheet Metal Workers, Steelworkers and other unions, and from the AFL-CIO, led by El Paso AFL-CIO president Victor Munoz.

Stoughton Trailer strike.

Auto Workers Local 2247 has been on strike against Stoughton Trailer in Wisconsin since April, and strikers are appealing for support from the labor movement. The key issue in the strike is health and safety. According to strike leaders, the company has been charged with over 30 violations by OSHA in the past three years: "With serious air contamination, no guards on dangerous machinery, no barriers to contain fire hazards and exposed high voltage wires, Stoughton Trailer is not a safe place to work." Picketers have repeatedly been attacked, fined, and arrested by the police, while scabs ram strikers with their cars. For more information or to offer support, call Local 2247 at (608) 873-8255.

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, Latino, Asian, Arab 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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CALENDAR

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.
Sat., Aug. 20: Workers World Party Forum. Featuring film class "Salt of the Earth" and WWP Vice Presidential candidate Gloria La Riva on why workers and poor need our own party. 7 p.m. \$2 donation. For location and more information call (505) 255-5369.

NEW YORK
Thurs., Aug. 25: Forum on censorship of the press in Israel and a Palestinian perspective on Hussein's decree. Hear Mirta Moscovich, relative of detained journalist, and Neil Saad from Arab-Palestinian Community Center. 7 p.m. Donation \$5. Sponsored by Palestine Solidarity Committee. At Casa de las Americas, 104 W. 14 St. Call (212) 964-7299.

SAN FRANCISCO
Sat., Aug. 27: "Cuba 1988: International Solidarity and Socialist Development." All-Peoples Congress activist Barbara Yorke will speak on her trip to Cuba with Venceremos Brigade. Slide show and talk. Refreshments. 7:30 p.m. \$2. At 2489 Mission St #28. Call (415) 821-6545.

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Capitalist greed washes up poisons on East Coast beaches

By Sharon Shelton

August 9—For people who live in the big cities along the East Coast, the beaches have traditionally offered a refuge from the sweltering heat and choking pollution of summer. Even on weekday evenings, entire households of working and oppressed people forsake the crowded, stifling tenements of the cities to cool off at the shore.

But this year, when heat and pollution counts have unrelentingly soared upward, millions of people have been denied escape. On July 6, as practically everyone all too painfully knows, the beaches began to be closed, shut down by a virtual tidal wave of needles, syringes, pills and other hospital refuse as well as by dangerously high bacteria levels in the water.

What is behind this disaster that has made this summer particularly unbearable for so many people? Do city, state or federal leaders have any solutions for this growing catastrophe?

Government officials haven't been exactly candid. New York Health Commissioner Stephen Joseph, for example, publicly proclaimed that the needles that have been found were dropped in the water by "local junkies," while other officials blamed the bacteria count on the weather, on rains that overloaded the antiquated New York City sewer system.

The crisis, however, goes far beyond "local junkies" and rain. Medical

wastes, some of it traceable to New York City hospitals, have spread as far north as Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts and as far south as Maryland. High bacteria counts have persisted with dead rats washing ashore along with wholeschools of dead fish in New York City.

8 million tons dumped into ocean

Although hospitals are banned from depositing medical wastes in the New York City sanitation system, disposal companies often illegally dump garbage in the ocean or in city sewers. In either case, the refuse would end up in the ocean, because New York is one of the few large cities that continues to dump sewage—8 million tons of it yearly from the New York area alone—into the ocean.

With the Reagan administration cutting off funds to the cities on behalf of Pentagon war spending and with city funds disappearing due to giveaways to the construction companies and tax breaks for the powerful real estate interests, New York City politicians prefer ocean dumping, because it is cheap. Dumping sewage into the ocean was officially banned in 1981, but the Koch administration successfully challenged the ban in court, despite warnings by scientists and environmentalists of catastrophes such as the current one.

Compounding the current crisis are near record high temperatures up and down the entire coast. So far, New York

City alone has had 25 days of temperatures at 90 degrees or above in comparison with 1985 which had nine and 1984 with 10. Whether this heat is due to the greenhouse effect—the warming trend which is expected to accompany the gradual depletion of the ozone layer which protects the earth from ultraviolet radiation—it at least could be a foretaste of the future if steps aren't taken to avoid the fossil fuel burning and other causes of ozone depletion.

Ozone 50% above safe level

Ironically, while ozone is being depleted in the stratosphere, it has built up at street level in the cities, causing respiratory discomfort and making the heat even more unbearable. Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital physicians report a recent rise in symptoms associated with air pollution, and New York City has declared a health alert because of a buildup of ozone, which is caused by sunlight reacting with the carbon monoxide emitted by automobiles. On Aug. 6, New York City ozone levels rose to 50% above federal safety standards.

Even harder hit, however, are urban areas in Connecticut, which get winds bearing New York and New Jersey air pollution. The air pollution throughout the East Coast is so bad this summer that even Vermont, which traditionally

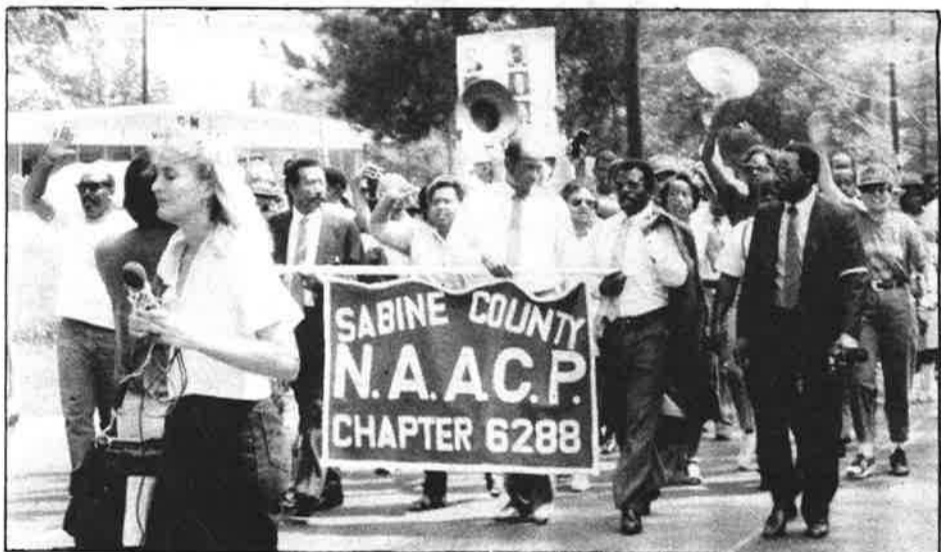
enjoys relatively unpolluted air, has suffered an ozone buildup.

Both the Republican and Democratic politicians are busy trying to pass themselves off as environmentalists in this election year. But where have been the calls for an investigation to determine if illegal ocean dumping has occurred and to prosecute any companies found guilty of doing so? Or to find out if the dumping of New York City sewage is responsible and to put an end to that?

The only comment the Koch administration has had on this crisis has been to hold a highly publicized press conference grandiose announcing he is prosecuting one small clinic in Harlem for throwing garbage on the sidewalk! And even then, the city administration would not have done anything had it not been for repeated protests by people living near the clinic.

In reality, the politicians are just front-men for the big profit hungry corporations, which are the biggest polluters of all. The capitalist system, that based on profits, is incapable of the kind of planning necessary to stop the wholesale ravishing of the planet it has caused. Only struggle by the masses of poor and working people can stop these despoilers and create a society that is based on human need and planning and take the necessary steps to end pollution once and for all.

Rights march in Hemphill, Texas, demands justice in police killing



March demands justice for Loyal Garner, Jr., killed by Texas police.

By Deborah Charles
Hemphill, Texas

August 6—"No justice, no peace!" was the battlecry heard throughout the tiny town of Hemphill, Texas, today. Over 300 demonstrators marched in near 100-degree heat to protest the acquittal of the former police chief and two former deputy sheriffs.

On July 15, the three former law officers were acquitted of violating Loyal Garner Jr.'s civil rights. Garner, a 34-year-old Black man from Florian, La., was arrested for allegedly driving while intoxicated.

When Garner asked to phone his wife, the two cops responded by beating him unconscious and then placed him in a cell without medical attention. Two days later he died in a Tyler hospital of brain damage caused by multiple blows to the head.

In response to this racist injustice, delegations came from Beaumont, Dallas and Houston, Texas, and Shreveport, La. Individuals also came from small east Texas towns such as Nacagoches, Newton and Pine.

The spirited crowd marched one-

and-a-half miles from Macedonia Baptist Church to the center of town. Many astonished residents listened to chants: "Hemphill, Hemphill have you heard, this is not Johannesburg!" and "Tom, Billy and Bo, racist cops have got to go."

'Racist cops have got to go!'

The marchers rallied under huge oak trees at the courthouse. Although several individuals from Hemphill were in the march, many were afraid to join in. A white resident and participant in the march explained, "There's a lot of them that feels justice wasn't done at the trial, but they're afraid of getting shot if they come out here today."

Even with this type of sentiment, the mayor of Hemphill still says that there is no racism.

Speeches were given by the mother of Kenneth Simpson, the brother of Clarence Brandley, and the wife of Loyal Garner—all victims of racist violence in Texas. At the pre-march rally the question was asked, "When did justice die?" The question was counterposed by a march participant "When will justice ever live in this country?"

—Tompkins Sq.

Continued from page 1
tion of the neighborhood being orchestrated by the big landlords, Mayor Koch, who is closely tied to the landlords, and the police.

Several cops seized a young man who was taking pictures of the police riot, smashed his camera, threw him to the ground and began to kick him while a woman on a nearby stoop shouted, "Stop! Stop! We won't let you get away with this!"

As several of us crouched in a doorway while police ran by swinging clubs, a young man named Pete said that he had been evicted from his apartment. Gesturing toward the scene on the street he said, "It's always been the rich against the poor. I'm disgusted with it."

That is exactly how the people of the Lower East Side feel—disgusted and angry at the cops as well as the real estate developers whose interest they are serving.

The Lower East Side is a community that has long been under attack—an attack called gentrification. For years the poor, oppressed and working people have been systematically moved out by the real estate developers to make way for high-income dwellers. It has not always been this way.

The Lower East Side was always a poor and working class area. It was traditionally a place where each new wave of immigrant workers would come to live, bringing with them their own cultures and traditions. It has been a community where people of different cultures and nationalities have lived together in harmony.

The real estate developers and wealthy newcomers view the long-time residents as well as the neighborhood's rich cultural heritage as something to be swept away, with a broom if possible, a club if necessary.

The complaints that the police claim

as the reason for the imposition of the curfew came from places like Christadora. For decades Christadora was a community center that was free and open to all. Recently it was sold to private developers who converted it to luxury condominiums selling for \$150,000 and up.

The struggle on the Lower East Side is a prime example of how the city government, the big business real estate developers and the police work together against poor and working people.

It is also a prime example of how the community—Black, Latino, Asian, Native and white, young and old, women and men, lesbian, gay and straight—can join together to fight against the forces of gentrification and oppression for their rights as a community.

Ricardo Thomas, a protester and Lower East Side resident, summed up the spirit of this community rebellion when he said, "This is my park. This is our park. Black, white, Latin, young and old, we're out here to defend it and we're going to stay."

Maggie Vascassenno, Workers World Party candidate for the New York State Assembly in a district that includes much of the Lower East Side, said, "The police are becoming more and more openly racist and brutal in their harassment and intimidation in order to gentrify communities throughout the city."

"The people are ready to fight back. The time is now to unite all parts of the community in all parts of the city to fight for decent affordable housing, for an end to racist harassment and lesbian and gay oppression. The community should control the parks."

A victory march to Washington Square Park was held Aug. 7. A community meeting on Monday, Aug. 8, was held in preparation for a meeting on Wednesday with city officials. Meetings will continue during the week and a rally is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 13, at 10 p.m.

Jury acquits sanctuary defendants in New Mexico

Wide support for movement to aid Salvadoran refugees

By Stephanie Hedgecoke
Albuquerque, N.M.

Sanctuary defendants Glen Remer-Thamert, a Lutheran minister, and Demetria Martinez, a reporter, were acquitted here Aug. 2 in a major victory for the anti-war movement.

Remer-Thamert and Martinez had been charged in a nine-count indictment for conspiring to transport and assist two pregnant Salvadoran women from El Paso, Texas, to Albuquerque, N.M., in August 1986. At that time, New Mexico had been declared a sanctuary state by Gov. Toney Anaya.

These are the first verdicts of innocent handed down in a sanctuary case, and the case was the first tried since the 1986 Tucson, Ariz., trial in which eight defendants were found guilty and sentenced to jail terms and probation. Remer-Thamert, who never denied having transported and concealed the Salvadoran women, was acquitted because the jury found he believed his actions were protected by Anaya's sanctuary proclamation. In the Tucson and other cases, defense arguments about international law concerning refugees and conditions in El Salvador were disallowed.

Both defendants were widely sup-

ported, especially in the local community. Remer-Thamert and Martinez had faced possible sentences of 25 years in prison and millions in fines.

Defense attorneys presented testimony on atrocities by the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government to prove Remer-Thamert acted out of necessity to protect the women's lives. El Salvador is the third largest recipient of U.S. military aid—\$1.5 million a day. This aid had financed the heaviest aerial bombing ever on the American continents, under direct U.S. supervision.

Since the 1980 "state of siege" was imposed, over 63,000 civilians have been killed, 200,000 wounded; 20% of the population has been displaced. Contradicting U.S. immigration policy, former New Mexico Governor Anaya, a Chicano, referred to international law, Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees and the anti-war movement when he proclaimed New Mexico a sanctuary state.

Remer-Thamert still faces a possible contempt charge in relation to the trial. Juror Martha King was inadvertently sent a sanctuary brochure, "Sanctuary on trial now in New Mexico," in a mass fundraising mailing by the New Mexico Sanctuary Defense Committee three days after the trial began.

Boston WWP candidate condemns Columbia Point evictions

On July 20, a hundred angry residents of Columbia Point Housing Project held a vigil and march to protest the eviction of two nuns and their social service agency from the project.

Sisters Jean Stanford and Joyce McMullen have run Project Care and Concern at Columbia Point for the past 18 years. They provide bread, clothing, recreation and advocacy to the residents of the project. The private developer who is turning the project into luxury condominiums and evicting the mainly Black and Latin tenants complained that the nuns argued for the rights of the tenants and against the gentrification plan and tried to help stop evictions. One long-time resident and activist, Rose Jolley, helped collect 300 signatures on a petition to keep Project Care and Concern at Columbia Point.

Workers World Party issued the following statement by Robert Traynham, Workers World candidate for State Senate in the First Suffolk District, which covers the Columbia Point project. The statement was handed out at the vigil and march.

That Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison (CMJ), the private development corporation and landlord of Columbia Point, has chosen to evict Project Care and Concern from its longstanding home is yet another example of CMJ's total disregard for the rights and wishes of Columbia Point's permanent tenants.

Over the past months I have witnessed CMJ's attempts to turn the much-needed public housing at Columbia Point into a luxury playground for the rich. This gentrification is being accomplished at the cost of painful relocations and evictions of Columbia Point's lifelong tenants, the banning of "undesirable" persons, harsh enforcement

of new tenant rules, documented racial harassment by private security forces, and other insensitive management policies.

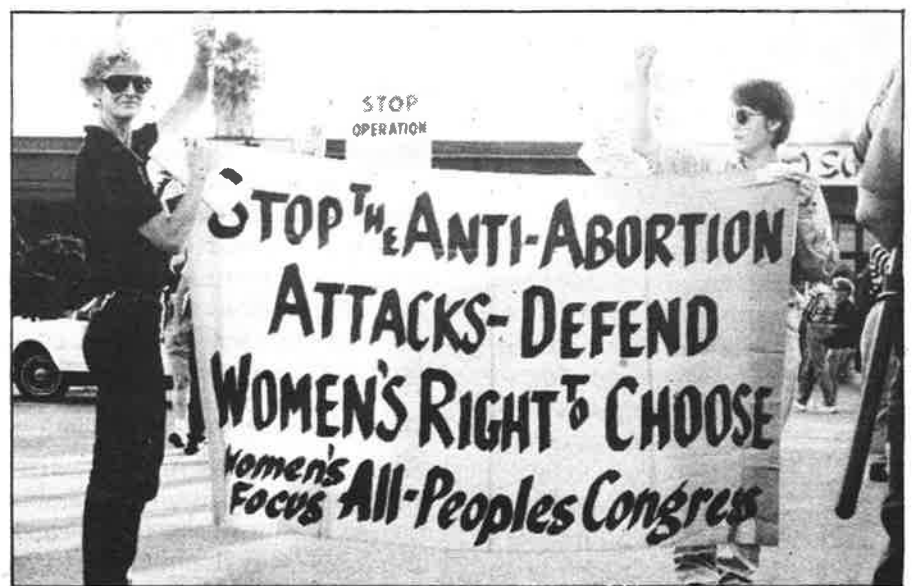
CMJ has also tried to get rid of any obstacles to its development plans. Of the original 1,200 units, only some 325 families and the elderly remain. Elderly people have lived out of boxes for months waiting for relocation, and those with pets have been evicted. The Columbia Point Community Task Force was turned into a paid mouthpiece for CMJ. And now CMJ says it has no space for Sister Joyce McMullen and Sister Jean Stanford, longtime friends, service providers and allies of the residents.

I call on all justice-loving people to support the demands of the residents and Columbia Point Tenants United, including an end to all evictions and harassment, new housing for all original residents, a real say in how development occurs and a place at Columbia Point for Project Care and Concern.

Evict Bulger, not the tenants

My opponent, Senate President William Bulger, has taken a clear stand on this issue. He and his partner, Thomas E. Finnerty, last year invested in Mount Vernon Realty Trust, 380 Mt. Vernon St., Columbia Point. Bulger, no doubt, hopes to profit along with CMJ off the gentrification of his own district. How can he truly represent the residents of Columbia Point when he is directly profiting from the gentrification of their neighborhood?

Workers World Party stands for housing people, not housing for profits, and for the right of all people to decent affordable housing, free from the threats of eviction and discrimination and organized to meet the needs of the tenants, not the landlords.



WW PHOTO: PATRICIA JACKSON

Abortion rights victory. Chanting "Our bodies, our lives, our right to decide!" women's rights activists recently confronted anti-abortionists misnamed "Operation Concern" at a recent northern California gathering. The bigots had planned to shut down several clinics in the Bay Area. However, they met such strong supporters of a woman's right to choose, the anti-abortionists were forced to call off other planned actions.

Zoe Kastl

Racism of Detroit-area banks guts city's economic growth

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

The normally hidden role of the banks in destroying entire neighborhoods and restricting economic development in this hard-hit, two-thirds Black city was recently exposed in a series of articles in the Detroit Free Press.

Banks and savings institutions in Detroit make home loans in the city's white, middle income neighborhoods at three times the rate of similar Black neighborhoods with comparable median incomes. The lending gap between white and Black neighborhoods increased every year from 1982 until it reached the three-to-one ratio in 1986.

In addition, in 19 major Detroit development projects, built since 1980 and costing more than \$560 million, local banks put up only \$61 million or 10.7% of the dollars needed. Unlike in other cities, and although Detroit is a leading recipient of federal grants, local banks will provide little financing for major projects.

Banks won't lend in Detroit

Detroit banks rank lowest in relation to banks in four other comparable cities in the percentage they lend to development projects backed by Federal Urban Development Action Grant Loans. The difference in percentages is dramatic—Cleveland, 40.5%; Chicago, 38%; St. Louis, 24.4%; and Detroit banks only 14.6%.

The Free Press pointed out that since 1980, Detroit area banks made the fewest Small Business Administration loans among the country's largest cities.

The city of Detroit has been forced to return apartment rehabilitation money to the federal government at a greater rate than any other comparable city. The money is designated to match bank loans, but Detroit banks don't loan. For the same reason, the FHA home loan program that allows low down payments by home buyers is also not used as much in Detroit.

Who are these racist banks? The Free Press examined the performance of the Detroit area's seven largest financial institutions: National Bank of Detroit, Comerica, Manufacturers National Bank, First Federal of Michigan, Michigan National Bank, Standard Federal Bank and First of America.

These seven companies had total assets of \$79 billion. They employ 40,600 workers, many in downtown Detroit, yet combined, the seven banks have a total of six Black people on their Boards of Directors out of 114 total board members.

The action of Detroit banks clearly violates the federal Community Reinvestment Act of 1977. This law requires financial institutions to demonstrate that "they serve the convenience and needs of the communities in which they are chartered to do business."

Banks foster Detroit's depression

Detroit has been in a continuous depression for years. Abandoned houses proliferate throughout this city and apartment buildings are left vacant while 27,000 are homeless.

Shut-down factories and stores are everywhere in a city where Black and Arab people and many others once migrated because of its decent-paying union jobs. The official unemployment rate in Detroit has been above 20% since 1982, with the real rate currently at 36%.

Community organizations, including the NAACP, the Michigan Leadership Conference, Detroit Association of Black Organizations, SCLC, and Metro-Detroit AFL-CIO have formed a new coalition to challenge the racist practices of the banks and their disinvestment from the city of Detroit.

The crisis in Detroit demands a bold political response. The billions in bank assets are a direct result of the labor of the workers in Detroit as well as their deposits. But millionaire bankers in suburbia have used that money to run after profits worldwide while ignoring the basic survival of Detroit and its population.

There's a good reason why Marx said one of the first acts of any socialist revolution should be the seizure of the banks. Only such an action can insure that the billions in assets that are derived from the workers and community can be utilized to meet the needs of the people.

The economic catastrophe in Detroit was promoted by the racist and illegal practices of the Detroit banks. These practices both justify and demand the banks' takeover by the public to rebuild this once great city.

Case of disabled lesbian draws nationwide support

'Free Sharon Kowalski Day' marked in over 20 cities

By Leslie Feinberg

August 7—"Free Sharon Kowalski Day" was commemorated in more than 20 cities today, bringing together disabled and able-bodied people—lesbian, gay and straight—to demand her release from a nursing home in Hibbing, Minn., where she has been forcibly kept by her father for three years. This precedent-setting case involves the rights of disabled people to control their own lives and the legal and social validation of the relationships of lesbians and gay men.

Sharon Kowalski's life changed in November 1983 when her car was hit by a drunk driver, leaving her severely in-

jured. Although Kowalski and her lover, Karen Thompson, had exchanged rings and bought a house together, when Thompson arrived at the hospital the night of the accident she reports that she "couldn't find out if the person I loved most in the world was alive or dead because I was not blood 'family.'"

Thompson, a physical education professor with a background in physical therapy, began to work with Kowalski, who soon regained the ability to feed herself, read, write and type responses to questions. Affidavits filed by health professionals stress that Karen was key to Sharon's recovery.

But when Kowalski's parents

learned of the nature of the two women's relationship, they tried to block Thompson from visiting and moved Kowalski to a hospital farther north, which has inadequate facilities for rehabilitation of her type of disability. Thompson filed a motion to be named legal guardian but failed. Twenty-four hours after Kowalski's father was named guardian he reportedly told Thompson she could never visit again.

'Help get me out of here'

Karen Thompson says she lives with the memory of her last meeting at the hospital when Sharon typed, "Help me Karen, get me out of here." Karen has been barred from seeing her lover for three long years since then.

Thompson filed a motion in District Court in Duluth, Minn., asking that Kowalski's capabilities be tested and that she be legally "restored to capacity," which would give Kowalski some say over her own life's course. Last month a court in Hibbing ordered a new set of mental tests to determine Kowalski's "competency" to select her own attorney and visitors.

Support network grows

Actions today, the day before Kowalski's 32nd birthday, included vigils, rallies, marches, street theater and birthday parties in Boston, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Seattle, Oneonta, N.Y., Louisville, Nashville, Portland, Ore., Pittsburgh, Tallahassee, Hous-

ton and Madison, Wis.

This weekend major articles on this landmark case for disability and gay rights appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, New York Times, New York Newsday and many other local newspapers as well as receiving airtime on numerous electronic news programs across the country.

Activists from California, Colorado, New York, Boston, Minneapolis, Maine, New Jersey and Washington D.C. met in Minneapolis earlier this year to plan a continuing support campaign. This was the second meeting of the Bring Sharon Kowalski Home Committee—formed the day before the Oct. 11 March on Washington for lesbian and gay rights, in order to build a national network.

Jesse Jackson said during his recent presidential campaign, "I wish to express my support for Karen Thompson. Ms. Thompson has been infinitely patient but there comes an end to patience with a system that is unfair and unjust. It's my fervent hope that very soon now Sharon Kowalski will come home again."

It is the courage of Karen Thompson to come out of the closet and brave a national speaking tour that is responsible for the broad support this case is receiving. She stresses that it is systemic oppression, including sexism, bigotry against lesbians and gay men and the lack of rights for disabled people, that is trapping Sharon Kowalski—not her body.

Fight opens vs. Circle K Corp.

Giant company stops insurance for people with AIDS

By Shelley Ettinger

Gay men who have AIDS and who work for the Circle K Corporation, the second-biggest convenience store chain in the country, are no longer covered by the company's health care plan. Neither are IV drug users with AIDS.

The policy, which went into effect earlier this year, came to light in early August when Circle K workers contacted lesbian and gay rights and civil liberties groups.

AIDS activists and supporters immediately mobilized, and simultaneous demonstrations are planned for Aug. 9 at Circle K offices in New York City and seven cities in the Southwest.

The same week the Circle K move reached the news, President Reagan gave the green light to discriminate against people with AIDS by refusing to adopt the strong measures endorsed by his own hand-picked commission. The commission had recommended as its strongest measure an executive order against discrimination.

Reagan chose to sign a statement saying that he personally doesn't like discrimination and doesn't think anyone else should. It is a clear statement to big business and the insurance industry that if they do discriminate, nothing will be done by the government to stop them.

Anti-gay, anti-worker

Twenty-six thousand Circle K workers receive medical coverage directly from the company rather than through a third-party insurer. So the nonunion chain unilaterally and quietly took an action that the insurance industry as a whole has been itching to take for some time, but which has been prevented by the strength of the AIDS activist movement.

The rationale for Circle K's medical cutoff of people with AIDS is that they are ill as the result of "personal lifestyle decisions." For the same reason, the company informed employees, illnesses related to alcohol or drug use will no longer be covered, either.

Charles Shoemaker, Circle K's vice president for human resources, told reporters that the company will continue to provide medical coverage to people who contracted AIDS through blood transfusions and to any woman "who unknowingly contracted the disease from her spouse."

But as for gay men who have AIDS, Shoemaker said, "there are certain lifestyle decisions that we are just not go-

ing to assure the results of."

Shoemaker readily asserted that the bottom line is money. "We felt we had to take certain steps," he said, "to help contain our medical costs, and we felt that this was one thing we could do."

Workers' medical benefits have been under attack for almost a decade in this country, with company after company slashing coverage and looking for ever more ways to dump their responsibility for health coverage. During this same period, the ruling class has tried to use the AIDS epidemic to whip up anti-gay bigotry and intensify lesbian and gay oppression.

Corporate management at Circle K apparently saw a way to slash health care costs, mount an attack on gay workers, and try to divide gay and straight workers, all in one fell swoop.

According to Circle K workers, in the wake of the recent news coverage the company also informed employees that lesbian and gay workers will now be monitored on and off the job. And, in a letter, Circle K threatened that any worker who does not cross protest picket lines at the company's stores or offices will be fired.

AIDS and insurance

Almost 70,000 people have been diagnosed with AIDS in this country during the years of the epidemic, including an estimated 48,000 gay men and 13,000 IV drug users. A constant battleground of the AIDS struggle throughout this period has been the insurance industry, which has repeatedly attempted to move toward denying any medical coverage to people with AIDS, people with AIDS-Related Condition (ARC), people who test positive for the HIV virus, and all gay men.

Instead of expanding medical coverage for people with AIDS, the big insurance companies are desperate to cut them off. Phony justifications—like the claim that insuring AIDS care forces up insurance costs for everyone else—can't cover up the real motivating force, which is profit.

After all, insurance costs don't just rise magically because some people are ill. Insurance costs are raised, deliberately, by insurance companies so that their revenues continue to far exceed expenses. Health insurance is designed to make a profit for insurance companies, not to provide health care for people.

Circle K just took the insurance industry's inclinations to their logical

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WW PHOTO: JOYCE CHEDIAC

Maggie Vascassenno, center, Workers World Party candidate for New York City's 61st State Assembly District.

Lesbian candidate for NY Assembly urges 'Manhattan Project' to stop AIDS

By Mahtowin
New York

August 5—Workers World Party hit the streets again today to kick off the campaign of Maggie Vascassenno, Workers World candidate for New York State Assembly in Manhattan's 61st District, which includes Greenwich Village and the Lower East Side.

Vascassenno, a lesbian activist who has been involved in progressive struggles for over a decade, was cheered by the crowd gathered at Sheridan Square when she called for "a Manhattan Project to find the cure for AIDS and fund care for people with AIDS. Workers World wants the billions spent on Star Wars to be used for healthcare. We de-

mand people before profits!"

Workers World presidential candidate Larry Holmes, another speaker at the campaign rally, stressed "the need for poor and working people to build an independent movement to fight for their rights rather than to rely on the big business Republican and Democratic parties."

Other people spoke about the problems that they face every day—sexism, racism, homophobia, a lack of childcare and healthcare—and how socialism can resolve those problems.

Hundreds of signatures were gathered to help put Vascassenno, Holmes and other Workers World candidates on the ballot.

Cesar Chavez on hunger strike, demands grape growers end use of pesticides

By Gloria La Riva
San Francisco

August 8—Widespread support is gathering for Cesar Chavez, leader of the United Farm Workers (UFW), who began the 23rd day of his water-only hunger strike in the farming town of Delano today, to protest grape growers' widespread use of five dangerous pesticides.

The refusal of state governments and growers to effectively restrict the use of pesticides in the fields has led to alarming rates of cancer and birth defects among farmworkers and their children. In McFarland, one small Chicano town near Delano, 13 children have been diagnosed with rare cancers, four times the rate of nearby areas. Six of the children have died.

This is the third time that Chavez has fasted. In 1968 he fasted for 25 days to protest violence against farmworkers trying to organize and in 1972 he fasted 24 days against an Arizona law that restricted boycotts. Doctors have expressed concern about his health. His kidneys show beginning signs of failure.

Supporters say he is in high spirits as hundreds of people are sending letters and calling to say they're taking action to support the grape boycott. Also, today more than 20 actors showed their solidarity by visiting Chavez, including Lou Diamond Phillips, Luis Valdez, Morgan Fairchild, Martin Sheen, Emelio Estevez, Eddie Albert and Robert Blake.

Farmworkers are most exploited

Howard Wallace, field representative for the UFW in San Francisco, told

Workers World, "The struggle by the farmworkers to ban pesticides is an environmental and consumer as well as a worker issue. Farmworkers are some of the most exploited workers, and they face very real dangers to cultivate and harvest the food that we sometimes take for granted. This is our chance to help them and ourselves. That's why we are urging people to 'adopt-a-store' and tell their nearby store to stop carrying table grapes."

Wallace explained that most of the chemicals are absorbed into the grapes and can't simply be washed away. The grape boycott calls for growers to honor union elections and collective bargaining with the UFW. The UFW also wants joint testing and monitoring of pesticides by the union and growers.

The five pesticides are captan, dinoseb, methyl bromide, parathion and phosdrin. According to the UFW, "Dinoseb is highly toxic and causes workers' deaths. Captan is a cancer- and birth defect-producing agent which

contaminates the food supply." Dinoseb is the only pesticide of the five that is banned in California, but it is used in other states.

Dr. Marion Moses, medical adviser of the UFW's Farmworkers Health Group, said of methyl bromide, "It has been responsible for more occupationally-related deaths than any other single pesticide in California. Testicular cancer developed in young men who worked in a plant that manufactured that pesticide." Ten million pounds of methyl bromide are used annually in California.

Union only assurance of safety

The dangerous working conditions for farmworkers who harvest grapes is largely due to the fact that the growers refuse to sign contracts with the union. There are presently no contracts between the UFW and grape growers. Part of the goal of boycotting table grapes is to force this substantial section of California agribusiness to recognize farmworkers' rights to a union and safe working conditions.

As agribusiness rakes in billions of dollars in profits, the exploitation of farmworkers throughout the country is also growing. A victory for workers in the vineyards, with community backing of the boycott, will contribute greatly to beat back the agribusiness assault on farmworkers and their unions, like the UFW and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. Boycott all table grapes! Viva la huelga!

Kits are available from the union with information on how to get grapes out of grocery stores. Write to UFW Boycott Group, Box 62, Keene, Calif. 93531.



Fines against International Paper show high level of greed, human disregard

By Phil Wilayto

The struggle against the International Paper Co. (IP) continues, with the courage and determination of 3,400 striking or locked-out paperworkers pitted against the arrogance of the wealthiest paper products company in the world.

In Jay, Maine, IP has agreed to pay an \$873,000 fine for hundreds of safety violations. In a July 27 consent agreement finalized between IP and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in Washington, D.C., the company denied all violations, but pledged not to contest the settlement.

In return, OSHA agreed not to classify any of the more than 200 violations as willful, after originally planning to fine the company \$1.3 million for 29 willful violations. OSHA's inspection of IP was sparked by a near fatal chemical leak last February that resulted in the evacuation of over 4,000 townspeople. The consent agreement was condemned by the union as falling far short of an adequate punishment for the company.

"Someone should go to jail for the disregard of human life in some of these citations," said Bill Meserve, president of Local 14 of the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU).

Small fine for death in the mill

A week after this settlement, OSHA fined IP \$11,000 for the death of a ma-

chinist at the Jay mill on May 20. The fine is a little less than three-and-a-half days' pay for IP Chief Executive Officer John Georges.

"This is a very small price to pay for a human life," commented Local 14 spokesperson Pete Bernard. "If someone shoots a bald eagle, the fine is \$10,000 and they lose their gun. Here IP has taken a human life, the fine was \$11,000, and IP still has the gun."

Mobile workers owed \$25 million

In Mobile, Ala., IP is appealing a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that the company's replacement of its maintenance workers with scabs last year had been illegal since the workers had been locked-out by the company at the time. The board ordered IP to pay back wages that could amount to over \$25 million. A federal judge is scheduled to hear the case in Mobile Sept. 19.

And in Lock Haven, Pa., where a judge's injunction prohibits the gathering of more than six strikers "in the vicinity" of the mill's gates, the state police are now saying that "in the vicinity" means the entire southern section of town—an area that just happens to include the local's union hall.

In Pennsylvania 'it's like martial law'

While it doesn't look like this will affect union meetings, the cops are saying that it will mean they can arrest strikers who gather on streets or in back-

yards in the area, if the number of strikers plus the pickets at the gates comes to over six people!

"Our freedom of speech has been taken away—it's just like martial law," Ron Jones, treasurer of UPIU Local 1787 told Workers World. "I feel like we should fight it—just go down there to the gate, and if they arrest us and fine us, just declare bankruptcy." Jones lives within the area now defined as "in the vicinity."

Why unemployment figures

By John Catalinotto

If it's so good, why does it hurt so much? That's the question people are asking when they compare the official unemployment rate with the suffering they see in the street.

Official employment may have dropped from over 10% to just 5.3% over the past four years. Yet there still seem to be as many homeless, as many millions living below the poverty level and more youth on the street with no future ahead of them.

Some reports appearing in late July and early August point out some trends that explain why the "improved" official figures only hide the real weaknesses of the capitalist economy. Some of these trends were especially sharp in New York City and in a number of other



Striking San Francisco health care workers.

San Francisco hospitals striking to stop cuts

By Bruce Baginski
Member, California Nurses Association
San Francisco

August 8—Almost 4,000 health care workers are now out on strike at seven hospitals in San Francisco and one in Daly City. Two weeks ago 1,600 licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), housekeepers, X-ray technicians, dietary workers and other hospital technicians walked out at seven facilities. They are represented by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 250.

Since the contract expired last April, the Affiliated Hospitals have taken away 7-to-12 days of sick leave per year, and refuse to pay sick leave for the first five days out of work. Workers have to pay up to \$1600-a-year to maintain health benefits. Hospital negotiators want provisions in the contract for an open shop and restrictions on the movements of union reps in the hospitals. On top of all this, they're demanding a wage freeze.

More workers sign for union

This is the first Local 250 strike at Affiliated Hospitals in 50 years. Support for the union is growing. In five weeks

major cities like Baltimore and Detroit.

45.3% outside work force

In New York, 45.3% of residents over the age of 16 are outside the work force. This compares to 34.5% nationwide.

This means that there is a large number of people—whether disabled, discouraged or simply ill-prepared to find work—who do not even attempt to find jobs. These people are ignored by the official employment figures.

According to the Aug. 3 New York Times, this "trend is most troubling among young people." For youth 16-19 years old in New York, only 22.9% are in the work force.

Some estimate that there are as many as 150,000 young people between 16 and 21 years of age in New York who are neither going to work nor going to



WW PHOTO: BRUCE BAGINSKI

Hospital workers back

enough signatures of unorganized clerical and technical workers were collected at the hospitals to file for union recognition. This is one of the largest and fastest organizing drives in recent history in the Bay Area.

On Aug. 2, registered nurses at six of the seven Affiliated Hospitals struck. Management wants mandatory 12-hour shifts and refuses to raise wages to the degree necessary to relieve the nursing shortage. The 2,100 striking RNs are tired of being forced to deliver substandard care because of understaffing. There's an enormous burnout rate among nurses and a drop of enrollment in nursing schools. The striking RNs are represented by California Nurses Association (CNA).

The strike was further widened two days ago when an additional 300 Local 250 and CNA members walked out of French Hospital over the same issues. Half of the hospitals in the city are on strike now and service curtailed.

On Aug. 9, RNs represented by Local 790 will vote on a tentative agreement just reached with the city. Details have not yet been released but the contract, which covers nurses working at the city public hospitals and clinics, is said to contain important provisions to alleviate a high patient-to-nurse ratio.

go down while poverty soars

school.

Some jobs exist. In many cases these jobs require training unavailable to these youth. In many others, the jobs pay so little—from minimum wage to \$4 an hour—that the young people consider them the next thing to slavery.

Only 32% receive benefits

Another report released in July shows why misery is growing even as Reagan boasts of economic gains. Only 32% of those officially unemployed are now receiving jobless benefits.

To compare, in 1975, after a downturn in the economy, 76% of those officially unemployed collected benefits. This means that now a much greater proportion of people unable to find work have no income.

This 32% is the lowest level since un-

New law requires notice of layoffs, shutdowns

Plant closing bill gives handle for fighting corporate attacks

By Robert Dobrow

For the first time, national legislation has been enacted forcing companies to provide notice to workers of layoffs or shutdowns. The plant closing bill became law at midnight Aug. 3. Reagan, who had repeatedly threatened to veto the popular measure, was forced to back down after the Senate voted for the bill by a large enough margin to override a presidential veto. The large vote reflected widespread belief that any politician opposing the bill would not get reelected.

This bill is by no means perfect. It doesn't contain everything that the labor movement lobbied for or desperately needs during this period of widespread shutdowns. But it does offer important protections for workers. And it can provide union and working-class activists new avenues for organizing opposition to corporate attacks.

The new law states that companies which employ at least 100 full-time workers at one site must provide 60 days notice of major layoffs or plant closings. It requires notice if 500 workers or one-third of a plant's workforce, whichever is lower, are affected by a layoff order.

Workers now get two days

That such a law is sorely needed in this country is shown by the fact that workers today, on the average, receive two days notice of layoffs and closings. Labor Department statistics show that two-thirds of those laid off get no notice at all. Almost one million workers who were dislocated from their jobs last year would have been covered by the new measure.

There are all too many cases of men and women who have gone to work in the morning only to find a padlock on the plant gate and a note on a bulletin board telling them they'd been fired. When General Motors announced hundreds of thousands of layoffs four years ago, the autoworkers found out about it by reading the Detroit Free Press.

In high-tech computer and financial offices there are many stories of the time that the security guard suddenly appeared at "Bill's" or "Mary's" desk, ordered them to empty their belongings in a bag, confiscated their ID card and escorted them to the front door. Sometimes towns will pay corporations big tax incentives to locate in their area; when the company finds cheaper labor somewhere else they just pack up and go without even telling the mayor or city council!

On the most basic level workers need prenotification. How can someone plan for the future if they face the possibility of being jobless without notice? A recent television special on CBS told the story of cannery workers in a rural town in Texas who just learned that their plant was shutting down—the next day. The previous week one of the workers had withdrawn his life savings to buy some land. Now he won't be able to make the mortgage payments and will lose it all. Another had spent several thousand dollars to add a garage onto his house, an expense he never would have made if he knew he was soon going to be unemployed.

But the purpose of prenotification isn't just so workers can make plans what they're going to do after they're laid off. Workers can use prenotification to fight shutdowns and layoffs.

Sixty days is not a long time but a lot can be done in two months—petitions signed, meetings held, picket lines set up, organizing activities to mobilize and unite everyone who has an interest in stopping the company. When a plant shuts down it's not just the workers who lose their jobs who are affected. The entire labor movement in the area has a stake, as well as the community that depends on the plant for services, environmental groups, and many others.

First raised in Buffalo in 1956

Prenotification has been an issue in the labor movement ever since 1956 when labor militants in the Buffalo area of upstate New York first raised the idea. This was a time when the Ford Motor Co. closed its stamping plant, organized by the UAW. Wickwire Steel, a plant owned by Colorado Iron and Fuel, also closed down.

While the trade unions were slow to pick up the idea, prenotification became more of an issue in the late 1970s and 1980s amidst the epidemic of plant shutdowns that swept the U.S., fueled by the high-tech revolution. Some local and state bills were introduced containing prenotification clauses but few were implemented into law.

Now that national legislation has been enacted, the ground has been laid for extending and improving the plant closings bill to cover more of the working class who desperately need it.

The most serious flaw with the new measure is that it only covers plants that employ over 100 workers. Most companies in the U.S. employ less than 100 workers. And most workers in the U.S. labor in small shops with few ben-

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Congress debates minimum wage after 7-year decline

Workers World's Larry Holmes urges \$10 an hour guarantee

By Lallan Stein

More than 8 million workers earn the minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour. In addition, another 6 million make only slightly above the minimum. Also, there is a loophole that allows some bosses to pay the workers only 85% of the minimum. Yet, the minimum wage has not been lifted since 1981, while the cost of living has gone up 32%.

Statistically a minimum wage earner is most likely a woman working in one of the service industries; a disproportionate number are Black or Latin. They are adults, 84% are age 18 or older.

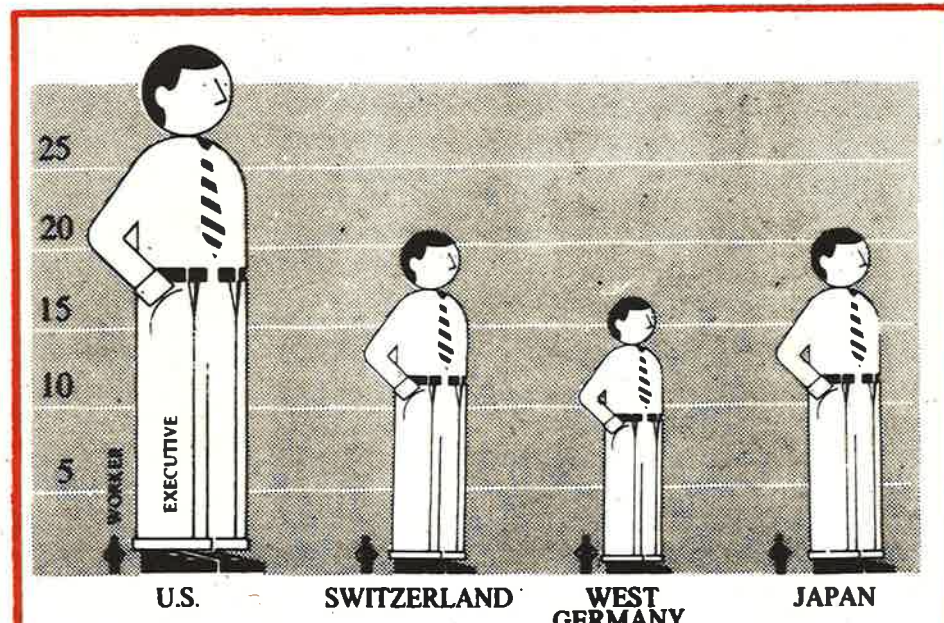
The service sector, which has grown rapidly, now includes 71% of the workforce, reports the AFL-CIO. Among those who earn minimum wage or below, 86% are service workers.

Sixty percent of minimum wage earners are women. Many are the sin-

gle head of a household fighting to keep a roof over their heads while providing adequate nutrition and care for their children. Working 40 hours a week for 52 weeks a year, such a woman will receive \$6,968 before taxes, substantially below the poverty line.

Add to this the problems of holding down a job. Many bosses who pay the minimum also have a policy of forcing a rapid turnover in order to keep down the fringe benefits they owe their work-

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U.S. has biggest pay gap

U.S. bosses make 31 times the average workers' wage

SOURCE: AFL-CIO NEWS, JUNE 18, 1988

Socialism and the equality

By Sam Marcy

August 8—Often in discussions on the right of nations to self-determination, there is no mention of the ultimate objective: to achieve the equality of all nations. Likewise with the furtherance of the revolutionary class struggle of the working class on a world scale; its objective is a world federation of socialist states based on the equality of all nations.

Autonomy alone is inadequate and is limited by historical conditions. In one of his very last introductions to the *Communist Manifesto* (written Feb. 1, 1893, for the Italian edition), Frederick Engels wrote that "... in any country the rule of the bourgeoisie is impossible without national independence. Therefore, the revolution of 1848 had to bring in its train the unity and autonomy of nations that had lacked them up to then. . . . Without restoring autonomy and unity to each nation, it will be impossible to achieve the international union of the proletariat or the peaceful and intelligent cooperation of these nations towards common aims."

It will be noted that Engels discussed autonomy and independence in relation to the struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudalism; national self-determination was needed as a framework for capitalist development.

But it is also indispensable for the development of the proletariat in its struggle against capitalist imperialism and for socialism.

Earlier, in the *Communist Manifesto* itself, written by Marx and Engels in 1848, the two young authors wrote, "In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility between one nation and another will come to an end."

Lenin's stand on autonomy in 1922

The issue of autonomy or equality of nations was the subject of a dispute between Lenin and Stalin in 1922. This is discussed in *Lenin's Last Letters and Articles* (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964).

The term "autonomization" had come out of discussions on bringing all the Soviet republics into the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic) on principles of autonomy. Stalin drew up a draft document on this concept and presented it to Lenin. Lenin sharply criticized this draft, and proposed a different solution. He proposed a union of all the Soviet republics on the basis of complete equality. In Lenin's view, autonomy was inadequate.

Subsequently, the First Congress of the Soviets adopted a resolution on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) which incorporated Lenin's conception, i.e., equality of all the union republics. Today this is a provision of the Soviet constitution and there are 15 union republics, as well as autonomous regions and areas.

Kazakhstan is one of the 15 republics, officially called the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. It is the second largest republic in area in the USSR and the third largest in population.

As of January 1, 1975, it had more than 14 million people. Now the popu-

lation has substantially increased.

It is a vast stretch of land, very rich in minerals and other raw materials, including chromite ores, copper, lead, zinc, silver and tungsten. To get an idea of the vastness and diversity of the land, Minnesotans pride themselves on being the state with 10,000 lakes, but Kazakhstan has 48,000 lakes!

Kazakhstan today is the USSR's major granary. It harvests 27 times more grain than in 1922. In 1974, for instance, 18.5 million tons of grain were harvested in the republic.

Nevertheless, Kazakhstan is thought of in the West as a poor, backward Asiatic republic and is only occasionally referred to when discussing the USSR.

Khrushchev's 'virgin lands' and the Kazakhs

Even Khrushchev, in his memoirs (*Khrushchev Remembers*, edited and translated by Strobe Talbott with an introduction by Edward Crankshaw, Little Brown & Co., 1970), is forgetful of the Kazakhs when he writes about his famous "virgin lands" campaign in Kazakhstan, its successes and difficulties.

"You can imagine the difficulties that the virgin lands campaign posed for a family which had to be picked up and moved from the home where it had lived for generations. It was a great hardship for them, but we had to resettle many such families—Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Russians—thousands of kilometers from the graves of their ancestors. Enormous material expenditures went into the resettlement campaign. Among other things, we had to give credit loans and financial aid to the youth who went out to build settlements in the virgin lands. We became convinced that we shouldn't set up collective farms out there. . . .

"A collective farm," continued Khrushchev, "is an artificial organization, that is, it is not a real community. Also, it would have been expensive to resettle people on collective farms. Therefore, we decided on the alternative of state farms."

From a Marxist point of view, a state farm is of course closer to the conception of building socialism than a collective farm, which in turn is superior to private farming.

"While I was in the leadership," says Khrushchev, "our cheapest bread was grown by state farms on the virgin lands."

All this is in a way, of course, very true. But what is striking about his description of the hardships of resettlement and the successes of converting Kazakh land into the principal granary of the USSR is that there is no mention of the indigenous Kazakh people.

The Medvedev brothers, Roy A. and Zhores, in their account of *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* (Columbia University Press, New York, translated by Andrew Durkin, 1976), give a critical evaluation of Khrushchev's agricultural policies, and dwell much on the virgin lands campaign. But here again, their concern is all with Khrushchev and his factional opponents, the success and failures of the agricultural campaign in Kazakhstan, but not so much as a word about the participation of the Kazakh people or what their leaders said, thought or did.

Of course, the virgin lands campaign concerned areas within the socialist state of Kazakhstan that had been mostly unpopulated. Still, one wonders how they could avoid mentioning the role played by the Kazakh people in the campaign, which must have vitally affected them.

Many nationalities in Kazakhstan

It is of course true that Kazakhstan, like most of the republics of the USSR, has innumerable nationalities. According to *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (English edition, Moscow, 1974), the native population is composed of Kazakhs (4,234,000, 1970 census). However, the encyclopedia states that there were at that time substantial numbers of Russians (5,522,000) and Ukrainians (933,000) in the republic, primarily in the virgin lands of northern Kazakhstan and in the cities.

There were also 288,000 Tatars, 260,000 Uzbeks, 188,000 Byelorussians and 121,000 Uighurs, living in the valleys of the upper Ili river. There were also 82,000 Koreans, primarily in the Alma-Ata and Kzyl-Ord oblasts, and there were 70,000 Dungans from Middle Asia.

From these figures alone, one can see the great complexity of the national question in Kazakhstan, and for that matter throughout the USSR, with its more than 100 nationalities.

The czarist policy of russification

The policy of the czarist government toward Kazakhstan was a colonialist one, aimed, as *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* says, at "the russification of the Kazakh people and hindering the development of its national economy and culture." The migration policies of czarism had an effect in the disintegration of the communal lands (auls), which were seized by the czarist administration. Wherever the czarist autocracy was able to, it enlisted the support of the bais (feudal rulers) in plundering the peasant masses.

If the words cultural revolution are to be applied anywhere in their broadest definition, it's here in Kazakhstan. The Bolsheviks not only brought about a political transformation and a social revolution, in that they overthrew the old feudal-encrusted regime upon which czarist autocracy rested, but they completely wiped out illiteracy, which had affected over 90% of the population. The Revolution brought about a renaissance of native arts, music and theater, and also brought with it the great social and cultural achievements of the Soviet Union.

It opened up an era of scientific and industrial development. It transformed the countryside. An area that had generally been nomadic and pastoral became a land with advanced industry and a very rich and diversified agriculture.

Before the Bolshevik Revolution, and early into the 20th century, Kazakhstan's economy served as a raw material base, not only for czarist Russia but also for the English, French and—yes—the U.S. It is true that most enterprises were small, but foreign capital dominated in mining and oil drilling, begun as early as 1911.

By 1971, there were almost 5 million people employed in the economy of the republic. More than a million worked in industry; more than half a million in

construction; almost a million in agriculture; half a million in transportation and communication. Women made up 47% of the industrial and office workers.

Socialist industrialization transformed the rural areas as well as the urban population centers and set Kazakhstan on the road to further socialist construction.

One must bear in mind the difference between the czarist policy of forced "russification" and the great increase in settlement of all parts of the Soviet Union after the Revolution. The latter basically grew out of the needs of socialist construction and the limitations imposed by frequent harvest failures in parts of the USSR due to drought and the general harshness of the weather.

Changes in political leadership

Having said all this, and taking note of the hostile attitude of the imperialist countries and their ideologues, it is necessary to review the national question as it presents itself in the contemporary period. Some generalizations ought to be made, for instance, about the Soviet Socialist Republic of Kazakhstan, even though it may have its unique features, as do all the republics and nationalities.

For instance, on Dec. 17, 1986, both Pravda and Izvestia carried a Tass dispatch from Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, saying that "A plenary session of the Kazakhstan Communist Party Central Committee was held today to consider an organizational question."

There would be nothing unusual in a plenary session of the Central Committee taking up organizational questions. However, the next sentence went on to say:

"The plenary session relieved D. A. Kunayev of his duties as First Secretary of the republic Communist Party Central Committee in connection with his retirement on pension."

Of course, the Central Committee has a legal and political right to relieve its first secretary, the leader of the Party, and elect a new one. This can hardly be called an organizational question, however. Nevertheless, this might pass muster, so to speak, were it not for the fact that this organizational change was made in connection with then retiring him on pension. Was there a dispute about the magnitude of the pension that was involved? Was the retirement voluntary or, after serving 14 years as the leader of the Kazakh Communist Party, was he ousted?

Of course, even if it was a political move disguised as organizational for diplomatic purposes, it is still entirely within the province of the Central Committee to deal with its cadres as it sees fit, in accordance with socialist norms and constitutional provisions.

Kunayev replaced by a Russian

It is the next paragraph which gives one pause before dismissing the whole matter, whether it be political or organizational, as of only secondary importance.

"G. V. Kolbin, a member of the CPSU Central Committee, who had been working as First Secretary of the Ulyanovsk Province Party Committee, was elected First Secretary of the Kazakhstan Communist Party Central Committee." And further on, "G. P.

of nations

The meaning of the 1986 rebellion in Kazakhstan

Razumovsky, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, took part in the work of the plenary session."

Now, Dinmukhamed Akhmedovich Kunayev, the dismissed first secretary, is a Kazakh born in Alma-Ata some 78 years ago. The son of an office worker, he became a machinist, later a chief engineer of a mine, then director of the Ridder Mine Administration, then vice chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR, and later president of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR. He became a candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU in 1966 and later a full member.

Some of his published works deal with the theory and practice of open-pit exploitation of deposits. He investigated and introduced efficient methods of cutting ore at mines in Kazakhstan. He has also been awarded three Orders of Lenin, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor and various medals. These are some of the highlights of his official biography from *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*.

His replacement, G. V. Kolbin, is a Russian, not a Kazakh. He too has a distinguished career in the Soviet Communist Party. But those who follow the national question and are sensitive to organizational questions that involve personnel changes would have cause to be concerned about the implications of this change.

One could dismiss it all by asserting the obvious, that Russians are now the most numerous nationality in the Kazakh SSR. However, Kolbin is not a Russian who settled in the Kazakh SSR, not one of those youths who came years ago to join one of the state farms. He, like Kunayev, is the graduate of a polytechnical institute, but in the Sverdlovsk province, not Kazakhstan. He is a cadre who has been sent in from the center, and that has considerable significance.

Of course, the Central Committee has the juridical right to appoint or elect whatever secretary it wants. It must be noted, however, that for the center to send in cadres today is not the same as in the early Bolshevik period, when the provinces and the less developed nationalities clamored for the center to send more cadres. In those early days, the cadres were sorely needed as educators and industrializers.

Many qualified Kazakhs

Sixty years later, there are now hundreds of thousands of cadres in Kazakhstan. Whole new generations have been brought up and educated in the spirit of socialism. Industry is much more advanced, and it is a scientific-military technological center.

When U.S. Secretary of Defense Carlucci visited the USSR recently in connection with his inspection tour of Soviet military installations, he went to one in Kazakhstan in the company of his Soviet military counterparts.

It thus becomes a question how this dismissal is read, first by the mass of the people in Kazakhstan, and by the Kazakh population in neighboring areas, as well as by the general public opinion in the USSR. There were altogether 5.25 million Kazakhs in the USSR as of 1970, of whom 4.25 million lived in the Kazakh SSR. But some lived in the Uzbek SSR, the Turkmen SSR, the Kirghiz SSR, the Tadjik SSR

and some areas of the Russian SFSR.

From the point of view of making the kind of judgment that the Kazakhstan Central Committee is said to have made in relieving Kunayev of his post, it is good to remember that there are also Kazakhs in the Peoples Republic of China, in the Mongolian Peoples Republic, and—not to be forgotten in the current situation—in Afghanistan. They all speak the Kazakh language.

All of this, it seems to us, would give one pause before making such a rash decision. It's not a question of procedure but of the political propriety of exercising such authority.

Role of CPSU national leadership

Finally, the question arises as to whether all this was not done under pressure from the Gorbachev administration. As we noted earlier, G. P. Razumovsky, the secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, also took part in this session. So we have two very high-ranking members of the Soviet government actively participating in the decisions of a union republic central committee, in deliberations which are generally the exclusive province of the central committee of the union republic.

Later, another member of the Politburo, M. S. Solomentsev, chairman of the CPSU Central Committee's Control Commission, was also there. The Control Commission, we should remember, deals with disciplinary and personnel matters as well as security problems.

Altogether, three top-ranking members of the Soviet Central Committee were involved in a very critical decision which again would normally be the province of the Kazakhstan Central Committee.

A careful examination of this development in the light of the national question should have created hesitation before making such a decision. It would have to involve a genuine imperative having serious significance for the whole country to be justified. As it was, all that was told to the public was that it was an organizational question involving retirement and pension.

Decision followed by rebellion in Alma-Ata

However, on Dec. 19, 1986, the readers of Pravda got a new view in a report from Alma-Ata. "Instigated by nationalist elements, a group of young students took to the streets in Alma-Ata yesterday evening and this afternoon to voice disapproval of the plenary session of the Kazakhstan Communist Party Central Committee decision. Hooligan, parasitic, and other anti-social individuals took advantage of the situation to commit unlawful actions with respect to representatives of law and order as well as to set fire to a food store and private automobiles and to commit insulting actions against citizens of the city."

Thus began a two-day rebellion which had to be put down by the use of force. How widespread it was, how deeply it agitated Alma-Ata and other cities still remains to be made public. It is enough to say that the Soviet media covered a considerable part of it. The negative effect it had in the neighboring Asian countries can only be surmised, except to say that there was malicious joy in those areas like Pakistan

which have been supplying counter-revolutionaries to the struggle in Afghanistan.

What was the urgency which impelled the Gorbachev administration to make this drastic personnel change?

The imperialist press, to the extent they covered it, implied that Kunayev was a Brezhnev supporter, a so-called conservative who would not follow the new line of restructuring (perestroika) of the Gorbachev administration. Assuming that that's correct, it is scarcely a reason for such flagrant intervention in the political process of a union republic, independent and equal under the constitution of the USSR.

Kunayev's speech to 27th Party Congress

A speech made by Kunayev on Feb. 27, 1986, at the 27th Party Congress, as reported in Pravda and Izvestia, shows that he supported the general line of the congress. His speech, however, is not distinguished by overwhelming enthusiasm for the reforms. He did, moreover, make some pointed criticisms which could be interpreted as going to the essence of the orientation of the new governing administration.

The Gorbachev administration stands for restructuring the national economy by intensive methods of development and making active use of scientific and technical progress. In particular, it is opposed to new big projects that involve heavy capital investment. This has been said time and again by representatives of the Soviet government, especially economists like Abel G. Aganbegyan, Nikolai Shmelyov and Leonid Abalkin.

Kunayev, however, had some points of criticism which showed that as far as Kazakhstan goes, he was looking in another direction.

"A mighty fuel and power base for the country is being created in Ekibatsuz. From there, electric power will travel along unique power bridges to the Urals and western Siberia. However, one must say that the commissioning of new capacities in the coal industry and the creation of a number of power stations that are called upon to provide very cheap electric power, not only to Kazakhstan, continues to be a bottleneck." Kunayev then details a number of power projects which have not been completed, or have not even been started.

"These shortcomings are explained," he continues, "by the fact that the USSR Ministry of Power and Electrification is doing a poor job of strengthening capacities and expanding the base of its construction organizations in the republic, which has an extremely negative effect on the overall state of affairs." It's not the Kazakhstan Ministry of Electrification he's talking about, but that of the USSR as a whole.

"Kazakhstan's Party organization has accepted as a highly important immediate task the creation on the basis of reserves of hydrocarbon raw materials of a high-capacity Caspian petroleum and gas complex. A special resolution on this question has been adopted by the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers.

"However, it is perfectly incomprehensible to us why the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry, the Ministry of

the Gas Industry and the Ministry for the Construction of Petroleum and Gas Industry Enterprises have set about the practical implementation of this resolution listlessly, in the old way, and without the proper sweep.

"The importance and promising nature of the development of the riches of west Kazakhstan also places on the agenda the task of implementing the design for the construction of a Volga-Ural canal, which would breathe new life into a vast region of the country. The resolution of these questions should be taken under control by departments of our Party Central Committee as well."

He then went on to stress, "The further development of the economy requires drastic improvement in Kazakhstan's water supply. In this connection, it seems to us that questions connected with saving the Aral Sea and with the ecology and economy of the regions adjacent to it, immediately or farther away, must not be postponed. They must be resolved as quickly and as effectively as possible, comrades, and not only for the sake of the present. ..." [All emphases are ours.]

The substance of this speech is that it goes a considerable way in promoting huge projects that generally are favored by the republics which suffer from inequality in development as against the more industrialized ones.

Problem of intensive development vs. big projects

This would pose a considerable problem for the Gorbachev administration, which is intent on slowing down the development of such projects and concentrating the financial and technical resources of the country on utilizing high technology in selective areas, the ultimate aim being to modernize the entire industrial infrastructure of the USSR. For the present, however, projects which would require heavy capital investment, very likely the projects to which Kunayev referred in his speech, would be cut out or slowed down, thereby creating a considerable problem for the Kazakhstan area.

It should be noted that all of Gorbachev's predecessors—Andropov, Brezhnev, Khrushchev, and certainly Stalin—were promoters of industrial development and eagerly sought to employ high technology. In fact, it has been the basis for socialist construction in the USSR.

It thus can be seen that in this area, there's a difference of approach which could vitally affect the situation in Kazakhstan, where it is projects like these which have developed the republic to its present level. Rather than bring this out into the open, the Gorbachev administration handled it in an administrative way and removed Kunayev and his collaborators.

Accusations of corruption, favoritism

What is more, the struggle degenerated into one where the governing group began to make accusations of bribery, corruption and lack of internationalism. This attack came in the form of a resolution of the CPSU Central Committee entitled "On the Work of the Kazakh Republic Party Organization in the Internationalist and Patri-

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EDITORIALS

Airbus coverup

When the U.S. ruling class commits a well-publicized crime, its first move is to blame the victim. If this fails, it blames the workers for "human error."

From train wrecks in New York to chemical poisonings in Bhopal, India, management investigations claim the error was not the fault of poor planning, or rushing to make a buck fast and putting safety last. No, the official reports blame "worker negligence."

It should be no surprise then how Washington and the Pentagon handled the massacre of 290 innocent people in the downing of Iran Air Flight 655.

First, the military brass, the Reaganites and Congress blamed the Iranians, relying on racism and nine years of wild, anti-Iran chauvinism.

Then the facts began to contradict the Pentagon's lies. The flight was regularly scheduled. It sent radar messages identifying it as civilian. It was in its flight path. The USS Vincennes had no justifiable reason for shooting it down.

On Aug. 2, the military investigation of the mass murder moved to Plan B. To blame were not the Washington policymakers who sent the Vincennes to invade the Gulf. Nor was it the overpriced Aegis radar system that misidentified the plane. No, the report blamed the "workers," in this case the Navy crew. Under stress, their first time in a combat situation, the report said, they panicked and misidentified the Iranian Airbus as an attack fighter.

In other words, the Pentagon is repeating the same old bull that every big corporation uses to "explain" deaths and injuries caused by the drive to increase profits.

And this too should be no surprise, because it was the U.S. ruling class's drive for profits that was also behind the gulf massacre.

The U.S. armada was ordered to the gulf to hold and grab oil profits for the oil monopolies. The Pentagon brass ordered the Vincennes to patrol aggressively, especially against Iran. The Pentagon officers lied to

the sailors by telling them Iran was out to get them, that the Iranian planes were going to attack.

The blame then is not with the ordinary sailors. It lies squarely with Washington and the Pentagon bigwigs who devised the U.S. policy of aggression in the gulf and gave the orders to have it carried out. It lies with the oil magnates and bankers who lust for ever higher profits. They and their Pentagon servants are the real criminals, and the military investigation is just a coverup for another of their crimes.

Court assaults young women

The Reagan administration has been especially contemptuous of youth. Today Black and Latino teens have the highest unemployment rates. Reagan and his cronies have fought to pay young people less than the minimum wage. And the rightwing's solution to the complex and pressing problems facing young people, from drugs to AIDS, is an insulting sloganeering—"Just say no."

Big government's latest encroachment into the lives of young people concerns a woman's right to control her own body. A federal appeals court has upheld a Minnesota law requiring women under 18 years of age who want an abortion to notify both parents (even if they are divorced) or to get approval from a state judge.

This ruling, which could certainly make life hell for a young woman, could easily discourage legal abortions. At the same time, elected officials show great contempt for teenage women who become mothers.

While specifically targeting the young, who are most defenseless in the eyes of the law, this appeals court ruling is also an encroachment upon the abortion rights of all women. Where do the progressive forces who want to fight this go from here?

The next legal step is to go to the Supreme Court. Some are expressing a reluctance to bring an abortion ruling before the Supreme Court. They fear that the high court's Reagan appointees will "tip the balance" and not only back the reactionary ruling, but also utilize it to broaden the attack against abortion rights.

Is there no other way? Though its justices are chosen for life, the Supreme Court is far from immune to

public pressure, especially from a mass movement. An independent mass movement, rooted among the workers and the oppressed, is the force that has the most potential to bring about social justice in all spheres of life, from decent wages to ending racism to abortion rights. It was the mass movement that won the right to abortion in the first place, and it is only the mass movement that can safeguard it.

Tompkins Square means fightback

Donald Trump and Edward Koch. The smooth real estate speculator and the outspoken racist mayor. If anything symbolizes New York's version of Reaganism it's the portrait of these two characters on the front page of some slick weekly.

For its entire history, the Koch administration has been locked in the service of the big real estate profiteers. And how they have profited. While no workers' housing was built, hundreds of thousands were forced from their homes and whole communities uprooted. Real estate prices and rents have reached the stratosphere.

But the courage of an embattled New York neighborhood showed that behind the slick image of the real estate "entrepreneur" and the "quaint" arrogance of hizzoner is the gun and club of the cop.

To turn New York's Lower East Side into a high-rent area for Wall Street managers—and to make fortunes for those who have gobbled up the neighborhood's buildings—the working and poor people who live there have to leave. To hurry their departure, Koch has unleashed his cop army on the people.

With a heroic rebellion that united homeless people, squatters and long-time tenants as well as neighborhood visitors against the cops, the Lower East Side is fighting back. And as the dust clears from this first battle over Tompkins Square Park, Koch has had to make concessions. He himself describes them as temporary.

Low-income tenants are watching this battle with the hope that it shows the way to halting gentrification and winning decent housing for working and poor people. They like the idea that the new rallying cry for the tenants' movement might well be: "Tompkins Square means fightback!"

— Kazakhstan

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otic Upbringing of the Working People" (Pravda, July 16, 1987). This resolution reads more like a criminal indictment than an evaluation of the work of the Kazakh Party organization. It is replete with accusations of corruption, nepotism, favoritism and toleration of reactionary Islam.

"In admission to higher schools," says the resolution, "preferential conditions were created for Kazakh young people[!], favoritism flourished, existing regulations governing admissions were violated and evaluations were overstated. . . ."

"No vigorous work was done to expose the reactionary aspects of Islam and its attempts to preserve outmoded traditions and notions and to reinforce national aloofness. Works of literature and art frequently idealized the Kazakh people's past and made attempts to rehabilitate bourgeois nationalists. . . . Religious activity experienced invigoration and clergymen's influence on various aspects of the population's life increased. Serious mistakes were made which led to an increase in nationalistic manifestations which were not promptly checked and moreover were hushed up or termed ordinary hooliganism."

Accusations also are made of "embezzlement, report padding, drunkenness, alcoholism and drug addiction." It's not our province to deal with these questions, and certainly not possible for us to determine the truth or falsity of any of these accusations. Yet even if all of them are true, and are not a deliberate red herring, they are irrelevant to

the critical political issues that are being swept under the rug.

Great Russian dominance in Politburo

The first and most critical is the propriety of the Politburo, which is composed mostly of Great Russians at this time, making the leader of a formerly oppressed nationality the butt of their attack, dismissing him and replacing him with a Russian. (It should be added that the former Party leader of Azerbaijan, Geldar Ali Rza Ogly Aliev, who was named to the Politburo during the Andropov administration, suffered the same fate as Kunayev and was removed in October of 1987. He and Kunayev had been the only representatives on the Politburo of the Asian republics.)

Talking internationalism will be of no avail. It will be interpreted as Great Russian chauvinism and not internationalism. It's talking down to a formerly oppressed nationality, and in any case these accusations are made by a dominant nationality against a smaller republic.

It would be different if it were Kazakhs themselves who were urging other Kazakhs to assume responsibility for internationalism and to fight the reactionary essence of Islam. Which ever way one views it, it is impossible to avoid the issue of Great Russian chauvinism preaching down to and in fact dominating one of the smaller republics.

It is precisely that which was the subject of Lenin's struggle in the last period of his life. And it was particularly

to this question that the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Party in 1923 addressed one of its main resolutions.

The Kazakhs could just as well have answered the accusations against Kunayev by recalling that the governing group has for a considerable period been promoting the art and literature of the czarist period, has been spending untold sums on redoing all the Russian Orthodox churches and other pre-revolutionary cultural institutions, has spent lavishly on the promotion of the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Russia and has gone way overboard in approaching a variety of religious organizations abroad in an effort to demonstrate freedom of religion in the USSR.

Harmonizing economic centralism with national democratic rights

Still, this leaves out a fundamental question involved in the dispute. The development of socialism requires economic centralism and socialist planning to avoid and eventually abolish the remnants of the chaotic capitalist market forces and replace them with a fully socialist planned economy. This can only be done on a centralized but democratic basis.

The Gorbachev administration, however, is more and more moving in the direction of economic decentralization, even though it backs away from it now and then.

Over and over, the governing group stresses the urgency of greater autonomy for managers, for the directors of industry. It stresses individual initiative, greater leeway for private cooperatives and new private enterprises. All this loosens the economic controls.

Over-centralization has of course

been an evil for the planned economy, but decentralization is something else again.

This trend toward economic decentralization is in sharp contrast to the centralist trend in relation to the republics, as evidenced in the Kazakhstan case. It is now more than two years since the Gorbachev administration began denouncing "high-handedness" and "command tactics from above" as causing stagnation in the USSR. How does this contrast with the high-handedness in the Kazakhstan case? The arbitrary removal of the leader of a union republic is in defiance of the Leninist norms for governing the relations between the USSR and its constituent republics.

Granted that there is an inherent contradiction between the centralist needs of the economy and the centrifugal tendencies of the constituent republics, is it not the very essence of Leninist tactics and strategy to harmonize the two tendencies? Is it not precisely on the national question that one needs the greatest amount of flexibility, knowing when and how to loosen the reins and at the same time to do the utmost to strengthen centralization conforming to the needs of social and economic development?

The fact that the USSR, as a giant multinational state, has been able to exist and achieve such monumental tasks in the fields of industry, science and defense, without the multitude of rebellions which are a constant source of struggle in capitalist multinational states, like India and the U.S., is proof in itself that a combination of economic centralism and flexibility on the national question offers the best road for socialist development.

Palestinians respond to pullout by Jordan's King Hussein

'This gives us autonomy, autonomy. That's the answer here!'

By Joyce Chediac

The recent announcement by King Hussein of Jordan that he was relinquishing his claim on the West Bank to the Palestine Liberation Organization is now being hailed by the big business press here as a "slap at the PLO."

The media, which often functions as an unofficial mouthpiece of Washington, declared Hussein's statement to be a crafty maneuver designed to discredit the PLO by presenting it with a mission impossible—funding and administering the West Bank all by itself. Jordan has spent \$100 million a year on the West Bank.

In making this assessment, the major media seem to have written off the

struggle of Palestinians who live on the West Bank. It is not unusual for big business to underestimate the struggle of workers and oppressed people. The Palestinian people, however, are the PLO. They are the ones who would take over the towns, villages and camps if Jordan pulls out.

What do they think?

After eight months of holding off and outwitting the heavily-armed Israeli military, Palestinians in the occupied territories have gained great confidence in the struggle and a measure of their own strength.

While there is anger that Jordan is unilaterally relinquishing the administration of the West Bank without consulting the PLO leadership or allowing

for a transition period, the overwhelming feeling is that Hussein's announcement was forced upon him by the uprising convulsing the West Bank and Gaza since December. This perception has been confirmed by Palestinians in the U.S. who closely follow events back home.

Knowing that it will not be easy, West Bank Palestinians are willing and actually anxious to take over the administration of their own land.

This optimism and confidence in the struggle is being expressed not only by the militant youth, but even by those who have the most to lose, the 21,000 administrators, teachers and health workers whose salaries Hussein will stop paying on Aug. 16.

'Autonomy is the answer'

For example, a senior Palestinian civil servant's response to Hussein's salary stoppage was, "This gives us autonomy, autonomy. That's the answer here."

About 5,000 civil servants and government employees on the West Bank are fully paid by Jordan. Another 16,000 receive part of their wages from Jordan and part from Israel.

Mohammad Alghou, who teaches Arabic at a Jordanian school in Ramallah, said he received about \$244 a month from Jordan and another \$384 from Israel. His reply to Hussein's announcement? "I depend on myself. I don't depend on Jordan. I'll work more, and get another job. The real problem is our condition, the Palestinian condition, not the money."

Dr. Yassir Obeid, who is Jordan's chief health administrator in the West Bank, will lose his entire salary, as will the 200 health care workers he supervises at four clinics in Ramallah and Jerusalem. Obeid put it this way, "I expected these measures. But they should have been taken at a much slower pace—three or four months to let us make arrangements and get ready." He continued, "When people are oppressed

and hungry they revolt. This will increase the intifada, not decrease it."

'Money not the issue'

Looking back on the sacrifices they have already made during the course of the uprising, Palestinians feel that they will find a way to continue despite Tel Aviv's announcement that it will not allow the PLO to bring in the \$8-10 million needed monthly to offset Jordan's withdrawal of funds.

"Money is not the issue," said Ibrahim Matar, a leading West Bank economist. "Already things are tight, the quality of life is depressed, the economy is destroyed. What more can they do to us? We have done with less before and we will do with less again."

Meron Benvenisti, a leading Israeli researcher on the West Bank, concurs. "If there is a vacuum in the territories created by King Hussein's disengagement, the Palestinians are sophisticated enough and politicized enough to start a similar parallel system," he explains.

Indeed, this parallel system already exists, and has grown in leaps and bounds during the uprising, with literally tens of thousands of popular committees springing up to meet people's needs.

Then there are the small, rural towns like Kfar Nimeh, known as "liberated villages." Kfar Nimeh is governed by a clandestine four-man committee made up of the four main Palestinian resistance organizations in the PLO. It has already established its own independent civil administration and is striving to meet the health, food, medical and unemployment needs of its inhabitants.

A village elder explained, "We think we can survive and continue our revolt, whether or not we continue getting the money that Jordan used to put in here."

Towns like these are being looked upon by many on the West Bank and in Gaza as the beginnings of the independent Palestinian state, which is the ultimate goal of the uprising.

—Layoffs, shutdowns law

Continued from page 7

efits and protections. Many workers are undocumented, others are victims of minimum wage and sub-minimum wage super-exploitation. It is necessary for these workers to be covered by the law.

There are many more service and clerical workers than ever before. These women and men constitute a growing and dynamic section of the labor force who are underpaid, have few job protections and would enormously benefit from a layoffs and plant closing

bill. Many of these workers are women; they are Black, Latino and from other oppressed nationalities. Others are lesbians and gay men and thousands are young people working at dead-end jobs. And most are in workplaces not covered by the new law.

The plant closings and layoffs law is an important victory for the labor movement, especially at a time when the banks and corporations have been unrestrained in their attacks against the trade unions and workers generally. Hopefully it will help pave the way for new, united struggles to push back the anti-labor offensive and reverse the economic assaults on the workers and oppressed.

wage and the increase being proposed in Congress "unionbusting starvation pay."

Holmes pointed out that the amount bosses pay workers has nothing to do with the value of the goods and services that workers produce. Rather bosses hold wages down to the lowest level they can get away with while at the same time maintaining an adequate workforce.

The difference in value between what the workers produce and what they get paid reads out in the bosses' rate of profit. Within the last decade the living standard of all working people has eroded. It helps the capitalists to depress everyone's wages, Holmes said, by holding down the pay of the most super-exploited workers and by maintaining a pool of long-term unemployed labor.

Holmes' election campaign calls for an immediate minimum wage increase to \$10 an hour. "The guarantee of a living wage will benefit all working people," he said.

— AIDS

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conclusion. If you're gay and you have AIDS, it's your own fault you're sick and you don't deserve any medical care. According to Circle K, gay men choose AIDS.

The same goes for IV drug users who have AIDS. For that matter, it's your own fault if you have any alcohol- or drug-related illness, as though that were your own choice.

The reality, of course, is that diseases don't discriminate—bosses do. And, with lesbian and gay, AIDS, and civil liberties groups all organizing to mount a campaign against it, Circle K management may live to regret its assault on workers' rights to medical care.

— Minimum wage

Continued from page 7

ers. Fast food companies have a record of keeping workers an average of 60 days. And bosses who have hired trainees at 85% of the minimum follow a policy called "churning," that is, laying off the workers after 90 days so that they never reach even minimum wage level.

Congress to vote on an increase

The organized labor movement has been fighting to increase the minimum wage. A bill has finally been introduced in Congress where it will be voted on during the coming weeks. Before it has even reached the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the amount being proposed has been reduced to a piddling 40-cent increase for each of the next three years, bringing it to \$4.55 by 1991. It also includes an exemption for the increase in Puerto Rico.

Reportedly, there is stiff opposition in Congress to this miserly increase. All of the debate on the question proves that those in Congress, who have never held back on increasing their own pay, are more interested in holding workers' wages down than in guaranteeing a living wage.

Since 1981 top U.S. business executives have given themselves enormous increases. In salaries and bonuses the big bosses make 31 times more than the average worker's wage. The wage gap between workers and bosses in the U.S. has become twice as large as any other industrialized capitalist country in the world.

WWP demands \$10 an hour

Larry Holmes, Workers World Party candidate for president in the 1988 elections, called both the present minimum

ANC tells Buffalo, N.Y., meeting: 'Dual power exists in South Africa!'

Special to Workers World
Buffalo, N.Y.

"There is people's power in the communities; dual power exists in the country; class warfare has broken out," declared Wantu Zinzele of the African National Congress (ANC). Addressing an enthusiastic meeting on July 29, Zinzele said that the only way for the apartheid government to survive is by "unleashing unspeakable violence against the African people." The ban on the press by the South African government is precisely for "the purpose of trying to hide the fascist, anti-people violence."

He stressed to the audience that it is

the government in South Africa "that has closed off all of the avenues of peaceful struggle." The government has formed or encourages the formation of "vigilante groups, assassins and death squads."

Zinzele declared that the government strategy "cannot work because the ANC is harnessing the power of the masses to control the wealth they produce. There will be no compromise on this point!" He said that the ANC is entering the phase that will "see the retreat of apartheid." He pointed out that the South Africans had already suffered a major military defeat in southern Angola.

The multinational audience was attentive and enthusiastic, chanting for the freedom of Nelson Mandela at the conclusion of Zinzele's speech. The forum was sponsored by Workers World Party as part of a summer series.

The audience also heard an upbeat, two-part report on the Workers World election campaign. Vera Spruill and Tom Scahill analyzed the recent Democratic Convention and reported on the progress of the petition campaign to get the Workers World Party candidates on the ballot in New York state.

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Uruguay y la lucha por una democracia popular

Por Carl Glenn
y Santiago Manque-Milla

Uruguay es uno de los países más pequeños de Sudamérica con una población de 3 millones de habitantes que en la actualidad está jugando un papel de gran importancia dentro del contexto de lucha que sacude al continente por librarse de la dominación neocolonialista ejercida por el país del norte vale decir EE.UU.

Mundo Obrero entrevistó a José Germán Araujo destacado líder popular uruguayo que lucha por la justicia y que además es periodista y senador. El objetivo de esta breve visita por EE.UU. es el de romper el bloqueo de noticias que mantienen los medios de comunicación aquí sobre los acontecimientos en su país.

Uruguay es un país en proceso de recuperación y que viene saliendo de una dictadura militar que duró doce años (1973-1985). Durante este período la represión fue brutal, con miles de encarcelados, desaparecidos, asesinados, torturados, exiliados; una de cada 80 personas fueron encarceladas, llegando hasta el extremo de requerir un permiso policial para poder celebrar una fiesta de cumpleaños.

El Departamento de Estado, la CIA, y el Pentágono entrenó y asesoró

a los aparatos militares para aplicar la política de contra-insurgencia y que cuyo objetivo era aplastar la voluntad combativa y proletaria del pueblo uruguayo pero no lo consiguieron.

Durante este período el costo de vida subió al 7.500 por ciento, que se tradujo en un desajuste salarial de más de la mitad según las cifras del Banco Mundial. Y la deuda externa subió de 500 millones de dólares a 5 mil millones.

Araujo explicó que el endeudamiento y dependencia económica no solamente es aplicado a Uruguay sino que está globalizado a toda Latinoamérica y es parte de la estrategia de dominación capitalista norteamericana, desarrollada en parte por Milton Friedman y que en su contexto se requiere el aplastamiento de toda expresión popular, la izquierda y el sindicalismo.

“Los militares han dejado el poder para dar la ilusión de una aparente democracia, como parte de un movimiento político de Washington para lograr más beneficios económicos a costa de los países latinoamericanos”, dijo Germán Araujo.

Ataques al movimiento sindical.

Una de las características históri-

cas del pueblo uruguayo ha sido la fuerza del movimiento sindical, ya en 1915 se había conquistado la jornada de 8 horas laborales y seguro social. Antes de que los militares se tomaran el poder, había una sola confederación laboral que agrupaba a todos los sindicatos del país, durante la dictadura los dirigentes fueron asesinados, encarcelados y en el menor de los casos exiliados. Araujo que fue arrestado 163 veces por la dictadura explicó como se formó una nueva organización laboral de carácter clandestino y compuesta por jóvenes trabajadores.

Después que se eligió un gobierno civil en el año 1985, la clase dominante legalizó al antiguo movimiento sindical que fue declarado fuera de la ley, con la esperanza de promover la desunión y la competencia dentro de la clase obrera, pero en poco tiempo las dos organizaciones se unificaron.

La lucha en contra la ley de impunidad

El desarrollo más importante desde el retorno del gobierno civil ha sido la lucha en contra la ley de amnistía que fue otorgada a los militares absolviéndolos de los crímenes cometidos. Para esto se formó una comisión compuesta por tres mujeres, dos de las cuales son viudas a consecuencia de la dictadura ya que estos asesinaron a

sus esposos y la tercera que tiene a su nieta en Paraguay, criada por un ex-oficial militar, y cuyos padres también fueron asesinados bajo el régimen opresor uruguayo.

Esta comisión tiene como objetivo principal el de abolir la ley de impunidad que favorece a los criminales de guerra uruguayos, que amparados bajo un uniforme militar cometieron delitos de lesa humanidad. Se juntaron sobre 634.000 firmas, más de las que se requerían para poder llamar a un referéndum popular que derogue la ley de impunidad pasado por el Congreso Nacional, pero hasta la fecha el gobierno no ha reaccionado todavía.

Los militares han amenazado con tomar el poder nuevamente que en verdad nunca lo han dejado. El ministro de defensa actual, teniente general retirado Hugo Medina, era el jefe del ejército durante la dictadura. A pesar de la presencia militar, el resurgimiento del movimiento de masas, la vitalidad demostrada por las fuerzas populares y la alta moral combativa de todo el pueblo uruguayo nos demuestra el apoyo que en estos momentos cuenta el Frente Amplio.

Y que hoy en día la palabra “justicia” es sinónimo de rechazo de lo que es la mal llamada amnistía.

Comando Sur Poder Hostil

Pasaje estratégico

Serie especial de estudios políticos
(segunda parte y final)

Vista desde otro ángulo la función del Comando Sur en la estrategia global norteamericana no puede soslayarse su particular ubicación en las riberas del canal interoceánico. El Canal constituye un eslabón imprescindible en la vida geopolítica entre las costas este y oeste de los Estados Unidos y entre los océanos más grandes del mundo: el Pacífico y el Atlántico.

Estados Unidos necesita un barco de transporte por cada 7.200 toneladas cúbicas de abastos que llegan a sus puertos, es decir, necesita 450 barcos para transportar tres millones de toneladas cúbicas. Si el Canal se cerrara necesitaría el doble de barcos, por el ahorro que la vía produce a cada envío (aproximadamente 8 millas náuticas). Esto significa un ahorro de 30 días de navegación por cada barco que viaja a baja velocidad y de 15 días en aquellos que navegan a velocidad de 20 nudos o más.

En la Segunda Guerra Mundial (1941-45) los Estados Unidos realizaron 20.276 tránsitos de tropas y transportaron 24 millones de toneladas de abastos militares. En la Guerra de Corea (1951-54) realizaron 3.331 tránsitos de tropas y 12 millones de toneladas de abastos. Durante la crisis de “los cohetes” en 1962 el Canal cumplió un papel clave en abastos y concentración de fuerzas navales para el bloqueo a Cuba. En dos años de Guerra de Vietnam, (1967-69) movieron 13.237 toneladas cúbicas de abastos hacia

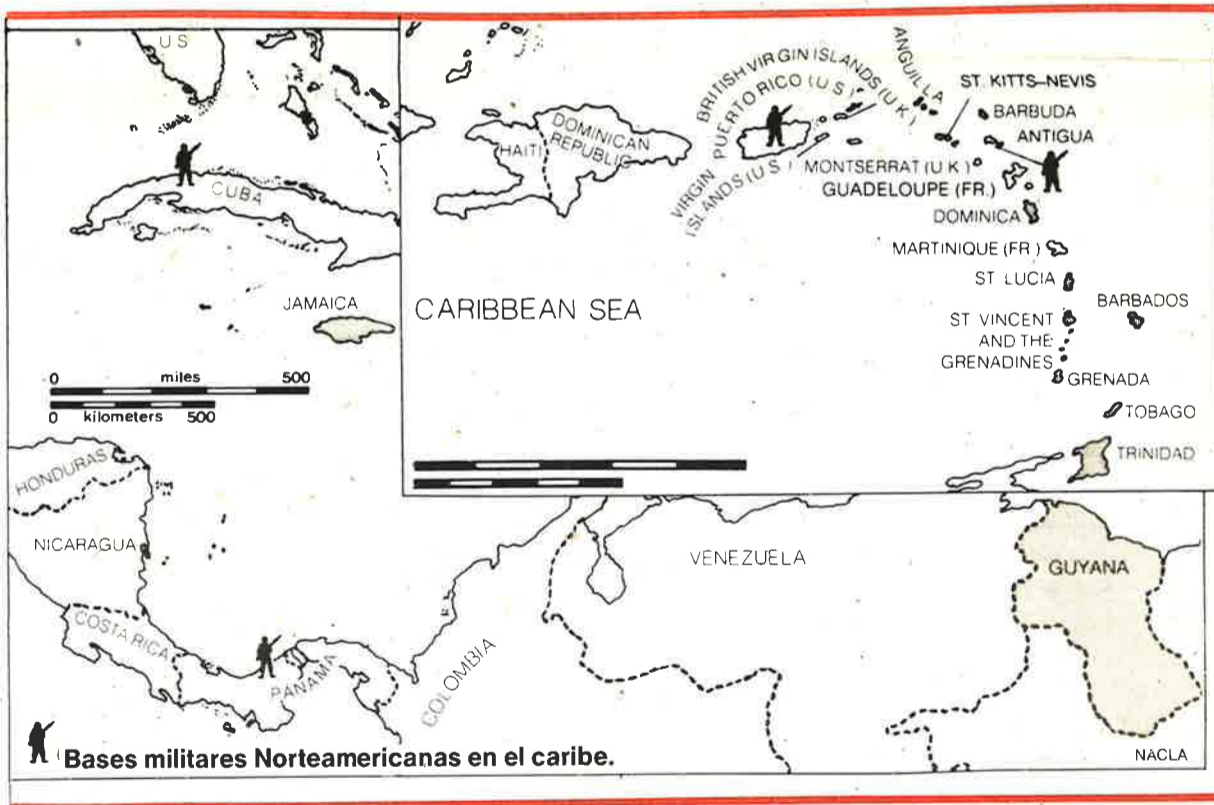
Vietnam, Guam, Tailandia y Filipinas (cf.: Morales, 1984).

Según declaraciones del Gen. Paul Gorman (Council of America, Washington, 8/5/84), para el Pentágono el Canal es un “pasaje estratégico” puesto que “en caso de un ataque a la OTAN (Europa) el 50 % de los contingentes pasarían por el aire”.

El Comando Sur cumple también el rol de mantener fluido el tránsito que se orienta fundamentalmente a beneficiar la circulación de mercancías, la acumulación del capital, la industria de guerra y la estrategia bélica de dominio mundial, es decir: el complejo militar industrial.

Comando Sur enclave hostil

El Comando Sur es un territorio comprendido o encerrado en otro es un complejo militar exógeno, segregado de la nación panameña, y mantiene una estructura interna de mandos, recursos y logísticas que obedece a las determinaciones de otro estado y a una estrategia mundial de dominación. El enclave militar mantiene una cultura, psicológica e idiosincrasia extrañas al territorio donde está enclavado y una estructura económica con efectos distorsionantes en la econo-



mía panameña. el enclave trasciende multiplicadamente las necesidades defensivas del canal y viola el principio de neutralidad, reconocidos en los Tratados y en los principios internacionales que rigen las relaciones entre los pueblos del mundo. Interviene en los asuntos internos de otros países atentando contra la libre autodeterminación de los pueblos.

El Comando Sur es un centro logístico y un eje estratégico contra la región centroamericana y caribeña, y contra el conjunto de los países latinoamericanos. Es un pivote de una concepción globalista y belicista que pasa de la contención pasiva a la contención activa, es decir, del primer al segundo escalón de la estrategia flexible.

Es un eje de las fuerzas de despliegue rápido y de la estructura militar de los Estados Unidos en la región. Es base de experimentación bélica y en-

trenamiento castrense y contrainsurgente para las fuerzas propias y ajenas, como escala en las tareas de reaprovisionamiento, reparación, mantenimiento y vigilancia naval, aérea, y marítima y así provee una plataforma ideal, punto de observación, control e inteligencia para gran parte del hemisferio.

Las 67 instalaciones del Comando Sur (sitios de defensa, áreas de coordinación y otras) se mantendrán hasta el año 2.000. Las tierras entregadas a Panamá a raíz de los Tratados Torrijos-Carter de 1977 son las superfluas e innecesarias para el funcionamiento militar del Comando. El mismo Tratado de Neutralidad permite la intervención unilateral permanente de los Estados Unidos si se estima en peligro la vía interoceánica en años futuros. Es decir: el enclave bélico cambia de forma, pero no de esencia.