



Defy the capitalists and the union hacks! Rank-and-file action vs. the takebacks

1988 has opened up with a new round of struggle by the workers. This issue of *The Workers' Advocate* reports on a series of strikes, job actions, and other protests against the capitalist concessions drive.

This is a year when many major contracts expire and various struggles are coming up.

The strike at Mobil Oil begins the contract struggles of 40,000 workers in the oil industry.

Walkouts and job actions have broken out at several General Electric plants. And 155,000 electrical workers are preparing for contract struggles this summer against GE, Westinghouse and other companies.

There have been a number of mass protests at Chrysler against layoffs and plant closings. And this summer and fall contracts for 160,000 auto workers expire at Chrysler, General Dynamics, and various auto parts companies.

As well, rubber workers, truck drivers, clothing workers, government workers — in all 3.4 million workers — face major contract fights this year.

The outcome of these struggles will determine the immediate fate of the Reaganite takeback offensive. The need for a fight is urgent. With the stock market crash the capitalists have become even more determined to skin the workers. It's time to unite, to organize, to stand up to every attack and build a class-wide struggle of all the workers.

The Capitalists Are Out for Blood

This year's election campaign has seen Democrats and even a few Republicans talking about a new compassion for the working masses. Some magazines have even declared that the Reagan era is over. But beneath the nice promises one finds that the capitalists

are still out for blood.

In the fall the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA), a private publisher of business research, surveyed major corporations about what they had in store for their workers. The BNA study showed that, "Despite rising profits...employ-

ers intend to take a more aggressive, tighter fist stance with unions next year [1988] according to a survey of companies with labor contracts expiring in 1988.... An overwhelming majority of the 215 employers in the BNA survey indicated they are determined to

prevent unions from reversing a downward pattern in negotiated wage increases that began in 1982." (*Associated Press*, Nov. 13, 1987)

The capitalist offensive continues
Continued on page 6
See TAKEBACKS

Democrats fund Reagan's contras



"Not one penny for contra aid" — slogan at demonstration in Washington, D.C., February 2. Reformist leaders are backpedaling on this demand of anti-intervention activists.

The Democrats know no shame in their hostility to Nicaragua. No sooner do they finally vote down one of Reagan's contra aid packages on February 3, than they declared on February 4 that they would fund the contras themselves. A new vote is expected in early March.

The Democrats are proposing a \$30 million aid package to last a few months. The issue in Congress is not whether to fund the war on Nicaragua, but only whether to pass the Democratic

bill or a new Republican bill.

Anti-intervention activists! The Democratic liberals swore up and down that the Democratic Party would stand up to the Reaganite war on Nicaragua.

What liars! In the last six months the Democratic-controlled Congress has approved aid to the contras four times for a total of over \$50 million. At this rate the Democrats will match the highest yearly funding for the contras ever.

Now the Democratic Party wants to continue funding the contras in the name of "peace."

The Democrats are just as opposed to Nicaraguan workers and peasants as the open Reaganite warmongers. **Let us aim the anti-war struggle against both parties of U.S. aggression, the Republicans and the Democrats!** □

See article on fraud of "humanitarian" aid — page 15.

Report from Kurdistan



- March 8 — International Working Women's Day
Salute the communist women of Iran!
- Kurdistan — nine years of revolutionary struggle
- Medical work in the revolution

(See pages 8-11)

No let up in Palestinian uprising: 'Occupiers, get out!'

The month of February saw no letup in the Palestinian demonstrations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Every time a school is allowed to open it immediately becomes an organizing center. Every time curfew is lifted from a neighborhood the masses immediately take to the streets again, determined to seek vengeance on the Zionist soldiers.

The continuing movement has shown everything the Zionists said about the uprising to be a lie. They said it was the work of a few "outside agitators." They said it couldn't last. They said that beating the demonstrators would end it. But the rebellion continues. And it gains in strength.

Nablus at the Center

The uprising began in early December in Gaza. And Gaza keeps getting shut down by a commercial and laborers' strike. The tens of thousands of workers who cross the border daily to work inside Israel periodically withhold their labor from the Israeli capitalists.

But the largest protest actions in February took place in the West Bank. Protests took place up and down the West Bank, even in remote villages, miles from any road.

The largest actions occurred in the cities — Ramallah, Nablus, East Jerusalem. In Nablus the Zionist troops came under attack from hundreds of youth throwing stones, bottles, chunks of concrete, and flowerpots. In many cases the youth forced bloodied Israeli soldiers to retreat. In the narrow streets and alleys of Nablus young militants attacked troops with knives, taking on the heavily armed soldiers in hand-to-hand combat.

The Zionists put the entire city of Nablus — with a population of 100,000 — under round-the-clock curfew for a week and a half. No one was allowed out of their home for ten days. This is a big hardship for people who usually buy their food daily. But starving the masses into submission did not work. Protests continued in the areas around Nablus.

Continued on page 13

Will the courts stop FBI spying on the movement?

It has been revealed that the FBI carried out a massive spy operation against the anti-war movement. For most all of the time Reagan has been in office, the FBI has paid special attention to undermining the struggle against U.S. intervention in Central America.

How should the movement protect itself against this big political police force?

Some say: look to the courts and the constitution. Whole organizations, like the American Civil Liberties Union, promote the idea that freedom can be defended through the courts.

But look at the history of the spying on the anti-war movement. In Chicago, the courts had already ruled that such spying should not be carried out, and it didn't faze the FBI one bit.

Judge Rules Against FBI Spying

In 1981 there was a "consent decree" between, on one side, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Chicago Alliance to End Repression (AER) and, on the other, the Chicago Office of the FBI. Approved by Judge Susan Getzendanner, this decree specified that in Chicago "the FBI shall not conduct [a domestic security] investigation solely on the basis of activities protected by the First Amendment...or on the lawful exercise of any right secured by the Constitution or laws of the U.S."

Furthermore, Judge Getzendanner interpreted this decree strictly, stating that "Some objectors argue that the FBI can evade the FBI settlement agreement by simply relabeling a 'domestic security' investigation as a 'foreign counterintelligence' investigation. They

are wrong. The settlement does not turn on labels." She said that things do not depend "on what the FBI chooses to call it [an investigation], but on the facts underlying the investigation."

Later, in 1983, Judge Getzendanner issued a permanent injunction to back this up.

You rarely get a judge who rules this way. But what happened?

The FBI Didn't Care

The FBI spying continued anyway. The Chicago Office of the FBI took an energetic part in the national campaign of the FBI against the anti-war movement.

This investigation was based on simply labeling the FBI's domestic spying as looking into foreign terrorism issues. Judge Getzendanner said that the consent decree could not be sub-

verted by mere labels. She was wrong.

This investigation was designed to chill First Amendment rights. It included pictures of demonstrations and reports on ordinary political activity. And it continued despite the consent decree and the permanent injunction.

The courts and laws are designed to protect the bourgeoisie. The same laws and phrases that are used to jail the people become impotent and elastic when applied to the ruling class.

Not Legalism, But Struggle

The movement can only defend itself against the political police by giving up illusions in bourgeois law. The organization of the masses against the bourgeoisie and its institutions is the only safeguard of political rights. □

Swaggart's and Robertson's born-again racism

Televangelists' apartheid connection

Right-wing TV preachers are once again in the center of the news. In his campaign for the Republican nomination, Pat Robertson is churning out one lie after another to grab media attention. Meanwhile, the TV church has been hit with yet another scandal as Jimmy Swaggart got caught with his pants down.

Lying and hypocrisy are in fact stock-in-trade for these self-righteous preachers. But while the capitalist news media eagerly zero in on the sex scandals, they don't bother to focus much attention on the real scandals about the TV preachers — the backward and reactionary politics they promote both here in the U.S. and around the world.

But the politics of the TV evangelists is not something incidental. The TV church is one of the biggest crusaders for right-wing political causes. One of their main activities is support for apartheid racism in South Africa.

Pat Robertson Shows His Racism

This was again brought home recently by a report on Pat Robertson. In an in-

terview broadcast on South African government-controlled TV, Pat Robertson declared that black Americans "don't understand what they're dealing with" in South Africa. He complained that South Africa has become a campaign issue.

Robertson went on, "And so it becomes an American political issue to say if you want support among American blacks for American political office you have to bash South Africa. I think that's bad."

The Republican candidate described his support for South Africa because of its strategic importance, "I want South Africa as a friend of the West and a bastion of capitalism." (Robertson's quotes appear in the *New York Times*, February 14)

Here in the U.S. one may be bewildered as to how South Africa has become a "presidential campaign issue." You hardly hear a word about it. But that's just a smokescreen. What Pat Robertson is telling his white racist South African audiences is that he is one of "their own." Simply put, Pat Robertson is a racist bigot and that's why he

supports apartheid racism.

Merely the Tip of the Iceberg

This is just a recent example. The right-wing TV preachers have a longstanding alliance with apartheid racism. All the leading lights of the TV church — Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell — have been involved in organizing support for the racist system in South Africa.

A few years back, during the height of the black rebellion in South Africa, Jerry Falwell of the "Moral Majority" went on a much-publicized visit to South Africa. He came back and organized a campaign to raise support for the Botha regime. He called for Americans to buy Kruggerands, the South African gold coin. And he railed against any efforts to impose sanctions on South Africa.

Pat Robertson's TV church has also been active on behalf of South Africa. Last summer Robertson's *700 Club* promoted three sellout blacks from South Africa who denounced the black liberation movement. Meanwhile Robertson has a TV station in Bophutatswana, one of the so-called "homelands" inside South Africa. They broadcast an Afrikaans version of the *700 Club* for white audiences. Robertson's network also supports RENAMO, the South African-backed terrorist group in Mozambique which has made itself notorious for a string of grisly mass murders of Mozambican civilians.

What You Won't Hear Swaggart Confessing As A Mistake

Meanwhile, Jimmy Swaggart is reported to have been the most popular

evangelical in South Africa. He has a large office and spiritual supermarket in Johannesburg and he gets a lot of exposure on South African television. Not surprisingly, look at what he wrote in an article in the July 1985 issue of his magazine *The Evangelist*.

"Some 300 years ago, when the country of South Africa was formed, the whites built this country with ingenuity, sacrifice and hard work. And through these last three centuries, more and more blacks opting for the good jobs and the higher wages in South Africa migrated in that direction. Consequently, there are now six or even seven times more blacks in South Africa than there are whites. And make no mistake about it, the blacks have contributed to the building of South Africa — but, far and away, it was the ingenuity, the sacrifice, and the hard work of the whites that made this country the envy of all of Africa." (Quoted in the March 1988 *Penthouse*.)

Clearly this stuff makes Pat Robertson's latest whoppers seem puny by comparison. This is straight out of the lying propaganda machine of the apartheid racists. But you won't find big media campaigns to force Swaggart to acknowledge these racist lies. You won't see Swaggart confessing any sins of support for bigotry. And you won't see the Assemblies of God Church leaders punishing Swaggart for these crimes.

What this says is simple: to these oh-so pious churchmen it is no sin to lie when it comes to defending white racism. It is no crime when it comes to helping the bloody South African regime oppress millions of black men, women and children. □

Pentagon's new germ warfare lab

The Pentagon is not only planning for nuclear world war, but for bacteriological warfare as well. The U.S. Army just unveiled plans for a new germ warfare laboratory at Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, 70 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. It announced that the lab would study anthrax, Q fever, tularemia, and encephalitis.

The Pentagon pretends that it is only interested in studying defensive measures. But these experiments turn out to be the same ones needed for of-

fensive use of germ warfare. The Pentagon, of course, needs to know how to take "defensive" measures to prevent infection of its troops and "friendly" populations before it can use the germs on "enemies." As well, since World War II the Pentagon has conducted a number of open-air experiments on how to spread germs through the atmosphere, using "harmless" bacteria or chemicals, experimenting on unsuspecting civilians in the U.S. and Canada. □

ISRAEL

Continued from page 13

car with Arab license plates, then burst from the car and spray demonstrators with automatic rifle fire.

The Essence of Zionism: Racist Oppression

The brutality of the Israeli troops and settlers goes to the very essence of Zionism.

All their measures — the beatings, the shootings, the live burials, the tear gassing of hospitals — have a deadly serious purpose: to keep the Palestinians in a state of oppression. This is the foundation on which the Zionist state is based.

The Zionist rulers promote the racist idea that the struggle is one of Jews ver-

sus Palestinians. This view is pushed by the Israeli capitalist ruling class to keep the Jewish working people attached to itself. But there are cracks in the Zionist consensus which the Israeli regime works hard to hold up. There have been several demonstrations by Israeli Jews against occupation brutality. And there have even been rumblings of dissent among reservists and soldiers who are part of the conscripted army.

Jewish workers in Israel need to break with the Israeli bourgeoisie and its class-collaborationist Zionist ideology. They need to join up with the cause of Palestinian liberation. The next step forward for the emancipation of the toilers — both Jewish and Arab — is through overthrowing the Israeli state and replacing it with a democratic Palestine without an official religion. □

The Workers' Advocate



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

Editorial correspondence:

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

Orders and subscriptions:

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

Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$0.75 for single copy
\$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9.00 for 12. From vendor: \$0.25 ISSN 0276-363X

DOWN WITH RACISM!

1,000 denounce coverup in racist abduction of Tawana Brawley



Over 1,000 people marched through a snowstorm in Poughkeepsie, New York February 27. Shouting "No justice, no peace!" they rallied in front of the Dutchess County sheriff's office to protest the racist attack on Tawana Brawley. Protesters lambasted local officials for covering up for the attackers. And Governor Cuomo and state Attorney General Robert Abrams were also denounced for not vigorously pursuing the racists.

Brawley, a black fifteen-year-old, was abducted as she waited for a bus in Wappingers Falls, New York. She was held for four days by six white men and repeatedly raped. She was finally dumped on a road November 28, wrapped in a plastic bag, with "KKK" and "Nigger" scrawled across her body in charcoal. Feces were smeared on her face and her hair had been partially chopped off.

Many facts have come to light indicating that government officials are impli-

cated in the case and have at least been covering up for the racist rapists. Tawana told her family that one of her attackers wore a badge. And the February 19 *Newsday* reports that, "Sources say that when Tawana was being interviewed by police hours after she was attacked, she identified one of the officers in the room as one of her attackers." Despite this, no one has yet been charged, and it is three months since the attack.

Under the pressure of mass protests, Governor Cuomo appointed a special prosecutor to the case. But Cuomo's appointee, Attorney General Abrams, has also failed as yet to charge anyone. People at the February 27 protest were filled with anger at the apparent footdragging of Cuomo and Abrams. None of these government officials can be trusted. Justice against this racist outrage can only be won by building up the mass anti-racist movement. □

Angry march against murder of Juan Rodriguez by New York's 'KKK in blue'

Angry demonstrators — 1,000 strong — marched through northern Brooklyn on February 20. People were mad because a 40-year-old Latino, Juan Rodriguez, was beaten to death at his home by four policemen on January 30. People were mad because, three weeks later, the New York Medical Examiner released his autopsy report whitewashing the brutal beating. People were mad because Rodriguez is another in a whole string of racist murders by New York's "KKK in blue."

The demonstration wound through the Bushwick neighborhood and walked in silence by Rodriguez' home. When they got to the Knickerbocker Avenue police station, however, angry slogans filled the air. When the protesters marched to the Williamsburg Bridge, they found it blocked by a phalanx of cops. Marchers denounced the police and shouted "Sin justicia, no paz" ("No justice, no peace").

The New York Medical Examiner's office is notorious for whitewashing murders by policemen. In this case they admitted there were "blunt force injuries of head, body and extremities sustained during a struggle with police." But they refused to say that the injuries were actually caused by the police. Although Rodriguez was handcuffed behind the back — with two sets of handcuffs, no less — while he was being beaten, the report leaves open the possibility that the injuries may have been self-inflicted. What is more, they say his death was also caused equally by two other factors: a) "acute agitation" (could the police beating have anything

to do with this?); and b) fatty deposits in the arteries that related to his heart giving out. Therefore the death was ruled "unclassified."

Despite this coverup, an independent autopsy by a pathologist hired by Rodriguez' family concluded he was beaten to death. The police claim they were only restraining a deranged Rodriguez. But the report of the exten-

sive injuries indicate it was the police who are crazed killers.

The DA is still investigating. But it is

clear as a bell that there will be no justice unless the masses continue to take to the streets in struggle. □

Class boycott vs. racist attacks at Providence College

Students at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island are rallying their forces to fight a swelling wave of racist attacks.

On January 29 they organized a boycott of classes. And a demonstration was held in front of the main ad-

ministration building. The students denounced the spread of racist graffiti, racial slurs, the rape of a black woman by two white students, and the systematic discrimination against minority students sanctioned by the college administration. □

Berkeley students oppose racist talk show

About 80 students demonstrated February 1 against a racist radio broadcast at the University of California in Berkeley. Passing sanitation workers raised clenched fists and shouted support for the protest.

The station had invited Tom Metzger, leader of the White Aryan Resistance, to air his racist views on a call-in program scheduled for the first day of "Black History Month." The protest kept Metzger from appearing. But the station rigged up a long distance hookup to make sure Metzger was allowed to

spew his racist filth.

In justifying the broadcast, liberals from the station whined about "free speech" and claimed they only wanted to "expose Metzger's ideas." They promised to air a rebuttal the following week. But they actually censored calls coming into the station, screening out everything but "polite questions." Such is the liberals' idea of "freedom of speech" — let the racists say all they want, but censor the impolite anti-racist militants. □

Building occupied at U. of Mass.

Anti-racist students took over a building at the University of Massachusetts for six days in February. As many as 200 students occupied the building. Meanwhile another 500 students demonstrated outside to show their support for the occupation. Students and faculty members around the campus also wore black armbands to show solidarity against campus racism.

The occupation was sparked by a racist beating of two black people after a

dormitory party on February 7. The students also protested other racist attacks and the discriminatory practices of the administration. The occupation was ended after the administration promised a number of reforms, including: to make racist attacks a cause for immediate expulsion; to increase the number of third world students; to increase the number of graduate student stipends for blacks; and to start a tutoring program. □

Homeless vs Chicago Housing Authority

About 20 homeless people — assisted by 50 steelworkers, carpenters, bricklayers and tenants — took over an empty apartment in the Cabrini Green public housing development on February 15. They were firing and cleaning the apartment when they were attacked by guards from the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). One person was arrested, charged with battery, and taken to jail. The rest were chased out of

the apartment. In January homeless people were beaten by security guards when they carried out a similar action at the CHA's Henry Horner Homes.

The CHA has some 5,700 vacant apartments around Chicago. Many are completely heated, have running water and are suitable to allow the poor to escape the cold weather. But so far the CHA has refused to allow homeless people to occupy them. □

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Strikes and workplace news

Walk outs and job actions at GE plants

Seven thousand workers shut down the General Electric jet engine plant in Evendale (outside Cincinnati) on February 16. Mass picket lines of from 25 to 100 workers were set up at each of the plant's dozen entrances.

The workers are fighting GE's attempt to ram through its job consolidation plan. It is not until June 30 that the current contracts expire at this and other GE plants (covering a total of 70,000 workers). But GE announced it would begin, at the end of February, to combine 64 job classifications into about 32, whether the workers agree or not. The sweeping job combination will intensify work for 80% of the work force. At least 436 workers will have their pay cut. And about 650 workers will be laid off. About 350 workers were already laid off in January. The workers are also protesting GE's contracting out of millions of dollars of work to nonunion shops.

Job Actions at Erie and Louisville Plants

GE has also been trying over the last year to unilaterally combine jobs at its Erie, Pennsylvania plant. But workers there are fighting back. So far there have been half-hour walkouts, lawn meetings, plant-gate rallies and a day-long strike. Workers at GE's Appliance Park in Louisville also walked out in a wildcat against job combination.

Shifting Chicago Jobs to Nonunion Plant

Protests are also developing against GE's plans to close its refrigerator plant

in Chicago. Last fall GE announced it would shut the plant later this year — wiping out 1,500 jobs — and transfer production to a nonunion plant in Decatur, Alabama.

Recently it came out that GE will keep a small division of 150 workers at the plant. On this basis GE claims it is not technically closing the plant and, therefore, does not have to cough up severance pay for the workers it is kicking into the streets.

Union Officials Agree to Split Motor Division Off National Contract

Meanwhile, the heads of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) agreed to let GE split the Motor Division workers off the national contract. GE threatened to move all work to Mexico if concessions weren't accepted. So in the name of saving jobs IUE President Bywater demanded that the workers accept a \$1.25 an hour pay cut. Concessions don't save jobs, and the IUE leaders know it. In fact they specifically left a giant loophole in the "job guarantees" in this contract. It says no more layoffs **unless there is a downturn in business.**

The union bureaucrats are not saving jobs by caving in to the GE billionaires. Rather they are splitting up the workers and weakening their ability to fight back. A united struggle of all GE workers is what's needed to resist the savage attacks by GE.

(Based in part on Feb. 23 issue of "Boston Worker," paper of the MLP-Boston.) □

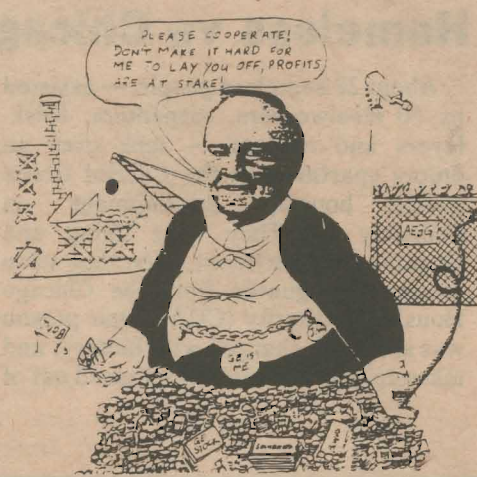
Fight vs. layoffs at GE—Lynn

Protest stickers declare, "To Hell With Jack Welch and the GE Billionaires! Fight Against Layoffs!" They have begun to appear around General Electric's giant complex in Lynn, Massachusetts. They are part of a campaign by the Marxist-Leninist Party to organize the fight against the enormous layoffs at GE-Lynn.

Last year GE raked in \$5 billion in profits. But it wants more. The January 18 *Boston Worker* reports, "It was not enough that the turbine plant was bringing in a huge profit. It wasn't huge enough. So they shipped the work out and are laying off 3,000 workers. It is not enough that aircraft profitability is more than twice that of Pratt and Whitney: \$25,000 profit per year per worker versus \$11,000 at Pratt (*Business Week*, Dec. 14). No, over 1,000 aircraft workers are to be dumped on Western Avenue too. It was not enough that they extorted 'factory of the future' automation and concessions out of us. They have set up more than 430 farm-out shops to make over 65% of the jet engine parts. Now they are talking of closing part or all of the Everett plant, bringing yet more layoffs."

Already 1,100 workers have been laid off. And as the layoffs mount, GE is driving those still employed to a frenzied pace of work. It has launched "GE is ME" and "I love the Pentagon" propaganda campaigns to exhort "cooperation" from the workers. And there is increased harassment over absenteeism and productivity. Some workers have even been forced onto overtime work because of GE's too hasty layoffs.

But anger is growing among the workers. Slowdowns began after the layoffs were first announced. The *Boston Worker* calls for the slowdowns, and other forms of resistance, to be stepped



TO HELL WITH JACK WELCH & THE GE BILLIONAIRES! FIGHT AGAINST LAYOFFS!

Marxist-Leninist Party, USA — Boston Branch

up. It emphasizes, "They threaten that if we don't cooperate, they will move the work out. But if we do cooperate, we will be laid off too. Cooperation and concessions — pushed on us by the soldout union bureaucrats — have brought us to the rotten state we're in today. And they want more. We must fight back against the ruthless profit drive, against the layoffs, concessions, speedup, and cooperation. To hell with Jack Welch (chairman of the board) and the GE billionaires! We are not machines to be thrown on the scrap heap to rust. Every worker must have a job or income. Let's make the rich sacrifice their millions for a change. No Cooperation! Fight Back Against Layoffs!" □

Fight closing of PACCAR truck part plant!

The Seattle Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party is calling for resistance to the "orderly" shutdown of the PACCAR corporation's Renton, Washington plant. The plant, called PACCAR Defense Systems (PDS), produces parts for Kenworth trucks, Peterbilt trucks, and other PACCAR subsidiaries. The corporation will shift the work to lower paying foundries and machine shops or acquire another foundry/machine shop to do the work at lower pay.

Some 400 jobs will be eliminated. But the arrogant management declared in January that it will **not** give production workers severance or retraining pay, and that it will not guarantee them jobs at Kenworth truck or other PACCAR-owned plants.

The management is not even telling the workers when the plant will close. Instead, it is keeping them in the dark and trying to squeeze every last penny from their sweat and blood. It has taken away afternoon break from many workers in the foundry. And it has instituted "computerized layoffs" in the cleaning room. With this system PACCAR uses a computer to closely monitor the workload and then lays off some workers for a few days or a week at a time. This is called an "orderly" and "professional" shutdown.

Unfortunately the union officials of the metal trades are scraping up every

argument they can think of to block resistance to PACCAR. For example, they've whined, "Don't get the company negotiators mad or you won't get severance pay." And they have harped on the racist lie that "Koreans are stealing your jobs because they will work for less." In fact, the workers in Korea are not standing for the rotten wages and conditions. Last year they unleashed a big strike wave against the capitalists. U.S. workers must do the same.

A February 15 leaflet of the MLP-Seattle calls on the workers to fight back. To organize mass actions. To draw Kenworth and other metal trades workers into the fight. "PDS does not have to close," the leaflet emphasizes. "But if the workers cannot prevent this then **PACCAR must pay.** First, every new job at Kenworth should be offered to workers in order of their seniority and with no reduction from their current wage. Second, PACCAR should fund retraining for every worker who wants it. Third, every worker should be given severance pay to tide him over, compensate for the disruption in his life, loss of seniority, etc. And not the Christmas turkey being given the lower-level salaried employees either! Hell, PACCAR has robbed every foundry worker of between \$15,000 and \$30,000 in wage concessions since 1983. It should at least pay that back." □

Maine residents block IP plant, protest poisoning by scab operation



One thousand workers and students demonstrate January 30 in Lock Haven, Pa. in support of striking International Paper workers.

Three hundred residents of Jay, Maine blocked scabs from entering the International Paper (IP) mill here for awhile on February 15. They were protesting the second major chlorine leak at the plant within nine days. They shouted "We want McKernan (Maine's governor)! Shut it Down!" About 80 of the protesters attempted to storm the mill, but were held behind the locked gate by police.

The mill is being operated by untrained scab labor and has become increasingly dangerous. On February 5 town officials ordered a general evacuation after 112,000 gallons of deadly chlorine gas leaked from the mill. While the town was evacuated IP kept 500 scabs in the mill — moved to the north end apparently to keep them from telling reporters about the accident that led to the leak. On February 14 seven employees of BE&K — the scab construction firm contracted by IP — were rushed to the hospital after being overcome by fumes from another major

chlorine leak. There are reports of three other small chlorine leaks and two oil spills in the mill in this period.

Protest leaders included the wives of striking IP workers. They are demanding that the mill be shut down for the safety of the people of the town. And they are supporting the IP strike.

Meanwhile over 1,000 workers rallied in support of the IP strike on January 30 in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania. The IP strikers were joined by workers coming from other parts of Pennsylvania and surrounding states. They included garment, steel, auto, oil and hospital workers along with students. They were also joined by a special contingent from the striking paperworkers in Jay, Maine.

The IP strikers have been out since last June, but they have received strong support from other workers all along. Despite repression by the police and the courts, the spirits of the strikers have not been daunted. Chants of "Scabs out, workers in!" rang through the air during the march. □

2,000 walk out at BP and Mobil Oil

On February 3 oil workers walked off the job at Mobil and British Petroleum (BP) refineries across the country.

Over 1,500 oil workers struck Mobil

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refineries in Torrance, California; Ferndale, Washington; and Beaumont, Texas. The workers are fighting Mobil's move to replace over 100 union jobs with untrained, nonunion employees. Following the expiration of the old contract, Mobil unilaterally converted the head operator job into a management position called "console supervisor." It began appointing people to this new management position regardless of their seniority, experience or training.

The same day some 400 oil workers struck BP refineries in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania and Toledo, Ohio. BP is demanding a series of contract concessions. It wants to extend the existing two-tier wage and benefit structure to

other sections of the refinery. It wants a barbaric absentee program that would cut 50% of sick pay any year the refinery absentee rate reached 2%. It wants to eliminate double-time pay and premium pay for working on days off or putting in over 40 hours during a regular schedule. And it wants to extend forced overtime and put workers onto a schedule of seven consecutive days of work, with two days off on a rotating basis.

These are the first strikes in the oil industry this year. Contracts covering 35,000 oil workers at a series of companies expired January 31. Another 5,000 oil workers have contracts that expire in March and April. □

1,000 rally in Cincinnati for transit strikers

On February 2 some 630 transit workers struck against the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority. They are fighting against the use of part-time workers and for higher pay.

The drivers, mechanics and clerks walked out after the management turned down a fact finder's report

favorable to their claims. Management even turned down the union bureaucrats' weak-kneed proposal for binding arbitration. Workers claim management is out to break the union.

On February 9th 1,000 workers rallied in downtown Cincinnati in support of the transit strike. □

Farm workers strike California grape grower

On January 29 more than 200 farmworkers struck Lucas and Sons, a major grape growing firm in central California. They are demanding to be paid on an hourly rate every week, rather than for piecework twice a month.

The farmworkers struck out of frustration. Seven years ago the Lucas workers elected to be represented by the United Farmworkers Union (UFW). UFW bureaucrats had promised to ob-

tain a contract for the workers without having to strike. Since then, however, their wages have been reduced and their benefits have been eliminated. And many workers have lost their jobs; they have been replaced by labor contractors.

Seven years later, the Lucas workers are still without a contract. Now, they are taking action to defend themselves. □

New York tugboat crews on strike

Tugboat and barge crews struck nine companies February 16. They are fighting contract demands that would eliminate 750 jobs and reduce wages and benefits by from 40% to 62%.

The strike by 2,500 workers has cut commercial shipping in New York har-

bor by some 50%. But the companies are shipping in scabs from other parts of the country. As well, it is reported that union bureaucrats have sent longshoremen and checkers across the picket lines, even though they belong to the same union. □

Bronx nurses are sick of overwork

Hundreds of nurses from two municipal hospitals in the Bronx, New York staged a sickout February 17. Some 40% of the nurses at the Bronx Municipal Hospital Center and 55% of the nurses at the Lincoln Medical Center did not report to work.

The nurses are protesting the intolerable working conditions. They are often working on a 40-patient-to-one-

nurse ratio. Such overwork not only harms the nurses but also is endangering the patients.

Nurses at all the municipal hospitals have been working without a contract since November. They are demanding wages comparable with private institutions as well as an improvement in their working conditions. □

Paid informants set up innocent workers for drug bust

A year and a half ago a big drug raid occurred at the Northern Illinois postal facility outside Chicago. Many workers were jailed and fired. And a big hoopla was made about drug-ridden workers endangering lives and ruining the efficiency of the Postal Service. But as the truth has slowly emerged, a different picture has come to light.

It turns out that postal inspectors paid Linda Clark to inform on other workers. She was paid for every person she turned in for selling drugs. Clark has admitted that, in order to get more money, she set up workers by asking them to get her drugs (even when they'd never done it before). What is more, she padded her income by simply adding names to her list.

Most of these innocent workers were cleared of the charges in court. But the

Postal Service, which had paid to set up the workers, has given them no such justice. Some were rehired, but some of them never got the months of back pay owed them for the time they were suspended. Some never got their records cleared of the disciplinary action. And some are still fired, even after being cleared in the courts.

Similar anti-drug actions have been reported in other work places. The February 1 issue of the *Chicago Worker*, paper of the MLP-Chicago, reports that nine workers at Bodine Electric were forced to resign or face arrest and prosecution for drug-dealing. These workers had been accused by two paid informants and were "convicted" by Bodine without any further ado.

Drugs are harmful and dangerous. But the crusade against drugs in the

work place is obviously not aimed at helping workers overcome drug abuse. Whether it is the drug raids or the growing drug testing at the work place, the aim of this crusade is to weed out "inefficient" workers (not to mention

militants) and to intimidate the entire work force into a more intense pace of work. The capitalists are on an offensive against the working class. And Reagan's crusade against drugs in the work place is just part of this attack. □

Pickers confront police at Davenport, Iowa plant

Strikers confronted police for the third straight day February 17 at the Red Jacket Pump plant in Davenport, Iowa. About 150 strikers joined the picket line. They threw nails in the roadway and blocked the plant gate, obstructing supervisors from entering. Policemen arrested five of the strikers,

two on felony charges of criminal mischief. A total of 10 strikers have been arrested so far in the strike.

Red Jacket Pump is a division of the Marley Pump Co. It is demanding a \$5-an-hour cut in pay and benefits. Some 350 workers have been on strike since January 20. □

Tax reform windfall: \$2 billion for auto giants

Remember how the 1986 tax reform was supposed to cut taxes for the working people while raising the taxes on the wealthy corporations? Well, few working people have seen any help. But it's another matter for the corporations. Loopholes were included in the law big enough for the monopolies to drive a car through.

Take the auto monopolies for example. A loophole was added supposedly to help out the financially troubled John Deere farm equipment company. But the wording was vague enough for General Motors, Ford and Chrysler to drive through. It is estimated that the three together will save \$2 billion from this one-time tax break. According to the January 25-31 *Washington Post National Weekly*, "Technically, the exception only allows auto makers to postpone paying the taxes.

But its effect is the equivalent of a tax cut because the taxes can be deferred every year for an indefinite time."

And who gets credit for helping these billionaires save billions in taxes? Not that lover of the rich Ronald Reagan. Oh no. It was that self-proclaimed party of the workers, the Democrats. Although a Republican originally inserted the loophole, the auto monopolies wanted to make sure it applied to them. So last fall GM lobbyists met privately with Dan Rostenkowski, the chief Democratic architect of the tax reform and chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. With his help the auto giants got passed a congressional guarantee that the tax exception applies to them. Obviously the Democrats are a party of the big capitalists just as much as the Republicans. □

Chrysler workers rally against selling parts plants



Over 2,000 workers protested in front of the Chrysler headquarters in Highland Park, Michigan on February 25.

The workers formed a giant picket line chanting slogans against the sale of Acustar and denouncing Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca. Homemade picket signs were everywhere with declarations like: "Cooperation and Concessions Mean Good-Bye"; "Keep Acustar, Sell Iacocca"; and "Solidarity with Kenosha, To Hell with Iacocca!" As the ranks of the protesters swelled, they took over the street blocking traffic for two hours.

Workers came to the protests from many Chrysler parts plants in the Detroit area. There were also workers from Chrysler's Toledo Jeep, Jefferson Assembly, Dodge Truck, and Sterling Stamping. And Ford workers from a Uta plant and GM workers from plants in Pontiac joined the picket line.

The Marxist-Leninist Party took an active part in the protest. Seven hundred leaflets on actions against layoffs at Jefferson Assembly and Kenosha were distributed along with hundreds of *Workers' Advocate*. Over a hundred Party picket signs — saying "No Layoffs, Fight for Every Job" and other slogans — were grabbed up by workers. And as the picket line got going, it was the Party that began the slogan shouting that added to the militancy of this action.

The most popular slogan among the workers was "Strike, Strike!" This was shouted after UAW leaders spoke. And the protest was concluded with even louder screams of "Strike, Strike!" Workers from seven plants declared that they had already taken votes to strike against Chrysler. They are only waiting for the leadership of the United Auto Workers (UAW) to approve the strikes.

Cutting Pay and Jobs at the Parts Plants

The workers are burning with anger at the potential sale of Acustar, Chrysler's components subsidiary.

Acustar includes 28,000 workers at 31 parts plants in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Last May Chrysler reorganized its parts plants into this separate subsidiary. This was the first step in its plan to split off the parts workers and to reduce their wages, benefits and jobs. Chrysler hopes to either sell off the subsidiary (and then buy parts at a reduced cost) or force the UAW leadership to agree to worse conditions for the parts workers.

At least one of the parts plants already has a two-tier wage scale. A section of workers in the plant make as low as \$2 an hour less than their fellow

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Chrysler workers. And Chrysler announced in January that it will shut down the Indianapolis electrical plant by 1989, eliminating 976 workers, and the Winfield Foundry in Detroit, eliminating 55 jobs. Cutting pay and eliminating jobs of parts workers is at the heart of Chrysler's plans for Acustar.

Iacocca publicly announced his attempts to sell Acustar a few weeks ago so that he can either sell off the parts plants or get a concessions commitment from the UAW leaders before the national contract expires in October.

Militant Words, Active Sabotage

After years of disgusting cooperation with Chrysler's concessions drive, the UAW leadership is suddenly talking tough. Marc Stepp, the UAW's vice-president in charge of Chrysler, has threatened to break off cooperation with Chrysler, to suspend local job combination contracts — called "modern operating agreements" — at six plants, and to allow strikes at a number of factories.

Stepp's sudden conversion to tough talk has come about only because he is sitting on a powder keg. The rank-and-file Chrysler workers have had enough and want to fight. Stepp's militant rhetoric is a cover for his active sabotage of a united strike against Chrysler.

On February 10 about 1,000 workers showed up for a meeting of officers of the 49 UAW locals at Chrysler plants. When a local official proposed a Chrysler-wide strike against both the sale of Acustar and plant closings, everyone in the room stood up to cheer and applaud. Stepp acted as if he agreed. But he claimed such a strike would be "illegal." And he suggested

'Unity with Kenosha, to hell with Iacocca!'

On February 2 over 2,500 workers joined a protest against the planned closing of Chrysler's Kenosha, Wisconsin plant.

A week earlier Chrysler announced it would close the plant this summer. It plans to shift production of its Omni cars to Jefferson Avenue assembly plant in Detroit and some production to its plant in Belvidere, Illinois. Only a year ago Chrysler forced concessions on the Kenosha workers promising it would keep the plant open at least five years. Now it's closing. Again it has been proved that concessions don't save jobs — they just soften the workers up for further attacks.

Kenosha workers are hopping mad. The big rally in Kenosha has been followed by other actions. On February 13 some 50 workers picketed a Chrysler new car show at the Drake Hotel in Chicago. There have also been widespread reports of sabotage of production in the plant. And many Kenosha workers have declared they shouldn't wait for the shutdown, but strike now against Chrysler's job elimination.

Union Leaders Still Won't Fight

Unfortunately the UAW leaders are

that the only way to strike was for each local to write up health and safety grievances, take a local strike vote, and then submit the recommendation to strike to the international UAW leadership.

With this maneuver, Stepp managed to drop the idea of striking against the closing of the Kenosha plant — only the possible sale of Acustar would be protested. He also split up the fight into individual plants instead of a Chrysler-wide strike of all 68,000 UAW members. And even the decision for strikes at individual plants is taken out of the hands of the workers and made dependent on the approval of the international leadership. Workers at seven plants have already voted to strike (one took the vote over a month ago), but the top UAW officials have so far refused to OK them.

Stepp's talk of breaking cooperation with Chrysler is equally empty. Owen Bieber, UAW president, still sits on the Chrysler board of directors. And suspending the local "modern operating agreements" is tied up in red tape. Stepp claims he has to find a "legal" way to suspend them.

Get Organized for a United Strike

All Stepp's concern over "legality" is aimed at stifling the struggle. The laws in the U.S. are stacked against the workers. It's legal for Chrysler to shut plants, sell them off, and toss the workers into the streets. But it's illegal for the workers to unite in a common strike to fight back.

Obviously this struggle cannot be left in the hands of the UAW leadership and their footdragging legalism. The rank and file must get organized independently and defy the anti-labor laws to resist the attacks of Chrysler. □

still holding them back. The local UAW hacks turned to Jesse Jackson, Democratic Party presidential aspirant, for help to block the workers' struggle. While decrying the "economic violence" by Chrysler, Jackson told the workers at the February 2 rally to trust their fate to a lawsuit against Chrysler. And he appealed to Chrysler to be benevolent to its workers. Of course everybody knows that Chrysler has never given the workers a thing unless it was forced to.

The UAW leaders are also helping Chrysler to pit Kenosha workers against the Jefferson Avenue assembly workers in Detroit. It turns out that the only lawsuit that the UAW leaders have yet filed is to block federal financing for the building of a new Jefferson assembly plant in Detroit. Meanwhile, at the Jefferson plant, a local UAW hack commented on the Kenosha closing by declaring, "Better them than us." Such is the poison spewed by the union hacks. For them "saving jobs" means helping Chrysler steal jobs from other workers.

Unite for Rank-And-File Action

Enough of these bureaucrats. The

file must take action over the heads of their union leaders and organize the workers' movement in conscious opposition to the union bureaucracy.

It is the AFL-CIO, Teamster and other union leaders who have set up the workers for the attacks of the capitalists. With their sermons for cooperation with the companies — whether it is cooperative partnership schemes in the work place or joining the corporations' trade war against foreign workers — the union bureaucrats have helped the takeback drive.

It is because of their sabotage of the workers' struggle that the government's *Monthly Labor Review* can report that "negotiations in 1988 will be carried on

workers must unite and wage a determined struggle if they are to defend their jobs. It is the mass protests and the threat of a strike at Kenosha that recently forced Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca to promise to set up a \$20 million fund to help the 5,500 workers who will lose their jobs. Of course this won't begin to compensate the workers for the loss of their livelihood. And the workers

have quite correctly denounced it. But if the small protests so far have forced this out of Chrysler, what will a big struggle do?

Jefferson workers, Kenosha workers, stand together. Fight for every job at Jefferson. Fight the plant closing at Kenosha. **Unity with Kenosha, to hell with Iacocca!** □

Picket stirs Jefferson Assembly



A plant-gate protest February 3 stirred up workers at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue assembly plant in Detroit.

At shift change a picket line was set up across the street from the back gate of the plant. The picketers raised clenched fists. For an hour and a half they shouted, "Bring Back the Laid Off, Fight Job Combination!" and other slogans.

The spirited protest got an enthusiastic response from workers leaving from first shift and entering for second shift. Many workers stopped for awhile to watch the picket line. Some said, "This is exactly what's needed. Keep it up." Others declared their agreement with various of the picket sign demands like "Restore Wash-Up Time," "Restore Full SUB" and "Full Medical Benefits." When picketers hollered, "Job Combination" or "Layoffs," some Jefferson workers joined in shouting "NO!" The most hearty response came when picketers shouted "Unity with Kenosha, To Hell with Iacocca!"

Closing Kenosha Saves No Jobs at Jefferson

When Chrysler announced it would close the Kenosha assembly plant, it claimed that shifting Omni production to Jefferson would save jobs. But about 1,000 Jefferson workers are on indefinite layoff. The rest of the workers are on a schedule through the spring where they work two weeks and then are laid off for two weeks. This summer the plant will completely shut down for a few months to retool for the Omni. And when it reopens it is expected there will be even fewer jobs.

Meanwhile, inside the plant job combinations and speedup are driving the workers to an early grave. The UAW leadership agreed to begin implement-

ing the "modern operating agreement" early, even though it wasn't scheduled to take effect until the new plant is built in another two or three years. As part of this local contract wash-up time was eliminated, job combination has intensified, and training in the speedup "team concept" system is beginning. The workers are fed up.

Intimidation Falls

The plant-gate protest was called by the *Detroit Workers' Voice* (local paper of the Marxist-Leninist Party) together with a network of Jefferson workers. These workers are either laid-off or are suffering overwork in the plant.

When word got around that there would be a plant-gate protest, Chrysler tried intimidation to stop it. Chrysler spread rumors that it would take pictures, get names, harass, and even fire Jefferson workers that participated in the picket line. A union hack told one laid-off worker that his unemployment benefits would be cut off. Meanwhile, Chrysler attempted to track down and intimidate anybody suspected of working with *Detroit Workers' Voice* in the plant.

Because of these threats people from other work places carried out the picket line. All told about 20 postal workers, hospital workers, steel workers, sanitation and cab drivers, and unemployed workers joined the picket line.

The fact that the MLP organized these workers to protest, while the UAW leadership has done nothing, inspired the Jefferson workers. They are working to build up their resistance network in order to combat the intimidation and prepare for further protests and job actions.

(Based on Feb. 10 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-Detroit.) □

TAKEBACKS Continued from page 1

without letup. Their aim, as the executive vice-president of Goodyear put it, is to "get real wage levels down much closer to those of Brazil's and Korea's...." (*Ibid.*) With or without Reagan as president, the Reaganite takeback offensive will continue. The Reagan era won't be ended until the workers, through their mass struggle, put an end to it.

No Cooperation With the Capitalist Bosses, Organize Rank-And-File Action

But to build such a fight the rank and

in a climate of comparative industrial peace that has existed since the early 1980's. The annual number of major work stoppages...was headed toward a record low in 1987.... Last year was the sixth consecutive year in which there were fewer than 100 major stoppages." (Jan. 1988, emphasis added).

But workers are getting fed up. Years of "industrial peace" have only meant more takebacks and more job loss. The solid wall of "labor-management cooperation" is showing cracks. When Acustar parts workers raise picket signs against "cooperation" with Chrysler; and a network of Jefferson workers organizes protests in defiance of their union hacks; and fighting campaigns of

the Party gain wider support among the workers at various work places; it can be seen that the spirit of struggle has never been extinguished among the workers.

It is this spirit that must be encouraged and organized. Sweep away the stink of cooperation with the bosses! Defy the union bureaucrats! Build independent, rank-and-file organization! Put an end to the Reagan era with a wave of mass struggle against the capitalists! □

Gorbachev picks up capitalist whip of insecurity

Whenever the workers have fought for demands such as unemployment insurance, health benefits, or welfare, there have always been capitalists who argue that providing social benefits to workers will only make them lazy. Such benefits — the wealthy, well-fed and secure bigshots tell us — only turn workers into spongers.

We hear such arguments all the time here in the U.S. which has the worst record on social benefits among the major industrial countries. Under Reaganism, this type of argument has been a major rationale for cutbacks in social programs.

The underlying idea is that workers need the threat of a whip to produce and work. And while the capitalists these days cannot use a physical whip as in the days of outright slavery, they argue instead for a different kind of whip — the whip of starvation, the whip of the fear of living in insecurity about one's health, housing, and children.

Gorbachev Echoes the Capitalists

The Gorbachev leadership in the Soviet Union has unleashed a new campaign against socialism and the working class movement. Under the banner of *perestroika* (restructuring) they have launched a campaign to introduce more blatantly capitalist ideas and mechanisms into Soviet society.

Gorbachev's new book, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, is a useful anthology of the new Soviet revisionist program. A few months back we began to examine the major themes of present-day Soviet revisionism as explained in this book. Here we touch on another theme — the question of socialism and social benefits.

It is well known that socialism deals with basic problems of worker security. In capitalist society those who work get the least, while in socialism those who work enjoy the benefits of their labor. In a socialist economy workers have health benefits, social insurance, employment security, etc. as basic rights.

After the Russian revolution in 1917, in the period when the Soviet Union was socialist, big steps forward were made in achieving such rights. Even though socialism degenerated and Russia eventually became a state capitalist society, the revisionist bureaucrats have not been able to destroy all these gains. Indeed, the Russian revisionists have used the existence of such benefits to claim that this proved that their society was still a socialist one. And this lie was parroted by revisionists around the

world.

But now, as the Soviet Union faces deep economic and political crisis, there is to be a change in this. Gorbachev writes in his book:

"Of course perestroika somehow affects everybody; it jolts many out of their customary state of calm and satisfaction at the existing way of life. Here I think it is appropriate to draw your attention to one specific feature of socialism. I have in mind the high degree of social protection in our society. On the one hand, it is doubtless, a benefit and a major achievement of ours. On the other, it makes some people spongers." (p. 30)

After describing some of the benefits, Gorbachev goes on:

"But we also see that dishonest people try to exploit these advantages of socialism; they only know their rights, but they do not want to know their duties."

By spongers, Gorbachev doesn't mean the privileged ruling class. How can he, since he represents those very people? No, Gorbachev's ideas are in fact the rationale being used by the real spongers to attack the Soviet workers.

In other words, Gorbachev says if you provide the working people with security, then a section of workers lose initiative. He is denouncing a large section of the workers as parasites. And he goes on to say this must be changed. And perestroika will do this.

A Pretext for Bringing Back the Whip of Insecurity

Here Gorbachev isn't arguing about wage incentives. That's another sphere; there too he plans changes — of course in the direction of widening the gap among the classes.

In this case Gorbachev's argument is a rationale for cutting back on social benefits. The Soviet revisionists are seeking ways to tie social benefits to the productivity of individual workers.

And in fact they are also bringing the scourge of unemployment out on a huge scale. It is estimated that the economic reforms of Gorbachev are going to result in the loss of up to 17 million jobs; and many of these workers are not going to find new jobs.

Indeed the idea that workers must be prodded to produce with the whip of insecurity is becoming a fashionable theme in all the revisionist countries.

The revisionist parties recently held a seminar in Poland on "Social Justice Under Socialism." This discussion was a very revealing one, which touched on a series of themes on how the workers'

exploitation is to be stepped up in the revisionist countries. (See *World Marxist Review*, December 1987.)

Here we will only mention a point made by a Bulgarian party delegate named Pachev. He said, "The extension of cost-accounting in Bulgaria [the 'market-socialist' plan of letting enterprises function according to the capitalist market fluctuations] led to the introduction of the concept of the so-called **graduated social and economic insecurity**. Under it socialism should manifest its humane nature first and foremost towards those who discharge their duty of worker conscientiously. And those who want to live off others must be denied the sense of absolute security." (Emphasis added)

"Graduated social and economic insecurity": here you have spelled out what Gorbachev seeks. Note here too that the attack on "those who want to live off others" is not aimed at the rich bureaucrats or other privileged officials. No, the *perestroika* campaign is aimed against workers who don't show the proper motivation to be good wage slaves.

Revisionism Can't Mobilize Workers' Initiative and Capacities

Of course there is no doubt that workers in the Soviet Union and other revi-

sionist countries are not eager to produce for the state capitalists. This is a feature of capitalism. The Soviet Union is a class society where the workers are on the bottom, and wealthy and privileged bureaucrats and managers are on the top. Why should workers not feel alienated from such a system?

The cause of this alienation is the restoration of capitalism in Russia. Gorbachev and the revisionist rulers have no solution to this alienation other than typically capitalist answers. Hence the open revival of the idea of using insecurity as a whip to drive the workers to produce.

Socialism is different. A socialist society is a workers' society. It is one where the workers are in power, a society where the workers mobilize themselves with common efforts to build a cooperative society. Socialism unleashes and mobilizes the tremendous enthusiasm of proletarians working together to build a society free from exploitation.

By overthrowing the capitalists who live off the workers' toil, socialism takes a giant step against the alienation workers feel from labor under capitalism. And as socialist society marches towards communism, the working class also takes more and more steps to transform all work into a conscious and meaningful activity. □

Soviet engine plant workers protest overtime

For the Soviet workers, Gorbachev's program of *perestroika* (restructuring) means wage cuts, speedup and overwork, layoffs and plant shutdowns. As the Soviet state capitalists proceed with their restructuring program, incidents of worker resistance are increasing.

In December, workers at the Yaroslavl engine works held a week of demonstrations at the plant gates. There are some 40,000 workers employed at the engine works and its satellite facilities.

The Yaroslavl workers were opposing a management decision to make the workers put in 15 Saturdays of work in the coming year. As many as 300 workers joined in the daily protests. They held up signs declaring such things as, "We Are for an Eight-Hour Day" and "We Are for Eight Working Saturdays Maximum."

Working Saturdays are routinely used by Soviet managers to meet production quotas by scrambling at the end of each

month. But they are not greeted eagerly by workers who quite justly see it as overwork. Now the Yaroslavl managers want to step up the use of working Saturdays.

The increase ordered by management was okayed by the union bureaucrats without consulting the work force. At the same time as their plant-gate demonstrations, the workers chose an "initiative group" to demand a meeting with management. This they got. The Soviet rulers were worried enough that they sent in the deputy minister of the country's auto industry and regional officials from the party, state, and trade union.

Using all this pressure, management was able to get its way. However, the workers' protest action did serve notice that Soviet workers will not stand by in the face of the increased exploitation planned by the Gorbachev regime. □

GUATEMALA

Continued from page 14

land and houses of the poor peasants and the Indian population. The anger against these measures also brought to the surface many other demands of the masses against poverty and political oppression. The protesters called for a decrease in prices along with a rise in the minimum wage; for the freedom to organize trade unions; the right to strike; an end to government kidnappings and assassinations; and the cancellation of the country's foreign debt.

Defying Repression

The first of three big protests occurred on January 8. Fifty thousand peasants and Indians rallied in the Western Highlands. A white star, the symbol of Cerezo's Christian-Democratic party, was burned.

On January 13, over 30,000 demonstrators marched to the National Palace in the capital, Guatemala City. When Cerezo's wife and other officials appeared on the palace balcony, they were denounced by the crowd and forced to beat a hasty retreat. Five days later

another action of similar size occurred in Guatemala City. As well, talk of a national strike was in the air. These demonstrations forced the Guatemalan courts to order a temporary halt to the electricity rate hikes.

These actions were the biggest open demonstrations in the last few years. Through terror and intimidation, the civilian-military dictatorship had put the clamps on the movement. But now the masses are boldly defying the fascist authorities. This was symbolized by the action in Guatemala City where protesters marched in streets lined with soldiers armed with machine guns.

Armed Actions

The rise of the mass protests has been accompanied by an increase in the activity of the anti-government guerrillas. For example, on January 19, the liberation forces wiped out six fascist soldiers in Peten. At the end of December, the guerrillas downed four U.S.-supplied helicopters and inflicted 21 casualties on government troops in fighting near Peten and Quiche. In November, a guerrilla ambush in Ixcán, near the Mexican border, killed 14 soldiers.

Cerezo: Front Man for Military Tyranny

The situation in Guatemala highlights the bankruptcy of the Cerezo regime. Cerezo came to power in 1986 promising a civilian government that would halt the terror of the military and its paramilitary death squads. But the tyranny goes on unchecked. In a recent three-month period, for example, over 100 civilians were assassinated and over 60 kidnapped.

U.S. Imperialism Supports the Guatemalan Rulers

The Guatemalan rulers have been propped up for decades by U.S. imperialism. In 1954, at the behest of the United Fruit Company (now called United Brands), the CIA organized the overthrow of the reformist Arbenz regime. U.S. imperialism then built the Guatemalan army and police from the ground up, helping to create a series of military dictatorships.

Today the U.S. government continues to feed the monster it helped create. The close ties between the U.S. and the Guatemalan military could be seen in the recent battles with the guerrillas.

U.S. advisors rode in army helicopters, and U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency planes and pilots were used to drop bombs and defoliants.

Support the Guatemalan TOLLERS

Support for the Cerezo regime is another crime of our "own" imperialist government in Washington. Let us stand with the oppressed of Guatemala! Let us build a powerful movement in solidarity with their struggle and against U.S. imperialism! □

El Estandarte Obrero

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

By mail: \$0.50 for single copy
From vendor: \$0.25
Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues
\$6.00 for 12

ISSN 0276-4954

Order from:

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Ontario Street Station
Chicago, IL 60611



March 8 -- International Working Women's Day Salute the communist women of Iran!

On this International Working Women's Day we salute the women communists of the Communist Party of Iran, including the women peshmargas (armed fighters) of the CPI's Komala organization in Kurdistan. They have joined the front lines of struggle against the Khomeini dictatorship. They face a regime that has imposed the most appalling oppression of women. And their bold participation in the revolutionary struggle can only be an inspiration to the exploited and oppressed everywhere.

Below is a report from the MLP medical team which recently travelled to Kurdistan where it met with new women recruits at Komala's training center in the no-man's land on the Iran-Iraq frontier.

New Peshmargas

The scene is Kurdistan 1988, a tent high in the mountains at the training center for Komala's new peshmargas. Young women come in, hang up their automatic rifles and sit on the floor in a circle. Most are 16 to 18 years old.

There is a hushed intensity as each woman speaks:

"My father was going to trade me so he could get a wife. I joined Komala to escape this fate."

"The Islamic regime imprisoned and beat me because I refused to wear a veil. I told them I didn't recognize their laws."

"Khomeini's guards came to my house to question me about Komala. I said, 'I'm not going to tell you anything even if you chop me to pieces.'"

"I became a carpet weaver at the age of eight earning 25 cents a day. Now I grasp and put into the practice the theory of the emancipation of the working class. Now I am a peshmarga."



New women recruits for Komala's peshmargas gather at the Training Center.

Who are these young women who speak with such boldness and courage? How do they dare to go against centuries of backward feudal traditions? What stirs them to virtually spit in the face of Khomeini, the Imam of a brutal and ferociously anti-woman dictatorship?

These young women have taken a giant step out of the past. They are among the recruits who have joined Komala to struggle for the overthrow of the Khomeini regime and all capitalist and feudal relations in Iran. They are women who have grasped that their own liberation as women can only be won as part of the struggle for the emancipation of the entire working class.

Doubly Oppressed as Workers and Women

The majority of these women were workers. Most joined the work force before they were 10 years old. They

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have suffered years of harsh exploitation, working 10 and 12 hours a day as brickyard workers, as carpet weavers or agricultural laborers.

On top of this, these women have come out of an extremely backward and oppressive society. They have been completely without rights.

In the rural areas women can still be bought and sold like animals. They cannot choose their husband nor can they divorce. They work the fields, then keep the house, care for the children and tend the animals. A full day of toil often runs from four in the morning until midnight. Woman's situation is such that she gives birth and within a few hours is back at her duties cooking bread. These severe conditions for women break their health. A woman of 30 is already an old woman.

The situation is hardly better in the cities. The humiliation and degradation of women is a cardinal point of the religious codes of the Islamic regime. Women are forced under the veil and suffer an apartheid-like second-class status.

The CPI and Komala Stand Up for Women's Rights

Of all the political forces in Iran and Kurdistan, it's the Communist Party of Iran and Komala that wage a consistent struggle against the oppression of women. The bourgeois nationalist KDP and others bend before the pressures of the regime and religious and backward prejudices; but Komala is resolute on this question and passionately fights for

women's equality.

Komala's "Charter on the Rights of the Toiling Masses in Kurdistan" includes an important section on the rights of women. They have propagated this document widely. On their radio programs and in their publications they point out that all barriers to women's full participation in the mass movements and political life must be torn down. It is also well known in Kurdistan that within the ranks of Komala's peshmargas, the women are treated fully as equals and fight in the military units right alongside the men.

Struggle Brings Winds of Freedom

This stand of Komala-CPI has put its stamp on Kurdish society. In the first place, it has gained it the sympathy of the masses of women workers and toilers.

A section of these women overcome all the obstacles put up by the regime



Young woman takes aim during target practice.

and tradition to make their way into the ranks of Komala's peshmarga forces. Life of the woman peshmarga is harsh. But that is not what you see in their optimistic faces. Because it is participation in the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed that has made the difference between living as wretched slaves and standing up as full human beings.

The young women at the training camp talked about how the tide turned for them when they began listening to Komala's radio. Others had been inspired by Komala peshmargas who defied the Islamic Guard to hold meetings and organize in the villages. Some counted themselves as communists from the age of nine or 10 when they began propagating the Marxism that they had learned from Komala among their co-workers.

Komala's stand against the oppression of women also has a broader impact. In areas where its influence is strong, a woman warning "I'll tell Komala" can prevent a beating. Moreover, Komala encourages women to take their place in the mass struggles. Among other things, women are par-

ticularly bold in the fight against the regime's military conscription. They hide the young men being searched out by the regime, and have frequently liberated them after they have been captured.

The working people of Kurdistan are learning that the participation of women is essential for the success of their struggle. The backward attitudes and mistreatment of women among the masses breaks down in the class struggle. Men and women alike can see how the struggle against the capitalist owners and the fight against the regime is strengthened with the participation of women and the defense of their rights.

The fresh air that was blowing at the training center cannot just be attributed to the beautiful Kurdish mountains. The new recruits — the young men and women workers — bring vigor and promise to the struggle. The aim of their movement is the overthrow of the Khomeini tyranny and all forms of capitalist exploitation and oppression. As they achieve this they will also smash the chains of women's slavery that is weighing heavily on the working people of Kurdistan and Iran. □



Kurdistan— 9 years of revolutionary struggle

Report from Kurdistan

(In December and January a medical team of the MLP, USA travelled to Kurdistan at the invitation of Komala, the organization of the Communist Party of Iran in Kurdistan. In our February issue we carried the first installment of "Report from Kurdistan." In this issue we continue our coverage with a report on the medical work of Komala and of its struggle against the oppression of women. Below we carry an account of revolutionary developments in Kurdistan over the last nine years. It has been prepared by a member of the MLP team and is based on accounts from both Komala leaders and rank-and-file fighters who took part in these events.)

This February marked the ninth anniversary of the revolution in Iran. The struggle against the tyranny of the Shah was felt around the world. It was one of the truly mighty mass movements of recent times. The whole society was in upheaval. Millions and millions were in the street. The workers went on strike, crippling the oil industry and the economic lifelines. Troops mutinied and took the side of the people. The masses smashed the U.S.-backed monarchy to bits.

This revolution settled accounts with the hated Shah and shook one of the main props of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East. And it threatened much more. It put into question the very existence of a capitalist regime in Iran. Unfortunately, however, the revolution was cut short: The Islamic clergy came out on top, which means that today the working people of Iran are once again groaning under a bloodstained capitalist tyranny — this time under the religious cloak of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The exploiters and oppressors everywhere sneer at the Iranian revolution. They tell us: "Sure, the people sacrificed and struggled to get rid of the brutal and corrupt Shah, and all they got for it was an even more brutal regime." But such sneers are self-serving rot. The revolution unleashed nine years ago was only the first assault; it was a struggle rich in lessons to guide the working class and revolutionaries in further assaults towards the triumph of the revolution and socialism.

The setback in Iran has taught the harsh lesson that within the general struggle against dictatorship, a struggle that grips diverse social strata and political trends, there must be ceaseless work to train the working class to safeguard its own independent interests and adhere to its own socialist perspective. Otherwise, the door is left open to the bourgeois and reformist forces which strive to put brakes on the revolutionary movement.

The formation of the Communist Party of Iran, which militantly struggles for the independent interests of the working class, is a sign that these lessons were not lost on the revolutionary workers. Moreover, in the region of Kurdistan, where the revolution went further and deeper than in other parts of the country, the independent movement of the workers and toilers — led by the CPI's Kurdish organization Komala — is a powerful force. This is a lasting and invaluable product of the revolution. Because, as we shall see in the following account of the struggle in Kurdistan, it was the revolution which polarized the different class and political forces, and which sharply posed the independent revolutionary path of the working class and toilers.

A Stronghold of the Left

Kurdistan is an impoverished and oppressed mountain region. Nonetheless, in the upheaval that led to the overthrow

of the Shah in February 1979, it was in Kurdistan more than elsewhere that democratic and left-wing slogans were stronger than the religious ones. There were a number of reasons for this. There was the religious factor, with the mainly Sunni Moslem Kurds being less vulnerable to the demagoguery of Khomeini and the other Shiite mullahs.

There was also the national question. The Kurds had been subject to every type of humiliation at the hands of the monarchy of the Shah and his father. They were denied the right to autonomy, the right to study in the Kurdish language, and even at times the right to wear Kurdish clothes. This generated deep resentment on the part of the Kurds who quite rightly suspected that Khomeini and the other religious chiefs would also refuse to grant them autonomy and their other national rights.

Moreover, within the Kurdish movement there were powerful nonreligious and left-wing trends. There was the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), the traditional bourgeois nationalist party, which had a mildly left image. There was also the strong presence of the communist organization Komala. And besides these two largest parties, a number of other left-wing groups had weight in Kurdistan (the Castroite Fedayeen, the Maoist Peykar, etc.).

Taken together, all this added up to a balance of political forces in Kurdistan favorable to the left. During the upheaval against the Shah, the religious figures tried to climb onto the back of the movement. However, unlike other parts of Iran where the left adopted a conciliatory or even downright laudatory attitude towards the religious leaders, the left didn't surrender the terrain to the mullahs. Therefore, it was the left, especially the communists of Komala, which came to the fore of the struggle.

Upheaval Against the Shah

In August of 1978 a Komala leader, Foad Mostafa Soltani, organized a 24-

day hunger strike of political prisoners in the Sanandaj prison. In solidarity with the prisoners, there was a sit-in at the justice building and a massive demonstration. This was the first huge mass action against the Shah in this major Kurdish city.

Months later, in December, there was a demonstration tens of thousands strong to greet the return to Sanandaj of Showeib Zakariaei, a Komala Central Committee member, after his release from one of the Shah's dungeons. The mullahs led by Ahmad Mofti-zadeh had tried unsuccessfully to convince the masses to boycott this demonstration. This turned the demonstration into the first major trial of political strength pitting the religious leaders against Komala and the left forces, with the latter coming out on top.

Komala was in the midst of the insurrection against the regime; its communist militants were at the head of the masses in the attacks on the police stations and other bulwarks of the regime.

On February 11 the insurrection triumphed in Tehran. As the revolution gained ground in Kurdistan, the political forces that had been forced underground by the terrorism of the Shah came into the open. On February 15 Komala was officially and publicly introduced to the people. The bourgeois nationalist KDP also attempted to reemerge into public life.

The bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces promised that the revolution would bring about a harmonious unity. But the conflict between the religious and left-wing forces, and the beginning of the public struggle of political parties, promised something else: the revolution was bringing to the surface the open clash between classes and political trends that had been held underground by the jackboot of the Shah's tyranny.

Revolution Unleashed

The onslaught of the Kurdish workers and toilers smashed the old forces of

order. The police and army had been routed except for a few garrisons. The former bureaucracy was reduced to almost nothing apart from a few social service agencies.

In this vacuum of power there was a flowering of organization among the working people. Revolutionary committees, or councils, organized day-to-day life in cities and towns across Kurdistan. Organizations of construction workers, of the unemployed, and other workers' organizations sprang up. Peasant leagues were formed. The most famous of these was the Marivan peasant union with over 40,000 members, organized and armed by Komala. As well, with Komala's encouragement an array of other broad mass organizations — under names like Association to Defend Democratic Rights, or Society for the Defense of Freedom and the Revolution — were set up in all the cities and towns of Kurdistan.

This wave of organizing gave a free hand to the left. Komala became the predominant force in many of these organizations — organizations which were emerging as the new power across much of Kurdistan.

Kurdistan was quickly emerging as a strong point of the revolution of the Iranian workers and toilers. In other parts of the country, the religious forces were step by step consolidating power; the left-wing forces were retreating in disarray, dominated by either shameless supporters of the allegedly "anti-imperialist" Islamic Republic or by vacillating elements who could not steer an independent road of struggle. In Kurdistan, however, the independent organization of the masses went much further. The left wing had the initiative. And the masses of workers and peasants listened to the appeals of Komala to be vigilant against the Khomeini regime as a capitalist and anti-revolutionary force.

Growing Conflict With the Islamic Republic

From its first days, the new Islamic government in Tehran saw Kurdistan as a dangerous threat and launched repeated attacks to disorganize and dis-

Continued on next page



In the spring of 1981 a number of Komala peshmangas were freed in exchange for POW's of the Islamic Republic. The working people of the city of Bookan came out to greet them.

Kurdistan — 9 years of revolutionary struggle

Continued from previous page

arm the revolution there. Only 40 days after the overthrow of the Shah, on the Iranian New Year, the first of a series of confrontations and bloody battles began. Mercenaries of the Islamic Republic attacked the mass organizations in Sanandaj. Komala and the left organized a counterattack which captured the city's garrison and the rest of the government buildings used by the Islamic regime.

On July 14 in the city of Marivan, Islamic guards gunned down three demonstrators. The people fought back and killed a number of guards. The government sent in a detachment of guards and troops to restore control. To protest this attack and the policies of the regime in Kurdistan, Komala issued a call for the people of Marivan to evacuate the city temporarily. On July 21, the entire population of the city marched out of Marivan with contingents marching from all over Kurdistan in solidarity. This "Marivan Decampment" was a symbol of the depths of isolation of the Islamic regime from the Kurdish toilers.

During these days the different political forces in Kurdistan took sharply different attitudes towards the central government. The bourgeois nationalist KDP, with the strength of tradition and its links with the exploiters behind them, tried to place themselves as the official arbiters of the fate of the Kurdish people. They adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the regime in the hopes of negotiating for themselves a degree of authority in Kurdistan.

The reformists and petty-bourgeois leftists also played an undermining role. The Fedayeen (Organization of Iranian Peoples Fedayee Guerrillas) actually tried to defend the Khomeini regime among the masses. It preached moderation and opposed deepening the struggle against the central government. After Komala the Fedayeen had been the second largest radical left organization. However, their prestige and support plummeted with their friendly attitude towards the Islamic Republic. (Later on the Fedayeen split, with the minority faction taking a more oppositional stand towards the regime. However, it floundered and vacillated under the acute class struggle.)

Meanwhile the communists of Komala organized and prepared the workers and toilers for an armed movement. They warned the masses about the intentions of the regime and rallied them to defend their revolutionary gains. Owing to this work, when the regime attacked in full force the working people were not caught by surprise.

Khomeini Launches War on Kurdistan

On August 19, the Islamic Republic launched an all-out attack on Kurdistan. Khomeini ordered this attack as a religious duty or "jihad." The suppression of the Kurds became an obsession for the regime in its drive to consolidate its power and turn back the revolution of the workers and toilers. In turn, the courageous resistance of the Kurdish masses drew the attention and sympathy of the workers and revolutionaries across Iran.

Komala issued a communique declaring that the Kurdish people are being tested and that Komala will organize them against this attack. It named Khomeini as a criminal and a defender of the capitalists. This was not a narrow appeal to Kurdish national sentiments; rather, it explained the necessity of defending Kurdistan as a bulwark of the general revolutionary movement of the working people of the country as a whole.

Report from Kurdistan

For the first three months, the whole region was consumed in warfare. Troops of the regime seized the cities, closed down the press and the universities and clamped down on the rights of the masses. Against this outrage there were demonstrations in Tehran and many other Iranian cities.

The Kurdish toilers rose up in arms. There was mass struggle and insurrection in cities and towns throughout the region. Sanandaj and the other cities were taken over by the peshmargas



Celebrating the first anniversary of the formation of the CP of Iran in the liberated areas of Kurdistan, September 1984.

(armed fighters) as the forces of the regime were thrown back. The government bureaucracy of the Islamic Republic had to be dismantled and moved into military garrisons.

Forced to retreat, the Khomeini government asked for a cease-fire and negotiations. A Board of Delegates was formed to negotiate for the Kurdish side made up of Komala, the KDP, the Fedayeen, and Sheikh Ezzedin Husseini (a prominent religious figure with a democratic reputation, but whose role was being eclipsed by the emergence of the political parties).

A conflict broke out between Komala and the KDP over the negotiations. Komala demanded that the negotiations be open to the people. The KDP, on the other hand, wanted to strike a secret deal. The KDP withdrew from the Board of Delegates and entered into negotiations on its own, hoping to make itself more attractive by separating itself from the left. Nonetheless, the regime had no intention to make such a deal; it was only buying time to regroup for a fresh attack.

When the Islamic Republic began new military attacks, the KDP still held out hope. KDP forces even led the way for Khomeini's troops back into the city of Sanandaj. Meanwhile, Komala took the stand of no retreat without a fight. This helped the masses draw lines between the militant stand of the communists and the cringing policy of the bourgeois nationalists. It also helped prepare the workers and villagers for the most stubborn resistance war in the history of the Kurdish people.

The Workers' and Toilers' Resistance

During the whole month of January 1980, Sanandaj was gripped by a general strike. There was also a mass sit-in at the governor's mansion, as well as a hunger strike of 900 people that lasted several days. These concerted

protests succeeded in forcing the Islamic guards out of the city by January 29. However, by the next day the Khomeini regime began its second full-scale offensive against Kurdistan.

A new form of mass organizations arose to organize the resistance. These were called "benques (or councils) of the localities." They were elected by the workers and poor of the neighborhoods and districts, and the benques were brought together under the umbrella of the "council of coordination of the

benques of the localities." These councils managed all the affairs of the cities. They also played a decisive role in arming the masses and organizing their resistance. Where the benque organization was most complete — such as Sanandaj and Marivan — the resistance was strongest. However, the struggle was weakened where the benques were less formed. This was mainly due to the opposition of the KDP chieftains who felt threatened by the power of the workers and poor that the benques represented.

Troops of the Islamic regime laid siege to Sanandaj on April 20, 1980. The inhabitants, organized by their benques, put up a fierce defense. For 24 days they held out in the face of both ground and air attacks. Later that month the regime attacked Saje and Baneh, only to be met by a similarly stubborn resistance. It took the troops 34 days to finally seize Baneh.

For the next five years, Khomeini's forces were bogged down in a bitter struggle to capture the rest of the towns and villages of Kurdistan. Now the occupation is near complete. But the war continues. The days belong to Khomeini's Islamic guards; the nights belong to Komala's peshmargas who enjoy broad popular support.

What's more, the war has taken on a new quality with the organization of a truly mass workers' underground organized by the communists of Komala. This is part of the deep class polarization that has taken place within the Kurdish movement.

Class Polarization

From the first days of the revolution in Kurdistan, the workers and poor have known that their struggle was not simply for national rights and autonomy. The real motive force of their movement has been the social questions. They have sought relief from the

grinding poverty at the hands of the exploiters. (In the early stages there was a strong peasant struggle against the landlords, but the main conflict has been the struggle of the workers and laborers against the urban and rural capitalists.) They have demanded sanitation, health care and other urgent needs. And they have fought for democratic rights to allow more room to organize and struggle for a better life. This deep-going movement of the workers and toilers has put the political forces in Kurdistan to the test.

For its part, the KDP has always rejected the class struggle in favor of an above-class unity of all Kurds for their national rights. When the class struggle became acute, the bourgeois nature of this stand became more obvious. When the workers and toilers go into action for their own interests, they are either ignored by the KDP or, worse, the KDP sympathizes with the wealthy owners and traditional chiefs who provide the KDP with much support.

Along with this, the KDP has shed its leftist image. In June, 1980 it expelled the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party faction in its leadership. In part this was due to Tudeh leaders going further than the KDP was willing to go in their groveling before Khomeini. It was also connected to the KDP seeking to cast off any "communist" labels as it began looking for support from social democracy and other forces of western imperialism. The KDP also took up warfare against the leftists. As early as the winter of 1981 it attacked and killed leftist militants of the Peykar organization in Bookan.

In 1983-84 the KDP unleashed a bloody civil war against the communists of Komala. Both sides have suffered heavy losses in this conflict. The war has temporarily subsided over the last year because the Komala peshmargas have taught the KDP that to pursue the war will cost them dearly. Nonetheless, the KDP continues its cowardly attacks on the communists. A Komala organizer of the Bookan brick yard workers' strikes was recently assassinated by the KDP, showing just where the KDP stands in the class struggle.

The Rise of a Communist Workers' Movement

With the revolution, Komala also went through an evolution. At the time of the insurrection it was a communist organization closely tied to the struggles of the workers and the poor. When the working class came into struggle, the other left wing groups in Kurdistan were paralyzed and pushed to the side because of their reformist and class collaborationist standpoint. Komala, on the other hand, successfully took up the challenge and became the main organizer of the workers and poor.

To accomplish this Komala underwent a rectification to overcome non-proletarian influences. At its Second Congress, held in March 1981, Komala did self-criticism for what it called "populist economism." It laid stress on criticizing those ideological stands which denigrate the struggle for the class independence of the workers; which underestimate the revolutionary nature of the working class; or which slur over the socialist training of the workers. The formation of the Communist Party of Iran in September, 1983 through the efforts of Komala and revolutionary Marxists from other parts of Iran such as the Union of Communist Militants was a crowning point of this process of criticism and proletarianization.

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See NINE YEARS

Medical work in the revolution

A medical team of the MLP, USA travelled to Kurdistan this winter at the invitation of Komala, the organization of the Communist Party of Iran in Iranian Kurdistan. The team visited a number of the medical facilities in Komala's camps strung along the mountains of the Iran-Iraq frontier.

Medical Miracles

The first stop on our agenda during our visit to the Komala camps was the Central Camp where the core of their medical facilities is located. Here we visited the hospital, including the patient wards and the pharmacy. We toured their surgery center and recovery room. And we sat in briefly during a class for medical aides being taught in their medical school.

The medical center is simple and the conditions under which the medical personnel work are extremely harsh. The doctors carry on with scarce supplies and only minimal equipment. There is a constant battle with the elements: coping with winter's mud and summer's dust, maintaining the water supply, ensuring electric current and so on. The school we visited was so tiny the 40 students could barely fit into the classroom.

Taking these difficulties into account, the achievements of this medicine for the revolution are astounding. Doctors perform over 300 surgeries a year with an infection rate lower than in many hospitals in the U.S. Komala paramedics are equipped with the knowledge and skills to do surgery right at the front and save the lives of gravely wounded peshmargas.

Battlefield Medicine

Medicine for Komala focuses on emergency and war medicine. And they have accomplished much on this front.

Every battalion of armed fighters, known as peshmargas, has in its ranks trained paramedics. They go through an intense medical schooling at the Central Camp, preparing them to treat wounded peshmargas under fire. Obviously, a wounded communist fighter is not rescued by helicopter medivac; nor can they easily check in to one of Khomeini's hospitals. They are often 10 or 20 days' march over rugged terrain from Komala's doctors and medical facilities. That's where the life-saving role of their battlefield medicine comes in.

This has been remarkably successful. The paramedics have saved countless lives through emergency treatment. They have been able to do sophisticated surgery in the field, using a flashlight to see, and a blanket to hide from enemy fire. We met a man who was rescued in this way after receiving a head wound so severe the brain was visible outside of the skull. However, their most famous case is the story of Jamil the Red.

Jamil is a young peshmarga wounded by a bullet through the abdomen. The bullet entered his body in such a way that it damaged his internal organs and his spinal cord. Without immediate surgery he would have died. The paramedics performed an intense two-hour operation in the midst of battle. They opened his abdomen and repaired the damaged organs. During the surgery they were connected by field radio to doctors at the Central Camp. They had only an IV anesthetic, and the simplest of instruments. Their radio signal could not be maintained consistently under conditions of battle. And still these paramedics gave Jamil back his life.

We met Jamil in the central hospital and again in the hospital in the camp in the village of Chenorah where he had been moved so he could be closer to his friends. He still suffers some damage to his autonomic nervous system but is now walking with only the help of a

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The life of Jamil the Red (right) was saved by Komala paramedics who performed abdominal surgery on him in the open and under fire. His comrade on the left was wounded in the shoulder in the same battle. At a Komala hospital.

cane.

His story is famous among Komala's peshmargas. Eventually a visitor hears the story of Jamil from the angle of each of the participants — the paramedics, Jamil himself, the radio group, the doctors. The episode is outstanding because it so vividly illustrates the collective dedication to the peshmargas at the front. And it shows Komala's devotion to sorting out the imperatives of wartime medicine.

Poverty and Backwardness

Komala's peshmargas struggle within a poverty-stricken society. Villagers live in low buildings made of mud with tiny lightless windows. There is no running water or sewers. They use kerosene or animal dung for heat and cooking which creates a stifling atmosphere with limited oxygen. The workers in the Kurdish cities are only slightly better off.

The Komala doctors told us that the health problems of the masses begin with malnutrition and are compounded by their lack of knowledge about hygiene. The masses suffer infections,

tuberculosis, loss of teeth, gastrointestinal problems of every description. The only types of diseases that do not plague them so heavily are those associated with aging; they simply do not live long enough.

The severity of these health conditions is visited upon the women with a vengeance. Eight percent of all women die in childbirth or with infections resulting from unhygienic conditions during childbirth. Nearly 20 out of every 100 babies do not live to see their second birthday.

Modern Medicine

The handful of European doctors who visit the Komala camps come with notions about the deplorable conditions in the camps in Afghanistan and other poor and war-torn countries. That's why they are so surprised to find in the Komala camps the high level they have achieved in sanitation, nutrition, and modern 20th-century medicine.

Even though often in a primitive form, there is electricity, potable running water, laundries, hot showers, and toilets. The medical group is respon-

sible for planning food consumption in the camps to insure nutritionally balanced meals.

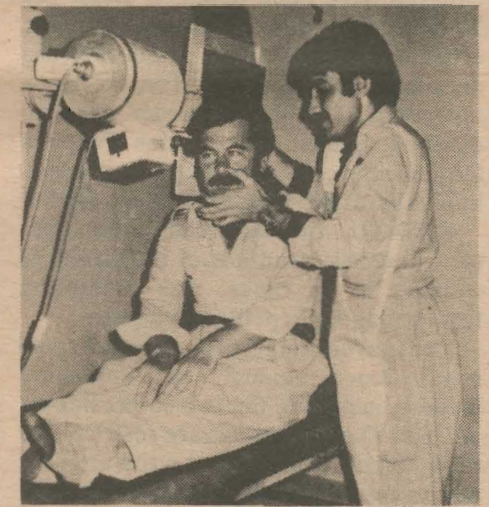
The backward and superstitious attitudes towards women and the anti-women laws of the Islamic Republic do not exist in the camps. In medical terms this means that improved hygiene, access to contraception (including tubal ligation and vasectomies) and abortion, and medically supervised pregnancy and childbirth are provided for the peshmargas.

New recruits are given a thorough medical examination and complete dental work is done. For many it is the first time they have received such care.

The medical staff also treats the peshmargas who come into the camps to rest and recuperate during the winter snows. Life is tough for these brave young men and women who spend from spring through fall deep in the interior on military operations against Khomeini's forces. They suffer from old wounds. They also have orthopedic problems as well as stomach and intestinal ailments connected with marching 12 hours at a time for weeks and months on end, often with little food or water.

Komala clinics also provide emergency and other services for the neighboring Kurdish villagers.

Komala's medical successes are not based solely on knowing modern techniques and keeping up with the latest research. Komala has developed 20th-century medicine in the midst of a backward society and while fighting a war because it approaches medicine as more than technique. Komala is creating a medicine that springs from a scientific and revolutionary perspective; a medicine that is part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed for a better life. □



Radiology at the Komala hospital.

NINE YEARS Continued from page 10

Today, the militant and rising workers' movement in Kurdistan is inseparable from the name of Komala-CPI. With massive sympathy and an extensive underground network, it has emerged as the dominant trend among the Kurdish workers. This in turn is being felt throughout Iran.

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also putting forward the demands of COSEP and its circles to the government. For example, COSEP's demands for a different tax policy and for the return of property are promoted. This is the reality of the opportunist manipulation by the right. They are trying to utilize the capacity and power of the workers' movement to protect their own minority interests. They are trying to mobilize the working class in favor of the defense of their managerial privileges as accumulators of profits. The fact is that the interests of the bourgeoisie and the workers' movement are not the same, no matter how much the

Last year there was a strike wave in the Kurdish brick yards and the workers' staged a massive May Day action in Sanandaj. Komala-CPI was at the heart of organizing both of these struggles which gripped the attention of the revolutionary workers across Iran. It is growing ever more obvious to the people of Iran that it's the independent revolutionary movement of the workers that holds the only hope for lifting them out

of their present torment. The Kurdish and Iranian workers are proving themselves as the only class with the initiative and stamina to confront the Khomeini dictatorship. In today's struggle the communists are laying the ground for the revolution of the workers and oppressed that will liberate Iran from its present capitalist torture of poverty, war and religious tyranny. □

right wing in an opportunist manner tries to manipulate the workers' demands, and no matter how much opportunism and local revisionism cooperate in this dirty work [the Nicaraguan pro-Soviet revisionist parties — the Socialist Party and the Communist Party — join coalitions with the right].

The workers' movement must show that it does not need friendship with the right wing in order to fight for its class demands. It must show that this fight is not just developed against the anti-worker policies of the government, the state, and its bureaucracy, but also and basically against the bosses, the bourgeoisie, the big entrepreneurs. [Develop the] independence and class struggle of the workers' movement in the face of

the [capitalist] management and the [Sandinista] government.

The workers must firmly insist on these demands. They must not only make COSEP, the capitalist associations, the bourgeoisie and the reaction in general bend before the revolutionary force of the working class, but also the Sandinista government itself. Taking the banners of struggle of the workers' movement into their own hands [is the workers'] best guarantee of success.

(From the December issue of "Prensa Proletaria.") □



Racist rulers slap new bans on anti-apartheid groups

In its latest police-state measure, the South African government has imposed new bans on 17 major anti-apartheid organizations. The ban makes it illegal for these organizations to carry out any activities without police permission. In effect, this amounts to a virtual ban on the opposition groups while maintaining a thin pretense that they are not formally declared illegal.

The ban order includes the United Democratic Front (UDF), the largest black opposition organization with scores of affiliated organizations. Another affected organization is the Detainees Parents Support Committee, an organization of people whose children have been detained under the 20-month-old state of emergency. The order also applies to the group that has organized the rent boycott in the black townships. The banning order was also directed against the Azanian People's Organization, another large anti-apartheid organization not affiliated to UDF.

COSATU, the black trade union center which has hundreds of thousands of workers in its ranks, was prohibited from engaging in political activities.

The government also ordered personal bans against 18 individual leaders, including the two co-presidents of UDF. The individuals are restricted to their homes. They cannot write articles, talk to reporters, or participate in politics in any way.

These orders are the latest in a long series of repressive measures which the Botha regime has carried out against the anti-apartheid movement. Under

the state of emergency, the opposition groups have already been hit hard. And only a few months ago, new restrictions were placed on the legal alternative press in South Africa.

Why the Latest Attacks?

At first glance, the racists' new ban seems hard to fathom. With all the repressive measures already in place and with the movement in South Africa at a relative ebb, why is the regime resorting to these new police measures?

Apparently the Botha regime feels that not enough had been done to smash the anti-apartheid struggle. The will of the black people to stand up against racist tyranny had not been crushed. For example, the townships were not yet pacified. The rent boycott continued. And here and there, actions against the authorities kept springing up.

Some who follow the South African situation closely say that the new banning orders have to be seen as part of a new round of repression that seeks to wipe out the influence of black militants in the townships. This repression has included the restrictions on the alternative press. It has included the new steps being taken to end the rent boycott. And it has included the use of vigilantes to murder the young militants known as the "comrades," such as the campaign of terror organized by Zulu chief Buthelezi in the Pietermaritzburg area.

This new round of repression is in part meant to clear the field for groom-

ing a new strata of black sellouts in the townships. The regime is preparing for new municipal elections in the townships and it does not want mass actions against the elections and the collaborators who want to take part in them.

All-Out War Against Apartheid!

The racists have now outlawed any legal black protest. They have reaffirmed their intention to maintain the present system through straightforward repression.

Botha and his henchmen have proved once again that apartheid cannot be peacefully reformed. The racist police state has again declared war against the masses. This must be met with war against the racist regime. There is no solution to apartheid other than through

the revolutionary struggle.

However illusions do not die among those who are inclined towards reformism. United Democratic Front leaders in South Africa are talking about fighting Botha's ban through new court appeals. It is unlikely that they will get anywhere, but even if the bans were modified a bit, they will not change the police-state of apartheid.

The answer is not reformist pipe dreams but revolutionary organizing. Legal openings so long as they exist should be made use of. But even then it is essential to organize underground work. And when legal openings are closed, this calls for greater efforts in building up the underground press, networks, and organization of the masses. It is along that path that the road for liberation lies. □

Battle against evictions heats up in Soweto

At the end of February, three people were killed in the black township of Soweto in South Africa. Police fired into a crowd of blacks protesting evictions. One thousand people massed together to oppose the evictions being carried out for boycotting rent payments. The police first used whips and tear gas to try and disperse the crowd; then they opened fire.

These evictions are part of a stepped-up campaign on the part of the racist authorities to try and break the 20-month-old rent boycott in Soweto. The boycott began in 1986 at the height of the mass actions against apartheid. Since then, under its fascist state of emergency laws, the government has been able to suppress some of the most visible manifestations of the black masses' anger. But the rent boycott has gone on despite repression. The boycott has cost the government over \$100 million in un-

collected rents and utility bills just in Soweto (the amount nationwide is \$400 million).

Rent constitutes a major portion of the income for the municipal councils set up by the white racist rulers in the black townships. Hence the sellout local councils work hard to break the rent boycott. Since daytime evictions draw a crowd, the councils usually evict people during the middle of the night. They show up at the door at 4:00 a.m. and demand back rent on the spot. If the tenants refuse, they are immediately put out and their furniture is confiscated.

This latest rash of evictions and the repression by the regime indicates that the racist authorities are becoming bolder and more brutal in their attempts to break the rent strike. But it will not be so easy to crush the fighting spirit of the oppressed black masses. □

Pretoria's troops make the law in 'independent' homeland

Bophuthatswana, February 10: President Lucas Mangope is overthrown in a military coup. Troops take over the capital and hold Mangope prisoner. Within hours, however, the coup collapses and Mangope is freed.

How was this effected? Did the Bophuthatswana military split into rival forces? Did the people of Bophuthatswana rise up in defense of their president?

No. Mangope was saved by the intervention of troops from South Africa. The coup collapsed as soon as South African troops came streaming across the border.

This is a dramatic confirmation of the point made over and over by the anti-apartheid movement, that South Africa's policy of "independent homelands" is a complete fraud. South Africa tries to justify its denial of rights for the black majority in South Africa by arguing that the blacks are really citizens of "homelands" (also called bantustans) like Bophuthatswana. South Africa's rapid intervention during the coup attempt shows that, regardless of who occupies the presidential palace in

Bophuthatswana, the law there is made by the apartheid racists.

Another case in point: in contrast to Bophuthatswana, the coup attempt in the "homeland" of Transkei around the first of January was successful. General Bantubonke Holomisa toppled the president and established a military regime without intervention from South Africa. In this case, the general previously delivered promises to South Africa that all agreements with South Africa would be honored. Having received the go-ahead from South Africa, General Holomisa pulled off his coup without any problems.

South Africa completely controls the economy of the "homelands." Bophuthatswana is used as a gambling and resort center for the racists (Sun City is located there). South Africa pays more than 60% of Transkei's annual budget. Holomisa's new regime is based on giving big tax breaks, cash incentives, and anti-labor regulations to South African capitalists who want to invest in Transkei. Clearly the South African propaganda about "independent" homelands is a complete fraud. □



Students at University of Cape Town demonstrate against the Botha government's crackdown on anti-apartheid organizations, February 25.

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simply as a means of pressure on Nicaragua. The Democrats have never more clearly indicated their hatred for the revolution in Nicaragua than now, when they have voted down a Reagan contra aid plan only in order to put forward their own contra aid program. Let us fight imperialism and its political parties! Otherwise one runs the risk of having to abandon even such basic demands as "No contra aid!" □

MARXIST-LENINIST BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

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The truth about Israeli 'democracy':

GAS, GUNS AND CLUBS

For decades the politicians and press in the U.S. have been telling us what a great democracy Israel is. An island of humanity and civilization among barbarians and terrorists.

What a pretty picture. Never mind that when Israel was set up in 1948, the Zionist founders of Israel forced out hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Never mind that those who remained suffered humiliation and discrimination. Never mind that in 1967, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza fell under a military occupation which has lasted for nearly 21 years. Never mind that Palestinian workers are superexploited by Israeli capitalists.

But the Palestinian revolt today is showing large numbers of people here in the U.S. something of the truth about life in Israel. People see the Zionist troops slamming young demonstrators around, and they ask, where is the humanity in this?

The Zionist chieftains themselves, along with the imperialists in the U.S., are trying to write off the brutality of Zionist troops as justified use of force to "maintain order." And if that doesn't cover every outrage, they dismiss the rest as "exceptions."

But are they? Or do they reveal the essence of Zionist rule — racist and oppressive to the core? The truth is, fascist savagery is not the exception among the Israeli Defense Forces — it's the order of the day.

Shootings and Fatal Beatings

Consider the Israeli army's return to the use of live ammunition to quell demonstrations. Because of international outrage, the army stopped shooting demonstrators with metal bullets during January. Soldiers still opened fire, but with rubber bullets and tear gas.

But this was not sufficient to dam up the rising tide of protest. So in February the soldiers returned to firing metal bullets at demonstrators. The death toll among demonstrators suddenly lurched ahead. Every day it climbs higher and higher.

With the return to live ammunition, Israeli army commanders returned to their old excuse that soldiers were just "firing at feet," but sometimes protesters "get hit by ricochet." But scores of people have been killed by these "accidents," and often by bullets to the head or upper body. The fact is, the army is using superior weapons and firepower to kill some protesters and to try and intimidate the rest.

Consider another Israeli method: the use of "force, beatings" — to use Defense Minister Rabin's phrase. Rabin ordered 10,000 wooden clubs for use by his soldiers. He advertised their use as a supposedly "humane" alternative to shooting at demonstrators.

It's bad enough to club people for

demonstrating. But the actual, unannounced policy goes far beyond that. Zionist troops range through Palestinian towns and refugee camps at night pulling people out of their homes and breaking their bones. These are not necessarily people suspected of demonstrating — the policy is simply random terror.

And no one could argue that this is simply an "exception" by some stray soldiers that "got out of hand." Hospital and clinic statistics prove otherwise.

In mid-February the Zionists took things a step farther. While before the patients in hospitals arrived with fractured limbs, now they began appearing with bruises all over their bodies, including their heads. This change in policy occurred after the huge Palestinian demonstrations of February 7-8. This new policy was not announced, but its effects were immediate and deadly. In two days four Palestinians died of beatings.

Burial Alive — An Exception?

One of the most horrific examples of Zionist brutality was the attempt to bury alive four Palestinian teen-agers on February 5 in the village of Salim. Soldiers first beat them, breaking their arms; then had a bulldozer dump dirt on top of them. All four managed to survive after villagers discovered them and dug them out.

This horror story was first suppressed by the press in Israel and the U.S. But when the facts became irrefutable, the official story then switched to loudly berating the soldiers involved, saying what they did was an "exception."

But is it really all that much of a deviation from the rampant daily beatings and shootings by the Israeli soldiers? And even this isn't the only case of such a barbaric act. It has now been reported that on February 14 soldiers seized two Palestinian teen-agers outside the village of Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip; the teens were first tied to jeeps, driven around, beaten, and then buried alive.

The U.S. media doesn't even bother complaining about the soldiers tying Palestinians to jeeps. This is accepted crowd control in the Israeli army — seize some Palestinians and use them as shields, tie them to the hood of your jeep, push them out in front of the soldiers, etc.

Zionist Vigilantes

Another feature of Israeli repression is the increased use of Zionist settlers in the West Bank as a vigilante force. The settlers' terrorist raids are unofficial but nonetheless directly organized by the Israeli state.

Many of the settlers are themselves soldiers or reservists. They are issued



The ugly rule of Israeli occupation army on the West Bank.

arms and ammunition by the army; they are required by the army to carry their weapons at all times, and are encouraged to use them if they feel threatened.

So it is no surprise to find Palestinians

being shot by settlers. But lately the settlers have taken to organizing regular terrorist raids on Palestinian villages. They come into town in disguise, in a

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See ISRAEL

'Occupiers, get out!'

Continued from page 1

And within an hour after the curfew was lifted, young Palestinians were once again slinging stones at the Zionist troops inside Nablus.

"Second Anniversary" Protests

One of the high points of February was the demonstrations organized to commemorate two months of the uprising. On February 7-8 protests flared throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. All towns in the territories were completely shut down by strike action.

In the days before and after this event, furious street battles took place in Nablus. Roadblocks were thrown up in East Jerusalem, and Israeli banks had their windows smashed.

Israeli troops tried all their brutal tactics to suppress the protests. Twelve towns including Nablus were under curfew. Soldiers beat demonstrators and opened fire directly into crowds. On February 7 alone they killed five Palestinians. But nothing stopped the protests.

Into the Golan Heights

The Palestinian upsurge also spurred the Arabs in the Golan Heights into action. On February 14 villagers in the

Golan Heights area demonstrated against their occupation and annexation by Israel. The Golan Heights, which used to be part of Syria, were captured by Israel in 1967 along with the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Heights were annexed by Israel on February 14, 1982.

In scenes reminiscent of the battles in the West Bank, hundreds of people in the village of Majdal Shams demanded an end to Israeli occupation. They were attacked by a force of 1,000 Israeli riot police. But the villagers fought back, throwing stones at the police.

Yet another "day of anger" was called on February 16. On that day a general strike completely shut down all towns in the West Bank and Gaza. Every shop was closed to demonstrate hatred of the Israeli occupiers.

Another ongoing form of struggle is the refusal to pay the Israelis' value-added tax. Every commercial transaction in the West Bank and Gaza is subject to a 15% sales tax. But now the Palestinian masses are refusing to pay it.

Shultz Visit Denounced

February ended in a powerful burst of struggle.

The focus of the actions this week was the visit of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. The U.S. government is the No. 1 backer of Israeli oppression against the Palestinians. But the mass uprising has made Washington nervous about imperialist stability in the Middle East. Thus Shultz came bearing a hypocritical "peace plan." But while this plan speaks about Palestinian rights it would maintain the Palestinians under the Israeli jackboot — it merely talks about some form of limited autonomy under Zionist hegemony.

The Palestinian masses were not interested. They shut down the West Bank and Gaza in a solid general strike. And as Shultz hobnobbed with the bloodstained Israeli leaders, waves of Palestinian militants confronted the Israeli troops in the occupied territories.

Another attempt to cool down the Palestinian uprising has flopped. The Palestinian masses who are daily standing up to the Israeli "iron fist" are not about to be fooled by the empty promises of U.S. imperialism. □



"The guys" in Nablus defy curfew to pelt Israeli troops with rocks.



U.S. imperialism, get out of Central America!

Activists oppose contra aid, thousands march in L.A.

At the beginning of February a new wave of demonstrations was held across the country against the U.S./contra war on Nicaragua. It was spurred by Reagan's efforts to win congressional approval of another huge aid package to the contras of over \$60 million for four months.

Eight thousand people protested in Los Angeles and 500 rallied in San Francisco. Seattle had two protests including a denunciation of Secretary of State Shultz at the University of Washington. Actions in the Midwest included demonstrations of 400 in Chicago and 300 in Detroit. A protest of about 1,000 in Washington, D.C. was among those held in the East. The demonstrations across the country show the widespread hatred for U.S. intervention in Central America.

The Marxist-Leninist Party took part in many of these demonstrations, distributing leaflets, holding discussions with the activists and raising militant slogans. MLP literature put forward the fighting tasks facing the movement. For example, the leaflet put out by the Seattle branch of the MLP declared "Solidarity activists, unite!:

1. Against all U.S. intervention — the terror war and the 'peace plan' blackmail. U.S. out! Period!
2. Against both interventionist parties, Republican and Democratic.
3. Reach out to working people. Explain the source of this intervention — the insatiable drive for profits and plunder by the big corporations, i.e. imperialism."

Shultz feels wrath of students at U. of Washington



On February 5, about 400 activists denounced Secretary of State Shultz at the University of Washington. They condemned the U.S./contra war on Nicaragua, U.S./Israeli oppression of the Palestinian people, and other crimes of U.S. foreign policy.

The demonstrators rallied at Meany Hall where Shultz spoke. One of the protest speeches pointedly condemned Democratic Party collusion in the contra war and the fraud of "humanitarian" aid to the contras. This got a warm response, and activists shouted slogans that were raised during the speech.

Inside the meeting hall, five protesters interrupted Shultz, shouting "Free Palestine, end the occupation!" Police removed them from the hall.

Following the rally, 150 activists marched through nearby streets, shouting slogans along the way. They were greeted with raised fists from

Anger at the Democrats — Another Wright-Wing Party

Reagan's aid plan was defeated in the House of Representatives on February 3. But this was not the end of the struggle. Speaker of the House Jim Wright immediately announced that the Democrats would put forward their own contra aid plan. And the Democratic-controlled Senate even voted 51-48 in support of the Republican plan defeated in the House.

As February wore on, anger developed at the Democratic contra aid proposals. In the movement, most political trends that support the Arias plan say they will accept "humanitarian" aid to the contras, if it is as specified in the Arias plan. They wrote about such aid as if it were mainly funeral benefits. But when this "humanitarian" aid surfaced in practice, it had little to do with the harmless pictures drawn by these groups. Many of these groups felt it necessary to denounce the Democratic Party's idea of "humanitarian" aid and the pointed bayonet that lies behind it. Meanwhile rank-and-file activists chant slogans for no contra aid whatever, and they have been stabbed in the back by those who had assured them that Congress would stop the Reaganite aggression — if it were just pressured a bit.

Some demonstrations were held at the end of February against the new Democratic contra-aid package. In Detroit, for example, on February 25 about 40 people demonstrated against contra aid, whether delivered by the CIA or the Red Cross. □

pedestrians. A couple of bus drivers apparently tried to assist the demonstrators by blocking off traffic on the opposite side of the street. At one intersection, protesters sat down and blocked traffic.

The marchers returned to campus just as the Shultz speech let out, greeting Shultz and his audience with vigorous denunciation. There was a special "greeting" for Senator Evans, a big-name liberal Republican senator from Washington who votes for contra aid and who attended the Shultz speech. Twenty activists surrounded and denounced him. The police swooped in, showing demonstrators away and sending a newspaper photographer to the hospital with injuries from a police nightstick.

But the wrath of the protesters had clearly been felt by Shultz and Evans. □

Workers and poor defy repression in Guatemala

The workers and peasants of Guatemala are again on the move. They have broken through the steel wall of repression of the Cerezo regime to hold massive demonstrations. The armed liberation struggle of the oppressed is reviving as well.

Against Poverty and Oppression

The upsurge was touched off by a government decree raising electricity costs by 40% and by new taxes on the

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Prensa Proletaria

POR LA UNIDAD DE LA CLASE OBRERA EN LA LUCHA POR EL SOCIALISMO.

Número: 25 Órgano Central del Partido Revolucionario Democrático de Nicaragua (MRP-RL) Valor CS 50

A toilers' peace or an imperialist peace

(The following article is an editorial from the December issue of "Prensa Proletaria." Translation by "WA" staff.)

Since the signing of the Esquipulas Accords [the Arias regional peace pact], the armed counterrevolution and the political counterrevolution have strengthened their forces.

When the military counterrevolution [the contras] was being dealt severe blows by the popular combatants, amongst whom the youth have distinguished themselves, the government recognized this counterrevolution at the international level as a fighting force.

After more than a year of having *La Prensa* closed, the reaction is now newly circulating its official voice. The parties of the right are mobilizing under the tutelage of the Yankee Congressional leaders. The National Dialogue is not discussing the demands of the masses. The National Commission of Reconciliation is under the leadership of a known enemy of the revolutionary process (pro-contra Cardinal Obando Y Bravo). The Law on Foreign Investment was approved. A general and absolute amnesty for all counterrevolutionaries was approved.

On the other side of the street the masses, the toilers, are suffering under the weight of the crisis and the aggression. Trade union freedom and democracy are curtailed; wages are poorer and poorer; the shortage of mass consumer products is becoming more acute; there are serious restrictions on the revolutionary mobilization and organization of the people.

This has been Esquipulas. The future of the Nicaraguan people is being decided in Washington, New York, Europe and Moscow; it is being decided

by Yankee congressmen, by social-democrats, by presidents who are enemies of their own people; it is being decided by the wheeler-dealers in revolutionary theory and practice. Esquipulas puts us in the hands of an International Commission made up of conservatives, social-Christians, liberals and all stripes of anti-popular trends.

The Sandinista government, for its part, amidst the opulence in which it lives, is trying to put the finishing touch on the social pact it signed in Puntarenas in 1979.

This is not how a people's peace is made. This is a peace of the capitalists and exploiters. Esquipulas is not the peace of revolutionaries; it is the peace of the transnational corporations, the peace of big private entrepreneurs, the peace of the counterrevolutionary newspaper *La Prensa*. Esquipulas does not stop the war; Esquipulas is the continuation of the war through other means.

Neither in the National Commission of Reconciliation, nor in the National Dialogue, nor in the International Commission of Verification and Follow-up, nor in the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit can answers be found for the demands of the masses. The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua has been and remains against the essence of the accords; it is against the social pact, as are the toilers and the revolutionaries.

The anti-imperialist struggle, the fight against the bourgeoisie, the fight for better conditions of life and work, for democratic rights, the fight for the deepening of the revolution are one [connected fight]; and the masses with the working class at the vanguard must be in the front lines of this battle. □

'La Prensa' must not be allowed to play with the workers' demands

The newspaper *La Prensa* is the central organ of the counterrevolution; it is a paper whose reactionary political rights have been recognized by the Sandinista government since its reopening. And *La Prensa* has been playing with the legitimate demands of the workers, trying to present the stands and the forces of the right wing as the champions of the workers.

The wage earners should not be fooled, however. Not even though *La Prensa* is, for example, pronouncing itself in Marxist-sounding language, talking about "productive forces," "labor power," "the proletariat," etc., and is supposedly in favor of the legitimate demands that the workers' movement has put before the Sandinista government.

The demands for a new Labor Code

[the old labor code from the time of the dictator Somoza is still in force], against SNOTS [the oppressive wage scale enforced by the Sandinista government], for the 13th month's pay [the December holiday bonus], and for trade union freedom and democracy are part of the immediate plan of struggle for the workers' movement. The bourgeoisie, playing with these legitimate demands, is trying to draw the constantly deepening mobilization of the working class and toilers against the state apparatus and its policies [into a fight] solely as regards the state's position towards the capitalists, especially those in COSEP [the Supreme Council of Private Enterprise]. The proof is that in the same newspapers where the right wing is talking up the workers' demands, it is

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No backsliding! Not a penny for the contras!

No contra aid! This is one of the popular slogans of the struggle against Reagan's war on Nicaragua. Not a penny for the contras, whether lethal or non-lethal, "humanitarian" or dirty.

Everyone agrees.

Or do they? This agreement was before the Arias plan.

The Arias plan made "humanitarian" aid respectable.

Previously "humanitarian" aid was the lying phrase of the Reagan men who wanted to prettify their funding of murder and arson. The Democrats trailed guiltily behind.

But now "humanitarian" aid is supposedly the very stuff of peace and reconciliation. The Democrats now proudly vote for their own packages of contra aid in the name of "peace" and upholding the Arias plan.

From Arias Plan to Contra Aid

And not just the Democrats. Many of the opportunist forces in the movement have joined the Democrats in debating what kind of "humanitarian" aid should be given to the contras. Oh, they still join the rank-and-file activists in shouting "No contra aid." And then they give interviews and put forward plans.

No contra aid — until a cease-fire. No contra aid — except to rehabilitate the contras. No contra aid — unless, except, not without conditions, blah, blah, blah.

Some Revisionists Defend the Liberal Contra Aid Packages

The pro-Soviet revisionists of *Frontline* are, as usual, most enthusiastic partisans of the liberals. They championed the Democratic Party's own package of contra aid. They wrote in their issue of February 15 that "the House of Representatives has delivered a stinging rebuke to President Reagan's Central American policy" in rejecting Reagan's contra aid package. And they defended "The proposal being ballooned by Speaker of the House Jim Wright (D-Tex.)" as "fall(ing) within the framework authorized by the peace accords." Since *Frontline* is in love with the Arias plan, their statement means that they support the liberal aid package.

Other Opportunists Debate the Proper Type of "Humanitarian" Aid

Other opportunists debate with the liberal Democrats what type of aid should be given to the contras. Take the leaders of the Days of Decision coalition that organized demonstrations against the Reagan contra aid proposal in February. The demonstrations gave the slogan "No contra aid."

But it seems that various leaders of the Days of Decision have a rather strange interpretation of this slogan. For example, the February 17 issue of the *Guardian* stated approvingly: "Any additional U.S. aid to the contras must go toward the reintegration of former contras into civilian life, rather than sustaining them as a military force," asserted Bill Spencer of Days of Decision.

And the February 24 *Guardian* quoted Meg Ruby of the Days of Decision as stating that "What we are saying is no aid should flow to the contras as long as they are an armed force."

In short, there can be additional U.S. aid to the counterrevolutionaries — under the right conditions.

Some statements say that aid should only be given after a cease-fire. But of course such aid is precisely designed to maintain the contras as a military force in case the cease-fire breaks down. Other statements say that aid should be given only after the contras disarm.

Financing Political Counterrevolution

But should aid be given to the contras even if most of them disarm and form an internal political counterrevolutionary front? This would mean financing the internal enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution. It would mean financing the attempt to destabilize Nicaragua "peacefully." We, however, don't think that the CIA's pawns should be financed in any of their activities, whether political or military. We don't think, for example, that the CIA funds that finance the reactionary newspaper *La Prensa* are any cleaner than the dirty funds that pay for the contra leaders' Swiss bank accounts.

Raising Money for Contra Resettlement

Yet some church groups are already organizing campaigns to help reintegrate the contras into Nicaragua. They aren't even waiting for a cease-fire. Why, the very declaration of the Arias plan meant to them that the era of peace had already arrived.

The SWP, in their paper *The Militant*, report approvingly on "the new Quest for Peace campaign" which "is specifically earmarked to help Nicaragua with resettlement efforts [of the contras] undertaken as part of the Guatemala peace accords [the Arias plan]." (Feb. 26, p. 10) SWP says this is "a project of the Quixote Center, a Catholic-based peace and justice organization in Washington, D.C."

It is one thing for the Nicaraguan government and people to take back those who give up the contra cause. It is another thing to mobilize foreign support for the plight of those poor contras.

This money will mainly be given to Nicaraguan communities. It does not go directly to the contras. It appears that Quest for Peace, to a certain extent, simply thinks it is clever to dress up aid to the Nicaraguan government as part of Arias plan aid to the contras. But this is too clever by far. It is a scandal to send money to bleeding, blockaded Nicaragua — and earmark it for the expenses of the "former" contras.

And whatever Quest for Peace's intention, this type of activity has its own political impact. Previously various church groups organized money to give to Nicaragua to counterbalance contra aid. Now they organize a form of contra welfare. This helps make it politically respectable for other groups to flood Nicaragua with money to destabilize Nicaragua in the name of "humanitarian" aid for the internal, "peaceful" contra front.

And who says that, even if some contras give up their arms, perfect peace will descend? Already there are reports of the internal "political" opposition in Nicaragua firing on demonstrations of their opponents.

Arias Plan Includes Contra Aid

All these aid plans follow from the Arias plan. The Arias plan is being advertised before the people as the alternative to the contra war. But it openly included provisions for certain types of "humanitarian" contra aid. This is why Nicaraguan President Ortega himself has been forced to endorse "humanitarian" contra aid after the contras give up their arms. And the real Arias plan can be seen in Congress, where the Democrats openly say that "humanitarian" contra aid is to preserve the contras as a means of pressure upon Nicaragua.

Oppose All Contra Aid — Oppose Imperialism

Down with all this nonsense about aid to reintegrate the contras, or "humanitarian"

aid, or aid after a cease-fire. **NOT A PENNY FOR THE CONTRAS! NOT A PENNY FOR THE CIA'S MEN!**

Our support must go to the suffering workers and peasants of Nicaragua. Material aid must go toward their needs, not that of the contras, towards their newspapers and organizations, not

those of the contras. And political work must be directed solidly against imperialism, not towards inventing ways of amending the current plans of the imperialists.

The Arias plan has now been revealed

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The fraud of 'humanitarian' aid

The Democrats are trying to pawn off their contra aid package as "humanitarian" because it is supposed to be for food, shelter, clothes, etc. Who are they kidding? The contras are carrying out a terrorist war. How can any aid to these butchers be "humanitarian"?

The Democrats are basing themselves on reports that the contras already have enough weapons and ammo from the CIA to last several months. The Democrats should know. After all, they approved the CIA shipments! Moreover, after the Democrats "defeated" the Reagan contra aid bill on February 3, the CIA actually increased shipments to the contras for the rest of February. With congressional approval.

Now the Democratic Party's proposed "humanitarian" aid will ensure that Reagan's hired gun thugs will still feel the warmth of U.S. ruling class support. As Jim Wright stressed, the Democrats must "make sure" that the contras are "not left high and dry."

Meanwhile the Democrats also know that the notorious private contra aid network that was brought to light in the contragate hearings is being used to supply the contras. But did the contragate hearings propose serious measures against the contra aid network? Or against the infamous contra drug running network? No! And are the Democrats doing anything to prevent the activities of these networks today? No!

Democrats Threaten New Military Aid

In fact, the Democratic Party leadership is already threatening Nicaragua with the prospect of yet more U.S. military aid to the contras. House Speaker Jim Wright declared in the beginning of February that "if the government of Nicaragua were to misbehave (i.e., not come to terms with Reagan and the CIA — ed.) in extreme ways, that would radically change the situation" and more military aid would be forthcoming. (*Guardian*, Feb. 24, p. 3)

This is not just empty words. In their current contra aid proposal, the Democrats already look forward to yet an additional aid package. The current bill calls for a fast vote on a further bill if the Nicaraguan government doesn't cough up more concessions. It must come to terms with the contras, that is, with the CIA and the Reagan administration that pulls the strings. Otherwise the Democrats will vote big bucks for war.

Ensuring the Existence of the Contras

Even the liberal wing of the Democrats is anxious to maintain the contras as a fighting force. The liberal Democratic Study Group in Congress wants more restrictions on contra aid than Jim Wright does. But, in a letter on January 29 to the Democratic leader in the House, Jim Wright, they insist that this wouldn't harm the contras. They say that the policies they want "would constitute the kind of insurance the [Reagan] administration says is needed. It would end hostilities, but would also allow the contras to remain intact as a military force within Nicaragua while peace arrangements are being worked out." (*Ibid.*)

The liberals want the whip of the contras to be used against Nicaragua — unless of course the Nicaraguan government peacefully agrees to all the contra demands.

And if the war ends, the "humanitarian" funding will finance the counterrevolutionary political activities of the contras. They will have more ready dollars than any other political force in Nicaragua.

A New Excuse to Aid the Contras

But one mustn't think our dear Democrats are heartless monsters. Why \$14 million of the \$30 million aid package is supposed to go to help the injured children on both sides of the conflict. This "kindly" gesture was a sop to those liberals who pose as determined opponents of the contra war, like Rep. Bonior (D-Mich.).

But this only shows the depths of cynicism of the Democratic liberals. They will fund a war that kills and maims Nicaraguan children and their parents. Then they will send a few band-aids, with big labels "Uncle Sam loves you."

The Democrats' "humanitarian" aid is a fraud from the word go. And this is assuming the proposed aid is actually used for its stated purposes. Again and again congressional "humanitarian" aid wound up being used for weaponry.

Bankruptcy of the Arias Plan

The Democrats have pushed their aid bill as part of the Arias peace plan. This just shows how bankrupt this supposed peace plan is.

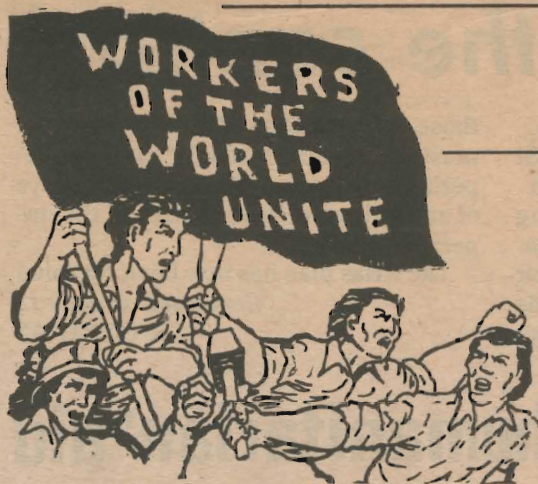
Meanwhile, under the guise of "democratization," the Arias plan demands that Nicaragua dismantle its revolution. Nicaragua must be run to the satisfaction of the Reagan administration, Congress, and the pro-U.S. regimes of Central America.

The Arias plan has not brought peace but merely weakened Nicaragua in the face of the contra invaders. For example, one of the "democratic" concessions wrung from Nicaragua was the release from prison of former supporters of the deposed dictator Somoza. And where are these ex-prisoners today? According to Nicaraguan officials, many have joined the contras. Far from stopping the contra war, the Arias plan is assisting it.

The Democrats want to see if they can get more concessions from Nicaragua through the Arias peace plan. This is why they want the fraud of "humanitarian" aid. And if the Democrats do not get the concessions they seek through diplomatic maneuvers? They have already made it clear that they want the contras to be maintained as a force for murder and arson and terror.

Build the Fight Against Contra Aid

Fellow activists! We must not allow the Democrats to get away with these imperialist plans. We must not place our faith in the "humanitarian" aid bills under the Arias plan. Nor should we help the Democrats and the CIA fund a "peaceful" counterrevolution in Nicaragua. To fight U.S. aggression against Nicaragua we must build up a militant mass movement independent of and against the imperialist political parties. □



The World in Struggle

British strike wave



British Ford workers denounce the company's "modern management" plans in a pre-strike demonstration.

In February a wave of strikes rolled through Britain. Seamen, nurses, teachers, and mine workers staged one-day walkouts demanding higher wages and a halt to job cuts. Worker agitation spread rapidly through the ranks of auto workers too, as Ford workers struck for two weeks, and at the end of the month workers at Land Rover were out on strike.

The job actions in February dramatize the upturn in the strike movement in Britain. In 1986 there were two million work days lost to strikes. In 1987 that number jumped to three and a half million, and 1988 has begun with a swing

One-Day Strikes Protest Thatcherism

A number of one-day strikes were organized in February to protest economic policies of the Thatcher government, especially in the government-run sectors.

On February 1, following a series of wildcat strikes, 10,000 mine safety workers walked out for one day. They demanded a 10% pay raise and an end to the rescheduling of work by the national Coal Board. The Coal Board insists on a flexible work schedule to keep the coal mines working six days a week.

Also on February 1, seamen shut down eight ports and stopped all ferry service in Britain. The seamen have lost 5,000 jobs a year for the past decade and are demanding an end to the cuts.

Nurses also walked out for one day protesting their low pay and the general underfinancing of the National Health Service, which causes overcrowding of hospitals and shortages of staff. The nurses shut down three dozen national hospitals in their strike.

Teachers in London also staged a one-day walkout.

Ford Workers Fight "Japanese-Style" Work Rules

On February 8th, 32,000 production workers at 21 British Ford plants struck

against the company's attempt to impose new "Japanese-style" production methods on them. In deciding to strike, the workers defied their top union leaders who recommended acceptance of a contract with the new "flexible work rule" provisions.

Ford wanted a three-year contract to implement the new provisions, and offered wage increases of 7% the first year and 2.5% over the inflation rate for the next two years. But these raises were tied to acceptance of the new "quality control" system opposed by the workers.

In 1985 workers gave Ford big concessions on work rules. The number of job classifications was cut from 500 to 52, giving Ford more "flexible" job assignments. The result: productivity and profits soared, while the workers gained only modest wage raises.

This year Ford wanted even more "flexibility," to the point of assigning skilled tradesmen to production work when they are not busy with a repair job. Ford also wanted to introduce "work teams" and "quality groups" to pit workers against one another and bring them into close collaboration with the company's productivity schemes.

A Powerful Strike

Ford, Britain's largest car maker, had not experienced a strike for a decade. With previous concessions on productivity and the union's endorsement of further concessions, Ford thought it could push workers to the wall.

But workers voted down the proposed contract by 90%, and proceeded to set up picket lines before the official call to strike. Nationwide production was immediately shut down.

Ford's modernized, highly integrated production system made the strike even more powerful. As soon as British production was halted, Ford was forced to send home the 2,000 workers at its plant in Belgium. And within a few days production slowed to a crawl at Ford's

West German plants.

Ford management scrambled to settle. The contract settlement came after two weeks. In the final settlement the contract's duration was cut from three years to two. Although Ford did not immediately win all its work rule changes, it was able to get the union leaders to agree to submit work rule changes to local bargaining. Thus the push for "Japanese-style" work rule changes was slowed, although not stopped. A section of the workers were angry with this settlement, but the contract was ratified.

7% Wage Pattern

The Ford strike set a pattern for struggle for other British auto workers. Workers at Vauxhall (owned by GM) are agitating for strike action, as are workers at Renault trucks. GM has offered Vauxhall workers wage raises of 7% a year following the pattern set at Ford.

The 6,000 workers at Land Rover's plant outside Birmingham went on strike February 22. This is the first strike at Land Rover in six years, and is another example of the growing strike movement in Britain. □

Ford workers strike in Mexico and Taiwan

In addition to the strike at British Ford, auto workers struck against Ford in Mexico and Taiwan during February.

The 1,000 workers at the Ford plant in Chihuahua, Mexico struck on February 8 demanding a 50% increase in pay. The workers also demanded a reduction in the work week from 48 hours to 40.

Ford workers in Taiwan also struck the second week of February. The workers won production bonuses that will average \$350 per month. This is a sub-

stantial increase in pay, since their pay is only \$650 per month.

The strike at Ford comes amid a strike wave in Taiwan, where strikes are completely illegal. Recently auto workers at Honda and Nissan plants in Taiwan also struck. And Tatung, the Taiwanese electronics monopoly, was also hit by a strike. Apparently the big strike wave that swept through South Korea last summer has helped inspire the Taiwan workers. □

General strikes shake Bangladesh dictator

In Bangladesh, the campaign to remove General Ershad from power continued with massive strikes and demonstrations in February. Since November the opposition has carried out an average of two general strikes every week.

Trying to quiet the opposition, Ershad dismissed parliament in December and scheduled new parliamentary elections for March 3. Ershad swore that these elections would be fair. The last ones only ended up formalizing his rule.

But Ershad is planning his March 3 elections according to the model set by other military dictators internationally. Polling places will be flooded with army troops to "provide security." Meanwhile Ershad's state of emergency remains in force, and he continues to ar-

rest opposition leaders.

The election is being boycotted by almost all political parties. Ershad had tried to use the election plan to win the collaboration of some of the capitalist opposition parties. But that did not work. The struggle against his regime will continue.

In the fight against the tyranny, the opposition campaign has generated broad mass support. The working people of Bangladesh have no love for dictatorship. But the bourgeois opposition parties do not represent hope for the masses of poor workers and peasants. For the toilers to make progress, they have to build their own independent class struggles and organization. They have to put their own revolutionary stamp on the current upsurge. □



Clash in Bangladesh: Gen. Ershad's police fire tear gas, demonstrators respond with rocks in Dhaka, February 6.

Explosion of struggle in Dominican Rep.

During the final days of February the streets of the Dominican Republic exploded in mass rebellion. Strikes were organized in many towns and cities. Workers demonstrated and set up barricades of burning tires. They attacked markets and food stores, seizing food. There were sharp confrontations with police and troops.

The workers and poor rose up with a broad range of demands. They demanded an end to hunger and called for the lowering of food prices. They demanded improvement in neighborhood services such as electricity, water, schools and roads. There were demands made against environmental pollution; in one area people wanted an end to pollution from a gold mine.

The toilers in the Dominican Republic have been suffering from economic depression for several years now. With the collapse of sugar prices and a big debt to foreign banks, the masses have been forced under one austerity plan after another. The masses are saying No More!

The right-wing government of Balaguer has met the toilers' rebellion with repression. Already at least three people have been killed, dozens wounded, and hundreds arrested. The government threatens more military force.

Meanwhile the mass actions continue without letup. And plans are underway for a general mobilization throughout the country. □