Heat wave called killer of thousands
Profit system ignores need of seniors, workers and poor for emergency relief

By Robert Dolore

The heat wave across the U.S. this summer may be costing thousands of lives. The government is doing nothing to stop this loss of life. Nor is it even keeping track of the losses.

Workers World learned of this while speaking with W. Moulton Avery of the Center for Environmental Physiology, a non-profit research organization established in 1980 in Washington, D.C., to study the impact of cold and heat on humans and to educate people on how to cope with the extremes in the weather.

A study Avery's organization did on the July heat wave showed that 15,000 additional people died during that summer than usually do in the same period. Some 70% of these deaths were of people over 65.

Avery explained that these deaths were caused by the extreme heat, even though the direct cause of death was more likely to be heart attack or stroke rather than heat prostration.

This year's heat wave is at least as severe as that of 1980, and is having a much stronger impact on the highly populated urban areas, especially along the Eastern Seaboard, said Avery.

On Aug. 17, Charles Osgood of the CBS radio show "The Osgood File" responded to these figures, pointing out that the loss of life exceeds any other natural disaster of this century, including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake where 503 lost their lives.

Avery concluded, "The situation is particularly grim this year; yet the U.S. government has done absolutely nothing, and you can't even get information on the heat wave at the Department of Health and Human Services."

Not grim for the rich

For some, life just isn't that grim if you only have to go from air-conditioned home to air-conditioned office and back again. If you've got lots of money you get chauffeured around and can even afford to hop on a ship or a jet and leave the city altogether to where the weather is forever nice.

But for workers, for farmers, for poor people, the heat wave isn't just a minor inconvenience, it's torture. And in areas with triple-digit temperatures it's life-threatening.

Capitalism didn't cause the heat. But the profit system does have a direct bearing on the needless suffering which working people are going through because of the heat.

If you live in a tenement in a major city like New York or Chicago the heat is a nightmare which affects the poorest the worst. There just isn't any escape.

In the most oppressed sections of the city scores of people are sitting outside to get away from the sizable of their apartments. But there's little relief on the streets.

Even the recreation centers, which might offer relief, have fallen victim to government cutbacks. The beaches are unusable. The city pools are over-

Continued on page 3

STRIKE VICTORY
San Francisco's hospital workers win their strike, then set an example of solidarity by throwing their weight behind striking nurses.

Continued on page 11

The writer is in South Korea to represent the People's Anti-War Mobilization at an international peace conference.

August 15—Chanting "Yankee go home!" and demanding the reunification of Korea, thousands of students gathered at Yonsei University here, determined to march to the north-south border at Panmunjom to meet with students of the north.

Efforts to build the Aug. 15 march to Panmunjom began on Aug. 7, with students at universities across South Korea holding marches and rallies and fighting with police who attacked these protests. Some 6,700 were arrested before today's activities even began.

Celebrated throughout Korea, Aug. 15 marks the day of independence from Japanese colonial rule. Some 44 years ago the Japanese occupiers were battered by the heroic struggle waged by the Korean people. Defying the south Korean government, students decided to mark this year's anniversary with a march to the border to challenge the current regime and to denounce their present-day occupiers—The 45,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea, armed with nuclear weapons.

The hard-won liberation from Japanese colonialists was stolen from the southern part of Korea in 1945 when...
Newspaper merger to cost thousands of jobs Detroit JOA monopoly approved by Meese

By Kris Hanel
Member Newspaper Guild 23
Detroit

On Aug. 8, in one of his last dirty deeds as Attorney General, Edwin Meese gave approval for the merger of the Detroit Free Press and the Detroit News under a joint operating arrangement (JOA), creating the largest newspaper monopoly in the country. A JOA is a legalized monopoly that is exempt from federal antitrust laws.

The Free Press-News JOA will merge all but the editorial departments of the two newspapers and will result in layoffs of 25 to 40%. As many as 1,430 primarily Black, Latin and women workers who are concentrated in the service, clerical and production departments will eventually lose their jobs. On top of these, thousands of Free Press carriers, many of whom are adults, are being idled with no compensation.

The JOA is racist in character as far as service to the community is concerned. The price will go up 5 cents during the week and 25 cents on Sunday. Circulation will drop as a result in the lower income communities (Detroit) will be cut in order to attract the more lucrative suburban areas (the suburbs). For the Knight-Ridder-owned Free Press and the Gannett-owned Detroit News, the JOA will mean fabulous profits. After the first year of this 100-year deal, the annual profits are expected to be at least $100 million.

From the very beginning 28 months ago, the Newspaper Guild and the other unions in the newspaper council opposed the JOA merger. The Guild's especially firm opposition forced Meese to observe hearings on the JOA. Both the anti-trust people and the Justice Department were forced to present the federal judge who presided over the hearings agreed with the case presented by the Newspaper Guild. The Free Press was not a "failing" newspaper and any so-called financial losses it had incurred were for the whole purpose of getting the JOA.

In January 1988 Knight-Ridder let loose an unprecedented campaign to change public opinion on the JOA before they could pressure the unions, threatening to close the Free Press if the JOA were denied. While the other unions eventually caved in to this pressure, the Newspaper guild continued to oppose the JOA.

The company installed a right-wing movement by higher paid editors who tried to get the paper to drop its opposition. But the Guild membership overwhelmingly defeated this move.

Rights of workers

However, on July 25, with the JOA decision imminent, the Newspaper Guild leadership suddenly decided to give up the fight. The International and the local union administrative officer pressured the Representative Assembly to reluctantly drop its opposition to the JOA.

The union even urged approval of the merger. Why, after holding out for 28 months, did the Guild leadership give up? What was lacking was a political perspective that could effectively answer the threats of Knight-Ridder to close the Free Press. The union leadership developed the concept that the workers have a property right to their jobs and that the community has a right to the information and services that the newspapers provide. These rights supersede the corporation's right to monopoly profit.

July 25, a bulletin issued to Free Press workers by the Job is a Right Campaign raised the idea that if Knight-Ridder tried to close the Free Press, the city could seize the assets under the law of eminent domain, and keep the newspaper open under worker-community control.

It is only now beginning to sink in that the JOA means layoffs, cutbacks, racism and union busting. Already, the new Detroit News is demanding a cut to a four-day work week from editorial workers and taking a hard line in union negotiations even though thousands of workers have not received a raise in over two years.

The local Guild president is threatening to resign his job if the JOA goes through. The Guild is beginning an organizing drive among the advertising, circulation and maintenance employees whom they represented before the JOA went into effect. The lessons of the last 28 months will be learned and the workers struggle against Gannett and Knight-Ridder will continue.

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

If you would like to know more about WWP, or if you would like to join us, contact the branch near you.

CALANDAR
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.
Sat., Aug. 20: Workers World Party Forum. Featuring film class "The Land and the Earth" and "WWP Vice Presidential candidate Gloria La Riva on New Mexico working class struggles today. 7 p.m. $2 donation.
At UNM Law Center, 1117 Stanford NE (corner of Stanford and Cerrillos Road) Room 2402. Call (505) 255-5369.

NEW YORK
Thurs., Aug. 25: Forum on censor-
ship of the press in Israel and a

Palestinian perspective on Hus-
sein's death. Hear Miri Mos-
covich, relative of detained
 Journalist and Nael Saad from Arab-Palestinian Community Center; 7 p.m. Donation $3.
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 13410 (Broadway and 7229).
Fri., Aug. 26: Namibia Day. Com-
memoration of armed struggle
against South Africa. Speakers in-
clude SWAPO representative, ANH
and solidarity messages, 6:30-7:30.
At Local 1199, 310 W. 43 St., Man-
hattan. Call (212) 557-2450.

SAN FRANCISCO
Sat., Aug. 27: "Cuba 1988: Inter-
national Solidarity and Socialis-

xample," speakers: Activist Barbara York will speak on her trip to Cuba with Venceremos Brigade. Slide show and talk. Refreshments 7:30 p.m.
$2. At 2489 Mission St., #23. Call (415) 821-6545.
Reagan performs for well-heeled delegates
Talk hides robbery of workers, poor

John Catalinoto

As the Republican National Convention opened Aug. 15 on network television, the camera scanned the audience. Hundreds and thousands of faces of affluent white males beamed back smug satisfaction over the television screen. The Wall Street wheeler-dealer was there, the bespectacled business consultant, the pencil-thin, Robin Hood-lookalike, Lowell Weicker, got none of his planks passed to moderate the reactionary platform.

According to the official figures, a full 60% of the delegates were men, and only 6% were Black, Hispanic or "other." A quarter were from the born-again camp. A poll placed them in the far right of the public, even right of Rea-

Almost all were wealthy compared to the average working person. They were the coalition of the greedy rich and the reactionary bigots that have been the base of the Reagan administration's support. The big event of the opening session was the speech by Ronald Reagan. It was a little subdued. Reagan had to lean on ex-vice chief George Bush to make a bigger splash when he ac-
cepts the nomination for presidential candidate later in the week.

There was no mistaking the Reagan speech, though. It had the obligatory movie reference, with Reagan asking Bush to "make it more for the Clip-
per." It was filled with the usual mis-
statements, distortions and self-serving lies that are Reagan's trademark.

Look at the record

Since the big-business media, as was usual over the course of the Reagan years, gave favorable reviews to Rea-
gan's "performance" and let the lies pass unchallenged, it would be useful to look at the record, the Reagan administration right here.

The Reagan gang succeeded in two big robberies.

They transferred hundreds of bil-
lions of dollars from the working class, from the poor, to the very rich. They did this by upping the poverty line, cutting back in social programs and through cutting taxes for the wealthy.

And they carried out a $2 billion buildup of the military machine, more than doubling the national debt to finance it, mostly with loans from abroad, with the interest payments picked from the pockets of the taxpayers.

Average real wages for working peo-
ples were $189.00 per week in 1977. Us-
ing the same 1977 dollars, these had dropped to $173.38 by December 1980, during the economic downturn that be-
gan before Reagan took office.

After two more years of downturn and almost five years of a Reaganite "re-
cover," fueled by the military expan-
sion, real wages have dropped to $167.64 by May 1988, measured in those same 1977 dollars (U.S. Depart-
ment of Labor statistics).

It seems almost all the jobs Reagan boasted of creating are in the low-pay-
ning service sectors, with many of them part-time jobs. Now 14 million workers are at or near the minimum wage of $3.35 per hour. That may be legal in Cal-
ifornia alone, some 50,000 children and youth are homeless.

In the name of "shrinking big govern-
ment," the Reaganites gutted the OSHA safety enforcement and environmental regulations. Now job injuries are up, while acid rain kills the lakes and med-
ical sewage puts the beaches off limits.

In the name of "the sacredness of life," the Reagan coalition attacked women's right to abortion. Meanwhile, infant mortality increased during the past seven years, with some inner-city rates more than double those for the rest of the country.

When the World Party presidential candidate Larry Holmes, commenting on Reagan's talk, noted that, "This con-
vention will clearly show the Republi-
cans to be the tool of the super rich. They've robbed the poor to give to the rich and robbed the taxpayers to build up the military."

"But as Reagan noted in his talk, 'The president can't spend a dime. Only Congress can do that.' Without the sup-
port of the Democrats in Congress, the more blatant Reagan gang couldn't have carried out its program," said Holmes. "We in WWP in our campaign will expose the pro-big-business bias of both capitalist parties.

APC runs for office in California.

All-Peoples Congress (APC) candidate for San Francisco Board of Supervi-
sors Stephanie Hedgecombe filed her nominating papers on Aug. 12 and will ap-
ppear on the November 8 ballot. "We're running to expose the way in which the Board serves the interests of the rich corporations. This is a peoples' campaign, fighting for jobs, housing, money for AIDS and everything else that poor and working people need," Hedgecombe told reporters.

Jane Cutler

Chubb Corp. tries to cheat hard-hit farmers
Wants to renege on drought insurance

Sharon Shelley

August 15—At a time when rural power was the main concern, this summer's merciless drought is expected to deliver an especially hard blow to small farmers in the Midwest, one of the country's largest insurance compa-
ies is trying to cheat farmers out of coverage they bought and paid for.

This naked money grab, which has prompted rallies and other protests in agricultural areas, exposes the greed of the capitalist insurance companies whose very survival in selling insurance is to rake in from overpriced pre-
miums, not pay out to alleviate hu-
man suffering.

Back on May 1, long before the drought began to take its toll, the Chubb Corporation was enthusiastic about pushing its new brainchild: rain insurance. At that time, the company ener-
gerically marketed rain policies through 236 agents across the US.

By July 15, however, after all the clear harvests were threatened by soaring temperatures and parched soil, the company sent out letters to thousands of devastated farmers announcing it would not honor their policies.

According to the company, the six-
teenth largest of its kind in the U.S., it has "suddenly discovered" that it had planned to sell to only about 1,000 farmers instead of the 8,700 who bought policies. The weather, Chubb claimed, had nothing to do with its de-
cision, and the company offered no ex-
planation why it took over a month to realize it had sold "too many" policies.

Farmers protest

Insurance experts quoted by the New York Times (Aug. 15) say that it would be "highly unusual" for a company not to keep track of how many policies had been sold.

Outraged farmers, already suffering from intense competition with the ruthless agribusiness monopolies and from high interest payments to the banks on mortgages and loans for heavy equipment, did not buy Chubb's ex-
cuses for reneging. Instead, they pro-
tested before state insurance commis-
sions, pointing out that there had been plentiful rainfall, the company would have more than happily accepted pre-
mium payments from as many who would pay them.

Shall we air conditioning be a right?

Why should it only be accessible to those who can afford it? Only a system which defines human worth based on how much money you have would re-
ject the simple solution that in these crisis weeks everyone who needs air conditioning must have it.

One MX missile, one nuclear-
equipped aircraft carrier, one month of Star Wars research, one B-1 bomber—any of these useless and wasteful items could be traded in to pay for air condi-
tioners for those who need it.

Local and state governments as well as the federal government have been forced, during times of emergency, to pay for shelter, for heat, for clothing and for transportation. For millions across the US, the heat wave is also an emergency, and one that requires im-
mediate action.

Under capitalism the national in-
come gets squandered for arms and weapons and handouts to the rich. Meanwhile working people are left to broil in the sweltering heat or freeze in the dead of winter. Such are the priori-
ties of a system based on capitalist greed rather than human need.

Currents, Iowa farmers have filed a class action suit against Chubb, and ten insurance commissioners—those from Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin and Minnesota—have been pressured by demonstrations and ral-
lies to agree to seek to have the com-
pany's license revoked if the matter is not settled.

Farmers themselves have vowed to fight this blatant theft by the parasitic insurance greedy industry until they get the compensation they deserve.
Yonkers housing battle spotlights years of bigotry

By Key Martin
Yonkers, N.Y.

August 15—This city of 200,000, the fourth largest in New York State located just north of New York City, has been in the national spotlight for its ongoing struggle against segregation.

Yonkers has been the scene of a series of racist mobilizations over the last several years after a desegregation victory won in the courts by the NAACP. National attention has focused upon city council meetings like one that took place here tonight, which have defied the desegregation order.

These meetings have been packed with shouting, taunting racists, falsely proclaiming themselves the champions of "property values," and intimidating the voice, Black or white, from being heard. They have been encouraged by elected officials. All but one of the six city council members ran on a platform of defying the court order and whipping up racist sentiment.

At issue is a recent decision by Federal Judge Leonard Sued resulting from the case begun in 1980 that found the city "guilty of intentionally enhancing segregation for 40 years." The court has ordered desegregation of the schools and the construction of 200 units of low-income housing on the predominately white east side of the city to correct the ghettoization of most of the Black and Latin communities and of public housing in the poorer sections of southwest Yonkers.

The federal court ordered the city fined for failure to comply beginning at $100 and doubling every day. So far the fine, which stands at $12,700, has been frozen during an appeal of the court's decision. If reinstated, the fines would reach $13 million within ten days and exceed the $300 million annual budget of the city by the 15th day.

During a fiscal crisis in the mid '70s Yonkers had agreed to the formation of an Emergency Finance Control Board in exchange for state financial assistance. This board has now placed the city budget in trusteeship, crippling the city council's willingness to defy the court to the point of fiscal ruin for the city as the main reason for the financial takeover. They have frozen all funds, including raises, etc., for the city, a monk's life that will have little to do with the poor communities rather than the racists and real estate interests who created the problem.

35 years of struggle

The struggle against racism here goes back to the mid 1950s when a Black man named Tom Wilson was shot to death by a white policeman in a bar on Black Street. Despite an angry protest in the Black community no justice was done in this case and the Black community was shut out of city politics with that on grace justly.

Today, almost 35 years and numerous civil rights and voting rights bills later, the growing Black, Latin and Arab communities now constitute between a quarter and a third of the population. Yet they are still disenfranchised, gerrymandered and shut out of the Yonkers city government.

The growing Black, Latino and Arab communities are still disenfranchised, gerrymandered and shut out of the Yonkers city government.

Role of real estate interests

Behind all this stands the real estate interests and developers who grew rich from developing east Yonkers as a bedroom community for New York City and profit greatly from whipping up racist hysteria over schools and housing.

To them, segregation and disenfranchisement are big business. They are only interested in the gentrification of the waterfront and the sale of single-family homes and coops. These real estate interests still have a stranglehold on City Hall.

During the fiscal crisis of 1976, for example, they forced the Black and Latin communities to bear the brunt of teacher layoffs and school closings, despite protests at school board meetings. And when the Black and Latin communities in the southwestern part of the city grew large enough to win elective office, the city establishment reduced the number of council districts from 12 to six and gerrymandered the districts so that the Black and Latin communities could not get a majority in any of them.

There are no Black department heads in the city administration (other than the lone Affirmative Action officer), no Black people work in the office of the city manager or mayor. There is only one Black member on the nine-person school board and one Black elected official, a county legislator, Herman Keith, the former president of the NAACP, which initiated the desegregation suit, and the first Black elected in Yonkers to any office.

Governor "understands" racists

It is particularly galling to the Black and Latin community that state officials, such as Gov. Mario Cuomo, who won office based on the turnout from the Black and Latin community, have chosen not to confront the racist elements or give any moral or political support to the beleaguered Black community which, after all, proved is case and won the suit against the discrimi- nation and is only looking for the en- forcement of the victory. Cuomo has, in fact, given back-handed support to the racists by expressing "understanding" of their plight! (See editorial, page 16)

More than anything else, the racists in Yonkers need a firm, anti-racist ans- wer. They have held sway in the political arena for too long.

The writer grew up in southwest Yonkers.

Protest called over racist beating by cop in Hartford, Conn.

Rebeca Toledo
Hartford, Conn.

On Aug. 12, 1987, a year ago this month, Timothy Moore, a 16-year-old Black youth, was brutally beaten by more than a dozen cops in a predominately Black neighborhood in Bowles Park here. Today, there is still no justice.

The cops, all white, were chasing Moore for an alleged assault. However, as is rarely pointed out in the local press, all charges were dropped a few months later.

Moore lay defenseless as the cops kicked and hit him, causing numerous head and back injuries.

So blatantly racist and brutal was the beating that a sympathetic crowd gathered. The cops responded with racist comments. Lorenzo Ricketts, a respected soccer coach with the Martin Luther King Jr. King League, checked on the cops and asked what the youth had done to deserve such a severe beating.

Five or six cops turned on Ricketts, knocked him down and started to kick and beating him. Another soccer coach, Garnett Williams, who was across the street, yelled to the cops to stop. At that point, several cops, opened the street, hit him with their night sticks, knocked him to the ground and stepped on his head.

Ricketts had problems walking after the assault, and Williams suffered sev- eral head injuries. Both men were later charged with interfering with an arrest and assaulting a police officer. These charges, however, were dropped in a matter of months.

Ricketts has filed a civil rights suit in federal court against the 14 cops and the policeman's union. Williams will soon join the suit.

Six months after the assault the police concluded an internal investiga- tion. The entire process was under police supervision and kept from the public, a fact that has gone unnoticed in the Black community. Even with its bias, the investigation could not get around the testimony of 30 witnesses that the cops had brutally attacked a defenseless young man and then assaulted the two men who had tried to intervene.

The FBI conducted another investigation. Once again, the process was secret. In a summary of its report issued at the beginning of August, the FBI virtu- ally lets the cops off the hook. No crim- inals will be charged, no suspensions issued.

The Black community and its sup- porters have called this outrageous re- port a "whitewash." They state that the cop has a widespread problem with po- lice brutality.

A protest rally is being organized for September.

Commenting on the investigation, Police Chief Bernard Sullivan said that the cop who struck Moore will have to live with that for the rest of his life.

The community answer to the chief is, "Sorry, that's not enough. We de- mand justice for Tim Moore. Stop po- lice brutality!"

Free the Puerto Rico/Hartford! 15!

The Puerto Rican Committee Against Repression (PRCAR) announced at a news conference in New York City on Aug. 16 that the U.S. government is planning to call an unprecedented 400 witnesses to testify in the trial of the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15, slated to begin on Sept. 24. Most of these witnesses are activists in the Puerto Rican independence movement. Jose Alfaro of the PRCAR compared the actions of the U.S. government to the McCarthy witch- hunt of the 1950s. Defense Attorney Ron Rubly called it "a thinly disguised attempt to attack the voice the other people, and to inca- turate scores if not hundreds of activists for refusing to testify."" "Demonstrations are being called in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Hartford and New York to mark the 3rd anniversary of the arrests of the Puerto Rican defendants on Aug. 30, 1980, when federal agents conducted a massive operation in Puerto Rico. On Sept. 24, thousands will converge on Hartford to de- mand freedom for the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15.

Maltrown

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WWW PHOTO: MALTROWN
Hospital workers’ unity stops union busting

1,500 new members join union as strike ends

By Bruce Baginski
Member California Nurses Association
San Francisco

August 16—Members of Service Em-
ployees International Union (SEIU) Lo-
cal 250 yesterday voted 782 to 58 in favor of a strike against St. Francis Hos-
tico and one Daly City hospital (Affiliated Hospitals). These 1,600 housekeepers, X-ray technicians, licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), dietary workers and other skilled health care workers have been on strike for three weeks.

The union has won back full health in-
surance benefits, which the hospitals cut last April when their contract expired. They also got back the 12 sick days that were taken. Casual employees gained new rights and protection, such as new language that increases their ability to be-
come permanent employees. And lan-
guage protecting worker health and safety was added—for example better in-
service training and free hepatitis-B vac-
cine for all workers who handle blood and body fluids.

Affiliated Hospitals were clearly try-
ing to bust Local 250 by forcing this strike, and it backfired in their faces. The new contract restores all union access rights being violated, with added provisions such as paid release time for union stew-
ards to attend meetings scheduled by the hospital. The union managed to collect 1,500 signatures of unorganized clerical and technical workers at the hospitals, enough to file for union recognition, in

one of the largest and fastest organizing drives in recent Bay Area history.

Solidarity with nurses’ strike

Two weeks ago, 2,100 registered nurses walked out of six of the seven hos-
titals. They are represented by the Cali-
fornia Nurses Association (CNA). Bar-
gaining resumed yesterday for the first time since their strike began. The nurses are determined to stay out as long as it
takes to get a contract with a good pay raise and absolutely no takeaways, including the proposed mandatory 12-hour shift. CNA labor representative Carrie Cina-
chetti describes the 12-hour shift as “a particularly malignant concept that will affect the future of nursing negatively, permanently.”

A real and lasting solidarity between CNA and Local 250 has developed during the strike. CNA insisted that Affiliated Hospitals first settle with Local 250. And now, even though they have a new con-
tact and are feeling the financial effects of a three-week strike, Local 250 members insist that they will not return to work un-
til the day after the RNs vote in a new con-
tact. The same solidarity is visible at French Hospital in San Francisco hospital where the two unions have been on strike since Aug. 6 in disputes similar to those at Affiliated Hospitals.

Striking Local 220 workers and CNA members hold solidarity march and rally Aug. 9.

WW PHOTO: BRUCE BAGINSKI

Storm of protest forces retreat by Circle K

Company refused health care coverage to workers with AIDS

By Leslie Feinberg

Nationally coordinated picketlines and preparations for a consumer boycott against Circle K Corporation are intensi-
yzing as outrage grows over the com-
pany’s policy to refuse health care cover-
age to most workers with AIDS.

As word of their huge picketing plans spread this week, the second largest con-
venience store chain in the country was hit with a storm of protests. For the first time, they announced a two-week suspension of the in-
urance cut-off. Circle K’s chairman and chief executive officer Karl Eller told the press the company would review their policy.

A Phoenix community spokesperson said a picket was planned at the Circle K national office Thursday, Aug. 18, and called for national actions on the same day. Plans are underway to set in motion a national consumer boycott, coordinated by coalitions comprised of people with AIDS, the gay and lesbian community, women’s groups, trade unionists, civil and legal rights groups, health care pro-

viders, seniors, and others who see the importance of digging in to stop Circle K from setting this dangerous precedent.

Anti-worker, anti-gay

Earlier this year Circle K notified 3,000 of its 4,000 employees who are covered by com-
pany health policy that the corporation would cut off all medical coverage to workers who became sick or were injured as a result of AIDS, alcohol or drug addiction or suicide attempts because the com-
pany now classified these as illnesses resulting from “personal lifestyle deci-
sions.” Only those who contracted AIDS from transfusions or married women who developed AIDS unknowingly from their spouses are considered “innocent” and eligible for coverage by Circle K Cor-

poration.

The response to Circle K’s anti-gay and anti-worker policy was fast, furious and focused as their stores and business office-
es were immediately confronted. Ac-
tivists across the country answered that no one chooses to get AIDS, and insisted that everyone with AIDS is innocent and deserves healthcare.

Protests spread

Last week 100 people demonstrated in front of the Circle K national office in Phoenix. At the same time Circle K stores were picketed in Tucson, Ariz., Albu-
querque, N.M., Denver, Portland, Ore., Kansas City, Mo., Salt Lake City, Houston and other cities. An organized telephone blitz of the national office and the Atlanta district office clogged tele-
phone lines, making business-as-usual impossible.

The first Circle K store in New York City opened two weeks ago, was pick-
et by members of ACT UP (AIDS Coal-
tion to Unleash Power), and the group sat in at the offices of the Reise Corporation, which runs the store as a franchisee, until the executives agreed to contact Phoenix to register the protest.

ACT UP members in New Orleans this week made plans to target Circle K stores in that city while releasing enough steam to carry out protests inside and outside the Republican convention.

A declaration of war

Karl Eller’s announcement to the press that the company was temporarily sus-
pending their policy for “review” and his agreement to meet with community members Aug. 15 clearly resulted from the struggle.

But the “review” was viewed warily by

many activists as a maneuver to stall and divert the fight-back. This caution proved justified on Aug. 15 when com-
pany spokespersons blocked several community members from the discus-
sions and Eller himself didn’t show. This arrogant action only underscored the need to force the corporation to pull back on its policy of discrimination once and for all.

Circle K is crying about costs, but they report only seven workers who currently have AIDS. Surely the bargain-basement health care those workers were eligible for couldn’t be too deeply into the $49 million Circle K made in profits off the backs of its workers last year.

Nip it in the bud!

In fact this non-union corporation, op-

erating mainly in conservative “right-to-

work” states where most workers receive minimum wage, is acting as the cutting edge for the giant conglomerates, and es-

pecially the large insurance carriers, in a broad attack on health care in general, and an ongoing scapegoating of people with AIDS and the lesbian and gay move-

ment in particular.

The pattern for many corporations cur-

rently in negotiations with unions is to demand that workers give up health care benefits in one form or another, while us-
ing divide-and-conquer tactics to achieve his goal. The struggle against Circle K’s initiative is a national fight that all workers, trade unionists and unorga-
nized, gay and straight, have a stake in.

Circle K wants to test the strength of the movement. But the swift, angry wave of protests has put them all on notice that from Circle K to the Republican con-

vention in New Orleans—the fight is on!

On the picket line

Continued from page 2

Whitney aircraft, which have lost thou-

sand dollars in value because of lump sum payments over the last two years.

They have joined the Electric Boat strikers on the picket lines. Meanwhile, Auto Work-

ers Local 370’s struggle at Colt Industries continues for more than two years. Af-
ter four months on strike, Colt locked the workers out in August of 1986. They have carried their struggle to marches, rallies and picketlines around the country, and the union says a boycott of Colt products has been very successful.

West Coast longshoremen to join AFL-CIO

The International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU) is preparing to affiliate with the AFL-CIO.

The union, which represents dockwork-

ers in California, Washington, Oregon, Hawaii and Alaska, has long been one of the most militant, progressive unions in the country, with a proud history of strikes, struggle and solidarity. In recent years, for example, ILWU members have refused to unload cargo from South Af-

rica and Chile. The dockworkers’ affilia-

tion with the national federation is a posi-
tive step that can only strengthen the la-

bor movement.
Big landlords sink claws in community
NYU real estate speculators lead the pack

By Shelley Ettinger
New York

You'd hardly recognize Second Avenue these days. The old all-theater once thrived. Decades later, there was the Fillmore East with Jimi Hendrix and the Grateful Dead.

Until recently, bodegas—Little grocery stores—dotted the avenue and adjacent streets.

Sushi, sukiyaki, and radicchio. Goodbye bodega, hello David's Cookies.

Gentrification spurs fightback

The people of this city's Lower East Side are locked in a war of survival against the big landlords and real estate tycoons who are behind the gentrification that threatens to destroy their neighborhood. Thousands of Black and Latino people live in the area around Tompkins Square Park, as do many East Indians, Pakistanis, and a great many Ukrainians.

The neighborhood is a center of the gay and lesbian community. Many of the more than 100 homeless who sleep in the park are people with AIDS. The vibrancy of the Lower East Side also attracts struggling artists and musicians, along with numbers of whom call it home.

Who's behind the gentrification of the Lower East Side?

Big landlords and the NYU connection

Names like Trump and Zeckendorf cast a big shadow of condo conversions and homelessness.

The Lower East Side is very attractive to rich, nip wall Street professionals who take a quick taxi ride to work, and the hottest clubs, theaters and restaurants are all nearby.

So it's prime real estate. Developers swallow up tenement buildings that have housed workers and the poor for more than a century. Then they convert them into condos and condominiums with air conditioning and brass bathroom fixtures and rooftop health clubs.

The Cristadora, one such new building, was the scene of particular community anger during the Tompkins Square demonstrations. A single condominium apartment in the Cristadora sells for $400,000.

But perhaps the biggest culprit is New York University. The community waged a long struggle in the mid-1980s to prevent NYU from building two high-rise dormitories on Third Avenue. They argued that, with low-cost housing for workers and the poor and students so desperately needed, it was a crime to construct only expensive new student housing instead.

NYU, the biggest private university in the country, arrogantly proceeded with construction even before it won the court case.

As a result, the community in the neighborhood had feared, the new NYU dorms considerably accelerated the whole gentrification process in the area. Longtime small businesses were pushed out in its wake, making way for high-priced boutiques and trendy shops that are inaccessible to the people of the Lower East Side. And even more development and conversions have followed.

NYU, which was already itself a major landlord in the Lower East Side and nearby Greenwich Village, is actually a conglomerate of realtors, landlords and developers. Its Board of Trustees is made up almost exclusively of some of the biggest real estate millionaires in New York.

This includes: Laurence Tisch, owner of Loews Corporation, Philip Morris and CBS; Leonard Stern, who owns Hertz Mountain and Lewis Preston, the chairman of JP Morgan.

NYU Board of Trustees Vice-Chair is Eric Voorhees, who runs a 501 c-3 that is in existence at one time with a number of campaigning against NYU's in New York City, New York.

Together, these luminaries have made NYU their proxy as a major player in the gentrification of the Lower East Side. They reap the benefits, both through all sorts of shady deals that bring them and their associates subcontracting for construction of NYU buildings, and through the resulting rise in property values and dealmaking that falls into their hands.

WWP says 'no' to gentrification

An Aug 13 rally for Maggie Vassacissenno, a New York activist, and Workers World candidate for the New York State Assembly, attracted listeners just two blocks from Tompkins Square Park. A Vassacissenno statement denounced the cops and the developers for their attacks on that neighborhood. Over 100 people subscribed to Workers World newspaper. Hundreds signed petitions for Vassacissenno. Participants later joined a march to defend Tompkins Square Park.

Scott Smith

Morris and CBS; Leonard Stern, who owns Hertz Mountain and Lewis Preston, the chairman of JP Morgan.

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Homeless man's view from a park bench

By Bill Bowers
New York

Walking through Tompkins Square Park, four blocks north of where I live and the site of recent battles and demonstrations against gentrification and police violence, I met Jimmy, a Black homeless man who was trying to sell two cans of soup.

Soup is one of only 100 homeless people, some with AIDS, who live in the park, a place where they have been able to assert some control over their lives. If the gentrifiers have their way, the homeless would be among the first to be forced out of the area. Jimmy was clothed only in a cutoff shorts and sandals. He and I recognized each other from the previous day's struggle with the police control of our park, and we fell to talking about the park protests, the police, and how they affect the homeless people who are living in the park.

WW: Have the police harassed you this summer before the curfew was lifted?

Jimmy: Well, in Washington Square Park they took their clubs and beat people across the street, or beat the benches they were sleeping on. Because of all the yuppies and rich people and Mayor Koch living there, they closed the park at night...we just gave up there. Here in Tompkins Square Park they don't bother us much. Look over there (by East 7th St) — you see people setting up housekeeping. Now if we just had water and electricity.

WW: And the public restrooms?

Jimmy: The public restroom here is terrible. There's a stench in it that sticks to your skin if you go in there. And they close it at night.

WW: What are the conditions in the city-run shelters like?

Jimmy: I refuse to go to those shelters. The shelter system in this country is a transparent rip-off. It's like a penal institution. If you go in there alone, if you don't have a bunch of "buddies," you get robbed, you get beat up. If you have "buddies" who come out with you and you look after them, you can get by. But I won't go in there.

WW: What about the winter?

Jimmy: In the winter we ain't got no choice. Unless we want to try to sleep in the subways, or in doorways, with summer-weight blankets.

WW: What do you feel about what happened last Saturday night (Aug 6)...

Jimmy: I think it was a good thing, it really pinpointed the problem here. Black and white together against the police. Now people are looking at what we are fighting. Everyone will know, in Chicago, in L.A. It's repression of the underclass.

WW: Mayor Koch and Police Commissioner Ward said it was all because of "professional agitators."

Jimmy: There are no professional agitators. No one needs to get up on a soapbox. The police are agitating us. They come in here all the time and provoke us. We don't need them around. Now we just need to show we can run the park better than they can.

WW: What do you think needs to be done?

Jimmy: We need to get the community together and get some money from the city to clean these rooms. We need to get shelters where we can preserve some human dignity and respect, including for people with AIDS...I want to help people with AIDS.

There's a Puerto Rican woman— she's not here tonight—she's got AIDS and she's going on her last journey. We need to legalize squatters and open abandoned buildings [so people can fix and live in them]. We need food and soup kitchens every day, like what the Panthers did.

WW: What about yourself? What are you going to do?

Jimmy: Me, I'm 41 years old, I gotta get some money together and get out of this. After a while, sleeping on benches is like a weight on your neck, choking you. I gotta get out of this before I have a heart attack and end up in a rehab shelter.

We talked a while longer, and as we did so several patrols of foot cops passed by. At least two of these included police brass, obvious by their white shirts and stripes. An impromptu duo, saxophonist and bongo player, made passable sounds behind us. After a while we talked about when we thought Mayor Koch would try to re-impose the curfew, perhaps next month or next winter.

Jimmy: I'm getting some people together to open up some subways for homeless to stay in ... to present the city with a petition.

WW: What do you call your group?

Jimmy: "The M-O-D Committee for Survival."

Aug 13 march of 500 takes to the streets despite rain
THE BATTLE OVER GENTRIFICATION AT TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK

Hundreds march as protest goes on
Mayor Koch admits 'blunder' in cop riot

By Michele Finkelstein
and Michael Swinrick
New York

This week, Mayor Ed Koch and his Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward were forced to admit that they had blundered in the police riot that occurred on Aug. 6 in this city's Lower East Side at Tompkins Square Park.

Because the actions of the police were met with overwhelming support and resistance by the people of this community, Koch was forced to lift the curfew, although he admitted it was a temporary measure.

Reacting to citywide and national pressure as even the bourgeois media acknowledged the bloodthirsty goons that they really are, Police Commissioner Ward was compelled to admit publicly that the police were disor- dered and unprepared for the upris- ing that occurred and that they were wrong to attack, brutally beating by- standers as well as protesters.

When the police attacked the demonstration protest gentrification, homelessness and the curfew that was placed on Tompkins Square Park, they were not prepared for the fact that the people of the Lower East Side would fight back. More than anything it was the fact that the struggle would spread to other parts of the city that forced Koch and Ward to admit their "mis- take." At the same time, they have befoe-up their troops on the Lower East Side and other areas that are brewing for a similar struggle.

A national issue

Their fears are not unfounded. What is happening on the Lower East Side is not an isolated situation. All of New York City has been targeted for gentrification, and in fact, poor and working people all across the country are being pushed out of their homes and their communities.

Many cities are ripe for rebellion.

Indeed, the Lower East Side community has begun to draw comparison between itself and other communities in similar situations. In turn, poor and working people throughout New York have identified and solidarity themselves with the Lower East Side.

While Koch and Ward are trying to sweep all this under the rug as soon as possible, the community has continued to resist in a week full of activities and protests.

In a community meeting Aug. 9, vic- tims of police brutality were urged to file complaints with the Civilian Complaint Review Board. Over 100 such complaints have been filed thus far.

However, the overwhelming mood of the meeting was angry, and the people attending wanted to do more than just file complaints. They wanted to take the struggle into the streets. And they did.

The Aug. 9 meeting was called to prepare for a meeting with city and police officials two days later. However, on Aug. 11 he officials did not show. Instead, they met at Gracie Mansion with a hand-picked group of "representa- tives,"-a decision that the community had no part in.

When the people at the community meeting learned of this underhanded trick they spontaneously marched to the Ninth Precinct, taking the streets without a permit and blocking traffic.

The crowd, numbering close to a thou- sand, assembled in front of the precinct and charted "McNamara out!" No "po- lice state!" and "The parks belong to the people!" before returning to the church to continue their meeting with- out the city and police officials.

On Aug. 13, activities took place in the park all day, including a march at 2 p.m. and an all-day concert.

500 march, defy police

On Saturday night, at 11:30 p.m., a march began. Complete with banners, placards and chants, an angry and de- termined group of 500 marched in the streets to near-by Washington Square Park, surrounded by large numbers of police.

As the demonstration swelled through Cooper Union Square on busy Saturday night, hundreds applauded, cars tooted and many joined the march.

All through the Greenwich Village area on crowded streets people joined in the chants.

Upon arriving at Washington Square, the demonstrators found it closed and swarming with police. Inside the park, despite the supposed lifting of the cur-few there. As the marchers rallied in front of the park they were surrounded by police, in riot gear who began to slowly close in on the demonstrators.

The march circled Washington Square Park, pausing in front of Mayor Koch's village apartment to chant "Koch out!" and "Whose parks? Our parks!" Then they marched back to Tompkins Square.

In contrast to last week's protest, this time the police were ready for the demon- stration. There were hundreds of po- lice, many with riot gear and many un- der cover.

The police verbally harassed the demonstrators, calling out taunts and insults. This reporter heard one police captain shout a demonstrator "Hey ... come over here so I can beat you up."

The police also had surveillance teams filming and photographing the march- ers.

Yet, despite such heavy organized police presence people stayed in the streets, marching for two hours. The police waited until most of the crowd had dispersed before moving in, in force, to arrest 12 people who they had iden- tified as "organizers."

Koch, the police, and the monied forces who they represent think that these people can storm-arm the community of the Lower East Side into submission.

They think that they can enforce gentri- fication with violence and martial law tactics. Instead, the police have only succeeded in revealing themselves for what they really are—tools of oppres- sion and the pawns of Koch and the big real estate developers and landlords, whose interests they serve.

Their actions have only further incited the peo- ple's anger. The struggle will con- tinue—supported by poor, working and oppressed people throughout the city.

Park was scene of historic battles

By Shelley Ettinger
New York

This summer isn't the first time Tompkins Square Park has been the scene of police riots and community re- bellion. The park is situated in the midst of New York's Lower East Side, a working class neighborhood that for over a century has been a center of trade union, tenant, anti-racist and radical organizing.

In 1874—in the midst of a deep de- pression with millions jobless, vicious unemployment in full swing, and wage cuts of up to 45%—the unemployed gathered for a rally in Tompkins Square. As they chanted slogans like "Work, not charity!" the demonstra- tors, many of them immigrant workers from Eastern and Southern Europe, were attacked, trampled and clubbed by mounted police.

According to an observer who was there, "Platoons of police suddenly ap- peared, drenched in sweat, raging, rushed without warning whatever on the helpless and unarmed multitudes, violently assailed them with their clubs, struck at heads right and left, wounded many. . . . "The police screamed anti-immigrant and anti- worker epithets as they carried out their assault, and later charged that their victims were just a bunch of com- munists and anarchists."

One hundred fourteen years later, it sounds familiar doesn't it?

60 years ago, 21 years ago

In the early decades of this century, the Lower East Side was filled with tenements and sweatshops—and with union halls, socialist and radical news- papers, meetings, organizing. Leon Trotsky, in exile during this period be- fore he returned to help lead the Rus- sian Revolution, lived and wrote for a time on St. Mark's Place, just a block away from Tompkins Square.

There were frequent meetings and rallies in the park, and brutal police raids on union meetings andicket- lines were not uncommon.

Then, in 1967, the cops did it again in Tompkins Square, in a vicious rampage remembered well by many current res- idents of the neighborhood. In fact, some of the people wounded in this lat- est police riot were also hurt in that one 21 years ago.

On that night, May 30, 1967, a large force of riot cops was dispatched to the park, ostensibly to enforce a noise ordi- nance against the large number of youth gathered there, many of whom were playing music with drums and guitars, and dancing. According to eye- witnesses, when the youth refused a police order to leave the park—assert- ing, just as the protesters last week did, that the parks belong to the people— police moved in with nightsticks fly- ing. Their most brutal blows were aimed at Black and Latino youth.
Cease-fire set in Angola and Namibia

By Monica Moorehead

August 16—An immediate cease-fire has been declared in both Namibia and Angola in connection with the long overdue independence of Namibia from South Africa's illegal military occupation by the racist apartheid South African regime since 1913. The People's Republic of Angola, socialist Cuba and Pretoria, after many months of intense negotiations which also involved Soviet and U.S. officials, agreed to a tentative 30-day withdrawal of the South African Defense Force and their puppets inside Namibia by the West African forces from Namibia and Angola as well as the withdrawal of Cuban internationalist troops from Angola.

The withdrawals are being characterized by all the parties involved as decisive in beginning the process of granting independence to Namibia, which culminated in United Nations supervised elections next year.

The following is a tentative timetable agreed upon by the three governments:

Aug. 8—a cease-fire has begun by South Africa, Angola and Cuba.

Aug. 10—South Africa is to begin a three-week withdrawal of its troops from southern Angola.

Aug. 22—Another round of talks begins between South Africa, Angola and Cuba who discuss a proposed timetable for the withdrawal of Cuban troops, the status of bases belonging to the South African National Congress of South Africa in northern Angola and future South African aid to UNITA.

Sept. 21—Completing the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and Cuba and Angola will propose a timetable for withdrawing Cuban troops from Angola.

Nov. 1—United Nations Security Council sponsored resolution 435, which has called for Namibian independence since 1978, goes into effect, with seven-month grace period before elections.

Feb. 1, 1989—South Africa is to end troop withdrawal from Namibia except for 1,500 troops in northern Namibia.

June 1—Namibian elections and establishment of Namibian constitution.

Will South Africa and the U.S. adhere to agreement?

The fact that such an agreement came to fruition is a major victory for both the Angolan and Namibian people who have been victimized by South Africa’s racist military aggression.

This agreement speaks volumes to the inability of the South African military, the most well-equipped on the African continent, to defeat the Angolan armed forces, the Cuban internationalist forces and the South-West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO) of Namibia on the battle field.

In fact, it has been South Africa and its puppet mercenaries that have suffered military setbacks time and time again at the hands of these revolutionary freedom fighters. Take for instance the decisive battle of Cuito Cuanavale in the Angola province of Cuando Cubango this past June, a major defeat for South Africa, which forced them to the conference table.

According to the British publications the Independent and the Manchester Guardian, one of the reasons South Africa agreed so quickly to the withdrawal is because 200-400 of its troops were trapped within Angolan borders and South Africa needed a legitimate reason to get them out.

It would certainly be too premature to predict whether this agreement will be adhered to by the U.S. or South Africa. Only time will tell. The U.S. is still trying to convince the Angolan government to negotiate with the UNITA bandits, a condition that up until now the Angolans, citing UNITA as terrorists, will not agree to. UNITA has not been a part of the negotiations, and has refused to adhere to the cease-fire process.

For the meantime the U.S. has made it crystal clear that agreement or no agreement, it will continue to provide aid to UNITA in order for it to carry on its campaign of butchery, sabotage and terrorism against the Angolan people.

SWAPO officials at the United Nations informed Workers World today that at this moment, while the South African troop withdrawal is being monitored in southern Angola, the South African military is carrying out "mysterious" around Walvis Bay, a strategic port in northern Namibia.

SWAPO also commented that in preparation for next year’s election the apartheid regime is forming a phony grouping inside of Namibia initially called the United Democratic Force to counter SWAPO’s immense popularity among Namibia’s 12.2 million people. These two acts alone confirm that South Africa is not about to negotiate in good faith and cannot come to grips with a tremendous source of mineral wealth and cheap labor, as Namibia has been for South Africa for so many decades, realize even a nominal amount of independence.

South African Women’s Day.

On Aug. 9, 1956, 20,000 women marched in Pretoria against the imposition of pass laws on South African women. Over 100 people took part in a program in Washington, D.C. to mark the 32nd anniversary of South African Women’s Day. The event highlighted the continuing struggle of South African women despite continued political harassment and economic hardship. Keynote speaker Nongomocho Sangweni of the African National Congress described her personal experience in South African prisons. Infant mortality is 31 times higher for black children than for white children, she said. Half of all black children in South Africa die before they reach five. Despite these conditions, Sangweni concluded, "courage is contagious".

Jermila Dukladalova

Insurrection in Burma—what to look for

By Sara Flouder

A revolutionary insurrection is sweeping Burma aimed at the military dictatorship that has ruled there for 26 years.

For the past week tens of thousands of militant, angry students and increasing numbers of workers have confronted the military regime. Hundreds have been killed as the military has repeatedly opened fire on unarmed demonstrators.

Workers in all major industries, including the docks and transport, are on strike. Shops are closed. The uprising has spread from Rangoon, the capital city, and Mandalay to 24 cities and large towns. This tremendous upsurge has swept all classes into motion in opposition to the corrupt military regime.

March uprising

The uprising began in March, sparked by spiraling inflation, shortfalls of basic goods, cuts in services and unrelenting political repression. Two hundred demonstrators were killed then when the military was called out under the command of General U Sein Lwin.

In the following months the military intensified the ongoing war against the oppressed nationalities of Burma.

In June a curfew was imposed.

Schools and universities were shut down. The workers were increasingly joined students in demonstrations.

On July 13 U Ne Win, who had ruled Burma since seizing power in 1962, resigned. In a political maneuver he suddenly called for elections after 26 years of military rule, but then picked General U Sein Lwin to replace him and restore order. The appointment of General U Sein Lwin, who was responsible for the massacre in March, increased the outrage and determination of the growing resistance.

Martial law was declared in Rangoon, but despite troops opening fire on demonstrators and a new wave of arrests, the rebellion spread and the strikes continued.

On Aug.13 General U Sein Lwin was forced to resign. His resignation, however, is not likely to end the insurrection. The military regime remains hated among all elements of Burmese society.

While the uprising has swept all classes into motion, it will be important to watch developments among the organizations of the workers and the peasants and especially in relation to the oppressed nationalities of Burma.

Oppressed nationalities and guerrilla wars

For over 20 years the military has attempted to brutally suppress the continuing armed insurrections of the oppressed nationalities who comprise 30% of the population of 40 million people. The Kachin, Chin, Shan, Karen and the Kayan people have all waged protracted guerrilla wars for self-determination.

In addition, although 85% of the population is Buddhist, there are Hindu and Moslem religious minorities and for years the military junta has been unable to crush an ongoing communist-led armed insurgency in the north of Burma.

Political life has long been stifled. Little information is available in the West or through the media about the underground organizations that obviously exist. But as the struggles intensify, new social and class forces and oppressed nationality will begin to emerge with their own demands.

Next: The struggle against imperialist domination.
Socialism and the equality of nations

The struggle in the Baltic states

By Yaaqov Marcy

It seems that whenever there is the beginning of a national crisis of consid-
erable proportions, each of the classes and their representatives seek his
historical precedents to aid their partic-
ular cause.

Nowhere is this more evident at the present time then in the Baltic repub-
lics of the USSR—Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. For a considerable period now, the people of these Baltics are seeking for a sense of identity in each of these republics that has been taken on a rather obvious bourgeois nationalist character.

That the collapse of the USSR should be distinguished from the de-
velopments in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kazakhstan which we discuss-

Demands for economic autonomy

The developments in the Baltic re-
publics have a distinct and preponder-
antly international dimension to them. This has been amply demonstrated in discussions in detail before one can ar-
rive at any opinion with respect to de-
mands being made by two organiza-
tions the so-called 'Baltic States' in E-
stonia, which claim to speak for "demo-
cratic reforms" and "socialist re-
newal." The first organization is a writers' group in Latvia which has issued a doc-
ument containing demands presum-
ably in the spirit of the June 1968 19th All-Union Party Conference of the USSR, which accelerated the Gorb-
achev administration's plans for eco-
nomic restructuring (perestroika).

However, their demands go far be-
Yaaqov Marcy was a well-known journalist and political analyst. This article, published in 1988, discusses the political and social struggles in the Baltic states, particularly Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The article examines the demands for economic autonomy, particularly in the Baltic states, and the tendency towards a socialist renewal. The author, Yaaqov Marcy, discusses the historical precedents and the political landscape of the time, including the increasing sense of nationalism and the efforts to gain economic and political independence from the Soviet Union.
Tawana Brawley and Yonkers

The role of the capitalist state in propagating and generating racism was put on display this past week in New York state. Yonkers, New York, has seen a virtual secessionist movement led by city council officials who are defying a federal court order to build low-cost housing in that city. There is widespread evidence of systematic racism in housing and education in the city, the fourth largest in the state. (See, article page 4) The four recalcitrant council officials have whipped up the white racist element in the city in a hysterical campaign against desegregation.

What is particularly noticeable about Yonkers is the fact that not one state or federal official, not one significant white politician, not one white business official, none of them has said a word of condemnation about this blatantly illegal action. The "law-and-order" president or his attorney general hasn't said a word. The governor hasn't said a word. None of the presidential contenders have said a word.

Liberal" Governor Cuomo went so far as to publicly state that he "understood the anger" of those opposed to low-income housing! He did not say he understood the anger of the Black residents of Yonkers who have endured decades of institutionalized segregation. Nor, he said, "understood the anger" of the racists. The message, of course, was as clear as could be. It was a green light to the bigots.

All this is in sharp contrast to Arne's handling of the Tawana Brawley case in Wappinger Falls, less than 50 miles up the Hudson from Yonkers. On Monday, Aug. 15, a New York grand jury voted to indict Brawley's father, a convicted drug dealer, for murdering a mysterious young black woman. There is already a court order sentencing Glenda Brawley, Tawana's mother, to 30 days in jail for defying a grand jury subpoena.

Brawley is the "case" through which the media has assiduously publicized and tried to demonize the black community. The only difference is that Glenda Brawley is black. The only difference is that there is outrage that has been little has been done to apprehend the criminals and know the police just aren't that concerted when a black teenager is a victim of such a heinous crime.

Instead, Cuomo issued a curt statement that "The law is the law. . .That's the way the system works." That is the way the system works, for bigots and oppressors and repression and poor and working people.

Letters

Bentsen and the Atomic Cafe

In a stroke of genius about five years ago, some people decided to study U.S. government film archives to learn exactly what our government was telling us about nuclear weapons in the 1940s, '50s and early '60s.

The film that was screened for the first time in public was the Atomic Cafe, a funniest and most frightening hour-and-a-half movie ever made. It featured Bert the Turtle talking to children, "just duck and cover" to remain safe from atomic blast, plus high quality technicolor film of hydrogen bomb explosions. A real laugh-fest.

I saw Atomic Cafe Tuesday, July 12, and what a coincidence! Who should I see upon the movie screen but no less than that youthful incarnation of the very man named that very day by Michael Dukakis as his choice to be the vice president of the United States.

Don't get me wrong. The guy is not the star of Atomic Cafe. Lloyd's only on screen for 30 seconds.

The time is 1945 and the history of the infant Korean War is hidden as the U.S. government tells the world "the commies are coming" and they have provoked a war by crossing the 38th parallel, and they have to be stopped. It is newsreel footage, and you see a freshman congressman looking barely 30 years old, looking more like a stern kid, and there in blazing black and white, standing on the Capitol steps to no less, from Texas. Mr. Representative Lloyd Bentsen, sincere and grim, looking right into the camera and addressing the people of the movie-going USA: "I protest the conduct of the United States advise the commander of the north Korean troops to withdraw his forces beyond the 38th parallel within one week and to provide adequate refugees from a specified list of North Korean cities that will be subjected to atomic attack by the United States Air Force. I ask you, the American citizen, to let your congressman know how you feel about this proposal.

Now, you can say this was excessive. You can say he didn't know the consequences of such words. Or you can say people grow and surely Lloyd Bentsen has grown over the last 30 years. God knows you'll hear more than you want about positions favorable to big business and $10,000 breakfasts.

Still, there is this thing about words. There is the testimony of millions—or is it just hundreds of thousands?—of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (and let's don't forget nonatomic-none-the-less-fireballing-Dresden too), and Lloyd Bentsen had to know. He may be a neat fella, I guess. The question that nag's in a man doesn't understand the meaning and implication of his words, and the terrible consequences that can come of them—is such a man fit to lead? Is he fit to be vice president? Of your local Rotary Club?

Stuart Hertz

Independent producer at Pacifica Radio WBAI in New City. (His program can be heard nationally in October.)

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campaign over. They were all sooton life! But the U.S. as well as Britain had never stopped exporting strategic materials to Nazi Germany, even after that matter to Japan.

The Neutrality Act passed by the Roosevelt administration, which was supposed to keep the U.S. from getting into the war, the billion and billions of dollars loosed in it. Nothing less than the outbreak of war itself stopped the flow of the Asian power.

Some of the big corporations, like General Electric, were among the very last to abide by the act, and even then only under duress. The government had to say to the act, and even then only under duress. The government had to say to the act, and the act, and then they would allow the belligerents to sink deeper into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously in this, in order to weaken and exhaust one another and then, while they have become weak enough, to appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, in the interests of peace, and to dictate conditions to the embattled belligerents. Cheap and easy?

This was a diplomatic message to the imperialist Allies about the suspicions of the Soviet government regarding their relations with Nazi Germany.

The New York Times in its coverage of Stalin's speech made no particular reference to what he had said about the USSR refusing to "pull the chestnuts out of the fire" for the Allies. However, the New York Telegram in its report of the speech carried a bold headline on that just that.

Communists emboldened imperialist democracies, then did about-face.

The Communist parties around the world were then in the Comintern, whose ideological leader was Stalin. What was wrong with Comintern policy at the time was that, following the "collective security" pronouncements made at the Seventh Congress of the CPSU, the Comintern began to so emphasize internationalism as peace-loving that they began to forget the imperialist character of these democracies and to ignore their aspects of the class struggle overboard.

Then, after the Soviet-German non-aggression pact, they compounded the error by appreciating the "reform" of the big capitalists, downplaying their catharsis of the Nazis. Tremendous disillusionment and demoralization can only result from such tactics.

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Koreans: 'Yankee go home!'  

Members of a delegation of four people from the United States who addressed the crowd. They were: Kiyul, a Korean living in the U.S. who represented the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament and Against Imperialism in Korea, Gloria Bois from the Alliance of Philippine Concerns, Charlie Chu of the War Resisters League and this reporter, representing the People's Anti-War Mobilization.

The U.S. speakers were received very enthusiastically as they denounced the U.S. troops out of Korea and supported self-determination for the Korean people (see article from Pyongyang). As the frontline fighters began to lead the march out of the courtyard, the final speaker read from a statement issued by the National Student Association. The statement said, "From Takc Eo Mountain (famous in north Korea) to the Hanla Mountain (the southernmost mountain in south Korea where the march to the border began), the road to Panmunjom is the only road to recreate and renew our nation."

Students face all-out police  

Late this afternoon, 20 police vans were held in preparation for the march to the entrance of the university, where 50,000 troops awaited the demonstrators. Rattling cans were heard to encourage the students from the university to march outside. Several police officers were heard screaming at the students to return to the university. The police then started to make arrests. Other speakers from different sectors of the Korean movement showed wide support for the student movement.

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The point of view of the socialist interests of the USSR and the world struggle for socialism, it was not wrong for the Soviet Union to enter into an agreement with Nazi Germany for the purposes of safeguarding its territory even if only on a temporary basis.

One must not lose sight of the impera- tive necessity for the USSR to maneuver between the two imperialist blocs, one democratic, the other fascist, in order to defend its socialist interests. The USSR did the same thing under Lenin, but in a more principled way, especially with the Rapallo agreement of 1922.

How Bolsheviks handled Rapallo treaty

At that time, a conference of the Allied powers was taking place in Genoa to consider such matters as post-war reparations by Germany. The Allies were supposedly concerned with the economic reconstruction of Europe and reparations. The Allied imperialists were nearly ready to accord diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union, but they put conditions on it. For instance they demanded a 65 million gold francs compensation for the Bolsheviks having expropriated imperialist property and repudiated the castrist debts. But the Soviet government refused to pay.

On the other hand, under the Ger- man-Soviet Treaty of Rapallo, the Ger- mans agreed to nullify the March 1918

Brest-Litovsk agreement which the Bolsheviks had signed with Germany during the war and which had imposed terrible hardships on the USSR. The Soviet Union had been forced to surrenderto Germany a great deal of its ter- ritory, including the Baltic states. At Rapallo, this was nullified and Ger- many also waived its claims for nation- alizations and other losses it had sus- tained as a result of the Bolshevik Rev- olution.

In those days, none of this diplomatic maneuvering by the USSR in any way interfered with the work of the German Communist movement, or the French or British, for that matter, who continued to conduct their working class struggle policies without making any concessions to their respective imperi- alist governments.

The historical problem for the working class in the Baltic republics is that after the Bolshevik Revolution, the workers there, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, attempted insurrec- tions in the three republics which un- fortunately failed for a variety of rea- sons. The attempt of the bourgeoisie to construct so-called democratic regimes also failed, and what ultimately re- sulted was wholesale repression of the Communists and the establishment of reactionary, fascistic regimes.

It is necessary to put it bluntly and plainly. The establishment of these ar- eas as socialist republics within the USSR was hastened by two developments. The first was the diplomatic rec- ognition of Soviet power arising out of the German-Soviet non-aggression pact of 1939. The second was the revo- lutionary activity and rising demands of these republics that arose in response to the enormous growth of Nazi influ- ence in Europe in the late thirties.

Earlier, the threat of Hitlerism had evoked momentous revolutionary struggles in France and Spain, resulting in the ascendancy of a Popular Front in both countries.

If certain elements in the Baltic states today hope that they have won all these historical issues, it would certainly be wrong for them to take the same old route as that mapped out by Western media, which leads right to the imperi- alist camp and is moreover historically false in its depiction of the imperialist Allies as the democratic defenders of small nations.

People's Anti-War Mobilization representative addresses Seoul protest

Sue Bailey, representing the People's Anti-War Mobilization, was among those who addressed a crowd of 10,000 student protesters in Seoul, south Korea on Aug. 15, before they confronted 50,000 riot police in an at- tempt to meet with students from north Korea.

Bailey pointed to the impact that the Korean struggle was having inter- nationally, as news footage of their determined demonstrations reached into the homes of millions world- wide. She explained, "When the Korean movement stands to demand that the U.S. get out of Korea we want to make sure that millions of progres- sive people in the U.S. are ready to hear that call."

"As with Vietnam 20 years ago and with Nicaragua and South Africa today, we want to build a mass anti- war and pro-solidarity movement with the Korean struggle. Such a move- ment must be conscious enough, militant enough and big enough that the U.S. government will be forced to respond. U.S. troops and nuclear weapons out! Forward to the genuine solidarity between the Korean and American workers!"

Bailey's words were very warmly received by the crowd and her talk was written up in one daily and one movement newspaper.

U.S. out of Korea!

Close to 200 people, mostly Korean, protested in front of the UN in New York City on Aug. 12. The demonstrators, led by the Young Koreans United, demanded "U.S. troops and nuclear weapons out of Korea." They also at- tacked the role that the UN has been playing in perpetuating the division of Korea.

Bill Sullivan
Pueblo Chileno rechaza plebiscito

Por Santiago Manque-Milla

El plebiscito que será convocado este año es una necesidad de las clases dominantes para institucionalizar a la dictadura militar del gran capital monopolio y financiero. A través del plebiscito se pretende convencer al mundo que los chilenos se resignaron a aceptar el sistema opresor y criminal instaurado en 1973.

El objetivo de la dictadura, en función de su proceso de institucionalización, es que quiere que las fuerzas políticas, ideológicas y sociales acepten legimitar las leyes de este régimen ilegítimo. Sólo así podrá prolongarse el Estado construido sobre las piedras angulares de la Seguridad Nacional y de la Contraseguridad. Bajo este esquema es que a la dictadura no le causa preocupación el resultado de un "plebiscito" cuyo trámite fraudulento está asegurado de antemano. Lo único que a ellos le importa es que acepten sus registros electorales y que los ciudadanos se inscriban y voten, ojalá masivamente.

Lo vital para la dictadura es que los partidos opositores soliciten funcionar de acuerdo a la Constitución del 80 y a la ley complementaria que promulgó el régimen, obteniendo así el dudoso privilegio de actuar en la forma en que la dictadura desea precisamente que actúen. Detrás de este juego, que constituye ya una burla a la dolorosa realidad que vive nuestro pueblo, hay fuerzas económicas y políticas, entre ellas el imperio norteamericano. Sumándose a este ataque en común acuerdo con las Fuerzas Armadas (FAA) hay sectores reaccionarios, grandes empresas nacionales e extranjeras etc.

Pero el pueblo no está obligado a elegir una dictadura de factos o a una tiranía militar institucionalizada. No tiene por qué optar entre Pinochet o un titerete de este.

El pueblo tiene su propio camino y ese es de la libertad por la libertad, el rechazo a la institucionalización del régimen y el combate para que la soberanía popular pueda ejercerse plenamente en un país libre, y que sus aspiraciones democráticas y sus reivindicaciones económicas, sociales y culturales serán obra del pueblo mismo, de su propia lucha que va más allá del plebiscito.

Y es bajo este contexto es que el Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR-Chile), como parte del Movimiento por la Soberanía Popular se plantea dentro de esta coyuntura política el rechazo al proceso de institucionalización en forma absoluta el desco nocimiento total de las leyes políticas del régimen y repudia la validez del "plebiscito" y de todo acto que emane de una autoridad que carece de cualquier legitimidad.

Nadie ignora que el MIR-Chile ha sufrido duras golpes durante estos años, pero nadie ignora también la firme decisión de sus militantes de redoblar sus esfuerzos y sacrificios para cumplir con el deber revolucionario de estar junto a su pueblo en momentos tan decisivos. Impulsando con firmeza las tareas necesarias para fortalecerse y entregar nuestras mejores capacidades políticas e institucionales en esta lucha por la libertad del Chileno. ¡Sólo la lucha nos hará libres! ¡Venceremos!