



## Medicine for profit has got to go!

# For a national health care system!

Medicine for profit is in crisis. While the total national bill on health is expected to reach a whopping 940 billion dollars this year, a quarter of all Americans are either uninsured or have absurdly inadequate coverage.

The day of government health plans is upon us. Even if Congress passes nothing this year, many states are proceeding on their own.

Only a government health plan can provide universal coverage for all workers and poor, whether employed or laid-off, whether people have pre-existing conditions or are presently healthy.

Only a government health plan can solve the mess that private-market health care has fallen into.

### In the name of a health plan

But will the presently-proposed state or federal plans provide this?

The plans leaked from the Clinton task force promise much. For the future. But for now? Universal coverage will

take two to eight years from the date of adopting the plan. That's what Clinton spokespeople are already saying. Clinton will be safely out of office long before his promise comes due.

Cost savings. That's Clinton's alpha and omega. But he has a Rube Goldberg scheme of regulations to accomplish this.

### Feeding the hungry market

This is because Clinton's "managed competition" is based on preserving the private market in health care plans. It preserves the insurance companies, whose overhead and marketing staffs and administrative expenses take up more than 14 cents of each premium dollar. And why? Insurance companies are unnecessary in a truly national health plan. But Clinton will keep them in order to avoid antagonizing a powerful, moneyed interest.

Clinton's plan is also based on balancing the interests of hospitals, the extravagant salaries of most doctors, the voracious

hunger of drug companies, and the balance sheets of the present medical supply houses. There may be some price controls for awhile. But the basic market anarchy is preserved.

And so long as the private market is preserved in full, the health crisis won't go away. So long as marketplace medicine calls the tune, the various moneyed

interests will reconcile their interests by soaking the workers and the poor, or by giving us second-rate care. Under those conditions, a government plan will mean, in large part, just feeding the market interests with tax revenues.

*Continued on page 3*

More health care articles: pp. 2-3

## May Day: Time for a change

It is time for a change!

Joblessness has become epidemic. The health care crisis only grows worse. Racism and police brutality are a national disgrace. And while the cold war is over, the U.S. military continues to hover over one area after another, playing world policeman for the filthy rich.

It is time for a change!

But don't count on Clinton to bring it. He has barely been in office three months and he has already backed away from a whole slew of his campaign promises. Oh sure, if it won't cost much, well then Clinton does the liberal strut. But when it comes to controversies or the most serious problems confronting the masses, then the Republicans raise a stink and all of a sudden Clinton starts whining about the costs, about balancing the budget, about finding another compromise with the entrenched interests of the rich.

It is time for a change!

The crises facing the working people are simply too deep to be solved by Clinton's piecemeal tinkering and liberalism-on-the-cheap. What we need are radical measures — those that shake up the old institutions, those that confront the capitalist establishment.

### Wake up the working class movement

Such measures will only come about if there is a broad movement for change. A movement that releases the initiative of the masses to fight for themselves. A movement that unites the workers in the big factories together with the workers in the hospitals, offices, sweatshops and stores.

Not a movement of the trade union hacks, who at most look after their own narrow craft interests, and whose "buy American" nonsense pits workers in the U.S. against our class brothers and sisters in Japan, Mexico and other countries. No, what we need is a movement that is class-wide and fighting in

the self-interest of the working class as a whole.

### May Day for the workers

The workers have launched such movements before. For instance, back on May 1, 1886, the eight-hour day movement got going with strikes and demonstrations all across the country. That movement not only improved workers' conditions, but it made clear to all that the workers were a class that had their own distinct interests and that when they united to fight they had the power to change the world.

Out of that movement May 1st became International Working Class Day. A day when, in countries around the world, workers stage protests, or walk out in strikes, or hold meetings to take stock of their situation and prepare for future class battles.

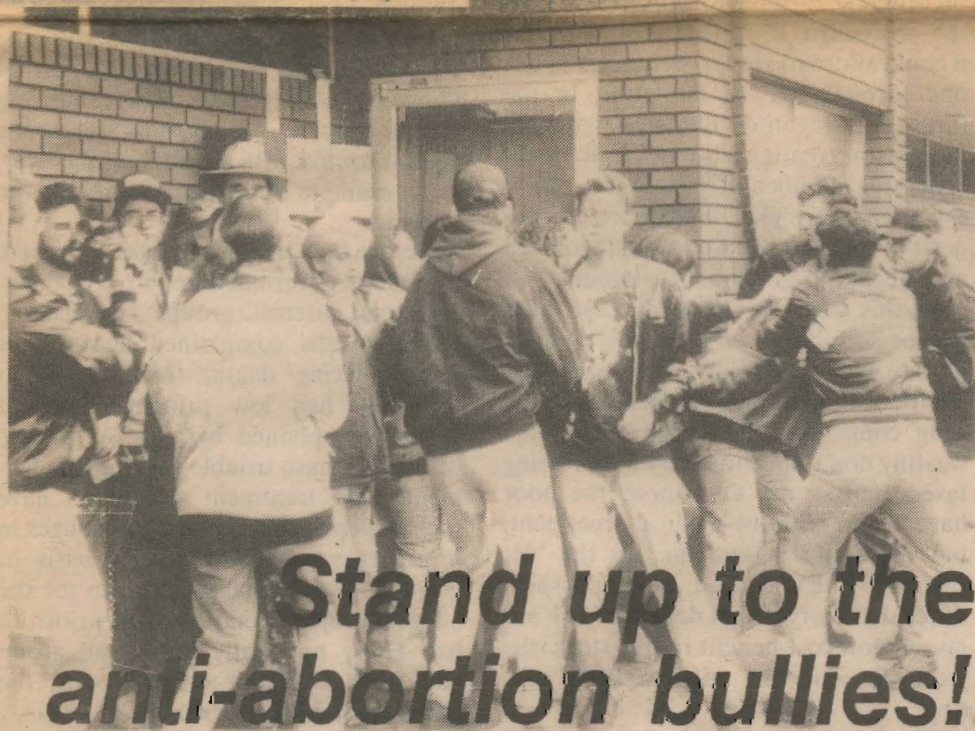
But this May Day you won't find big mass actions in the U.S. The workers' movement has been set back and relegated to just one more "special interest" within the liberal coalition of the Democratic Party.

If the workers' movement is to be revived, then the militants and activists must spread around leaflets and papers that help the masses understand their own class interests and lose illusions about the Democratic politicians and union bureaucrats. They must begin to draw sections of workers into action, no matter how small these are in the beginning. And they must begin to build organization that can unite and release the creativity of the masses.

On May Day weekend, as part of this work, the Marxist-Leninist Party is holding meetings and other activities to help the workers discuss and understand where their class interests lie on major issues like national health care. Come to these meetings, help build them, and join with us in the work to rekindle the working class movement.

It's time for a change! It's time for the working class to get organized! ■

Detroit area clinic defense, April 9.



## Stand up to the anti-abortion bullies!

The murder of Dr. Gunn on March 10 by "right-to-life" fanatics shocked the country. But it was only one strand in the anti-abortion web. Those who thought that the election of Clinton meant that abortion rights were secure are mistaken. The struggle is intensifying at clinics around the country.

These attacks on clinics, doctors and patients must be stopped! But how? Should we stand by and wait for more laws and injunctions and hope that the police finally act?

But if stopping the anti-abortion fanatics was mainly a matter of having laws against their criminal activities, they would have been stopped long ago. They surely violated enough laws—arson, assault, trespass, vandalism, etc. But the courts and cops generally treat them with kid gloves.

No, it is up to ordinary people to do the job. It is the development of mass action in defense of women's rights that knocks the wind out of the sails of religious fanatics. It is the heroism of

activists in defending clinics, of women in asserting their rights, and of medical personnel in staffing clinics, that has been keeping abortion rights alive in this country. It is the presence of people in defense of clinics that has punctured the pretense of the anti-abortion crusaders to be the voice of the people, and that has forced the police to do something for the clinics.

The more active the ordinary people, the less room there will be for the torches and bullets of the "right-to-life" movement. Dr. Gunn was active in his own way, continuing to work at the Pensacola clinic despite "wanted" posters and threats. The best way to honor his memory is to build a movement of ordinary people active in their own way — confronting the anti-abortion zealots, going and explaining the issue in communities, workplaces and schools, and uniting in defense of women's rights. ■

More pro-choice coverage: pp. 6-7

### May Day Events

**DETROIT:** 1:30 pm, Sunday, May 2.  
Room 272, Northwest Activities Center,  
48100 Meyers (At Meyers & Curtis).

**CHICAGO:** Saturday, May 1.  
Contact Marxist-Leninist Books and Periodicals  
at: 312-243-5302.

# Profit-based medicine is sick

## Charging workers for their 'lifestyle'

The employers are seeking one way after another to shift health costs onto the workers. One way being used by some capitalists is blaming workers' health problems on "lifestyle" choices. Companies can pretend to offer health benefits for a moderate cost, but lay extra heavy fees on workers who smoke, or drink, or don't exercise regularly, eat the wrong foods, or are overweight, or have high cholesterol, and so forth. At Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids, for example, each employee is rated on their "lifestyle"; a bad rating can cost a worker up to \$100 a month in added fees for health insurance. At Michigan National Bank, workers were penalized based on an assessment of whether they smoked or drank, what their blood pressure and cholesterol levels were, and a measurement of body fat. Clearly the workers suffer an intolerable loss of privacy, as well as big cuts in pay.

With the savage anti-people moralism typical of this supposedly enlightened society, people are being told that they brought it on themselves for their bad "lifestyle" choices. Since they are supposedly such bad people, they are to pay and pay and pay.

This isn't good medicine, but just exploiting the workers. Medical views on "lifestyle" issues change from decade to decade: should you diet to lose weight, and what is the proper weight? Use polyunsaturated oils or olive oil? What is the proper cholesterol level? How much is a matter of heredity rather than anything the person did? How much

follows from the hardship of working at a certain job? How can people change their habits? Yet workers are to be crucified on the ever-changing standards of establishment opinion, and denied the right to their own views. And if the standards prove to be wrong a few years down the road, hey, it doesn't matter. The more standards the company imposes, the less workers will satisfy them, the more money the company will get in fines — and it doesn't matter a whit whether the standards really promoted health or not.

For that matter, the increasing workloads, growing job insecurity, and difficulty in providing for a family without much money, have a great deal to do with why some people drink or smoke. But the employers will keep stepping up the workloads, while fining the workers for being stressed out. And imagine the hypocrisy of forcing workers into long hours of overtime, and then blaming them for not exercising regularly, not sleeping enough, or having an unhealthy "lifestyle."

Private-market medicine promotes itself as giving everyone a choice. Here we see that it is stripping away workers' privacy, and intruding on their lives in a way that the national health systems in other countries wouldn't dream of doing. We must oppose these "lifestyle" penalties from the employers today, and ensure that they are not incorporated into any American system of national health insurance system tomorrow. ■

## Preventive care and cost control

One of the ills of private-market medicine is the lack of comprehensive preventive care. It is claimed that "managed competition" will solve this problem, because the insurance companies or health maintenance organizations will want to hold down their medical expenses. It is supposedly cheaper to provide preventive care today, than to provide expensive therapy tomorrow.

But cost control and profits cannot motivate a universal system of preventive

care. If profit is the motive, preventive measures will only be taken for those ills that might cost the health plan more money tomorrow. Already this calculation is an incentive not to treat many problems. For example, many health maintenance organizations will drag their feet in treating chronic pains and other problems that make people's lives miserable today, but aren't likely to get worse and require expensive procedures tomorrow. They only want to give that care

which is "cost effective," and you have to fight for any other care.

Moreover, flawed figures are sometimes given to prove how "cost effective" preventive care is. For example, the cost of a dose of vaccine will be compared to the cost of treating a disease. But usually the apologists of marketplace medicine forget to point out that many people may have to be vaccinated in order to prevent a small number of disease cases. Moreover, there may be expenses involved in getting everyone to come in for their shots. Besides, the overall social cost of the disease may be large, but the expense to the particular health plan involved may be quite small.

Even when preventive care is cost-effective, a manager of a health plan, if

under pressure to produce immediate economies, may calculate in a peculiar way. He or she may figure that, well, the costs of not giving preventive care will not show up until later, after the executive has retired, or maybe after the patient has shifted to another health plan.

So long as preventive care is based solely on cost control, it cannot be consistent and comprehensive. But Clinton's "managed competition" depends on such "cost control" to provide preventive care. This is likely to prove a disappointment. It is only concern for people, not for the bottom line, that can provide the impetus for a full system of preventive care. ■

## Clinton OKs the Oregon rationing plan

The state of Oregon wishes to hold down its Medicaid costs for medical care for the poor. It therefore has decided to regulate Medicaid not according to the medical needs of the population, but according to what it wishes to spend. It proposed to solve the problem of escalating costs by simply refusing to give various medical procedures to the poor.

Under this plan, Oregon ranked all medical procedures in a list of priorities from number one to 688, supposedly on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis. It then estimated how much money it will take to carry out these medical procedures each year, based on their cost and the number of people expected to need the procedure. It decided that, for now, it could afford to give procedures number one through 585 to the poor. In the future, if Oregon decides to devote less money to treating the poor, it could lower the number of procedures. Or if the poor get sicker, and more people need the various procedures, Oregon will also decide to give less treatment.

In this way, the Medicaid cost crisis will be solved. Never again will Oregon have to worry about increasing costs. The doctors can keep their high salaries, the drug companies their high prices, the wealthy don't have to worry about being taxed, and so on. Of course, the poor have to do without medical treatment, but that's life in Oregon. It's the "let them die" plan. Indeed, medical procedures that carry a high degree of risk are given a low cost-benefit rating, since why treat someone who might well die anyway?

The Oregon plan also included extending treatment to everyone under the federal poverty line, not just those on Medicaid. But once again, they would only be treated for certain conditions. Moreover, this list of conditions would also be used as the basis for the health plans that would be required from employers to give to their workers. It is expected that it will make it harder for any worker or poor person to get any medical procedure beyond number 585.

This plan required approval from the

federal government, because it radically changes the Medicaid program. The Clinton administration has just approved it, on the basis of allowing the states to experiment. But this is the type experiment that no one should want. The Oregon plan sets the worst possible precedent for a possible universal system. It would be regarded as an outrage in any civilized country, or in any country with a reasonable national health care plan. It is also a system of second-rate assembly-line medicine which regards a patient as medical condition #xyz, rather than an individual to be cured.

Moreover, the Oregon plan was based on moralism against the poor. One of the factors used originally to rate the procedures was a telephone survey of Oregon residents about their values. As well, extensive propaganda was done against drunks with cirrhosis of the liver, as an example of alleged leeches on the system.

Before the Oregon plan was approved, the federal government required changes. Different interest groups complained. AIDS groups complained because, as people facing death, their treatment originally had low priority. Disabled groups complained because, as people who might have trouble seeking employment, their treatment also didn't have such high priority. A series of changes in priorities were made on the basis of political give-and-take. So much for the allegedly objective nature of the priorities list. Every politically influential group had their say. But not the poor, the patients, and the workers.

It is not a question that rationing is needed because the U.S. lacks resources to treat everyone. The Canadian health system treats everyone. The conservatives and the advocates of "managed competition" complain about the problem of waiting for certain procedures in Canada. They then propose a system where the poor will wait forever.

Watch out! The Oregon plan is a system of universal non-treatment. What working people need is a system of universal care. ■

## Merging Medicaid into a national health system

For the time being, the Clinton task force is not adopting the Oregon plan, however. Indeed, it is floating the idea of merging the Medicaid system, which provides medical care for the most poverty-stricken people, into a general health plan. It is said that this will ensure that they are given health care at the level of

other people, rather than having an inferior system. And it is said that the poor will be given special services that they need to actually utilize the system.

Having the poor treated as everyone else, rather than pushed around as well-

Continued on next page  
See MEDICARE

## The Workers' Advocate

Theoretical-political newspaper of the  
Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

Letters, orders and subscriptions:

The Workers' Advocate  
P.O. Box 8706  
Emeryville, CA 94652

From distributor: 25 cents

Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1 for single copy

Subscription: \$6.00 for 6 issues; \$11.00 for 12 issues

ISSN 0276-363X

## El Estandarte Obrero

Spanish supplement to The Workers' Advocate

By mail: 50 cents for single copy

From distributor: 25 cents

Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues, \$6.00 for 12 ISSN: 0276-4954-954

Order from: The Workers' Advocate

# For a national health care system!

Continued from front page

## Who will look after the workers and poor?

But if Clinton is going to preserve the competing interests, then it stands to reason that we workers and poor had better see to it that our interests are taken into account. No one else will look after us. The drug companies won't. The hospitals won't — many have closed their emergency rooms rather than treat large numbers of the poor. The doctors won't do it — the medical establishment has looked calmly on for decades at tens of millions of people languishing without medical care. And no one trusts the government bureaucrats.

If the workers and poor don't take an active role on the health care front, cost cutting will take place completely at our expense. Cost controls will mean rationing care to the poor, as Oregon has brazenly announced. Meanwhile the health industry executives and elite doctors will roll in the dough. No rationing for them in Oregon.

Cost controls will also mean cutting the salaries of nurses and hospital staff, and cutting the amount of time they can spend on patients, while leaving management in its plush, carpeted offices.

## Make demands on the system!

Don't wait for the political experts to figure it all out — they've made a mess of it. Don't wait for Congress to pass a national health insurance bill and think it will all come out OK in the end.

Let's get organized now to force the employers to maintain and extend coverage at the place of work, and to force the governments to maintain and extend their public health programs, clinics, and Medicaid coverage. The productivity drive and work place hazards are one of the chief causes of workers' health problems, so it's only fair that the employers should pay. And the more the employers pay,

the more willing they will be to accept a national health plan.

Let's oppose now, while it is just starting, the putting of all sorts of moralist restrictions on workers' health plans. People should not be penalized for the habits of modern life, nor should they be subjected to the dictate of religious fanatics about abortion or contraception. The pro-choice movement is one example of a struggle that will have a direct impact on what future medical plans look like.

Let's fight for a national health plan with truly universal, quality coverage. Demand that it be universal now, not in the 21st century. Let's demand it be financed from taxes on the wealthy and the corporations, whose income is increasing, not on the workers and poor, whose income has been decreasing for well over a decade now.

We need a true national health plan, not one based on marketplace interests.

The insurance companies are an unnecessary overhead, and serve no useful purpose. The first step in cost controls, without which all the rest is a fraud, is to eliminate the role of private insurance in basic health care. The next step, if more savings are needed, should be to examine the system of hospitals and clinics. Hospital after hospital and clinic after clinic has been closing, whole areas have been left without anything but little, private storefront "clinics," while the remaining hospitals compete to see who can absorb the most money. Marketplace forces have gone bankrupt here as well. There should be a national net of hospitals and clinics run on a rational basis.

## Is it socialism?

And let's have no illusions. The fight for universal coverage and against two-tier medicine will continue long after the adoption of something called a national

plan. We live under a government run by the wealthy, so a government-run health plan is not a socialist plan. It may be better than what presently exists. It may be free of some of the petty-minded market forces. But it will still be connected to the overall health industries, and it will be run by a government that represents the collective will of the corporations.

Under workers' socialism, production as a whole will be run in everyone's interest, not for the profits of a handful. Only then will there be a fully humane system of health care, based on the mass participation of the whole people. Only then will environmental protection, work place conditions, and health care be handled in a really integrated way.

At that time, health care will truly be medicine for the people, not for profits. ■

## Unions start caving in to Clinton plan

Across the country there have been a number of demonstrations and coalitions around the principle of establishing a "single-payer" system of health care in the United States. A number of unions and union officials have been involved in this, as well as left activists. Strictly speaking, a "single-payer" system should mean a Canadian-style health system, where the government is the single payer for all the basic health costs of the people. As far as basic care goes, it would cut out the insurance companies, with their huge overheads, bloated premiums, and complicated paperwork.

But the unions, with their pro-establishment leaderships, have already started to cave in to Clinton's "managed competition," which preserves the insurance companies. In late March, the Committee for National Health Care Insurance put out a national ad, entitled "Health care reform in America ... without each of these principles, it just won't fly." One of the principles is "Private insurance should play a role." This committee, one may note, is headed by Douglas Fraser, former president of the United Auto Workers. The UAW was one of the unions that used to be in favor of the "single-payer" system.

Earlier in Ohio, AFSCME officials were reported to be urging the Coalition for Universal Health Insurance for Ohio to a position of "managed competition."

And watch out! Some of the union leaders try to present Clinton's "managed competition" as a "single-payer" system. Since "managed competition" involves a single super-agency in each region, this is, according to them, a "single-payer" system.

The AFL-CIO as a whole is moving toward "managed competition." It wants to work with Clinton. Its statement about health care is mostly a long list of good things, which could be interpreted in many lights. But it looks like it is going for "managed competition." Karen Ignangi, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Employee Benefits, says that the AFL-CIO "will be pushing for a market-based system..." and the AFL-CIO Executive Council statement of February 16 on health care apparently demands "managed competition." It calls for a "unified purchasing and delivery system, organized on a regional basis

with federal standards, to negotiate with providers, contract with plans..." This is a description of regional super-agencies negotiating with insurance companies according to federal standards, i.e. "managed competition."

It is no surprise that the union leaderships want to follow along behind the Democratic Party, only hoping to negotiate a few details of their own. It shows that health care activists should rely on the rank-and-file workers and ordinary people, and not be seduced by the hope that the labor bureaucracy will finally stand up for the people. ■

## MEDICARE

Continued from previous page

fare charity cases, would be wonderful. Unfortunately, however, "managed competition" isn't the same thing as a uniform national system. It relies on market forces to come up with varying insurance plans or HMOs. True, the insurance companies aren't supposed to be able to pick and choose who they will cover. You might think this means that they couldn't single out the poor. But there is a catch. In the marketplace, there always is.

Local clinics are convenient for all people, and are absolutely necessary for most poor people. So poor people would have to choose plans with clinics in their area. And it is impossible to require that all plans have clinics in all areas. Thus all an insurance company would have to do to make sure that it offered plans which excluded most of the poor would be to locate its clinics in affluent areas. And stay away from those inner-cities! And presumably some other insurance companies would specially target poor areas. So once again a dual system would arise: one type of care for most neighborhoods, special poor care for others.

Because "managed competition" relies on market forces, there is no way it can stop the poor from being stomped on. At the same time, by putting care for the poor into the hands of insurance companies, an additional layer of overhead would be charged for their care. Thus "managed competition" might involve higher expenses for treating the poor than currently. The fine words about a "universal" system would end up drowned in the reality of marketplace discrimination. ■

## Hospital workers strike Kaiser in L.A.



On April 1st, 12,000 workers at Kaiser Permanente's hospital in Los Angeles walked out for the day. Kaiser is the country's largest HMO. It made \$290 million in profits last year, but it isn't offering much to its hardpressed workers.

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Profit-based medicine is sick

Charging workers for their 'lifestyle' .....	2
Preventive care and cost control .....	2
Clinton OKs the Oregon rationing plan .....	2
Merging Medicaid into a national system .....	2
Unions start caving in to Clinton plan .....	3

Clinton waffles on gay rights .....	4
Capitalism turns AIDS into an epidemic .....	4

### Strikes & workplace news

Coal miners; Steel workers; Nursing home; Medical equipment; Janitors .....	5
Few full-time jobs in Clinton's plan .....	5

### Defend women's rights!

'Right-to-life' murders doctor .....	6
'Pro-life' murder no accident .....	6
CALL dials wrong number in South Bend .....	6

Bad Friday for OR in Detroit .....	7
Buffalo clinic defenders .....	7
Supreme Court upholds N. Dakota law .....	7
Military doctors refuse to do abortions .....	7
An end to the Hyde Amendment? .....	7
Rescue America opposed in Britain .....	7

### Down with racism and police brutality

Los Angeles; Fort Worth; New Orleans; Chicago; Detroit; Monroe, MI; Mississippi jails .....	8
---	---

### The world in struggle

Africa in the stranglehold of debt .....	9
Workers across Europe demand jobs .....	10
Yeltsin vs. Russian parliament .....	11
The Haitian people must have their say .....	12
Support the Haitian refugees .....	12

# Clinton waffles on gay rights

A million people will rally in Washington, D.C., on April 25 to support the right of gay men and women to live free of hate and discrimination.

Bigotry against gays and lesbians is still fashionable and acceptable in large sections of U.S. society. Discriminatory laws are on the books. Hate crimes are on the rise. And the right wing of the capitalist establishment has seized on homophobia as the cutting edge of their effort to build a mass base for a reactionary drive against all working people.

April 25 ought to be a forceful protest against this backwardness. It ought to be a stepping stone to a serious fight against the right-wing offensive. Workers and other oppressed people, both gay and straight, should join this struggle.

Today there is a lot of attention on ending the military's ban on gays. This ban is part of the larger edifice of legal discrimination against gays in the U.S. It isn't the main focus of the struggle for gay rights, but this issue is useful for the political lessons it teaches about the political-military establishment and about where Bill Clinton stands.

Gays have always been in the military, but the military has long fostered a rabid environment of anti-gay bigotry. Reagan enshrined this into law in 1982 with an official ban. This increased witch hunts and persecution of gays inside the armed forces. The arguments used to justify the ban on gays are ludicrous. They resemble the excuses given to justify segregation of blacks in the military before that was ended in the late 40s.

When he ran for president, Bill Clinton said he would end this ban. He was looking for gay votes and funds. But since he entered office, Clinton has begun to wimp out. Instead of signing an

executive order as he had proposed, he struck a compromise with the military. New recruits aren't to be asked their sexual orientation, and while discharge proceedings can be started against avowed gays, no one is to be discharged. The Pentagon is supposed to work out rules on the issue by this summer. And Congress has begun hearings on the subject.

So what are the military chiefs and politicians doing? Many rabid officers are whipping up a frenzy of homophobia inside the military. And the Pentagon is working on ways to restrict and segregate gays. The atmosphere being created is one which would make life miserable for gays should they be allowed in. Meanwhile, the Congressional hearings are headed up by Democratic Senator Sam Nunn, who opposes lifting the ban. Many others, both Democrats and Republicans, support him. They are expected to make the hearings a major platform for justifying anti-gay bigotry.

And Clinton? While he's not part of the anti-gay offensive, events have already shown he's willing to buckle for political expediency.

If the original compromise with the military wasn't bad enough, he recently agreed that he saw merit to the idea of segregating gays after the ban is lifted.

What is more, the administration filed a brief in federal court opposing a recent court ruling which ruled that the military ban is unconstitutional. The Justice Department doesn't want this decision to go through; they would rather the military leaders get to decide. They argued that the court decision was "overbroad" and "restricts the authority of the president in consultation with Congress to make rules governing the armed

forces...."

Ending the ban on gays in the military is a matter of allowing gays to have legal rights. And that's all it should be taken as. Progressive people should not forget that the U.S. military is an instrument of oppression of people around the world by the capitalists who rule the U.S. We support ending the military's ban not because we look forward, as establishment gay rights groups do, to gays joining the military to perform great deeds for U.S. imperialism. But we recognize that the military is also a major social institution employing several million people. Most soldiers are there because they are naive about what the military is all about, or they see it as a job or training opportunity. We think that all arenas of society should be free of dis-

crimination.

No matter what happens with the military, we ought not forget that there is a bigger struggle ahead with the right-wing bigots. The Christian right is spearheading crusades in several states to write into law that states and cities cannot make any laws ending discrimination against homosexuals.

The fight over gays in the military has shown that relying on Clinton as the solution is a loser. A mass movement is necessary. The fight for gay rights ought to be waged as part of the broader agenda on behalf of all working and oppressed people. And instead of looking for saviors in the well-off establishment, activists for gay rights need to find ways to draw ordinary working people into the struggle.



Police attack gays at St. Patrick's Day parade in New York. Gays were banned from the march. In Dublin, Ireland, parade gays had a float. Banning gays from St. Patrick's Day isn't about being Irish. It's about bigotry.

## AIDS is a viral disease, capitalism makes it an epidemic

AIDS has become the most serious epidemic of the late 20th century. Over 13 million people worldwide are currently infected with the HIV virus which causes AIDS. And the rate of infection is accelerating, especially in the Third World and among the poor everywhere.

New deadly viruses periodically infect human beings. That AIDS should appear and initially kill a large number of people is probably unavoidable. But that AIDS should become an epidemic and continue to spread even after its cause and the means of prevention were known is a condemnation of the backwardness of the capitalist system in general and its distortion of medicine in particular.

### The devastation of Africa

The first AIDS cases were recorded in Africa in the 1970's. But Western capitalist medicine paid little attention to this deadly new disease. Meanwhile, the extreme poverty resulting from over a century of colonial exploitation, the avarice and wars of local ruling classes, and the austerity programs imposed by the US and Western banks made ideal conditions for the rapid infection of whole populations. In some regions the young adult to middle age population has been devastated by AIDS. And yet those with the wealth and power to do something just write Africa off and demand more austerity measures against the African people.

### Anti-gay, class and race bias allows AIDS to spread

When AIDS spread to the U.S. and Europe it was first noticed among gays and poor IV drug users who shared needles. But the prejudice against gays

and the poor became an excuse to do little or nothing about this dread disease, especially in the US. "Who cares about gays and black drug addicts anyhow," such was the attitude of the Reagan/Bush regime. More money was spent by the federal government in four months investigating the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in 1983 than in the entire first eight years of the AIDS epidemic in the U.S. Even after the HIV virus was discovered, next to nothing was done to educate the public on prevention measures. The right wing blocked condom distribution, sex education and clean needles for addicts. At a time when the AIDS public health emergency called for a massive extension of community health clinics in poor neighborhoods, and drug treatment programs for addicts, clinics were closed and drug treatment cut back so that more of the federal treasury could go to the rich and the military. Rather than combat AIDS the capitalist establishment persecuted the AIDS victims. Employers fired AIDS victims and cancelled their insurance policies. Penniless, thousands were kicked out of their homes and became homeless. People from other countries who tested positive for HIV were banned from even visiting America although in fact America is one of the world's biggest exporters of AIDS.

### The capitalist attitude on HIV -- "Let the poor die"

Needless to say, this policy of the capitalist establishment helped HIV spread on an enormous scale in the US. Today there are between one and 1.5 million Americans infected with HIV. That is at least one in every 250. It is no

longer a "gay" disease. It is no longer an "IV drug users" disease. Heterosexual women are the fastest growing group of AIDS victims.

But there is an enormous class and racial distinction in how this disease has spread. The wealthy and even the more educated and better-off sections of the working people have sufficient access to health care and prevention measures so that the disease is not spreading very fast in these sectors at this time. But among the poor, gay or straight, it is a different story. The health department of the state of Connecticut has recently announced that one in 26 blacks is HIV positive and one in 40 Latinos. Blacks and Latinos are overwhelmingly concentrated in the poorest sections of the working class, and are two to three times as likely to be unemployed and have no health insurance as whites. If anything, studies have shown that drug use is less among poor blacks than among upper class whites. But the better-off have more access to medical treatment to cure sexually-transmitted diseases (syphilis and other venereal diseases greatly increase the risk of HIV transmission). They can get medical advice on safe sexual behavior and can always afford condoms or clean needles. Unlike the working and unemployed poor, they are not faced with the constant economic insecurity of life that can lead to risky mistakes in one's love life.

### Fight AIDS - Fight the capitalist system

A serious fight against AIDS comes in conflict at every step with the interests of capitalist profiteering, and with the forces of capitalist financed right-wing

bigotry. The experience of AIDS activism shows that unless the capitalist establishment is targeted and fought, little more will be done to fight AIDS than is necessary to keep the disease from becoming epidemic in the upper order of society. And what is done will always be done in such a way as to pay tribute to the medical industry, as is the case with AZT, which is sold at eight times its cost.

### The difference a national health service makes

Even compared to other capitalist countries, the US track record on AIDS is appalling. In most European countries, where a more intense history of class struggle forced governments to introduce some form of national health system, especially after World War II, and where the weight of religious bigotry has been less, much more has been done. While the US government still can't bring itself to use the word condom, safe sex and AIDS education campaigns began earlier and have been much more extensive in most European countries. National health systems that emphasize more preventive medicine and reduce and treat earlier all sexually transmitted diseases have greatly reduced the risk of HIV transmission. In addition, most of the European countries have far more extensive drug treatment programs. As a result the HIV infection rate in countries like Britain, Denmark, and Holland is one-fourth the US rate. In Sweden it is closer to one-eighth the US rate.

This is not to say that everything is rosy in Europe with the national health

Continued on page 10  
See AIDS



## Strikes and workplace news

### Angry coal miners back to work

For a month 7,500 coal miners struck Peabody coal, the largest U.S. coal producer and the leader of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA). But on March 2 the leaders of the United Mine Workers union (UMW) agreed to extend Peabody's contract to May 5 and ordered the strikers back to work.

The UMW leaders claimed this "selective" strike was a victory because Peabody had agreed to their demand for information on the full extent of its coal holdings. A major issue in this contract dispute with the 12 companies that form the BCOA is "double breasting" — the practice of coal companies opening non-union mines under other names and violating a contract provision that requires them to hire laid-off UMW miners. With more information on who owns what mines the UMW leaders say they

are in a better position to negotiate a new contract. (The UMW leaders also extended, for a second time, the contract with the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance, a coalition of four major coal companies that split away from the BCOA. The contract deadline is now the end of June, keeping those miners split away from the miners in the BCOA, whose contract now expires May 5.)

But many rank-and-file miners are angry with the union bureaucrats. They point out that the only way to stop contract violations, and to resist new concessions demands, is to bring all the miners out on strike. They say the miners must return to their traditions of "No contract, no work!" or non-union mines will take over the coal fields. ■

### What's wrong with Trumka's "selected strike"?

The strike at Peabody has shown up one of the major weaknesses of the "selective strike strategy" of UMW head Richard Trumka.

Following the strike it came out that the BCOA had set up an industry strike fund that apparently required BCOA members that were not struck to subsidize those that were. Ashland Coal Inc. admitted that three of its subsidiaries made payments to Peabody during the

month-long strike. (*Wall Street Journal*, March 12)

The different companies united and put all their strength behind Peabody. Meanwhile, the UMW leaders kept miners on the job at the other BCOA companies making profits they were using to prop up Peabody. The selective strike strategy only tends to weaken the miners. A united, industry-wide strike is what's needed. ■

### Non-union coal miners strike

400 coal miners walked out against Marrowbone Development Co. the last week of March. Marrowbone has a strip mine, two underground mines, and prep plant in Mingo County, West Virginia. These have all been non-union operations. But on March 23 the company told the miners it had decided to cut health

benefits, pensions, and bonus pay rates. The next day four miners from the strip mine picketed and turned back the day shift. They were fired. But other miners began to picket the other mines and shut down the whole complex. It is reported that many of the strikers are now joining the UMW. ■

### Steel workers sit in against mill closure

More than 200 steel workers and supporters marched against the closure of the Shenango Inc. mill March 20 in Sharonville, Pennsylvania. Another march of 350 workers took place March 10, including coal miners from the Aloe mine in Allegheny County which is owned by the same family as the one owning the Shenango mill.

Both marches supported workers who have been conducting a sit-in at the mill since March 6, two days after it announced plans to close, eliminating 220 jobs. Workers vowed to stay there until their jobs are restored. People from the community have been bringing them food and firewood.

While the workers are determined to fight for their jobs, their union leaders keep offering to give up more concessions. Over the last year, the leaders of the United Steel Workers (USW) gave

up over \$11 an hour in wage and benefit concessions to the company. Thirty jobs were also given up through early retirement. And, workers provided nearly 250 hours in unpaid work to ship special orders.

Now the USW leaders are demanding that Mellon Bank meet with them to discuss a "worker" buyout of the plant. But such a buyout calls for still more concessions, layoffs, and speedup to make the plant profitable for a management company that would run it. But concessions don't save jobs, whether to the original owners or in so-called "worker buyouts."

Wouldn't it be better to fight that Mellon Bank keep the plant open or provide full pay and benefits to the workers until they find comparable jobs? ■

### Medical equipment workers locked out over health care

When workers at Fisher Scientific, a medical and scientific equipment supplier in Springfield, New Jersey, resisted the company's move to raise their health care

costs by 450%, the company locked them out. Scabs were then hired to do the work.

Fisher Scientific makes millions of

dollars each year in equipment orders from doctors and hospitals, yet it locks out and replaces its workers over health care. What hypocrites!

But support is coming in for the workers. Resolutions recommending that city agencies not purchase Fisher Scien-

tific supplies have been passed in New York, St. Louis, Boston, Philadelphia and Dade County, Florida. More than 100 doctors, scientists, researchers and public health officials have signed an open letter to Fisher demanding the workers be rehired. ■

### Nursing home workers strike for health insurance

More than 500 people came out March 11 to support strikers at the Orthodox Jewish Home for the Aged in Cincinnati, Ohio. Licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants struck February 22 along with dietary, housekeeping, and maintenance workers.

Their demand? More affordable health insurance. These health care workers

can't afford the \$150 per month they are forced to pay for health insurance. They are also demanding a health and safety committee, a wage increase, a better sick leave policy and a pension plan. The strikers are now confronting the nursing home's hiring of permanent replacements. ■



Rally for striking nursing home workers in Cincinnati, March 11.

### Justice for Janitors wins health insurance

The Justice for Janitors union movement just won a contract with Sir Thomas Industrial Building Maintenance, another firm in the Silicon Valley of California. Thomas signed rather than face the hunger strikes, demonstrations and other mass actions that the Janitors used to organize Apple Computers

earlier. The new agreement brings the total number of janitors organized in that area to over 1,000.

The union contract means not only a raise in wages (from \$5.25 to \$6.40 an hour). It also means the workers will get family health insurance benefits for the first time. ■

### Few full-time jobs in Clinton jobs program

While running for election, President Clinton promised he would launch a program that would create one million jobs a year. Once in office, he slashed his program and promised only 500,000 jobs this year. Now it has been revealed that even that figure was a lie.

It turns out that when Clinton talks about creating jobs he is not talking about the full-time, decent-paying work that people expect. Oh no, most of the jobs he's creating are only eight-week summer jobs or other temporary and part-time work. Recently the administration admitted that the 500,000 jobs they were talking about are only the "statistical equivalent of 200,000 jobs" — that is, the equivalent of 200,000 full-time jobs lasting one year. (*New York Times*, April 3)

But then even these jobs are too much for the Republicans. They've carried out a filibuster blocking the passage of Clinton's \$19.5 billion jobs program. And

it appears that the president is preparing to work out a deal with them to cut the package. And why not? No matter his promises, it turns out that Clinton is just another capitalist politician, little different than the Republicans. Clinton can't be relied on. The workers will have to wage their own, independent fight for jobs. ■

**Marxist-Leninist  
Books &  
Periodicals**

CHICAGO  
1640 S. Blue Island Ave.  
Phone: 243-5302  
Fri. 5-7 pm Sat. 12-6 pm

# Right-to-life murders dedicated doctor, David Gunn

On March 10, Michael Griffin calmly walked up behind Dr. David Gunn at a women's clinic in Pensacola, Florida, aimed his pistol and fired three times, killing the doctor. Griffin was working with a group of anti-abortion zealots called Rescue America who were picketing the clinic that day. Anti-abortion squads had been trying to intimidate Dr. Gunn and other abortion providers in the area for some time. But Dr. Gunn was convinced that his work filled a vital need for the women of Florida, and he refused to leave them desperate and without any place to turn. He continued his work in the face of intimidation and threats.

Dr. Gunn hadn't been doing abortions for the sake of the big bucks; as a specialist in obstetrics and gynecology, he could have earned far more with a safe practice at a hospital. He hadn't been in it for the sake of prestige; doctors working at abortion clinics face death threats from religious fanatics and sneers from Reaganite Republicans. He took part because it is necessary for the welfare of women, and because other doctors weren't doing it. He had been the type of doctor with a conscience of which there are all too few, the type doctor that everyone hopes to be treated by.

And now he has been removed from this world by a religious fanatic in a group oozing phrases about "right-to-life" from its lips.

## The campaign against Dr. Gunn

Dr. Gunn's murder didn't come out of the blue, but occurred in the midst of a concerted campaign against him and other doctors by anti-abortion groups. Operation Rescue put out a "wanted poster" on Dr. Gunn last year including his picture, home phone number and his schedule. This was part of the OR operation "No Place to Hide" directed against doctors who do abortions. A few days before Gunn was killed, OR leader Randall Terry told a rally in Melbourne, Florida that in stopping abortions, "We've found the weak link is the doctor. We're going to expose them. We're going to humiliate them." (Cited by Anthony Lewis, *New York Times*, March 12)

Meanwhile it was Rescue America which organized the picket at the clinic where Dr. Gunn was killed. Its regional director John Burt, who led the picket, says he isn't responsible for the violence of his followers. But Mr. Burt has long been familiar with right-wing violence; he is a self-admitted former KKK member. He now concentrates on violence against women. In 1986 he and his daughter broke into another Pensacola clinic, smashed equipment and furniture, and slammed the owner of the clinic into a wall, seriously injuring her neck. Burt was convicted of burglary and assault.

The Randall Terry's, John Burt's, and other pro-life zealots aren't simply people who think abortion is wrong. They are people who think they have a divine right to shove their religious views down everyone else's throats. Mind you, they realize they aren't going to convince most people of their views. So they seek to get their way by harassing, intimidating, and beating up opponents, and blockading, burning or otherwise closing down clinics.

Worked into a religious frenzy by such leaders, is it any wonder that Griffin conceived the idea to murder Dr. Gunn?

## Blaming the victim

Perhaps, one might think, the murder of Dr. Gunn would cause the anti-abortion zealots to stop and reconsider their actions. Since they call themselves advocates of life, shouldn't they be worried and upset that their acts had led to the

taking of life? Since they pose as people whose actions are justified by high moral principles, shouldn't they be upset that their own follower proved to be a terrorist, and his dead victim proved to be a person of principle?

Not at all. The murder of Dr. Gunn didn't even faze the right-to-life movement. They didn't declare a moratorium on their actions nor mourn Dr. Gunn. Instead they are pressing on with plans for more blockades, more "wanted posters," more harassment of women seeking abortions and of doctors. And from many voices in the "right-to-life" movement came the view that the real murderer was Dr. Gunn, and that he deserved what he got.

Some groups rallied to Michael Griffin's defense, with Rescue America immediately setting up a fund to support his family.

Rescue America leader Don Treshman, who had decided the time was ripe to spread his gospel in England, commented on British TV that "we don't condemn it [the murder of Dr. Gunn] because morally, it can be justified." (*Reuters News Service*) OR kingpin Randall Terry chimed in that "while it is wrong to kill, we have to recognize that this doctor was a mass murderer." (Cited by Ellen Goodman, *Detroit News*, March 16) Matt Trehwella of the Missionaries to the Preborn compared Dr. Gunn to Nazi doctors at concentration camps, and said he "would not condemn someone who killed Hitler's doctors who committed atrocities against human beings, and neither will I condemn Michael Griffin." (*New York Times*, March 12)

Some others said a few words against murder, but also wanted to look on its good side. "Pro-life" leader Rev. Donald Gratton said if the murder "somehow stops other doctors from performing abortions...we might as well reap some of the good things that come from it." (*ABC Evening News*, March 11)

Meanwhile Operation Rescue continued its boot camps to train more anti-



"Wanted" poster put out by Operation Rescue to target Dr. David Gunn.

-abortion zealots, as shown on national TV. But what was it teaching there? The students debated whether to support Dr. Gunn's murder. One trainee, at a Melbourne, Florida camp, told a reporter: "The majority thought it was wrong. ... But a few people thought it was morally justified. Then someone said, 'If it's morally justified, why aren't we all out killing abortionists?' Everybody got very silent." And another trainee said: "If we really believe they're child killers, it may be justified....It would be my responsibility to shoot him." (*New York Times*, March 19)

## Moderates?

Another wing of the "right-to-life" movement condemned the murder and said it had no place in their movement. But they were not so worried about the murder itself as about the prospect of a new law making attacks on clinics a federal offense. They were especially worried that millions more people might see through the moral mumbo-jumbo of

the "right-to-life" movement and see it for what it really is, and what it always has been.

For example, the United States Catholic Conference cried out that the murder of Dr. Gunn "makes a mockery of the pro-life cause." (*New York Times*, March 12) But for years the Catholic hierarchy has said things like this about anti-abortion violence, and it has never stopped them from supporting and working together with the very zealots carrying out this violence. The Church has politely disagreed on tactics at meetings with Operation Rescue and other anti-abortion bullies, and yet it has continued to coordinate attacks on clinics with them. Anti-abortion zealots often use churches, Catholic or Protestant fundamentalist, as staging grounds for launching attacks on clinics. And the Church leaders themselves often schedule a prayer rally to bless a campaign to close down the clinics while the zealots attack the clinics directly.

The Catholic hierarchy also joins with the anti-abortion crusaders in heated rhetoric about abortion being murder, and at times has declared abortion to be a holocaust worse than war and starvation. Without such flaming rhetoric from

the Church, and certain Protestant clergymen, the anti-abortion zealots would have a hard time whipping up violence.

Indeed the Church would also punish abortionists as murderers, only it wants this punishment to be carried out by the stern arm of the law.

## No more religious terrorism!

The anti-abortion movement talks of reverence for life, but it is tied with a thousand threads to the murder of Dr. Gunn. Its core is a religious fanaticism that has no respect for life, but only for its other-worldly principles. It has no respect for the values and lives of actual people, and especially of women. This is why it can call the majority of humankind "murderers" for simply using birth control ("abortifacients" in "right-to-life" lingo) or having abortions, while raising funds to support an actual murderer, Michael Griffin.

It is time for all working people to say no to the religious terrorism of the "right-to-life" movement. Dr. David Gunn will not be forgotten. Let us defend women's rights from the tyranny of the self-appointed saviors. ■

## 'Pro-life' murder is no accident

Was the murder of Dr. David Gunn an isolated act by a lone nut? Not at all. Violence is a way of life for the "pro-life" movement. Here's a brief glimpse.

Besides the murder, there have been other armed attacks. For example, in Flint, Michigan in 1992 a man armed with a gun and grenades was disarmed after entering a clinic. And in 1991 in Springfield, Missouri, an anti-abortion gunman grievously wounded two people in a clinic.

And Dr. Gunn's murder takes place in a climate of escalating anti-abortion violence. In March alone, a Montana clinic was burned down and an attempt was made to blow up a St. Paul, Minnesota clinic. And eight clinics in Riverside and San Diego counties in California were sprayed with butyric acid, forcing the hospitalization of four health care workers. At the end of the month, an anti-abortion activist who threatened a

clinic director with murder was arrested in Charleston, South Carolina for "stalking".

In the first two months of 1993, clinics in Corpus Christi, Texas and Venice, Florida were firebombed. In the last two years, 28 clinics were torched or firebombed. Overall, acts of violence against clinics have risen from 52 in 1988 to 186 last year, according to the National Abortion Federation (NAF).

The NAF also reports that there have been 163 cases of arson or firebombing or attempts at the same since 1977. Clinics have been entered by anti-abortion vandals some 322 times, and there have been 82 assaults in the same time period.

Meanwhile the police have stood by with arms crossed, doing as little as possible. With 28 arsons and firebombings over the past two years, only one person has been arrested. ■

## CALL dials the wrong number in South Bend

Collegians Activated to Liberate Life (CALL) crept into South Bend on March 14. They hoped to pass a quiet evening registering for a two-week conference, their name for the siege they planned against women's rights. They picked South Bend because clinic defense was only sporadic there, and because it is home to Notre Dame, a Catholic university.

They were disappointed on two counts. First, word spread of their plan to attack South Bend and its single abortion clinic. Pro-choice activists from all over the Midwest, including South Bend, came to defend the clinic. And second, Notre Dame, as well as St. Mary's College,

backed out of hosting their conference.

Sunday evening 50 protesters showed up at CALL's registration session at Holy Family, a parish church. The registrants seemed to be outnumbered not just by protesters, but by the news media. But while the TV cameras had to hunt for Peter "holier-than-thou" Heers, founder of CALL, activists greeted the religious nuts coming to register with slogans that continued right through the opening ceremonies. Eventually 20 police showed up to protect CALL, and they arrested one demonstrator after he denounced the pastor of Holy Family.

Continued on page 10  
See SOUTH BEND



Pro-choice activists greet registrants at 'pro-life' conference.

## Defend women's rights!

### Bad Friday for Operation Rescue in Detroit

Operation Rescue failed to close down a clinic in the northern Detroit suburb of Bloomfield Township on August 9, Good Friday.

About 5:30 that morning, 50 pro-choice activists grouped up at the Summit Clinic in Detroit. They were awaiting word from activists tailing OR on which clinic the anti-abortion thugs would strike. When word came about 7:30, they drove off to confront the anti-abortion bullies.

With the memory of the murder of Dr. Gunn by a "pro-life" fanatic fresh in their memories, the activists arrived at the clinic in a militant mood. By this time, their numbers had swelled, and there were also a few dozen people mobilized by MARAL (Michigan chapter of NARAL) nearby, for a total of 100, with somewhat more OR. Those pro-choice activists who followed the directives of NARAL stayed back, wouldn't shout slogans, and mainly were onlookers or escorts. But the other clinic defenders mocked OR, shouted "Shoot by day, bomb by night, that's the tactics of 'right-to-life'", and confronted OR. One placard was entitled "OR's method of birth control" and showed a gun.

At first, the pro-choice activists cleared

OR blockaders from a side entrance and secured it. The police had let OR block the door, but arrested two pro-choice activists. It turned out that this door wasn't really used by the clinic, so clinic defenders proceeded to clear OR from another door. This door too turned out to be nonfunctional, so the clinic defenders proceeded to a third door. But here the police intervened and allowed OR to hold its position.

Pro-choice activists surrounded the group of OR and cops at the door, denouncing police protection of the blockade. Finally, the police decided to do something, and they cleared the door, arresting those OR who refused to move. Eventually, they decided to clear the back of the clinic altogether, removing both clinic defenders and OR trespassers. However, even then they let OR continue to trespass at the front of the clinic, removing them only from the very front of the door. They arrested those who sat down and wouldn't move.

At various points, activists chanted "This clinic is open!" When the first patient arrived around 9:00, she had no trouble getting in to the clinic. OR's blockade had fizzled. ■

### Buffalo clinic defenders thwart 'pro-life' youth group

At the end of March, an anti-abortion outfit called "Youth for America" boasted it would bring out hundreds of teenagers to shut down clinics in Buffalo, New York. Now they are eating those words.

300 abortion rights supporters showed up on March 29 to protect the GYN Womenservices clinic, which was the only clinic in the area doing abortions that Saturday. On the other hand, the anti-

abortion "Youth" could only muster 35 teens and did not try to shut anything down.

Instead, the "Youth" staged a media event. They went inside Children's Hospital, got tossed out, and then had a pray-in in front of the TV cameras. Their only "victory" was that local reporters repeated their boast that they had shut down the clinic that they had not even showed up at! ■

### International Women's Day in Puerto Rico

Women's rights activists marched through the streets of San Juan, Puerto Rico on March 8 in celebration of International Women's Day. They demanded an end to restrictions on abortion rights, and government aid for poor women wanting abortions. As well, they wanted

more family planning programs, child care facilities, shelters for battered women, and sex education and AIDS prevention programs in schools. Crowds along the march route joined in shouting slogans. ■

### Supreme Court upholds North Dakota anti-abortion lecture

In early April, the Supreme Court upheld by a 7-2 vote a North Dakota anti-abortion measure. It forces women who want abortions to be subjected to a mandatory "pro-life" lecture to discourage her and a 24-hour waiting period.

There is only one clinic in the state that does abortions, so it is already difficult for many women in the state to get there. This bill adds further obstacles. However, it is reported that the state attorney general has ruled that women can get the required scolding over the phone, rather than having to make a separate appointment at the clinic for it.

This is different than "waiting period" laws in other states where a woman is required to make a separate trip to the clinic just to hear the lecture. Making two trips to a clinic is a big problem for many poor women. It can mean two days off work, or twice the trouble in ensuring privacy. It makes it easier for women to be found and harassed by anti-abortion crusaders, who try to get the car license numbers at the woman's first visit. And often there aren't any clinics nearby. So the woman may have to make two long and costly trips or pay for an overnight stay near the clinic. ■

### Military doctors refuse to do abortions

On January 22 Clinton overturned a

ban dating from October 1988 on abor-

tions at U.S. military facilities. But, the unofficial military paper *Stars and Stripes* reports, of the 44 military obstetricians and gynecologists (ob-gyns) in Europe, not one is willing to perform abortions. The last one who might have done abortions had just changed his mind.

*Stars and Stripes* says the doctors' refusal stems from religious or ethical concerns. But other sources say that 84% of practicing ob-gyns in the U.S. describe themselves as pro-choice. (See Ellen Goodman's column, *Detroit News*, March 30) Military doctors may well have a different mentality from civilian ones, nevertheless it is rather unlikely that the 44 military ob-gyns in Europe all happen to object to abortion. More likely, there are other reasons for their refusal.

In the U.S., for example, despite their widespread pro-choice beliefs, only about

a third of ob-gyns perform any abortions, and only 4% do more than 10 a month. This is because abortions generally aren't very profitable or prestigious for doctors, and they prefer to shunt off most abortions to special clinics. Moreover, doctors are subject to pressure on themselves and their children from religious fanatics, the latest incident being the murder of Dr. David Gunn. And there are few doctors who will stand against such pressure. The richer you are, the less likely you are to stand up for principle, and the medical establishment tends to be real wealthy.

Meanwhile the military is apparently refusing to use local doctors in Europe to perform abortions. So Clinton proclaimed a right in theory, and looks the other way as the right is denied in practice. ■

### An end to the Hyde Amendment?

In 1977, the Hyde Amendment banned the use of federal funds for abortion for poor women unless their lives were threatened by pregnancy. This cynical action by Congress denied abortion rights to millions of poor women who rely on Medicaid for their medical care, and it interfered with their health care. It perfectly expressed the temper of Congress: stomp on the most powerless members of society for the sake of political expediency. Since 1977, Congress has included a version of this ban in every Medicaid funding bill.

The Clinton administration now says it wants this ban lifted. And well it should be.

Thus this abortion ban is omitted from Clinton's budget just sent to Congress. But the Clinton spokesperson promises

that states will be allowed to continue to deny Medicaid funding of abortions. This is not a good sign about whether abortions will be covered in all states by the Clinton health program.

The main effect of replacing the Hyde Amendment by the Clinton waffle will be to reimburse those states that presently allow Medicaid abortions for some of this expense. They will receive a bit more federal money for Medicaid, while poor women in other states will still be out of luck. In fact, only 20 states allow Medicaid funding of abortions, and eight of them only in cases of rape or severe fetal deformities.

But the Democratic Party is so lukewarm on the issue that it isn't even clear that this halfhearted measure will be accepted by Congress. ■

### Rescue America opposed in Britain



London police arrest pro-choice demonstrator who came out to confront "Rescue America."

After one of his followers murdered Dr. David Gunn at a Florida clinic, Rescue America founder Donald Treshman decided to spread his net to Great Britain. But he soon ran into trouble.

In London, England, on March 29, Treshman was asked during a TV interview about Gunn's murder. Speaking on behalf of his movement, he stated: "We don't condemn it." Why not? Because to condemn Michael Griffin for coldblooded murder was to impose morality! Treshman, who seeks to close all abortion clinics and impose his own morality on all women and doctors, wouldn't want to impose any moral principles on Michael

Griffin. Why, he's just a laid-back, tolerant person. Live and let live — except for David Gunn and anyone else at an abortion clinic, of course. He actually stated: "I'm not going to step on somebody else's morals. I'm not going to impose my morality on anyone else."

The British government preferred not to have blood spilled in London, and it arrested Treshman for deportation an hour later. They released him on April 1, pending a deportation hearing on April 29, on his promise not to incite public disorder. But his very purpose in

Continued on page 10  
See BRITAIN

# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## Rodney King beating trial: Cops and the system guilty

As we go to press, the case against four L.A. cops who brutally beat Rodney King has gone to the jury. Although their verdict is not yet in, a number of things have been made clear by this trial.

This time around a lot more witnesses and evidence were presented proving beyond any possible doubt that the racist cops are guilty of the criminal beating of King. Although this was clear before, the evidence brought out in this trial shows that the prosecutors in the earlier, state trial did a pitiful job. They failed to call a whole slew of witnesses, and they failed to develop their arguments or really go after the cops.

Of course in this trial, as in the early one, the courts have gone out of their way to try to help out the policemen. For example, federal judges refused to allow evidence to be presented of the horrendous racist statements by the commanding officer, Sergeant Koon, and officer Powell. They made the amazing ruling that the evidence was so inflammatory against the officers that it might incite the jurors against the two other cops as well, and it therefore should not be heard. And they call this the "justice system"?

Even without this evidence the case against the cops is very strong. Indeed,

about their only defense was that the savage beating they gave King was simply a matter of following the official policy of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Sergeant Charles L. Duke Jr., an LAPD "expert" on excessive force, actually testified that every baton blow and kick had not only been justified, but was even required under police department policies. He said the officers were simply "reacting the way they are trained."

This is, of course, no justification for the cops beating King. Rather, it is a stark indictment against the institutionalized racism and terroristic policy of the police department itself. The four cops should not be let off the hook. Rather, the heads of the police department itself should be put on trial.

Nor is the racism and police brutality isolated to the LAPD. Below are articles indicating that police terror is running rampant throughout the country. As working people become increasingly upset at high unemployment, poverty, racism and hopelessness, the rich ruling class is turning more and more to the police baton to terrorize and hold down the masses. It is not just the L.A. cops who are guilty. The whole system is guilty as sin.

## New Orleans protesters cover up racist monument

A storm of protests have blown up against the rededication of a racist monument in New Orleans.

On March 7, some 20 white supremacists, led by former KKK leader and neo-Nazi David Duke, came out to rededicate a racist statue. The monument commemorates race riots organized by the White League following the Civil War in which over a hundred black people were murdered. The statue was taken down in 1980 for road construction. But a judge ordered it restored as a historic artifact, and it was set up again at the end February.

Quickly, anti-racists began protests at

the sight, including covering the racist symbol with sheets. On March 7th, 60 anti-racists countered the white supremacists. Shouting "White supremacy must go!" demonstrators broke through the police lines several times and confronted the racists. The police arrested four black activists and attacked several others, including choking the 82-year-old State Representative Alexander Avery.

Two days later, more than 300 college students rallied against the police and racists. Other protests have also broken out. And a giant rally has been called at the monument for April 17.

## Jail lynchings charged in Mississippi

Some 47 prisoners, 24 of them black, have been "found dead by hanging" in local and state prisons in Mississippi since 1987. In mid-March a new coalition, called the Commission on Human Rights Abuses in Mississippi, held two days of unofficial hearings on some of these hangings and other unexplained deaths in the Mississippi jails. They charged that racism and systematic terror is being used in Mississippi.

Examples given at the hearing included that of David Scott Campbell, a 22-year-old who died October 1990 at Neshoba County Jail in Philadelphia, Miss. His family reported that after he was arrested on a year-old trumped up warrant, David's jailers hanged him and had his body embalmed before an autopsy could

be performed. His death was ruled a suicide. But the family charges that he was murdered for dating a white woman, the daughter of a deputy sheriff in a nearby town.

Another black man, 18-year-old Andre Jones, was hung by his own shoelaces under the authority of a sheriff notorious for his racist brutality dating back to the civil rights movement. This was also ruled a suicide. But Jones' family hired a pathologist who, after examining the body and jail, said the evidence points to murder.

The hearings and other protests caused the interim chairman of the U.S. Commission for Civil Rights to call for a federal inquiry. But President Clinton has not yet agreed to hold one.

## 6,000 denounce probation for racist killer in Fort Worth, TX

About 6,000 people marched in Fort Worth, Texas, March 28 to protest the courts letting off a racist killer with a mere sentence of 10 years probation.

Christopher Brosky is an avowed white supremacist skinhead. He was one of three youths who participated in the June 1991 drive-by shotgun shooting of

a 32-year-old black man, Donald Thomas. One of the racists got 15 years in custody of juvenile authorities. The one who actually fired the shotgun made an agreement to serve a 40-year prison term in exchange for testifying against Brosky.

An all-white jury convicted Brosky of murder and sentenced him to five years in state prison plus 10 years of probation. But spokesmen for Judge Everett

Young claimed that Texas law prohibits stacking probationary sentences on top of jail terms, and the judge ruled that Brosky need only serve the probation.

Of course, even the five-year prison term is light for an avowed racist who helped plan the shooting and was in the car when it was carried out. Protests are continuing, and the judge's ruling is being appealed.



Fort Worth, Texas, March 28: Thousands protest sentence of probation for racist drive-by murder.

## Chicago cops attack Mexican neighborhood activists

About 100 people from two Mexican neighborhoods went to give evidence about the overcrowding in their schools to a meeting of the Chicago Public Buildings Commission on March 9.

When they got there they were told the meeting was not for them, and they were barred from entering. After several white men in suits were allowed in, some of the activists got upset. They demanded

their rights and walked through the doors. County sheriff's officers arrested four of them and roughed up several others.

A number of these people had been involved in earlier confrontations over defending bilingual education in the city. It seems the Chicago police don't like to see them defending their rights.

## Police brutality investigated in Monroe, Michigan

Monroe, Michigan — the home of General George Armstrong Custer, who is notorious for his racist massacres of Native Americans — appears to be living up to his reputation. The Monroe County sheriff's department is being charged with systematic brutality and racism.

The county has already paid \$1 million in three out-of-court settlements to people who were brutalized by the police. Three other cases are pending. And other charges exist, but people have been afraid to make them public.

Despite the expensive settlements, the cops involved have not been disciplined for brutality or racism. Now the NAACP, the FBI and others are investigating to see if charges should be filed against the police.

In one case, a man's mouth was taped and deputies beat him while he was chained to a drain cover on the floor of his cell. The beating stopped only after he began vomiting through his nose and passed out. He had been arrested for reckless driving.

The chairman of the Monroe commission argued that, "It wasn't a black issue because some of these cases are more white than black. It's plain police brutality, I guess you would call it." Nevertheless, he defended the police, saying the out-of-court settlements were not an admission of guilt. Then why did they pay? "It might have cost us a lot more," he declared, had the cases gone to trial. That, itself, seems to be an admission of guilt.

## Detroit cops attack protest against their brutality

Protesters marched outside Cooley High School in Detroit on March 23 to protest the police shooting of a teenager there the morning before. Cops opened fire through a car door and seriously wounded 18-year-old Joseph Hampton. They claimed he tried to drive over them. But witnesses deny it.

When the protesters arrived at the school, they were ordered across the

street by school security guards. They complied. But after they began shouting slogans against police brutality, and after some students began to join them, city police stormed up and started beating them. The cops smashed the face of one demonstrator into the ground, and she was sent to the hospital where she received seven stitches. Altogether seven protesters were arrested.



## The war of the rich against the poor

# Africa in the stranglehold of debt

When the U.S. and European powers send food aid to Africans in the grip of famine, they expect to be lauded for their supposed humanitarianism. But Africa is caught in the web of a much larger tragedy — a tragedy the rich powers could easily relieve — but they stubbornly refuse.

Today the social outlook from Africa is grim. Civil war is killing thousands in Angola, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan. Famine takes the lives of millions, and threatens more each year.

In nearly every social indicator, Africa is going backwards.

\*The World Food Program (WFP) estimates that malnutrition now strikes about 40% of African children compared to 25% in 1985.

\*In 1986 46% of all WFP emergency food programs were destined for Africa; in 1990 85% were.

\*While Africans had made progress in education up to the 70s, the number of children in primary school declined from 1980 onward.

\*The spread of AIDS is devastating the continent. One million people have already died of AIDS. Six million adults and 750,000 children are infected. Medical care systems are starved of resources.

\*In the 70s African economies stagnated, but during the last decade they have actually declined. The poor are worse off than ever: income per head now is below the level it was in 1970.

Despite this dismal state of affairs, during the 80s the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa were sending an average of a billion dollars each month in loan service payments to the rich countries.

That single statistic highlights the insanity of the international economic order. We are daily told that this is the most rational order, supposedly the best means to match supply and demand, and the key to universal prosperity. Yet how can such a system be considered rational or effective when an entire continent is pulled downward, and yet is expected to fork over a billion dollars each month to the banks and governments of the rich countries — money that comes from the sweat of the poorest human beings on earth?

Welcome to the world of international capitalist finance and Africa's debt crisis.

### A vicious cycle

Africa's debt is a fairly recent curse. Only \$6 billion in 1970, today it is over \$280 billion. (In considering Africa's situation, it is useful to focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, where the worst of the crisis is concentrated. Sub-Saharan Africa's debt stood in 1990 at \$168 billion.)

In the 70s, African countries tried to use foreign loans to fund economic development and meet financial shortfalls. But within a few years, the loans, which were supposed to help their economies, turned sour. Economic crisis led to a falling Gross National Product (GNP), making it ever more difficult to repay loans. And every dollar spent on debt service meant a further decline in GNP. Debt service was not the only, or even the major, cause of economic crisis. But it greatly worsened the crisis.

Amazingly enough, most countries maintained debt service through the 80s, even in the midst of falling GNP and hard times for the masses. But instead of granting relief, foreign lenders united to demand more and more belt-tightening from African workers and peasants in order to get their tribute.

How did this crisis unfold, and what was responsible for it?

### How the world market worked its wonders

Africa's debt crisis is born of the same

basic causes as that of the Third World as a whole.

Back in the 1970s, Western banks were awash in funds, but they did not see enough places in the rich countries to invest this money. A surplus of credit turned into a glut when the oil-exporting countries deposited their petrodollars after the oil price hike of 1973. The recession in Europe and North America meant a further contraction of profitable investment opportunities. Banks looked eagerly at Third World opportunities.

Third World countries were eager to secure loans for development. And the oil importers among them also needed loans to offset the oil price shock. Interest rates were low, and at that time Third World countries were receiving fairly good prices for the raw-material commodities they exported. They expected to be able to pay debt service on the loans. (Not all the loans were, however, governed by economic aims; as we shall see, the African ruling elite shares responsibility for the debt crisis and its cruel impact on the ordinary people.)

For the same reason, banks did not consider these loans to be all that risky. They also knew that international financial authorities and the big economic powers would make sure that loans would be repaid.

But the capitalist world market — whether in finance or commodities — is no place for certainties. And things did not go as expected.

The commodity price bubble soon burst. African countries heavily depend on the export of such commodities — sugar, coffee, cocoa, bananas, peanuts, rubber, and minerals like bauxite and copper — for most of their foreign exchange earnings. But prices in the 80s dropped to the lowest level since the 1930s. World trade expanded rapidly during the 80s, but African trade actually declined. Trade with Sub-Saharan Africa (outside of South Africa) now is only about 1% of world trade.

Because of the legacy of colonialism, many African countries have been heavily dependent on one or two commodities, and they have been unable to break out of the exposure this gives them to the ups and downs of world commodity prices. Today they are confronting the coldest result of such naked exposure.

Meanwhile, the oil importing countries got hit by a severe punch with the oil price hike of 1979. There was no commodity boom at this time to cushion the impact.

Soon a world glut of oil meant a collapse of oil prices. But this didn't help the oil importers very much. Credit had tightened, and they could not easily get further loans to finance their shortfalls. Meanwhile the depression in oil prices meant that now the oil exporters were also hit hard. An oil exporter like Nigeria — the largest debtor in Sub-Saharan Africa — faced severe crisis.

At this very time when Africa was beginning to run into trouble, interest rates in the rich countries skyrocketed. This was closely linked to the new monetarist economic thinking fashionable with the Reagan administration. Those debts taken at floating interest rates became very expensive to pay back, and new loans were dearer than ever. As countries took on new loans to pay debt service on old ones, the total bill kept rising.

African countries did get some of the debt rescheduled. But this didn't make much of a dent. They were expected to keep paying tribute to the bankers and governments of the rich countries.

The result of the economic crisis: a serious drop in the standard of living in Sub-Saharan Africa. Real wages plum-

meted. Workers were forced out of regular employment into the so-called "informal sector" of street vendors, day laborers, etc. School enrollment declined. Malnutrition jumped dramatically. People who had made some strides forward since the end of European colonialism were thrown back.

### IMF demands austerity

To help them with their credit squeeze, African countries turned to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. But this only made things worse.

These institutions were set up by the major Western powers after World War II. Beginning with separate functions, the IMF and WB today have become closely intertwined. They function like a two-headed dragon combining the roles of banker-of-last-resort and enforcer of fiscal conservatism. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., they represent the financial power of the wealthy countries. Here countries have votes according to their economic power, and the Western powers' control of capital provides the WB and IMF with decisive voices in poor countries' policy-making. These institutions have become the principal economic arm of the war of the rich powers against the poor of the world.

The IMF agreed to help African countries arrange some new financing on their debts. But in return countries had to accept "stabilization" programs. To qualify for new loans a government had to allow IMF officials to come in and review their budgets.

The purpose of these programs was to make debt service the number one priority. The programs included harsh cutbacks in government services, employment, and subsidies for food, transport and other basic consumer needs. The cost of living was further increased by IMF-ordered devaluation of national currencies.

IMF and WB bureaucrats have followed an ideology of economic liberalism, insisting that reduction in "government intervention" magically would stimulate African economies. This is done as a rigid formula, no matter what the reality may be. In some cases there has indeed been bloated state spending, on such things as lavish projects, military buildups, schemes to benefit narrow cliques of privileged elements, unproductive enterprises, etc. But when the bourgeois governments cut public spending, such things are often spared. It is spending on programs of public welfare that get cut. After all, the rich and privileged do not pay the price, the ordinary workers and peasants do. The IMF is complicit in this class war.

What is more significant, the IMF acts

on the guiding principle that the African countries must solve their debt crisis by bringing their government accounts into balance. That could perhaps restore financial stability without too much disruption, if the issue at stake was simply a short-term budget deficit problem. But the debt crisis of today simply isn't a creature of this sort; it is much too huge, the product of a set of extraordinarily bad times. African states have reduced their balance of payments deficits during the 80s, but their debt burden has remained crushing and gotten worse.

If the proof is in the pudding, then the IMF declarations have proved empty. The actual result, in the 1980s, was that African economies went into the dumper. Meanwhile, the rich countries were guaranteed a steady supply of cheap raw materials, and Western loan agencies contrived to receive escalating interest payments on African debt.

Thus the IMF and World Bank have simply served as the latest agencies of the imperialist oppression of Africa.

### The African elite shares the blame

So far we have concentrated on the external forces that have oppressed Africa. But the story is not complete without taking into account the role of the ruling classes in Africa.

The governments which took the helm of post-colonial Africa are based on the local capitalist elite. Even though some social and economic progress did come with national independence and economic growth in the 1960s, the African bourgeoisie has proved to be a terrible yoke on the workers and peasants. It has been a junior partner in the ruin brought by the debt crisis.

To begin, not all the loans taken out in the 70s were for economic development. The capitalist economy being weak in most African countries, the state represents the largest resource base, and it has tended to become the focus of a spoils system. Different groupings of the rich elite compete for control of public finances in order to fund patronage networks. The scale of this varied from country to country. Cheap foreign loans were a way to expand such networks of privilege.

In places loans were taken out for lavish prestige projects. In Gabon, for example, over a billion dollars in credit was spent on projects such as a road linking the airport and the presidential palace, the enlargement of government buildings, and a fleet of commercial jet aircraft.

The inflow of credit resulted in the

Continued on page 10

See AFRICA

## How big is Africa's debt burden?

The debt crisis of Latin America has been much in the news for years. But in many ways Africa's burden is worse. The debts of African countries were smaller in absolute terms (number of dollars) than the Latin American countries, but their debts represented a bigger burden.

Sub-Saharan Africa had a total foreign debt of \$168 billion in 1990, compared to over \$400 billion owed by Latin America.

What sort of burden does this actually represent to the economies of the region? Take total external debt as a percentage of GNP. For Latin America and the Caribbean, the debt to GNP ratio rose from 35% to 42% over the decade. For the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, however, this leaped dramatically during the 80's, from 29% to 109%! In

a country like Zambia it rose from 91% to a staggering 261%.

This is a huge burden which generations of Africans are expected to be paying back to the rich countries.

Let's take a further look at what this burden meant each year to the Africans; consider how much these countries had to pay in annual debt service out of their export earnings. Sub-Saharan Africa was paying 11% of its export earnings in 1980. Ten years later it was paying 19%. This was generally lower than what Latin America paid, but still this meant that each year a fifth of Africa's much more meager export earnings was going simply to repaying loans.

(The above figures are taken from *World Development Report 1992*, a publication of the World Bank.) ■

# Workers across Europe demand jobs

In a day of action coordinated across the European Community, one million workers took to the streets on Friday, April 2. They protested jobless rates that are climbing ever higher and show no signs of turning around.

The European Trade Union Confederation, which coordinated the protests, reported that rallies and marches took place in more than 150 cities. In several countries, workers also organized work stoppages.

In the face of the recession, the working class in Europe is facing widespread devastation. This year the average jobless rate is expected to top 11% and it will keep rising into 1995. None of the governments or political parties have offered any hope of stopping this trend. Instead, officials daily forecast new rounds of job cuts as auto, steel, and other major industries face restructuring by their employers.

## Britain

In Britain, nearly all of the country's trains were stopped by a 24-hour strike. Rail workers were protesting the job cuts which are expected from the Conservative government's plan to privatize the rail network. Rail union officials described the strike as "rock solid" and pledged further actions to defend their jobs. A second strike has been called for April 16.

Bus workers in London also walked out, in their case to protest pay cuts and changes in working conditions.

And thousands of coal miners halted work for the day over the government's plans to close 19 of the country's 50 mines.

About three million people, 10% of the work force, are out of work in Britain.

## Germany

Some 40,000 eastern German engineering and steel workers staged a second day of wildcat strikes. They were angry at employers' refusal to pay wage raises of more than 20% which were promised two years ago. The bosses are offering 9%. This is the first time that employers have broken a major contract since World War II.

Germany has also seen other worker protests in recent weeks. The weekend of March 27, about 75,000 steelworkers rallied in Bonn to oppose impending job cuts in the steel industry. The restructuring of the European steel industry is slated to slash 70,000 jobs in Germany and other EC countries.

German unions have announced a national day of protest on April 24. The unemployment rate is 8% in western Germany, while it stands at 16% in the

east. About 650,000 more jobs are due to be lost this year across the country.

## Italy

Workers faced heavy rain to take to the streets in demonstrations against the country's 9.5% unemployment rate. Postal workers and some other government employees struck for the day, while transportation workers shut down trains, buses, ferries and planes for four hours.

Militant workers threw coins and bolts at union leaders in Turin. They denounced the sellout policies of the union officialdom and called for a determined struggle for workers' interests.

## Elsewhere

In Brussels, where the European Community is based, 1,500 people marched in support of the day of action against unemployment. They walked

behind a Hoover vacuum cleaner, which was a reference to a recent decision by the Hoover Corporation to move production from France to Scotland to take advantage of lower wages.

25,000 people marched in Strasbourg, France, the seat of the European Parliament. And 15,000 demonstrated in Maastricht in the Netherlands, the city where in 1991 the EC leaders signed the Maastricht treaty on closer economic and political union.

Demonstrations also took place in Portugal, Greece, and Spain.

## The challenge ahead

With the Maastricht treaty, the capitalist governments of Europe have escalated their plans to unify capital across the European Community. While they have promised a "social charter" to mollify the workers, the reality facing workers in Europe is worsening economic conditions and efforts to strip away many of the rights which workers have won over decades.

In the face of the efforts among employers to integrate themselves further, the workers have to develop their own continental ties. The stronger these bonds, the less they allow the employers to pit workers of one country against another, the more effectively they will be able to stand up for their rights.

The day of action against unemployment is a welcome development. The officials at the head of the unions may only have intended it as a one-shot effort to blow off steam, but ideas may spread among the rank-and-file workers about the need for a serious struggle for jobs across the EC.



German steelworkers protesting plant closures and layoffs.

## SOUTH BEND Continued from page 6

Then CALL searched for a place free of clinic defenders. On March 18, the day before their scheduled event in South Bend, 14 of them chained themselves to concrete blocks placed at the entrance to a clinic in Gary, Indiana. They were arrested and the clinic opened an hour later.

The next day, Friday the 19th, pro-choice forces gathered at the clinic in South Bend. By 8:00 a.m., 60-70 people in high spirits were guarding the driveway and another 40-50 were guarding the front door. An hour later the anti-abortion zealots of CALL showed up and were greeted with slogans, boos, jeers, and hisses. Ten antis from CALL knelt on the ground near the parking lot and were immediately surrounded by clinic defenders. The rest walked in a circle, saying Hail Marys. They also tried to harass patients driving in to the clinic.

Then, a couple of hours later, Heers raised his arm to gather his sheep. The defenders tensed, ready for a charge. Heers brought his arm down. And — the antis knelt and prayed. After a couple of minutes, they got up and started to move: not at the defense lines but down an unprotected side bordering the parking lot. A group of defenders dogged them, expecting them to rush the snow fence. But the antis just kept going and left.

So CALL decided to try its luck at another unprotected clinic again. On

Saturday, March 20, fifty antis were arrested in a vain attempt to close a clinic in Merrillville, Indiana.

Tuesday, March 23, the next planned hit in South Bend, saw CALL's continued slide downhill. Only a handful of antis showed up. They faced a small group of determined clinic defenders, mainly local, who stood their ground and outnumbered the antis. CALL decided to go away.

Then on March 26th, 20 antis showed up at the South Bend clinic. Some tried to post themselves to harass cars coming in, but they were blocked by some pro-choice activists who left the main clinic defense line. Meanwhile the police were yelling at pro-choice activists to "move over there" or telling them "you have to stay there."

Overall the clinic defenders were in high spirits. But some differences did exist. A NOW-dominated clinic defense organization had a sign-up sheet at all three South Bend clinic defenses. They wanted signees to pledge to abandon militancy and to disavow any connections to more leftist organizations, a sort of pro-establishment loyalty oath. But the actions were too spirited for cold water to be poured over them so easily.

Thanks to CALL's campaign, the clinic defense movement has been energized in South Bend. With hard work and persistence — countering every lie by CALL and other antis, every instance of harassment, every attack — even a small group of activists can stand up for women's rights.

billion in the late 80s, some \$10 billion was exported in unrecorded capital flight. In total, it is estimated that more than \$40 billion went out of the region in capital flight. Some of this money went in search of profits to be made from high interest rates abroad.

Finally, when the governments based on the wealthy agreed to austerity mea-

sures, they made sure that it was ordinary working people who bore the price. If working people rebelled, as they did in several countries, the governments used their police and military forces to put down the masses. The repressive machinery of the state was not curtailed by any IMF adjustment programs; after all, this was in many ways the final guarantor of the repayment of debt.

## The debt should go!

A basic element of rescuing Africa has to be the scrapping of the continent's debt. It is ridiculous when Western governments posture about their humanitarianism with charity aid for famine victims. The debt is simply too big a

burden for the poorest continent in the planet. It must be given up.

It is worthwhile noting that most of Africa's debt isn't owed to the banks, but to governments and multilateral agencies. The governments cannot hide behind the excuse that they can't trouble the banks. Moreover we have seen that when it suits their interests, Western governments do forgive debts. Only a couple of years ago, Egypt had billions of dollars in loans written off by George Bush in exchange for signing up for Desert Storm. If billions can be written off for a shameful war, why cannot a continent's misery be relieved? In a future article we hope to examine some details of what would be involved in liberating — or alleviating — Africa from this tragedy.

## AIDS Continued from page 4

systems in a number of countries there. Europe is still capitalist, and capitalist interests impede the fight against AIDS, as the recent blood scandal in France shows (HIV-infected blood was allowed to be used for transfusion rather than use an American blood test while the French blood test was still under development). What is more, all these countries have large sections of impoverished immigrant workers who to a greater or lesser extent are outside the system of social welfare

and social protections. Among these immigrants the AIDS rate is much higher than in the native population, though by no means as high as among blacks in the US. But the experience in America and the comparison with Europe does show the importance of a national health care system for the working people. Some of the better systems in Europe give a tiny glimpse in the direction of what might be done when the working people free society from the grip of a wealthy minority and establish a socialist society. To fight AIDS fight capitalism.

## BRITAIN Continued from page 7

Britain was to egg on the small anti-abortion movement there to harass women and "step on somebody else." Within a few days, Freshman's allies showed up to harass women at a number of local clinics. They also showed up at the London offices of International Planned Parenthood, where they were confronted by 20 pro-choice militants. The conservative British authorities arrested mainly

the pro-choice militants.

It can be noted that Britain has had legal abortion since 1967, six years before the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. Abortion rights were broadened in 1991. And there is also a national health service covering everyone, including the poor. The greater freedom of abortion and contraception goes along with less abortions, not more. There are 21 abortions per 1,000 live births in Britain, half the American rate of 43 abortions per thousand births.

## AFRICA Continued from page 9

enrichment of a number of millionaires in Africa. And when the crunch came, don't think that these people made any sacrifices. In fact the rich continued to prosper. In Sudan, for example, when the country faced a foreign debt of \$14-

## Yeltsin vs. Russian parliament

# Workers get shafted either way

On April 25, Russians will vote in a referendum that is expected to climax the recent power struggle between President Boris Yeltsin and the opposition which dominates the country's parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies.

At first Yeltsin had simply wanted a vote on his leadership. He hoped to use a victory as a club to beat his opponents. But he didn't have his way; parliament added other questions, including on Yeltsin's economic reforms and whether there ought to be new presidential and legislative elections.

The result of the vote may well be inconclusive, and political turmoil is likely to continue.

Echoing Yeltsin, news media in the U.S. have worked hard to whip up support for Yeltsin as the supposed champion of "democracy" against the "communist" parliamentarians. But in fact there are no communists on either side, and not much concern for democracy either. (Even the hucksters who call themselves communists in Russia, dregs from the old state-capitalist Soviet regime, are a small minority of 67 in the 1,033-member body. And they aren't communists either. The communist revolutionaries of 1917 and awhile thereafter have long been replaced by revisionist hacks for whom communism was just an empty phrase. The Russian workers have had no real communist party for many decades.)

The media has had to admit, however, that for the great mass of Russians, there wasn't much interest in either side. Russian workers have enormous problems these days just finding something to eat.

So what's at issue in the gridlock between president and parliament? Essentially it's economic policy. But it's not the case that one side wants a market economy and the other wants socialism, or even a return to the old state-capitalist setup. No, they agree on a private capitalist economy, but there are disagreements on details and the pace of transition. For example, there are disputes over control of the state bank, over how fast to raise prices on controlled goods, and the rate of privatization of state-owned industries.

### Economic disaster underlies the political crisis

Underlying the political crisis is the severe economic dislocations in Russia. Inflation is raging at 25% a month. In the last year the value of the ruble has dropped from 125 to the dollar to 600 per dollar. Production has been dropping rapidly — in 1992 it was down 30% from 1990, in the last two years workers' real incomes have shrunk by more than half.

This disaster has put enormous pressure on government leaders to put up or shut up with their highly-touted market reforms. Leaders in parliament who were allies of Yeltsin are getting faint of heart. They are afraid of the industrial collapse that may be around the corner. With their control over the Central Bank, they have tried to get off the reckoning by subsidizing factories through running the printing presses full-speed, printing out more and more rubles.

As the crisis deepens, there is a lot of finger-pointing as the political leaders try to shift blame from one to another. A little over a year ago parliamentary leaders gave Yeltsin special powers to practically rule by decree. But with the growing economic crisis they have been trying to cut down his powers again. Meanwhile, Yeltsin has sought new extraordinary powers against some of his critics.

The quest for dictatorial powers may also be related to the fact that Russia is

unraveling as a united state. Many of the regions have become de facto fiefdoms, and there is said to be real danger of the country splitting apart. Yeltsin has tried to garner support from local regions by promising them autonomy, but there is a limit to how much he will allow. His opposition, where Russian nationalists are more prominent, may prefer a harder line.

Both Yeltsin and the opposition represent the privileged elite, but they tend to draw support from different elements of that elite. Yeltsin is being championed by the private-capitalist millionaires who have made a bundle in recent years. Meanwhile, many in the opposition represent the managers of state-owned industries and other elements in the bureaucracy.

Despite all the shouting and stomping, none of the political leaders have any viable solutions for the economic problems.

### "Democrats" and "communists"

In the midst of the political crisis the U.S. media went on a binge of hysterical pro-Yeltsin propaganda. Yeltsin was promoted as the "only elected leader" opposed to the "communists" in parliament. The most ridiculous claims were being made to justify the U.S. government's continued support for Yeltsin.

For example, it was said that Yeltsin was Russia's "only elected leader." Yes, Yeltsin was elected president back in 1991. But so were the members of parliament elected, in 1990. So what makes one more "democratic" than the other?

And it was said that the parliament was full of "former communists." But Yeltsin himself is a former member — indeed, leading member — of the Soviet Union's Communist Party. And since the CP is pretty much irrelevant to today's debates, such accusations are off the mark anyway. The actual makeup of the Russian parliament is complex. There are 17 factions and four blocs, with shifting numbers and alliances among them. The so-called "hardliners," a bloc of the 67 self-proclaimed "communists" who are loyalists of the old regime with the Russian nationalist groups, make up 352 members currently of the 1,033 member parliament. Yeltsin's supporters number between 152 and 191, and the rest stand in between. (Figures from *U.S. News and World Report*, April 5)

It was also said that parliament was "flaunting the will of the Russian people" by opposing Russia's only nationally-elected leader. But since when is it a requirement of "democracy" that congressional representatives are required to go along with everything the president desires?

What is proved by such demagoguery? The only thing you can derive from such ludicrous claims is the fact that the U.S. government and media are coming down on Yeltsin's side. Nothing surprising about that — they have always supported the most extreme "shock therapy" policies for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Who cares if the workers have food, housing, child care, jobs, or medical care? The important thing is to sell off the state assets (at bargain basement prices) and get down to the business of making profits.

In addition, Yeltsin has been a U.S. ally in international affairs. The U.S. ruling class is unsure of who would replace him. Even with Yeltsin, they haven't always found him agreeable; for example, on policy towards Serbia. But an even more nationalist regime in Moscow would be unsettling.

While the consensus is to support Yeltsin, inside government circles there

is some doubt about Yeltsin's ability to hold things together. But for now there is no one else, so they are still supporting him.

In early April, President Clinton met Yeltsin at a summit conference to shore up Yeltsin's sagging fortunes at home by showing he enjoys international support. Clinton threw in a few dollars — \$1.6 billion — to help him out.

### Russian workers still passive

To the extent that they care about the debate, Russian workers appear to be split, just like the Russian bourgeois strata. Some workers oppose Yeltsin's shock therapy plans, while others want to break the logjam. Some miners, for instance, think they will be better off with privatization, when they can break free from central-bureaucratic control.

But for the great mass of workers the Yeltsin-parliament debate means little.

### HAITI

#### Continued from back page

powers of international capitalism. The first could lead to real blows against the entrenched forces of reaction, while the second will only tinker with the cruel status quo.

### The deal in the works

No details of the present deal have yet been announced. But it is said that there will be a timetable of political steps and "a simultaneous tradeoff" by both sides.

The talk of a timetable suggests that there is to be no immediate restoration of Aristide. Instead there will be a transitional government of some type. It is likely to be dominated by forces acceptable to the Haitian establishment.

The idea of a tradeoff refers at the least to a blanket amnesty for all coup leaders and soldiers. In other words, no matter what crimes they have committed and continue to commit, the bloodthirsty criminals will go scot free.

These elements were foreshadowed by Aristide's meeting with Clinton on March 16.

### Clinton's role

At that meeting, Clinton tried to cover up his notorious flipflop on the issue of Haitian refugees by smiling and shaking hands. But behind the smiles Clinton pressured Aristide to accept further concessions to the military leaders in Haiti.

Last year Aristide had agreed to allow Marc Bazin, the military's choice, to remain as prime minister. He also agreed to amnesty for most participants in the 1991 coup, but he demanded the removal of the top coup leaders. Now Clinton has demanded that Aristide ease up on his demands against the coup leaders, and Aristide has agreed not to jail them.

Clinton gave vague statements about being for democracy and for Aristide's return. But at the same time, he refused to set a date for Aristide's return. Meanwhile, administration officials have told the press that democracy and the restoration of Aristide are not the same thing. This suggests that if Aristide is to be returned, this will come gradually, and it would require him to perform as a figurehead president while real power is seated with the Haitian elite.

That the Haitian elite will dominate any proposed deal is also indicated by a look at who Clinton has turned to as an expert on Haiti. According to the *Miami Herald*, this is an old buddy from Yale named Gregory Craig. Craig, a well-connected Washington lawyer, has been

They are so burdened with the cares of day-to-day living that they have little interest in political debates, especially when they understand that both sides have basically the same program. And many of them also know that most of the forces in conflict are representatives of the same privileged elite who have long ruled over them, whether they called themselves communist in the past or they label themselves "democrats" or "patriots" today.

The workers cannot afford to be passive, however. As long as they remain quiet, Yeltsin and the parliament will run roughshod over them. The Russian workers need to reconstitute a struggle for their interests, an independent politics of class struggle. This struggle requires a vision of new hope, a new communist party, a workers' socialist alternative to both the tyrannical state-capitalism of yesterday and the disaster of the free market today. ■

hired by the Mevs family of Haiti, who are perhaps the richest family in the country. They own Haiti's sugar monopoly and several factories and industrial parks. They are believed to oppose Aristide's return.

The fact that a representative of the Meveses would get Clinton's ear is no big surprise. It may be remembered that Ron Brown, Clinton's Secretary of Commerce, was formerly a high-paid lobbyist for the Duvalier family.

Clinton's advisors do not include activists from Haiti's democratic resistance or any of the refugees who have faced persecution first hand. For advice and expertise Clinton turns to the rich, to the bourgeois oppressors of the refugees.

### The Haitian people must have their say

The return of Aristide to political office in Haiti would not be the final victory of democracy. But it would signify minimal respect for the Haitian people's democratic will. The fact that the White House will not seek even this much shows the shallowness of its commitment to democracy in Haiti.

Real rights for the Haitian people require even more than restoring Aristide. It would require breaking apart the torture state. As long as the military men, policemen, and rural sheriffs who have held sway in Haiti are not uprooted there will be no real prospect of democracy in Haiti.

But such a prospect scares the elite and the imperialists because then the people may not accept whatever economic misery that the exploiters impose on them. Thus a serious effort at freedom will not come from any imperialist-brokered solution. For that, the masses in Haiti have to mount their own struggle. And that is the kind of struggle progressive people in the U.S. ought to support!

The revival of mass struggle in Haiti this time may be cut short by the deal in the works. However the Haitian people may not be satisfied with the deal the powers-on-high want to impose on them. They may want to have their own say. ■

## Diplomatic deal in the works

# The Haitian people must have their say!

A settlement of the political crisis in Haiti, brokered by the White House and the United Nations, may be close at hand.

Clinton's emissary Lawrence Pezzulo and Dante Caputo, special envoy for the UN and the Organization of American States, have been shuttling back and forth between the U.S. and Haiti. They are working on a deal between the military regime and Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti's elected president who was ousted in September 1991.

There have been many rumors in the past of impending deals, but none of them panned out. This time a sign that a breakthrough may be near comes from a conciliatory statement broadcast by Haiti's dictator General Raoul Cedras on April 7. He spoke of "constructive appeasement, based on reciprocal concessions."

If a change is indeed in the works, why is it coming now? And what kind of change will it be? How does the proposed deal measure up to the needs of the Haitian people to breathe free of the tyranny imposed by Cedras and his minions?

History has taught a thousand times over that a people can win freedom only through their effort and struggle. It cannot be "given" to a people. Any solution midwived by the world's big capitalist powers comes at a price, and falls far short of what the oppressed people yearn for. The proposed settlement in Haiti is no exception to this rule.

### Background to the diplomatic flurry

In December 1990 Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president with an overwhelming vote of the Haitian people. He was a radical priest who had been prominent in the struggle against the Duvalier tyranny, and he had a reputation as a forceful advocate of the needs of the poor.

When he came to power though, Aristide tried to run a middle course between the people and the country's powerful establishment — the military caste and the wealthy elite. His actual reforms were few, but he continued to encourage the hopes of the masses for change. Meanwhile the working people of Haiti, while still poverty-stricken and miserable, breathed somewhat free from daily brutality from the military and police.

All this was intolerable to the rich and their military protectors. Hence the coup. A reign of terror was clamped down, and over a thousand people have been murdered.

The military coup was at first greeted in Washington with economic sanctions. While originally uneasy with Aristide, the Bush administration had grown comfortable with him. After all, the Haitian leader had retreated from his previous radical declarations. However, as the military appeared to stabilize its power, Bush showed a readiness to make peace with the new regime. It was, after all, composed of military officers with whom the U.S. government has long had close ties.

During his campaign Clinton promised to change the Bush policy. He pledged an active effort to pressure the military to restore Aristide. And he said he would abandon Bush's policy of forcibly returning Haitian refugees back to their homeland.

Once in office, Clinton did not change Bush's policy toward the refugees. In fact he worked out with Bush a U.S. blockade of the island to make sure no refugees got anywhere close to the U.S.

At the same time, it does appear that the new administration stepped up diplo-

matic activity to restore a civilian government.

This is not the cause for rejoicing that it might appear at first sight. Respect for the Haitian people's democratic hopes is not what this is all about. The facts suggest that diplomatic pressure was stepped up because of fear that the Haitian masses, fed up with waiting for Washington, were ready to move towards a solution based on their own efforts and struggle.

### The people get restive

Haitians had hoped that Clinton's victory would mean an accelerated program by the U.S. to restore Aristide to power. Aristide and the political forces linked to him had encouraged these hopes. From the time of the coup, they had placed all their bets on a solution based on U.S. diplomacy and pressure rather than the Haitian people's own struggle.

But Clinton dashed these hopes by continuing Bush's policy of returning the boat people back to Haiti.

Despite the military's repression, Haitians never submitted to their dictate. Even though any large-scale mass movement was forestalled by Aristide's policy of begging the U.S. for a solution, small protests nevertheless continued. In March, it appeared that something bigger was about to emerge.

On Monday, March 29, the military violently dispersed a demonstration by 400 people in the northern town of Gonaives. Three women and five children were arrested. This is reported to be the first demonstration held in the north this year.

Around that time, walls in Saint-Marc were painted with anti-regime graffiti and people erected barricades of flaming tires at the town's entrance. Barricades also went up in Mirebalais. Hinche and several other towns were inundated with pro-democracy fliers and photos of Aristide.

These actions come in the midst of a climate in which many organizations have begun to agitate that the people should not expect international forces to resolve the crisis.

Four national peasant, popular and church groups called for "vigilance brigades" to respond to repression. They denounced UN human rights observers who have been allowed into Haiti as "secretions of the imperialism," unable and unwilling to defend the people's real interests. Another mass front, the Asanble Popile Nasyonal, expressed doubt in the UN/OAS effort and U.S. promises. It announced that it was tired of "delaying tactics" and called for "mobilization in the four corners of the country" if President Aristide is not back in the country by April 26.

A union leader is quoted as saying, "I see a lot of diplomatic maneuvers, but I don't know what is really happening. The Haitian people have to have a say in what's being decided."

There are forces in the Haitian resistance who don't want a mass uprising but simply want to pressure the diplomats to take them into account. But there also were signs that people were beginning to consider acting on their own behalf. That could amount to the first signs of an impending mass uprising.

This prospect has apparently convinced the imperialists and influential elements within the Haitian ruling class that the longer the Haitian crisis festers, the more likely that it could lead to a solution which would escape their control. Hence the deal which seems to be near completion.

There is of course a big difference



Haitians demonstrating outside the White House, March 16.

between a solution won by the masses and the one that is being brokered by the

Continued on page 11  
See HAITI

## Support the Haitian refugees!

Every day there are new reports of torture and killing in Haiti. The country remains a prison for the people. And Bill Clinton keeps sending the Haitian boat people back.

Clinton tried to cover up his cruel stand by saying it was humanitarian — to save lives that might be lost at sea. But this is just hot air to whitewash what is essentially a racist policy. If the refugees were rich and white, or escaping from some country the U.S. didn't like, they would be welcomed with open arms. But poor black Haitians get no sympathy from the government.

Clinton says Haitians can apply for a visa at the U.S. embassy in Port-au-Prince. But he "forgot" to say how many such applications would be approved. Furthermore, the embassy is watched by Haitian security.

The most glaring recent example of that is the case of William Corascelan. Corascelan had quit the Haitian navy and applied for asylum in the U.S. Embassy officials granted him asylum and on March 12 personally escorted him to the airport in Port-au-Prince. But there Haitian security police grabbed him before he could fly to Miami and took him off to prison despite the protests of embassy officials.

This is the sort of treatment that individuals specially favored by the embassy receive. One can imagine the sort of treatment meted out to an ordinary worker who goes into the embassy and asks for asylum.

### Haitians detained in Guantanamo rebel

In the meantime, the Haitians detained by the U.S. at Guantanamo Bay rebelled against their treatment in mid-March. 272 Haitians are being held there under military rule for the "crime" of having the HIV virus (or being one of those person's relatives).

The detainees have been on a hunger strike since January. With some of them, their health condition has badly deteriorated, and the government has admitted that camp doctors don't have the facilities to deal with their problems.

The refugees recently began more forceful protests. Eleven of them escaped the compound where they were held on March 10 and managed to elude capture until the next day. Other detainees blocked tracks at the camp, as a show of support for those who escaped. And a number of other escapes were attempted.

On March 13, sometime before dawn, some 200 riot troops invaded the compound, supposedly to "make a head count." But in "counting" they brutalized the Haitians, tossing them out of bed, beating some, and forcing women to undergo vaginal searches. The refugees fought back, throwing stones and starting fires. Of the camp's 47 housing structures, 12 were destroyed. Afterwards 30 refugees were thrown into the brig and were held without charges, with no access to a lawyer.

Since then there have been protests in Miami and New York against the brutal treatment of the refugees. These refugees have qualified for consideration for asylum, and should be admitted to the



Haitian refugees at Guantanamo Bay.

U.S. To keep them out, the U.S. Congress recently passed a law forbidding people with HIV from entry into the U.S. This is unjust persecution of people on the basis of their health.

Hearing a plea from advocates of Haitian refugees, a federal court judge ruled March 25 that the government has to either provide medical treatment to the HIV-infected refugees or send them where they can be treated. The Clinton administration decided to allow 36 people into the U.S. for treatment. But the balance will remain imprisoned. Thus, only if they are near death will the U.S. government bring people here from the prison camp in Guantanamo.

This shameful policy cries out for opposition. It is an outrage that the U.S. government has opened the world's first concentration camp for HIV-positive people.