

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cleanup work starts after storm hits Cuba

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Negotiations for election plans begin in S. Africa

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Multiparty talks to pave the way for the first-ever democratic election for a constituent assembly in South Africa began April 1 in Johannesburg. Representatives from 26 political groupings throughout the country were scheduled to attend.

Nineteen organizations attended two previous rounds of multiparty talks in December 1991 and May 1992, known as Codesa I and II (for the Convention for a Democratic South Africa). The talks had broken down shortly after the May 1992 session when police and armed forces, together with thugs associated with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), intensified violent assaults against African National Congress (ANC) supporters and others that took 1,800 lives during the first half of 1992. During this period, the National Party government also pressed its demand for veto power in any future government.

The ANC together with other forces in the democratic movement launched strikes and mass demonstrations that forced the government to resume bilateral talks with the ANC in September. This led to a successful multiparty planning conference March 5-6 that set the stage for the resumption of this latest round of talks.

Among the leading items to be discussed at the conference are the powers of a proposed multiparty Transitional Executive Committee (TEC), which would preside over elections to a constituent assembly. The ANC insists that the TEC have real decision-making powers, while the government says it should just be an advisory body.

The ANC calls for the TEC to establish a joint command structure over the armed

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## German steelworkers protest austerity pact

BY LÜKO WILLMS

BONN, Germany — The first national labor demonstration of workers from eastern and western Germany took place as 70,000 steelworkers and their supporters gathered here March 26. The workers were called out by the IG Metall union to protest more than 30,000 layoffs planned in the German steel industry in the coming years.

This was the largest rally of workers in Germany in many years. Workers from other unions, including many coal miners, came to express their solidarity with the steelworkers.

IG Metall is following up the demonstration with a series of "warning strikes" throughout the eastern region beginning April 1 to protest the employers breaking a wage agreement earlier in March. Some 300,000 electrical and metal workers will take part in what London's *Financial Times* described as "the first officially organized workers' protests since the 1930s" in eastern Germany.

Wages for steelworkers in eastern Germany are 57 percent of those in the west. Other workers in metal fabricating plants and electrical manufacturing receive about 70 percent of the wages of workers in the western region.

The bosses are reneging on a 1991 agree-



Some of the 70,000 steelworkers and supporters who marched in Bonn March 26. Placard on right says, "German and foreign workers, one class, one united fight."

Reuters/Bettmann

ment to raise wages in eastern Germany by 20 to 26 percent, bringing workers there closer to parity with the west. The employers say they can only give a nine percent raise, which is the current rate of inflation.

IG Metall organizes workers in the steel, auto, electrical, and machine manufacturing industries. Workers arrived at the Bonn demonstration in 11 chartered trains and about 1,100 buses from all over Germany. They marched from four assembly places on the outskirts to the central Hofgarten park.

Several thousand "brought fire to Bonn" in a 175 km (108 mile) torch relay, which started at 5 minutes to midnight on Tuesday, March 23, in Dortmund, at the eastern end

of the Ruhr area. "Rather fire to Bonn than being fired by Krupp" read one sign in the demonstration.

Trains came from Eisenhüttenstadt, Brandenburg, Henningsdorf, Gröditz, Dresden, and Riesa in eastern Germany; Amberg and Salzgitter in western Germany. Buses arrived from all over the Ruhr area, from Bremen and Saarland, and from many other places.

A large portion of coal produced in Germany is used in steel manufacturing. Large job cutbacks in steel are immediately felt in mining. "Miners and steelworkers must support each other," said Peter Eigenwillig,

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## The Militant Labor Forum presents

### CHALLENGES FACING THE WORKING CLASS

#### CUBA TODAY

Hear **Mary-Alice Waters**, editor, 'New International'

**NEW YORK CITY**  
Saturday, April 3  
6:30 p.m.

**GREENSBORO,**  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Friday, April 9  
7:00 p.m.

**DES MOINES,**  
IOWA  
Saturday, April 10  
6:30 p.m.

### SOUTH AFRICA: WHITE REGIME'S FINAL HOUR

Hear 'Militant' correspondents just returned from South Africa

**NEW YORK CITY**  
**Steve Clark**  
Sunday, April 4  
4:00 p.m.

**GREENSBORO**  
**Sam Manuel**  
Sunday, April 11  
10:00 a.m.

**DES MOINES**  
**Wendy Lyons**  
Saturday, April 10  
2:30 p.m.

### WORLD CAPITALIST DISORDER ACCELERATES

Hear **Jack Barnes**, national secretary, Socialist Workers Party

**GREENSBORO**  
Saturday, April 10  
6:30 p.m.

**DES MOINES**  
Sunday, April 11  
11:00 a.m.

The forums in Greensboro and Des Moines are part of socialist educational conferences taking place April 9-11. Classes on other topics will be offered as well.

For more information and locations, please call: (212) 727-8421 in New York; (919) 272-5996 in Greensboro; and (515) 246-8249 in Des Moines

## UMWA miners prepare for next round in contract battle

BY JOHN HAWKINS AND BOB KISSINGER

MARISSA, Illinois — On Illinois Highway 13, as you enter Marissa from the north, one of the first things that catches the eye is a two-sided billboard in front of Georgia's Lounge reading: "We support the UMWA."

Located an hour and a half southeast of St. Louis, this village is in the middle of Peabody coal country.

The energy giant operates three mines and a coal-cleaning plant near here — the Marissa and Baldwin underground mines, the River King Pit no. 6 strip mine, and the Randolph preparation plant — employing more than 800 workers.

During the month-long United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) selective strike against Peabody, Marissa was one of the centers of action.

And, as the signs in the windows of most businesses here indicate, this town will be a center of action again should the mine workers' union need to renew the strike.

The coal miners walked out February 2, following the expiration of the contract between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal

Operators Association (BCOA). The strike ended March 2, one day after the union expanded it to four more mines in Illinois employing 800 workers and to several more mines in Pennsylvania and West Virginia — all owned by other BCOA companies. Miners returned to work March 5.

The UMWA offices in Marissa are a few blocks from the center of town on the third floor of the old high school.

When we visited the union hall March 26, local union presidents were gathered for a meeting with region and district officials to get a report on the negotiations with the BCOA that began three days earlier.

Entering the building, we were greeted by a grade-schooler wearing a camouflage UMWA ball cap adorned with union pins.

He directed us upstairs to the union offices and introduced himself as nine-year-old Jonathan Cross, the son of Marissa mayor Jerry Cross, who is also secretary-treasurer of UMWA District 12.

Union officials invited us to stay and talk after the meeting.

Daniel Neff, a trustee of the Illinois UMWA Relief Fund, was preparing infor-

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## China opposes N. Korea sanctions

China announced March 23 that it opposes attempts by the United States and its allies to impose sanctions on North Korea. The U.S. government has accused North Korea of continuing a nuclear weapons program and has begun campaigning in the United Nations Security Council for sanctions against the country. Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen said that his government not only opposed sanctions, but also opposed discussing them in the UN Security Council.

Washington stepped up its threats and provocations against North Korea after Pyongyang pulled out of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty March 12. The North Korean government also put the country on a mobilization footing following the resumption of the "Team Spirit" joint military exercises by U.S. and South Korean forces. The war maneuvers concluded March 18.

## Israel shuts out Palestinians

The Israeli government closed its borders to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza for an indefinite period March 30 after two policemen were killed earlier that day. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin urged Israelis to support "an all-out war against terrorism," and relaxed the rules under which soldiers may fire at Palestinians. Tel Aviv has accused Palestinians of killing 15 Israelis in the month of March. At least 26 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli soldiers and civilians in the same period.

## 20,000 in Dublin protest bombing

Twenty thousand people rallied in Dublin March 28 to call for peace in northern Ireland and condemn the recent bombing campaign by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Britain. Many Irish throughout Ireland and in Britain have expressed outrage at IRA bombs that exploded in a shopping center in Warrington, England, killing two children March 20. There is also anger at attacks by the British government and rightist paramilitary groups in northern Ireland, who have murdered six Irish Catholics since the bombing.

The demonstrations have occurred as a growing number of public officials in Ireland and the British-occupied North have called on the British government to end its refusal to talk to Sinn Fein, the main party calling for British withdrawal from northern



U.S. marines practice mock invasion during recent "Team Spirit" maneuvers in S. Korea.

Ireland. London claims it will not talk to Sinn Fein because the organization does not denounce IRA violence.

## French conservatives seal victory

The Union for France, a coalition of conservative parties, scored another major victory in the second round of voting for parliament in France. The alliance captured 487 seats in the 577-seat National Assembly, up from 273 in the outgoing parliament. The biggest loser was the Socialist Party and its allies, which won 67 seats, down from 277 before. The Communist Party and its allies won 23 seats, while the rightist National Front lost the one seat it had before the elections.

President Francois Mitterrand is expected to appoint a conservative prime minister shortly after the election. The Socialist Party, Communist Party, and National Front complained about the French election system, which allowed the Conservatives to get 84 percent of the seats despite receiving 39.5 percent of the popular vote in the first round March 21.

## Somalis agree on pact

Leaders of Somalia's feuding factions came to an agreement for a new government in negotiations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The pact, announced by United Nations representatives March 28, calls for a transitional council of 74 representatives from the

factions and Somali provinces to run the country for two years until a national government is organized. There were no reports at the time of how the next government would be formed.

The main governments that have sent troops to Somalia had been putting more pressure on the faction leaders. The week before the agreement, 2,000 U.S. troops returned to Kismayu to control the situation in that city. On March 26 the UN Security Council passed a resolution to send at least 28,000 troops to take over control of military deployment from Washington.

## Kenya abandons IMF measures

In separate statements, Kenyan president Daniel arap Moi and finance minister Musalia Mudavadi announced that the country was abandoning an "economic reform program" and rejecting International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank proposals. Saying that the Bank and the IMF refused to honor pledges to resume aid, they announced that the government was reimposing controls on foreign exchange and prices.

Mudavadi said the economic program proposed by the financial institutions would ruin agriculture and lead to food shortages and mass unemployment. Opposition parliament members walked out of the reopening of the parliament March 23, protesting the break with IMF demands.

## UN to repatriate Mozambicans

United Nations high commissioner for refugees Sadako Ogata has announced plans to repatriate some 1.3 million Mozambican refugees following the declaration of a cease fire in the country's civil war. Mozambique and the South Africa-backed Mozambique National Resistance signed a peace agreement last October to end the 16-year war. The UN Security Council has set up an 8,000-strong force to oversee the implementation of the agreement, which calls for a general election to take place soon.

## Mexico denounces U.S. execution

Mexico "deeply laments" the execution of Ramon Montoya, the first Mexican citizen to be put to death in the United States

in many years, said the country's foreign minister Fernando Solana. Montoya, 38, was convicted of killing a Dallas cop 10 years ago and executed in Texas March 25. Mexico does not have the death penalty. The Mexican government had earlier appealed for a pardon or a reprieve.

## Judge rejects injury penalties

A judge employed by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission threw out a fine imposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration against Pepperidge Farms Co. for repetitive stress injuries suffered by workers at a bakery near Philadelphia. Judge David Oringer said he dismissed the \$1.3 million fine because there were no federal standards regarding repetitive stress. Oringer also said there was no feasible way for the company to protect the 69 workers suffering injuries at the bakery. The decision will now be reviewed by the full commission.

## Racist killer gets probation

Some 400 people protested at the Tarrant County Justice Center in Fort Worth, Texas, March 24 to protest the sentencing of 17-year-old white supremacist Christopher Brosky. A day earlier, Brosky was sentenced to 10 years probation after he was convicted of murder in the drive-by shooting of Donald Thomas, a 32-year-old Black man killed two years ago.

The sentence, imposed by Judge Everett Young, was said to have resulted from a misunderstanding by the all-white jury. Prosecutors have said they are considering an appeal of the sentence and the Anti-Defamation League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have called for a federal civil rights trial against Brosky.

## Quebec City protest against embargo on Iraq

"No, the war is not over; the embargo continues!" Almost 100 people chanted this and other demands in a demonstration in Quebec City, Quebec, February 28 against the UN-imposed embargo on Iraq. The demonstration, which included many university students as well as members of the small Arab community there, was organized by the ad hoc committee "Urgence Irak."

Marchers were encouraged to sign a petition demanding that "the Canadian government stop the sanctions" because, it says, the embargo not only has drastic consequences for the civilian population of Iraq but it "results in a constant climate of war in this region of the globe."

Leila Azzarian, a student at Laval University who recently visited Iraq, said, "We forget, unfortunately, the anguish suffered by the Iraqi people. The children particularly suffered serious traumas." She added, "If it's possible to summarize in a single sentence the testimony that we heard [in Iraq], it would be 'Stop the embargo so that we may lead normal lives.'"

—DEREK BRACEY

Stéphane Boutin, a student at Laval University in Quebec City, Quebec, contributed to this week's column.

## THE MILITANT

*Weekly coverage of labor resistance  
to attacks by the employers*

*Hundreds of United Mine Workers of America union members have bought the 'Militant' recently as they battle for new contracts against the coal bosses. Telling the truth about this fight week after week, the 'Militant' has become one of the miners' weapons. For working people resisting the bosses' attacks on our wages and standard of living, from Shawneetown, Illinois, to London, England, and Johannesburg, South Africa, there is a working-class newspaper tying it all together — the 'Militant.'*  
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# Russian regime mired in permanent crisis

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The power struggle unfolding in Russia between the president and his opponents in the parliament is symptomatic of a regime in permanent crisis.

Russian president Boris Yeltsin narrowly survived an impeachment vote, but his executive powers were somewhat restricted when the Congress of People's Deputies formally revoked his ability to rule by decree March 29.

In an effort to upstage Yeltsin's call for an April 25 national plebiscite as a vote of confidence in his rule, the Russian parliament has scheduled a referendum for that same date. Among the questions to be placed before the voters by Congress is whether they approve of Yeltsin's social and economic policies, and whether early elections should be scheduled for president and the parliament.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

To further complicate the issue, Congress also declared that for the referendum to be approved, Yeltsin must win the backing of 50 percent of all registered voters, not just those who turn out to cast a ballot. This is unlikely to happen. In 1991, when Yeltsin was elected Russia's president with 57 percent of the vote, this represented only a quarter of the voting age population.

"Russia's power struggle is irreconcilable," said an article in the March 30 *Wall Street Journal*. "Russia now effectively has two functioning governments, each issuing decrees and claiming the other's decisions to be invalid."

### Accelerating social crisis

At the heart of this ongoing power struggle is the stark reality that "market reforms" and plans to privatize industry, banking, and land ownership are not only failing to reverse Russia's economic decline, but are actually accelerating the social crisis throughout the country. Real wages, for example, are down 25 percent since 1985, consumption has been cut in half, and inflation continues to rise at the rate of 25 percent a month.

There are no short-term solutions to the political crisis wracking Russia. A brief review of some of the twists and turns in this fight during the past few weeks illustrates this fact.

On March 12 the Russian parliament slashed the president's power, declaring the right to overrule his executive decrees. Eight days later Yeltsin responded by calling an April 25 referendum as a vote of confidence in his rule and announced that he was assuming "special powers." These powers included the right to overrule any decisions made by the legislature.

This move was immediately condemned by the Constitutional Court. Yeltsin's opponents summoned the Congress of People's Deputies, Russia's highest legislative body, to full session to consider impeachment of the president. Amid the furor Yeltsin backed down, publishing March 24 a milder version of his "special powers" decree.

The Russian president and his major opponent, Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Congress, then announced that they had reached a compromise agreement in which Yeltsin would drop his call for an April 25 referendum. Instead, elections for both the presidency and a new two-chamber legislature would be called for November.

This agreement further inflamed legislators from both sides of the aisle, leading to a proposal to oust both Yeltsin and Khasbulatov.

Both motions failed. A total of 617 legislators voted in favor of impeaching Yeltsin, 72 votes short of the required two-thirds majority of the 1,033 members of Congress. Only 268 deputies cast ballots against Yeltsin's removal. Legislators also voted 558-339 to reject the dismissal of Khasbulatov.

### Squabbling bureaucrats

Several thousand pro- and anti-Yeltsin demonstrators gathered in the streets of Moscow while the Russian parliament was in session. The largest actions occurred March 28, the day of the impeachment vote. Some 50,000 people attended a pro-Yeltsin rally, which was officially authorized by

Moscow's mayor, while another 10,000 marched through the streets in opposition to the Russian president.

"At a tumultuous rally of democratic forces [that evening]," reported the *Washington Post*, "Yeltsin told cheering supporters that the impeachment effort was a 'Communist coup d'etat that did not take place.'"

The reality is that neither side in this conflict consists of supporters of democracy or of communism. Yeltsin's fight with his opponents in Congress over who should hold decisive political power is basically a dispute within the ruling bureaucracy over how fast to proceed in imposing drastic austerity measures on working people in Russia.

Prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union, both Yeltsin and those in the parliament leading the fight against him were part of the hierarchy of the ruling Communist Party, which for decades maintained a stranglehold on political power in the Soviet Union.

Since the mid-1920s this party, despite its official name, has had nothing to do with communism. Rather than representing the revolutionary workers of Russia and the Soviet Union, it became the voice for a counterrevolutionary bureaucratic stratum that succeeded in driving Russian working people out of politics, thus laying the basis for the eventual restoration of capitalism.

Those comprising today's so-called communist opposition to Yeltsin are alarmed by the devastating results of his reforms, such as the lifting of price controls. They fear an explosive reaction from working people if the process is not slowed down. Demonstrators participating in their actions carry banners ranging from pictures of Stalin to prozarist signs.

### Little progress in restoring capitalism

So far Russia's rulers have made only limited progress in reestablishing capitalist property relations. As the right-wing Heritage Foundation succinctly points out, "In many areas — control of the money supply, agricultural reform and privatization... there has been far less structural change [in Russia] than is even minimally necessary for the functioning of a market economy."

The fact is that a capitalist class does not exist in Russia. The ruling bureaucracy is — as it has been for many decades — simply a parasitic layer deriving its privileges from its control over nationalized property.

Some 95 percent of all property in Russia is still state-owned. While more than 46,000 stores and other small businesses — such as restaurants and night clubs — were privatized in 1992, this has had little impact on the more than 10,000 medium and large enterprises, virtually all of which still remain in state hands.

### Capitalist investors wary

Such facts make the rulers of the United States and the other Group of Seven (G-7) nations — Germany, France, Japan, Italy, Canada, and Britain — hesitant to pump large sums of money into the Russian economy despite their recognition that Yeltsin's regime needs substantial assistance if it is to maintain its course towards integration in the capitalist market. Capitalist investors are wary about making large investments in Russia because of the unstable ruble, which continues to plummet in value, and the huge sums of capital that continue to be smuggled out of the country.

The Clinton administration, which is considering asking Congress for up to \$1 billion in new aid for Russia, is urging the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to provide much larger sums. Washington announced that it wants the IMF to provide Russia with



Street vendor in Novosibirsk, Siberia. Thousands of Russians are trying to grapple with unemployment and other effects of economic crisis by peddling clothes and other goods in the streets.

Francisco Conde/Impact Visuals

as much as \$13.5 billion a year. Such a move, however, would require the IMF to loosen its demand for severe austerity measures as a requirement for providing the funds. Last year Russia failed to meet these strict IMF conditions.

Governments of the G-7 countries have expressed a willingness to provide some aid, but the heart of their proposals is aimed at restructuring Russia's debt, which stands at more than \$75 billion — some \$40 billion of this being owed to Germany. Such a move is simply a recognition of the fact that Russia has not been making payments on its debt. Last year the G-7 nations had planned to reschedule \$2.5 billion of Russia's debt, but they ended up adjusting this up to \$7.2 billion when Russia failed to make the interest payments.

G-7 foreign and finance ministers are planning to meet in Tokyo April 14-15 to

discuss assistance to Russia. This gathering will come shortly after Clinton's April 3-4 meeting with Yeltsin in Vancouver, British Columbia. Yeltsin has also been invited to attend the Tokyo meeting.

"The issue of new assistance for Russia could also expose tensions among G-7 nations," warns the *Financial Times*. "Germany in particular, feels that it has had to carry too much of the cost."

Russia's major industries continue to receive huge government subsidies. In 1992, the central bank increased its lending from 194 billion rubles to 6.3 trillion by year's end.

"Credits to state enterprises cannot be cut off entirely," suggests Harvard professor Jeffrey Sachs, an economic adviser to the Russian government, "but they must be cut sharply."

"Every country in Eastern Europe has experienced a decline in industrial production of more than 30 percent since the end of 1989," states Sachs, explaining that he believes this is a necessary overhead in Russia also.

Such a move would throw millions out of work in Russia, setting in motion stepped-up resistance by workers to the government's austerity drive. Currently about 600,000 Russians are listed as unemployed, in a population of some 150 million.

As part of his plan to implement this next phase of economic "shock therapy," Yeltsin reshuffled his cabinet and named his principal economic strategist — Boris Fyodorov — to the post of finance minister. Fyodorov, who has described himself as an admirer of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher's economic ideas, is known to favor more rapid steps toward implementing capitalist "market reforms."

As Russia's rulers continue along this path of implementing more drastic austerity measures, working people will be drawn into the fight as they resist unemployment, inflation, and further cuts in their social wage.

## Changes on 'Militant' staff

The *Militant* has announced changes to its staff that will advance both the business and editorial sides of the paper's work.

*Militant* editor George Fyson will take on the additional responsibility of business manager. The goals of this move are to improve the professionalism of the business, promotion, and circulation operations of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. These aspects of the two periodicals' work, from organizing the computer entry of new subscriptions and renewals to responding to readers' requests for more information, are handled by members of the *Militant's* writing staff.

Fyson, who became editor in December 1992, was earlier the paper's managing editor. Brian Williams, formerly the business manager, will continue as a member of the paper's writing staff. Williams has contributed numerous articles on a variety of issues in world politics, from the crisis in Haiti and Somalia to the fight to defend Mark Curtis, a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who was framed up by the police on false charges of attempted rape and burglary.

Argiris Malapanis has been named managing editor. Malapanis joined the *Militant* staff in September, 1991. Since then he has made many international reporting trips for the paper, including to

Yugoslavia, Cuba, and several countries in Latin America. He has written extensively on political developments there as well as on many other subjects.

Joining the staff with this issue is Stu Singer. Singer most recently contributed to the paper from the front lines of the fight of the United Mine Workers of America against Peabody and other coal companies. In February and early March he travelled through mining areas in Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky with a *Militant* sales and reporting team.

For the previous two years Singer was a part of the leadership of the Pathfinder building reconstruction project, which completely remodeled the offices and a major piece of the printshop that serve the *Militant*, Pathfinder Press, and the national office of the Socialist Workers Party.

Singer did a stint as a staff writer for the *Militant* in the early 1980s. He adds to the paper his many years of experience in the labor movement. Singer has been a member and activist in a number of industrial unions, most recently in the United Auto Workers in Newton, Iowa, where he was a production worker for Maytag Co. Singer helped found the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines, following the March 1988 arrest, beating, and frame-up by the cops of Mark Curtis.



# Rail workers debate concession demands

BY JO ROTHENBERG

MINNEAPOLIS — In engine cabs, shanties, lunchrooms, and depots, some 3,600 Burlington Northern railroad workers represented by the United Transportation Union are now debating how to vote on a recently proposed contract.

Agreement on the two-year accord was reached in early March by union officials and company negotiators. It is subject to a UTU membership referendum, set to take

contract prohibits reduced crews from handling trains above a certain car count.

Cutting back the crew size and increasing the amount of work they carry out have been goals of a longstanding carrier offensive against rail workers in the name of "reducing labor costs" to maintain "a competitive edge" against rivals.

This offensive has been successfully carried out by virtually every carrier in the United States, with the exception of BN on

sional instructions to end the walkout.

As a result, health and welfare terms were dictated by a government board, which stated that crew size and work rules would be determined carrier by carrier.

The current offer before BN northern line workers is another piece of the process of attacks by the rail bosses.

The railroad companies hope that union members will swallow further concessions on crew size and work rules in exchange for what amount to bribes in the form of buyouts as well as the promise of paid "job security" for the life of the contract.

The memorandum of agreement states that "the Carrier may offer the opportunity for voluntary early separation."

## Rail buyouts

Railroad workers seeking this "buyout" would receive \$80,000 if hired before Dec. 5, 1980 or \$30,000 for those hired afterward.

The proposed agreement also refers to a "reserve board," which laid-off members could be on and receive 75 percent of their current pay, until recalled to work.

If ratified by the union, members are to receive a \$5,000 signing bonus, and small lump sums paid to other workers since the contract was settled.

These so-called sweeteners are getting mixed reviews.

While the \$80,000 buyout has appeal among some workers who are close to the retirement age of 62, many others say they can ill afford taking \$30,000 — in many cases less than a year's wages — to go look for a job in today's depressed economy.

The aim of the buyout is to further slash the BN work force, pruning it of higher-paid veteran employees, many of whom have wage benefits that the carrier has successfully denied to new generations of railroad workers.

It currently takes a new BN hire five years to reach 100 percent of the hourly pay of senior workers.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, BN's "top officials have said current labor contracts on the northern line saddle the railroad with 1,650 extra crew members and an additional \$100 million a year in costs."

Few UTU members see each other as "extras" who "saddle" a poverty-stricken carrier.

The removal of this portion of the work force will decrease safety, both for railroad workers and the urban and rural communities neighboring railroad tracks.

Remy Fischer, a vice-president at Kemper Financial Services, termed the proposed contract "a very big psychological boost and an immediate financial benefit to Burlington Northern."

Many UTU members also have learned that the promise of "reserve board" job security rapidly gives way to being forced to return to work elsewhere, at carrier demand, under the penalty of severance.

Many of these points, according to members of UTU Local 1000 in Minneapolis, were raised with local officials in a union meeting March 16.

Brakeman Steve Gabbert told the *Militant* after the meeting, "The company is asking the older guys to take \$80,000 and throw a hand grenade into the building before they leave," a reference to anticipated working conditions if the contract is ratified.

At the same time, many railroad workers who share this sentiment see no alternative to the offer.

They fear that if the contract offer is voted down, something worse, imposed by a governmental board, will be forced on them.

News of the contract proposal was met with cheers by Wall Street investors, and BN stock soared in trading.

Jo Rothenberg, a switchman on the Burlington Northern in Minneapolis, is a member of UTU Local 1000.



Militant/Lisa Hickler  
March 1991 protest by rail workers against proposed concessions. The following month 250,000 held one-day national strike; Congress ordered them back to work.

place in early May.

The contract covers UTU members employed in terminal and road freight operations as brakemen and switchmen, as well as hostlers (engine movers in rail yards).

These unionists work on BN's northern line, which runs from Minneapolis to Seattle and Portland, Oregon.

Other UTU members working for the multibillion-dollar rail giant approved contracts in 1991.

The tentative contract offer, known as a memorandum of agreement, sets conditions where crews "may be conductor-only crews." Currently most BN northern-line road crews run with an engineer, a conductor, and two brakemen.

The agreement would reduce the crew size by two brakemen. It also sets a precedent for further reductions to one-person crews in rail yard jobs.

The contract offer eliminates limitations on the length of trains that could be handled by these reduced crews as well. The current

its northern line.

In April 1991, after a three-year deadlock over a national contract, railroad workers were presented with an offer from a presidential emergency board convened under the Bush administration.

Nearly 250,000 railroad workers struck against the proposed settlement's giveback demands. After 19 hours on the picket lines, rail union officials ordered the strikers back to work, kowtowing to congress-

## Socialist garment workers discuss labor fights

BY TONY PRINCE

BOSTON — Socialist workers from around the United States who are members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) met here March 13-14 to discuss the world political situation and its implications for their work as unionists.

The socialists, who work in the garment,

warehouse, and textile sectors of the ILGWU, heard a political report from Paul Mailhot, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and a former garment worker.

Mailhot stressed that the instability and disorder in the capitalist world has accelerated. There are no bright spots for imperialism in the world today, he said.

Politics in the United States is marked by the continuing world economic depression. Mailhot said. There are nine million unemployed, 10 percent of the population is on food stamps, and wages are declining. In this context, he said, "It's important to explain that what we are in right now really is a recovery — a recovery in the midst of a long-term worldwide depression. This is the best that capitalism has to offer any more. Likewise, we should point out that the Clinton administration is a liberal administration. This is what liberals are today — people like the pro-cop, law-and-order attorney general, Janet Reno."

Mailhot explained that the bosses are not pushing a direct assault to break major unions today. Rather, the government is carrying out a broadside attack on the social wage — Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other entitlements. At the same time, the grinding offensive against workers in the plants continues.

## Solidarity with miners

The garment and textile workers at the meeting discussed building solidarity with the miners' fight against Peabody Coal Co. In this case the coal miners won a clear-cut victory through a month-long strike, which put them in a stronger position to continue the fight for a contract from the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

The socialist unionists noted that sales of revolutionary literature published by Pathfinder Press have qualitatively increased, and the basis for expanding the long-term readership of the socialist press, the *Militant* and *Perspective Mundial*, continues to grow.

Several of the ILGWU members explained that immigrant workers, who make up a major component of the union, are becoming more and more a part of the U.S.

work force. Political discussions among immigrant workers and native-born workers tend to focus on the same issues — what to expect from the Clinton administration, the offensive against the working class, and the drive toward war.

Mary Nell Bockman of New York described how working in an ILGWU-organized plant has given her a better understanding of the role of Chinese workers in the union and in the city. "Socialists in the ILGWU can help take the lead in doing more political work among Chinese workers," she explained.

## Struggles in the ILGWU

The socialist workers discussed some of the struggles going on in the ILGWU, like the strikes at STC Knitting in Queens, New York, and Plastonics in Hartford, Connecticut, as well as the recent organizing drive at New Balance athletic shoes in Boston. In the course of building support for these struggles, many participants at the meeting said they have been able to discuss broader political issues with their fellow fighters.

They have also introduced some of these workers to the case of Mark Curtis, a political and union activist framed up on false charges of attempted rape and burglary in Iowa. Several of the STC strikers readily identified with Curtis and his role in defending immigrant workers, since their boss had called in the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to try to bust their organizing drive. Curtis was arrested and framed up in 1988, while taking part in a union effort to defend immigrant coworkers from the meat-packing plant where he worked who were arrested in an INS raid. The socialist workers resolved to step up their campaign in defense of Curtis.

The participants in the meeting agreed that, based on the successful work carried out in the union recently, socialist workers should increase their presence in this key union and in the sector of the working class it represents.

Tony Prince is a member of ILGWU Local 155 in Brooklyn, New York.

## Los Angeles cops attempt to smear Rodney King in trial

BY SANDRA PUCCI

LOS ANGELES — Sgt. Stacey Koon, one of the cops on trial for beating construction worker Rodney King, used his appearance on the witness stand March 24 to again smear King as a drug-crazed giant who made the cops fear for their lives.

Much of his testimony was a repeat of the state trial, in which he asserted that King was on PCP, a claim that hospital tests did not confirm.

Koon described King as fearsome, large, and "buffed out," with a "blank stare" and beads of sweat on his forehead, "certain indicators of PCP intoxication."

He claimed that King initially responded to the cops "in gibberish, repeating the same thing over and over... not in any language." Asked how long King spoke in this fashion, he responded, "five to ten seconds."

In a new version of the events on the night of the beating, Koon told the court that King and the other two "suspects" in his car led cops on a "stop-and-go" chase causing them to think that King and his passengers had a "tactical plan to draw officers in, towards a dark park," implying that the cops were going to be ambushed.

He also asserted that in the beating King was not struck on the head. At the same time, he told jurors that he "screamed out several times: 'Don't hit him in the head, don't hit him in the head.'"

Koon reiterated his state trial assertion that the beating would have ended sooner if he had been able to use the "upper body"

hold, or chokehold, which is officially against Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) policy except in instances where they wish to use "deadly force."

In the state trial last year, Koon testified that he did not use the chokehold because King is Black, whereas in the federal trial now underway he claimed the main reason was that it would violate departmental policy.

The use of the chokehold was restricted in 1982. Police in Los Angeles had killed at least 17 people through its use in the previous seven years.

Koon told the court that in his six years of duty prior to the moratorium, the chokehold was an "everyday tool that I employed." He said the times he used it "were too numerous to mention."

Two other defense witnesses, use-of-force expert Sgt. Charles Duke of the LAPD and Edward Nowicki, an expert in use of the club, also testified.

Duke told jurors that injuries to King's head and face were caused by "a violent confrontation with the ground."

Despite the graphic evidence of the videotape of the beating which shows defendant Laurence Powell hammering King with his club, Nowicki testified that these blows were "weak and ineffective," and demonstrated a "lack of power."

Apparently in response to the assertion of Powell's "lack of training" in use of the club, the prosecutor noted that there are 15 cases on the record of Powell clubbing people.



# 'Mark Curtis: symbol of freedom fighters everywhere; we must demand his release'

## Supporters of framed-up unionist speak out against slander campaign

We reproduce below excerpts of some of the recent letters sent by supporters of Mark Curtis's fight for justice to his defense committee.

These letters answer attempts, made by those who claim Curtis is guilty, to pressure endorsers of his case to end their backing of the defense effort.

A political activist and union fighter, Curtis was framed up on false charges of sexual assault and burglary in March 1988. He was convicted of those charges later that year and is now serving a 25-year prison sentence.

\* \* \*

### Rev. Theodore Schroeder

Immanuel Lutheran Church,  
St. Louis, Missouri

I want you to know of my continuing support for Mark Curtis and for the work you have been doing these many years in his defense. I congratulate you.

I am still impressed negatively by the charges and "evidence and testimony" brought against Mr. Curtis. I am not surprised when a person showing Mark's passion for labor or other rights is charged with crime. Such charges in no way sway me from the opinion that Mark is an innocent person charged and convicted for the simple purpose of silencing him and frustrating his efforts to carry out the purposes to which God called him.

You of the committee are to be commended for guaranteeing that this silence is broken, that the work of justice for laborers, aliens, and all continues. May God bless you.

### Al Campbell

Professor of economics,  
University of Utah,  
Salt Lake City

It is extremely saddening to see anyone connected with an organization such as the Boston NAACP line up with the police in a frame-up of a person who has spent his adult life fighting in various organizations for a more just world.

The testimony of the rape victim, Demetria Morris, made it clear that Mark Curtis was not the perpetrator. She specifically gave a height very different than his, said the perpetrator was a smoker (Curtis does not smoke), and insisted he wore a belt (Curtis did not have one). The careful test for physical evidence linking Mark to the crime came up negative. She described being raped on the porch floor which was covered with dirt and dog hair; her clothes indeed had these on them, but his did not. She specified a time at which the event occurred, for which Curtis has witnesses that



Jock Barnes, a leader of dock workers in New Zealand in the 1940s and '50s. "Many cases of lying, perjury and frame-ups by police have been revealed," he said.

he was elsewhere.

The conviction then was entirely on the word of the police officer (in this case, an officer who has a record of lying in police reports and investigations). Of course the issue is exactly this: is the testimony of a police officer against a social activist sufficient in itself (in this case, in the face of contradicting evidence) to convict a social activist. There is a long history of such police testimony which later turned out to be untrue. Mary Bertin's letters against Curtis, the crusade she has taken upon herself, start with this acceptance that the word of a police officer is as good as gold. She underlines, and puts in capitals, and follows with an exclamation mark: "Mark Curtis is a violent rapist." But that is the whole heart of the issue. There is no evidence for this other than the word of the police.

A polarization of U.S. society has been occurring since the 1970s, and was accelerated in the 1980s. Periods of social polarization inevitably bring increased social conflict, between those trying to build a more just society, and those trying to maintain the status quo. In the past, in such times the police as an institution have always lined up with those that have tried to maintain the status quo. We can expect it will be the same in the years to come. All progressive forces should be campaigning to support the basic principle, which is a life-and-death issue for social activists: Anyone is innocent until proven guilty. To label people who want to defend this important issue as "sexist" and "racist" appears to be an attempt to use name-calling on these important and sensitive issues to avoid a serious consideration of what is involved in this case for all social activists.

Proof of guilt certainly is not established simply by the word of a police officer (again, in this case, one with a record of perjury).

Many youth (and many not so young) in Los Angeles, and New York City, in fact across the nation, be they black, white or brown, understand this. The several untrue claims and implications in Mary Bertin's letter are offensive to anyone who has really studied the transcript of the trial, and dealt with the Mark Curtis Defense Committee over the years, but they are not the most serious aspect of the letter. Mary Bertin does a tremendous disservice to all social activists by trying to convince people they should accept the word of a policeman as sufficient evidence for a frame-up of a social activist.

I continue to hold firmly the position I have held for four years: the state has never proved Mark guilty (in this case the evidence at the trial seems to me to prove he is innocent, but that is not needed for my position), and therefore he should receive an unconditional release (and be awarded damages for the wrongfully imposed imprisonment) immediately.

### Jock Barnes

Veteran labor leader,  
New Zealand

Accepting the presumption that an accused person is innocent until proved guilty, so many cases of lying, perjury and frame-ups by police have been revealed, that, I submit, an equally justifiable presumption is that police are lying unless the contrary is proven.

My immediate concern is with the United States and its junior partner in world infamy Great Britain. Cases such as the framing of Stephen Ward, the Birmingham Six, and the Gilford Four are fresh in the minds of most.

To recite the numbers of similar cases in

the United States would be a mammoth task. I write of one — Mark Curtis. . .

"A Mexican lover just like you love those coloureds." The words used by police thugs when bashing Mark Curtis. I believe the significance of these words is great indeed.

A Mexican lover. Yes. With truth they could have said workers and oppressed people of any country. But if, in fact, he had raped a coloured girl, no cop, however much a moronic cretin he be, would have called him "a coloured lover." . . .

Mark Curtis is a symbol of freedom fighters everywhere. Don't beg for his release. Demand it. And with it full compensation for his suffering.

Divide and rule is the first principle of capitalism.

Ours must be to cleanse our ranks, organize, and fight back.

Our immediate objective — freedom for Mark Curtis.

The ultimate, call it socialism, communism or what you will, production for the use of all as distinct from the profit of a few and with it the death of this obscene system called capitalism and the collaborators it breeds.

That is the final step to ensure that such frame-ups as that of Mark Curtis can no longer be.

### Linda L. Melhoff

Member, International  
Association of Machinists and  
National Organization for  
Women, Seattle, Washington

Yes, I still support Mark Curtis and once again request the Iowa Parole Board at least consider Mr. Curtis for a work release program.

I do not believe Mr. Curtis is a racist nor a rapist. His long history of standing up for the rights of minorities is what has made him a target.

For the past ten years, I have been active in my union holding several local and district offices. I have observed firsthand that companies will use dishonest, underhanded, and illegal means to stop workers from becoming empowered. Charging this man with rape served the company's need to remove a powerful leader who was encouraging the weakest and most exploited workers to fight for their rights.

Since "red-baiting" is no longer very effective, this frame-up also sheds a negative light on the Socialist Workers Party and I believe it was an attempt to discredit their work.

It is time to put an end to this injustice. Release Mark Curtis now.

\* \* \*

Letters in support of Mark Curtis's fight for justice should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Fax (515) 243-9869.

### Parole Now for Mark Curtis!

Des Moines, Iowa  
Friday, April 9, 7:00 p.m.

#### HEAR

Kate Kaku, Curtis's wife and a leader of the International fight to win justice for Curtis

William Kutmus, Des Moines attorney representing Curtis in federal appeal of his conviction

Edna Griffin, long-time fighter for civil rights, member Iowa Women's Hall of Fame

Andre Sledge, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149, Marshalltown, Iowa

Join the panel of speakers to discuss campaign to win freedom for framed-up unionist.

Best Western Starlite Village,  
929 3rd St.

Sponsored by the Mark Curtis  
Defense Committee

For more information call (515) 246-1695

## Socialists launch Detroit mayoral campaign

BY TONI JACKSON

DETROIT — "Socialist Workers name mayoral hopeful," stated the March 2 issue of the *Detroit Free Press*. On March 1, Sharisse Beasley, Socialist Workers 1993 campaign cochairperson, announced Rose Ana Berbeo's candidacy in the November election for mayor of Detroit.

WDET radio aired an interview with the candidate the evening after the press conference. "Clinton's call for 'shared sacrifice' to boost the economy is a cynical exercise that will benefit the wealthy and continue the attacks on the living standards and working conditions of working people," said Berbeo, 24, who works at the Thornapple Valley kill plant and is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union Local 26.

Berbeo urged working people and youth to struggle in their own interests rather than in the interests of the billionaire families that

run this country. As an example of workers fighting in their own interests, Berbeo pointed to the fight of members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against the attempt by Peabody and other coal bosses to weaken their union and drive down their standard of living. Berbeo urged all working people to support the coal miners in this fight.

In response to the news coverage, a prisoner incarcerated in a local jail called the campaign headquarters to invite the candidate to speak to inmates there. "We're tired of the politicians that come down to the prison to try to get people to vote for them. A lot of the guys are looking for an alternative," he said.

Some of Berbeo's coworkers are debating a campaign statement that, among other things, proposes a 30-hour workweek with no cut in pay to spread available work around. In the plant where the socialist can-

didate works, 11-hour days are the norm in some departments. In other departments shorter workdays are only the result of speedup.

The press conference was held at the new storefront Pathfinder bookstore at 7417 Woodward Ave. The socialist campaign also announced four candidates for City Council. They are: James Harris, member of the United Auto Workers (UAW); Arlene Rubinstein, member of the UFCW; John Sarge, member of the UAW; and Candace Wagner, member of the United Steelworkers of America.

Since the announcement, Berbeo has spoken at a National Organization for Women meeting on abortion rights. The mayoral campaign also sent campaign supporter Michelle Brown to coal-mining areas in Pennsylvania to show support for and build solidarity with UMWA miners there.



# Cleanup work starts after storm in Cuba

BY SARA LOBMAN  
AND FRANCISCO PICADO

HAVANA, Cuba — Several dozen young people began gathering at the Castellito (Little Castle) here for the evening work huddle March 24. The youth were part of the cleanup and repair effort being organized by the Union of Young Communists (UJC) following the March 13-14 winter storm.

The damage from the storm, which produced 125-mile-per-hour winds and waves up to 25 feet, is more severe than initially thought. The United Nations Development Program estimates that damages totaled more than \$1 billion. This is equal to 50 percent of the total amount of hard currency that Cuba has available for purchasing badly needed medicine, oil, food, and other supplies on the world market.

The UJC has agreed to take responsibility for repairing the recreation centers, ice cream shops, and other installations along the seaford drive in Havana known as the Malecón. Many of these recreation spots were virtually destroyed. Every evening leaders of the different work crews gather to review the progress of their teams and map out plans for future work. Roberto Robaina, first secretary of the UJC, chaired the session the *Militant* was invited to attend. Student federations at several high

schools and universities sent representatives to the meeting. Dozens of students from these schools are volunteering as part of the cleanup effort.

The meeting also included workers from various industries who are providing food, equipment, and important skills. For example, the Castellito itself needs substantial electrical work.

Discussion at the meeting was lively and to the point. Julio, a leader of the work at La Fuente concert facility, reported that the work there had advanced as planned. The one problem, he said, was that the volunteers from the Military Technical High School had not received their lunch until the middle of the afternoon. "They worked hard and no one complained," he said, "but we should make sure this doesn't happen again."

## Damage hits Cuba hard

At least four people were killed and 95 injured by the storm and subsequent flooding that caused damage in 8 of Cuba's 14 provinces. More than 36,000 homes were damaged; almost 1,500 of these were completely destroyed. In addition many work places and service centers were affected, including hospitals, schools, and industries. One of the two largest overhead cranes in the country was destroyed as well.



Rebuilding in Havana after March 13-14 storm. The damage caused by the storm equaled half of the hard currency Cuba has available for food, oil, and other supplies.

Residents in Vedado, one of the Havana neighborhoods most severely affected by the storm, told the *Militant* they were without electricity, gas, or water for almost six days. Telephone service in much of the country was disrupted. Several people described wading home through water that was almost up to their waists. The flooding also caused serious damage to the sewage system, promoting emergency measures to prevent illness from contaminated water.

The storm hit Cuba at a time when the island of 11 million people is struggling to come out of the most difficult economic conditions they have faced since the 1959 revolution. This current crisis, caused by the sudden collapse of trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since 1989, and brutally exacerbated by the U.S. government's trade embargo, has led to serious shortages of food, medicine, clothes, building supplies, and other necessities.

The storm destroyed a substantial percentage of the winter food crop, much of which was ready to be harvested. Initial agricultural losses are estimated at more than \$210 million. Much of the banana crop was leveled — more than 2 million plants were destroyed — as was half of Havana province's tobacco crop. There was serious damage to many fruits and vegetables.

In the days after the storm, thousands of people mobilized in volunteer work brigades to salvage whatever they could from the fields. "The first Saturday after the storm, more people than usual showed up," Nancy Montes de Oca told us, referring to the volunteer brigades that work every Saturday in the fields near her school in Matanzas province.

Brigades from Havana have been organized to harvest the potato crop before the potatoes spoil in the unusually soggy ground. One woman showed us stacks of green bananas in her kitchen. The fruit had been taken from damaged plants in the hope that it will eventually ripen.

## Shortages make recovery difficult

"The severe shortages make everything more difficult," another woman, a psychologist, explained. In previous floods the gov-

Continued on Page 12

# Pathfinder trip gives Cuban students, professors 'living lesson in Marxism'

BY GERARDO RAMOS SERPA

MATANZAS, Cuba — Cuban students studying the most varied fields of technical science, agronomy, humanities, and economics at the "Camilo Cienfuegos" University of Matanzas recently had an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the most pressing questions facing the world, Latin America, and the nation. The event was the XVI Student Scientific Seminar on Social Sciences sponsored by the Federation of University Students and the Department of Social Science at this institution of higher education, held March 16-17, 1993.

But while this event had been held 15 times previously, what was unusual and of particular interest at this year's event was the opportunity of having with us, for the first time, representatives of Pathfinder Press of the United States.

Mary-Alice Waters, Sara Lobman, and Francisco Picado gave the exchange of ideas an unusual dimension, and left a whole string of impressions and opinions among the students, professors, and university administrators with whom they were in contact the entire time. We would like to review some of these impressions.

Above all, it was significant to have firsthand experience of how revolutionaries think and act under the conditions inside a country like the United States, and how with great clarity, resolve, and courage they spread their ideas and carry them out. In this sense, the dissemination of the most outstanding socialist and progressive ideas of our epoch, from Marx, Engels, and Lenin to Malcolm X, Mandela, Fidel Castro, and Che Guevara, among others, made one appreciate how despite the theoretical phrases now in vogue and the ideological retreat of some, it is still clear which sources the revolutionary movement must study and learn from in order to understand the world and achieve its transformation.

But the comrades from the United States did not limit themselves to sharing ideas (something very necessary that should not be overlooked or minimized). They also described the intense and risky practical work among the masses of workers, students, and intellectuals they carry out in order to shorten the distance separating us from the creation of a more rational and just society.

Of no less importance for Cubans was learning positions and conflicts that exist within the United States concerning Cuba-U.S. relations, where the hostility and blockade by this enormous power against a small but firm Caribbean island have for a long time showed signs of unjustified stubborn-



Students reading *Perspectiva Mundial* at the University of Matanzas

ness, morbid inflexibility, and unbounded arrogance. Fortunately, however, the best among U.S. society (in addition to its non-native-born components) do not sit with folded arms; day after day they add another grain of sand to the balance, in favor of the disappearance of this unjust anachronism. This shows once again the substantial difference, already pointed out by the illustrious Cuban José Martí, between the views and interests of U.S. administrations and the people of that country. [Martí was a leader of the struggle against Spanish colonial domination of Cuba and U.S. plans to replace Spanish rule in the late 1800s.]

The visitors from Pathfinder did not fail to interest themselves and polemicize around the questions that are now at the center of discussion concerning Cuba, such as the viability of its economy, the benefits and social risks of tourism, and the recent electoral process, among many others. All this was always accompanied by a common denominator: the belief and expectation that Cuba will resist and will emerge victorious from the economic difficulties it is going through as a result of the collapse of socialism in Eastern

Europe and the ex-USSR and the criminal blockade imposed by the United States for more than thirty years. And this is precisely what unites Cubans with the members of Pathfinder, because both are now "searching for the way" to move forward.

For all these reasons — and many more than can be expressed in these few lines — the professors of the University of Matanzas are devoting themselves to explaining the social sciences from a Marxist perspective, with the goal of educating the youth in the foundations of authentically human values. And for those students who for several days spent their time arriving at their own points of view about the social reality surrounding them, the visit of the comrades from Pathfinder Press was, without doubt, a living lesson in Marxism.

Gerardo Ramos Serpa is the director of the social sciences department of the University of Matanzas. He helped organize the Student Scientific Seminar on Social Sciences held there March 16-17. An article on this conference appeared in the April 5 issue of the *Militant*.

## Contribute to the Pathfinder Books for Cuba Fund

In the past year, Pathfinder Press has received many requests from Cuban libraries and schools for donations of books and pamphlets published and distributed by Pathfinder.

Because of the depth of the current economic crisis in Cuba, funds to purchase these books are virtually nonexistent. Yet there is a tremendous thirst for exactly the kind of material that Pathfinder produces on the history of the modern working-class movement and the struggles of working people around the world.

Pathfinder representatives recently participated in a student conference at the University of Matanzas and donated dozens of books to the school library there (see article on this page).

To meet these requests Pathfinder has launched a Books for Cuba Fund. The cost of the donation to the University of Matanzas library alone came to \$1,600.

Similar donations to the library at the Higher Technical Institute in Holguín in October 1992 and February 1993 cost \$1,500. This means funds are urgently needed. Send your donation to: Pathfinder Books for Cuba Fund, Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



# Sales drive off and running!

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

"It's the only newspaper that lets us know what's actually going on in South Africa. All the other newspapers don't even cover what's happening," said Houston oil worker Ron Pitts, referring to the *Militant*.

Pitts, who works at an Amoco refinery, was explaining why he took out a subscription to the socialist paper, which has been featuring extensive, firsthand reports on the revolutionary democratic struggle in South Africa. He was at a barbecue, attended by 100 oil workers, that was hosted for two leaders of the African National Congress Youth League who are touring the United States (see article on page 9).

The unionist's comments were typical of the response that promoters of the *Militant* have found in cities around the United States and in several other countries, where an international campaign is now under way to expand the circulation of this and other socialist publications.

The goal of the intense eight-week effort, which kicked off March 27, is to win 2,800 new *Militant* subscribers and 600 subscribers to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. It also aims to put 1,200 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* into the hands of new readers.

As we go to press, the drive stands at 213 *Militant* and 33 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, as well as 14 copies of *New International*. That puts the campaign ahead of schedule in sales of *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions at the beginning of the first week. We are off to a slow start, however, in sales of *New International*.

## Truth about South Africa

Pitts wasn't the only one at the Houston barbecue who wanted to get the truth about South Africa and other political developments. In between hamburgers and political discussions, four more unionists there subscribed to the *Militant* and one signed up for a *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription. Four workers eagerly bought the *New International* to read the article "The Coming Revolution in South Africa."

In New York City, supporters of the *Militant* hit the ground running. Within the first few days of the campaign, they had already

sold subscriptions to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* to 39 people, as well as four copies of *New International*. They are also arranging to visit several people who asked them to return later in the week when they will have the money for a subscription.

Taking advantage of a sunny break in New York's cold spell on the first Saturday of the drive, *Militant* distributors mobilized 10 teams throughout the area, from Manhattan to Queens and Yonkers. Buoyed by their results, a group of *Militant* readers ended a full day of political activity by going to a fund-raising dance at a Dominican community center, where they signed up one more subscriber.

One New York reader, Susan Anmuth, reports that already eight of her coworkers at a United Auto Workers-organized plant have subscribed.



Selling the *Militant* at mine portal in southern Illinois

Although in San Francisco it rained hard all day that Saturday, this did not stop *Militant* supporters from going out and selling seven subscriptions to the paper. One new reader signed up that evening at a Militant Labor Forum on the Philippines and two unionists who work on the Santa Fe Railroad purchased subscriptions on the job.

In Canada, three readers teamed up to spend three weeks introducing the socialist paper to workers and students throughout northern Ontario and Manitoba, Tony Di

Felice reports. In the first week they went to campuses in Sudbury and Thunder Bay, Ontario, where eight students subscribed to the *Militant* and seven purchased copies of *New International*.

Ronald, a student at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, said the *Militant's* analysis of the U.S.-led intervention in Somalia and the war in Yugoslavia was "terrific." The team also went to a major paper mill in that city, where 10 workers purchased copies of the paper. At the Inco nickel mine in Sudbury they met a similarly warm response.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, promoters of the socialist publications got off to a good start, selling 17 copies of the *Militant* and 3 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* the first week of the drive. They sent one team to Edmonton, Alberta, where seven students subscribed to the *Militant*, including

a number from Kenya and South Africa. "After discussions on Stalinism, a student decided to buy *New International* no. 6, which features the lessons of the assassination of Maurice Bishop" of Grenada, writes Ned Dmytryshyn.

## Sales to coal miners

A team of five *Militant* supporters traveled throughout the coalfields of southern Illinois March 23-26. They visited 14 mines, including several owned by Peabody Coal Co., which the United Mine Workers of America struck for a month this February. Having won an initial round, the miners are now pressing ahead in their battle for a decent contract.

Through the team's efforts, 180 miners, other workers, and students purchased the *Militant* and another seven took out introductory subscriptions.

Elizabeth Kealy, a laid-off garment worker from New York who was on the *Militant* team, wrote: "At one four-way stop, team members found themselves selling to miners from three different mines. Cars were backed up three to four deep with windows rolled down and hands reaching out to grab a paper."

"One truck driver, who had been laid off from two mines, said, 'I know your paper, and I know because I've read it. We really appreciate your support and what you do.' A few coal miners remembered seeing the *Militant* on their trips to Camp Solidarity, the strike center of the Pittston miners during their 1989-90 battle."

*Militant* readers are reminded that, to be counted on the weekly scoreboard, subscriptions must be received at the business office by Monday at noon.

Greg McCartan is a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 106 in Baltimore.

# WHERE WE STAND

SOLD: 8% 216

SHOULD BE: 5% 140

BEGINNING OF WEEK ONE

	The MILITANT		PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL		NEW INTERNATIONAL		
	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		
UNITED STATES							
Washington DC	21	75	28%	1	25	7	40
Portland, OR	4	15	27%	0	2	0	10
Denver	1	5	20%	0	2	0	5
Birmingham, AL	11	75	15%	2	10	0	20
Santa Cruz, CA	1	8	13%	0	5	0	5
Cleveland	8	65	12%	0	4	0	25
Baltimore	9	75	12%	0	10	0	25
Salt Lake City, UT	9	75	12%	0	15	0	35
Detroit	9	80	11%	0	10	0	30
New York	24	225	11%	9	75	0	95
Atlanta	6	75	8%	2	10	0	20
Seattle	6	80	8%	4	30	0	35
Twin Cities, MN	9	120	8%	0	15	0	30
San Francisco	8	110	7%	0	30	3	70
Newark, NJ	9	135	7%	3	45	0	70
Boston	7	110	6%	1	30	0	45
Chicago	7	110	6%	0	25	0	35
Los Angeles	8	170	5%	5	85	0	95
Philadelphia	4	85	5%	0	20	0	25
Greensboro, NC	3	65	5%	2	7	0	30
Houston	3	75	4%	0	20	0	25
Pittsburgh	3	80	4%	0	5	0	25
Des Moines, Iowa	3	85	4%	0	30	0	40
Morgantown, WV	1	65	2%	0	5	0	20
St. Louis	1	90	1%	0	10	0	40
Miami	1	100	1%	0	35	0	50
Cincinnati	0	10	0%	0	2	0	3
New Haven, CT	0	10	0%	0	2	0	5
U.S. TOTAL	176	2,273	8%	29	564	10	953
AUSTRALIA							
	2	30	7%	0	10	0	20
BELGIUM	0	8	0%	0	4	0	10
BRITAIN							
London	2	60	3%	1	5	3	25
Manchester	1	35	3%	0	1	0	20
Sheffield	1	35	3%	0	3	0	15
BRITAIN TOTAL	4	130	3%	1	9	3	60
CANADA							
Montreal	10	65	15%	2	12	0	60
Toronto	10	75	13%	0	15	0	45
Vancouver	1	70	1%	0	10	0	30
Quebec City	0	5	0%	0	0	0	2
CANADA TOTAL	21	215	10%	2	37	0	137
FRANCE							
	0	10	0%	0	3	0	10
ICELAND							
	3	10	30%	0	1	0	3
NEW ZEALAND							
Christchurch	3	25	12%	0	1	0	8
Wellington	3	40	8%	0	1	1	10
Auckland	3	45	7%	0	1	0	10
N.Z. TOTAL	9	110	8%	0	3	1	28
PUERTO RICO							
	1	1	100%	1	10	0	10
SWEDEN							
	0	65	0%	0	20	0	20
TOTAL	216	2,844	8%	33	661	14	1,251

## IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT		PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL		NEW INTERNATIONAL	
	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL	
UNITED STATES						
IAM	5	—	—	0	—	0
UTU	12	—	—	0	—	0
UMWA	7	15	47%	0	—	0
UAW	14	85	16%	0	—	0
ACTWU	2	28	7%	1	12	0
USWA	5	85	6%	0	—	0
OCAW	2	50	4%	0	4	0
UFCW	2	56	4%	0	35	0
ILGWU	0	—	—	2	—	0
U.S. TOTAL	49	319	15%	3	51	0
AUSTRALIA						
AMEU	0	3	0%	0	—	0
FPU	0	3	0%	0	—	0
NUW	0	3	0%	0	—	0
AUSTRALIA TOTAL	0	9	0%	0	—	0
BRITAIN						
AEEU	0	6	0%	0	—	0
NUM	0	2	0%	0	—	0
RMT	0	12	0%	0	—	0
TGWU	1	6	17%	0	—	0
BRITAIN TOTAL	1	26	4%	0	—	0
CANADA						
ACTWU	0	2	0%	0	—	0
CAW	0	9	0%	0	—	0
IAM	0	6	0%	0	—	0
USWA	0	10	0%	0	2	0
CANADA TOTAL	0	27	0%	0	2	0
NEW ZEALAND						
EU	0	5	0%	0	—	0
MWU	0	2	0%	0	—	0
UFBGWU	0	8	0%	0	—	0
N.Z. TOTAL	0	15	0%	0	—	0
SWEDEN						
Food workers	0	6	0%	0	—	0
Metal workers	0	5	0%	0	—	0
Transport workers	0	2	0%	0	—	0
SWEDEN TOTAL	0	13	0%	0	—	0

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEU — Amalgamated Engineering Union; AMEU — Automotive, Metal and Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; FPU — Food Preservers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; NUW — National Union of Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union

## 'Tremendous response' to plans for gay rights march

BY GREG MCCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "This is a march about justice," said Billy Hileman from the busy headquarters of the April 25 national march for gay and lesbian rights here. "Make sure the word is everywhere, so everyone possible can come to Washington."

Hileman, national cochair of the march organizing committee, said the march will step off the Washington Monument grounds at 12:00 noon, march past the White House, and end in a rally on the Capital Mall. Central demands include an end to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, for federal civil rights legislation protecting the rights of gays and lesbians, increased funding for AIDS research, and defense of abortion rights.

The response among students "has been tremendous," Hileman said. Many student groups have been building the march for over a year.

Judith Lerner, coordinator for interpretive services for the march, said phone lines to the national office have been busy and "we keep hearing more from those coming from across the United States and Canada. Trains are booked up and down the East Coast and there are no longer any direct flights to Washington available for the weekend."

Lerner said the recent endorsement of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People shows growing opposition to discrimination against gays and lesbians. "I see this march as part of the unfinished business of the civil rights movement. If one person is oppressed we all are less free."

For more information on the week of activities call the national organizing office at (202) 628-0493.

Greg McCartan is a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 106 in Baltimore.



# ANC fights apartheid's divide-and-rule

## Democratic movement in S. Africa seeks to win over Coloured population

BY PETER CLIFFORD

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — "When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, beginning the apartheid system of divide-and-rule, Coloured people used to live in an area called District 6, near town," explained African National Congress (ANC) leader Tony Yengeni in an interview in late February. "They were forcibly moved and dumped in Mitchells Plain, an area built on sand, many miles from town."

Under apartheid's system of racial classification, Coloureds are those of mixed white and African national origin.

The policy of the apartheid regime toward those categorized as Africans was worse, said Yengeni, who is the regional secretary of the ANC in western Cape Province. The white minority rulers, he recounted, "attempted to keep the western Cape a Coloured preferential area, allowing Africans in only as migrant labor for six months or a year at a time."

The laws restricting Africans broke down over the years as capitalist industry grew and the fight against apartheid advanced. Yengeni explained that "African people, based mainly in the rural areas, with no land to till, moved to the urban areas. That's why around Cape Town you see massive squatter housing areas."

The largest concentration of South Africa's 3 million Coloureds is in the Cape Town area. According to government estimates, 58 percent of the population in the western Cape is Coloured, compared to 15 percent African and 26 percent white.

Coloureds were designated by the apartheid rulers to occupy a particular position in the racist, caste-like system. While denied the vote and equal rights with the white minority, Coloureds were set up as a social layer with relative privileges over Africans. "In social and economic terms they were better off," Yengeni said. "A large middle class devel-



Squatter housing in Cape Town, South Africa. As industry grew, "African people... with no land to till, moved to urban areas," said ANC leader Tony Yengeni.

United Nations photo/151768

oped. Many were integrated into the civil service, army, and police."

Through this process, Yengeni said, "a cultural identification" with the white minority was promoted by the apartheid rulers, as well as a "fear of the ANC." The National Party says that support for the ANC will lead to "a loss of jobs, schools, and livelihood" for Coloureds.

As the struggle to overturn apartheid advanced following the 1976 youth rebellions and the rise of a Black-led nonracial trade union movement, the apartheid rulers took a cosmetic political step towards the Coloureds and the minority Indian population as well. A new constitution went into effect in 1983 and

what was called the Tricameral Parliament was established the following year.

Coloureds could vote and elect members of Parliament (MP) to a separate House of Representatives, a lower house than the whites-only parliament, which retained the real power along with the state president. Africans, who make up over two-thirds of the population, were still allowed no vote, not even to a token body such as the Coloured or Indian Houses.

The democratic movement organized a campaign to boycott the elections to the Tricameral Parliament. Alan Boesak, now a central leader of the ANC and from the Coloured area of Cape Town, spearheaded a

campaign to secure 1 million signatures opposing the fraud. Only 31 percent of those able to vote cast ballots. The largest party elected was the so-called Labour Party, which, while it proclaimed opposition to apartheid, nevertheless broke the boycott.

When the rising mass movement against apartheid secured the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, the ruling National Party quickly dropped its whites-only policy and opened its ranks to other races. The NP, however, mainly targeted those Coloureds who had already sought collaboration with the apartheid system. Through this maneuver, they won a majority of MPs in the Coloured House of Representatives, replacing the Labour Party as the majority party there.

### National Party woos vote

In mid-February 1993, the National Party government brought two Coloureds onto its cabinet with full ministerial positions for the first time.

The African National Congress faces an important political challenge today in winning Coloureds to the democratic movement in the course of the upcoming election campaign for a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution for the country.

A March 1993 study by the Center for Development Studies at the University of Western Cape — traditionally a majority Coloured campus with many Coloured faculty members — indicates that the National Party would win a solid majority among Coloureds if an election were held right now.

At the end of 1991, Nelson Mandela spoke at a western Cape ANC regional congress and addressed this challenge. "Mandela's view," Yengeni said, "was that we should have a leadership that reflects the situation on the ground — a nonracial, Coloured, Indian, white, and African leadership." Boesak was elected to chair the ANC in the western Cape at that 1991 congress.

### Patriotic Front

The democratic movement has won new ground since 1991 in unifying people of different skin colors against apartheid.

Yengeni reported that some of those "who opposed us before have now joined the ANC in the Patriotic Front," a broad coalition of more than 90 organizations formed in 1991 to oppose apartheid. This includes the predominantly Coloured Labour Party. In addition five MPs to the whites-only Parliament have broken with the liberal Democratic party and joined the ANC.

"When people see leaders from other parties now joining with the ANC, it has a positive effect," Yengeni said. "It exposes the lie we are a Black group."

"Of course," Yengeni noted, "when it comes to affirmative action, we have to prioritize those most disadvantaged under the apartheid system, but that doesn't mean we're not nonracial."

"We are going to have a campaign of door-to-door meetings," Yengeni said. "We're putting in place a program of visits by top leaders, rallies, and public meetings."

Yengeni stressed the importance of campaigning with the affiliates of the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions. "The unions in the western Cape are predominantly Coloured in membership," he said. "The majority of those employed are Coloured, and through the unions we hope to reach many people."

"We want to convey the true image of the ANC, a democratic, peaceful, and nonracial organization," Yengeni said. "South Africa has no other hope. The National Party cannot be this because of its history of divide and rule."

"It's the ANC," he said, "which has the ability, policies, and leadership that can lead all of South Africa's people."

John Steele also contributed to this article.

## Reporter's notebook: a visit to Cape Town

BY JOHN STEELE

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — You can see the Atlantic Ocean from the wealthy white neighborhood called Seapoint perched on Signal Hill, a 20-minute drive from downtown in this city.

The homes are palatial, walled-in, with colorful, lush, well-attended gardens. At five in the afternoon the streets are empty, except for Black women carrying bags of groceries up the steep hills. They are cooks and domestics who provide services for the wealthy owners of these homes.

Black gardeners can also be seen waiting for buses to take them back to the squatter communities around Cape Town.

\* \* \*

New Crossroads is a Black squatter community north of the city center inhabited by thousands of Africans from rural areas seeking work in Cape Town. Some 500-600 people each day pour into the squatter communities around Cape Town. Others have been here for years. The vast majority are unemployed. Some have occasional work.

Residents of New Crossroads get to work in minibus taxis costing about \$5 per round-trip. In longer-established areas, municipal authorities have been forced to provide outside toilets and a wash basin with running water for families.

More recent arrivals, often living in hand-built wooden shacks with plastic sheets for roofing, have to get water from a central tap. They use makeshift outhouses for toilets. Disease is a serious problem in these areas.

\* \* \*

Driving through Mitchell's Plain, a huge community of Coloureds on the southeast

outskirts of Cape Town, the comparison with New Crossroads is striking.

The homes, while modest, are permanent structures. The streets are paved, clean, and there are sidewalks. The rate of unemployment, while high (there are no precise government statistics), is significantly lower than in New Crossroads. A regular bus service takes people to work.

Mitchell's Plain is a product of the apartheid regime's efforts to divide and weaken the oppressed by granting Coloureds — those of mixed white and African descent — certain political and economic privileges relative to Africans.

Some poor whites now live in Mitchell's Plain. Africans can legally live here now, though most still can't afford to.

\* \* \*

The Cape Town headquarters of the ANC and ANC Youth League is a place with a lot of action — people constantly coming and going, phones ringing, computer keyboards clacking, and fax machines beeping.

On the floor occupied by the Youth League there are wall posters urging people to fight for a constituent assembly, and for young people to use condoms to avoid AIDS. Other posters condemn violence against women and urge people to join the ANC.

Today many of the Youth League staff members are dressed up in suits and party dresses; they are hosting a fundraising banquet for local business people at 4:00 p.m. The speaker is Peter Mokaba, national president of the ANC Youth League. The banquet is a big success, with a turnout of 150 business people paying about \$20 each.

\* \* \*

The student center at the University of

Western Cape looks like student centers at campuses all over the world, with students reading, eating, playing cards, and talking.

A banner erected by the South African Students Congress calls on students to attend a rally to pressure the university administration to register students for the new school term despite outstanding fee debts for the previous year.

Pete Clifford, a visitor from Britain, and I are invited to the SASCO office to meet some of the SASCO leaders. Discussion begins about the current struggle, then branches off to the books in the Pathfinder 1992 catalog, the *Militant*, Cuba, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world capitalist depression, and the fight for a democratic South Africa. The discussion ends when we all go to a mass meeting to hear ANC secretary general, Cyril Ramaphosa.

\* \* \*

A white Cape Town businessman who deals in real estate, sitting next to us on the two-hour flight back to Johannesburg from Cape Town is cynical about the corruption and "incompetence" of the National Party government. Despite this, he says, he is optimistic about South Africa's future.

The country needs to reject the extremes of the ANC and the white supremacist Conservative Party, he says. He is for a long transition to democracy and sees the need to develop a Black middle class to bring stability.

It will take decades to "upgrade" the Black population, he says. He is convinced the "nonracial nirvana" of the ANC is not possible.



# ANC youth meet Texas workers, students

BY JERRY FREIWIRTH

HOUSTON — Two leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League just completed a one-week tour here. From March 21-26 Lulu Johnson, the deputy president of the Youth League, and Clayton Lillienfeldt, a league member studying at the University of the Western Cape, spoke to nearly 1,000 students and workers about the current situation in South Africa and the challenges facing young people in that country.

The Houston tour was sponsored by the Texas Coalition for a Free South Africa. It was one leg of the national ANC Youth League Student-to-Student Empowerment Tour that grew out of the student and youth workshop at a national South Africa solidarity conference in New York City last November.

Johnson and Lillienfeldt spoke at three colleges in the area: Rice University, Texas Southern University (TSU), and College of the Mainland, in Texas City. At each school, student program boards, university departments, and student groups undertook to sponsor, fund, and build speaking events for the South African activists. In every case, sizable crowds of students were attracted to the events and took part in lively discussions on the big questions facing the freedom struggle today.

Over 250 students at the High School for Performing and Visual Arts heard the ANC youth leaders speak. After meeting Hilda Gentry from the school's administration, Johnson and Lillienfeldt were introduced to a school assembly. They later spoke to four combined classes. After each talk, they were met by a sea of hands, as the students were eager to learn more.

Many students wanted to know what conditions are like for Black youth in South African schools. Lillienfeldt described the effects of years of apartheid policies. Most classes have only one teacher for as many as 60 students in the Black schools.

"Generally there may be only 20 textbooks for these 60 students, and these textbooks are very out of date. They are basically hand-me-downs from the white high schools," Lillienfeldt explained. "This means that many students need to study in shifts. It's not unusual for a student to have to get up in the middle of the night, say at two in the morning, because that's his time to use the textbook he must share with three or four other students."

Another common question during the week involved so-called Black-on-Black violence. At the Rice University meeting Johnson responded to a question along these lines by saying, "The responsibility for the violence in my country rests with the [F. W.] de Klerk government and the Inkatha Freedom Party of Mangosuthu Buthelezi. It has been shown that the regime arms, trains, and abets the violence of Inkatha, as a way to derail the freedom struggle."

The ANC youth leaders explained that while some of the most hated apartheid laws have been withdrawn and negotiations for ending apartheid have resumed in recent weeks, "apartheid and the legacy of apartheid is still very much with us." Johnson told students at College of the Mainland, "[Apartheid] is with us in the fact that the overwhelming majority of the



Lulu Johnson of ANC youth speaks with oil workers

country still does not have the right to vote. It is with us in the fact that 87 percent of the land is allocated to 4 million whites, while 34 million Blacks have only 13 percent. And that, of course, is the poorest land available. We need you to walk with us, as Nelson Mandela has said, in this last mile in the fight for freedom. The road along this last mile is a very difficult one indeed."

Lillienfeldt spoke before 40 oil workers at a membership meeting of Local 4-227 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union, which represents workers at Lyondell Petrochemical Co., Phillips Petroleum, and others. He described last August's two-day general strike, which shut down South Africa and "showed the power of the working class in forcing the government back to the negotiating table."

Throughout the tour many people asked questions about the role of working people and unions in the fight against apartheid. Johnson answered these questions by pointing to the unions as one of the important sectors in the freedom struggle, although he offered the opinion that the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the main union federation, which is allied to the ANC, has declined in effectiveness in recent months. Johnson said there are ongoing discussions over whether COSATU should field candidates as part of the ANC slate for a constituent assembly.

Another highlight of the Houston tour was a dinner sponsored by the Rothko Chapel, a very prestigious institution in Houston. Part human rights forum, part art museum, part chapel, it served as host for Nelson Mandela when he visited Houston two years ago. Those attending the dinner, which the two ANC Youth League leaders spoke at, represented a wide range of prominent figures from Houston business, church, labor, and human rights organizations, including Sissy Farenthold, a prominent Democratic Party official and activist; Alan Barnes, secretary-treasurer of the OCAW local at Shell Oil; and Tom Gentry, president of the OCAW local at Lyondell Petrochemical.

The South African youths received prominent coverage on KTRK-TV, the local ABC network affiliate, and in the *Houston Post*, one of two major daily papers here.

The tour concluded with a dinner with activists from the Texas Coalition for a Free South Africa. In the course of organizing the tour, new faces joined the coalition including students and teachers from many area colleges, ANC members currently residing in Houston, and workers at the Amoco, Shell, and Lyondell oil refineries and the Houston Ship Channel Railroad.

Committee activists noted this was the first serious activity in support of the South African freedom struggle since Nelson Mandela's visit two years ago.

Tom Kleven, a professor at TSU Law School who coordinated the tour itinerary, told the *Militant* that "plans are now being discussed about ways in which the significant interest shown during the week-long tour can be followed up by future educational programs, tours, and solidarity activities."

Jerry Freiwirth is a member of OCAW Local 4-367. Sandy Lee, a member of the United Transportation Union, contributed to this article.

## Oil workers: 'new awareness of S. Africa fight'

BY PATTI HIYAMA

HOUSTON — On Sunday, March 21, more than 100 people, mainly oil workers and their families, met here with two representatives of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League of South Africa. "I knew a lot of people were going to come, because of the big ticket sales at our plant, but everyone else was surprised," said Patsy Butler, who donated her home for the meeting and barbecue. She is a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW) working as a heavy equipment operator at Lyondell-Citgo Petrochemical Refinery.

"And many coworkers who knew they couldn't attend because of their work schedules bought tickets anyway," she added, "just to show their support for the South African freedom fighters."

## S. Africa negotiations begin

Continued from front page

forces and cops of the government and homeland administrations, as well as other armed bodies such as Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the ANC's armed wing, and the Pan Africanist Congress-affiliated Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA).

The government, on the other hand, insists that it alone retain command over the cops and armed forces during the elections and that the MK and APLA turn over their arms and membership lists and disband.

Another important issue under discussion involves the powers and boundaries of regions within South Africa. In an interview printed in the ANC monthly *Mayibuye*, Thozamile Botha, head of the ANC Commission on Local Government, commented on the regional issues in dispute.

The ANC's "starting point is that South Africa is one united country. We therefore believe that everything must be based on a single national constitution," said Botha. "The national constitution must be drafted until it is completed and then adopted in its entirety."

The National Party and Inkatha are for first developing regional constitutions. They also call for regional referenda to decide on the acceptability in that region of the national constitution.

More than 200 delegates from around the country attended a March 20-21 ANC planning conference on regional policy. The ANC calls for a future constitution to provide for a maximum of 10 regions, and that all final decisions on regional powers and functions should be decided by an elected constituent assembly.

The ANC also calls for reincorporating the Bantustan states of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei into the new South Africa with full citizenship rights restored to all people living in these territories.

A rally held March 21 in a Black township near Johannesburg, to mark the 33rd anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre helped launch the ANC's election campaign in the area. Some 6,000 people attended the rally in Katlehong township to commemorate the 1960 killing of 69 anti-apartheid demonstra-

Many people present were members of OCAW who work at Lyondell-Citgo Petrochemical Refinery, Shell Oil Refinery, and Amoco Refinery. Others included railroad workers in the United Transportation Union, sugar refinery workers in the International Association of Machinists, and South African students studying at Houston area colleges.

Several members of the Southwest Trail Riders Association who had just finished the annual trail ride into Houston to the livestock show also came. The trail ride celebrates the traditions of the Black cowboys of the Old West.

Lulu Johnson, deputy president of the ANC Youth League, and Clayton Lillienfeldt, an undergraduate at the University of the Western Cape, are part of a national tour to build solidarity with the South African liberation movement. This highly successful barbecue was their introduction to Houston.

They both addressed the gathering, explaining that the struggle against apartheid was at a critical phase and needed international support. There was also plenty of informal discussions.

"This tour is really important," said Ron Pitts, an OCAW member at Amoco Refinery, echoing the sentiments of many at the barbecue. "Because of the hard times we're having here in the U.S. with the economy and unemployment, we haven't given priority to South Africa. We take for granted that we know what's going on, but we really don't."

"The last big thing most of us heard about was when Nelson Mandela was released from prison," he added. "So this tour will help to rekindle a new awareness of the fight in South Africa. I know it did for me. From now on, I'm going to give priority to solidarity with the South African struggle."

Patti Iiyama is a member of OCAW Local 4-227.

tors by the South African government.

### Nuclear weapons revelation

Prior to the resumption of the multiparty talks, South African president de Klerk publicly admitted March 24 the existence of a clandestine 15-year nuclear program in which South Africa built six atomic bombs. Not wanting to face the prospect of having to turn this weaponry over to an ANC-led government, the arsenal was dismantled.

"Unlike the case of Iraq, as well as those of Iran, Libya and North Korea," stated a March 25 *New York Times* article, "South Africa has escaped public pressure from the United States to disclose its nuclear program."

The ANC voiced support for the scrapping of South Africa's atomic weapons but questioned de Klerk's assertion that all bomb-grade uranium had been eliminated. The ANC is also demanding full disclosure on nuclear matters and opposes the government's destruction of documents that could be of future use for tracking down the full truth about the weapons program.

De Klerk asserts that South Africa had devised and built its bombs without help from other countries. However, in the mid-1970s, the United States sold South Africa 45 percent enriched uranium, which could be used in the construction of nuclear bombs. Germany also provided major assistance with uranium enrichment technology.

In other developments, South African troops sealed off Transkei March 30. All people and vehicles entering South Africa from this Bantustan territory are now being stopped and searched at road blocks. The government attempts to justify this action by claiming that APLA forces are using this area to mount armed attacks.

Maj. Gen. Bantu Holomisa, the leader of the Transkei, rejected the government's allegations. The South African government is particularly miffed at Holomisa because he released secret documents March 11 indicating that the 1985 murders of Matthew Goniwe and three other anti-apartheid activists in eastern Cape province flowed from a decision by a meeting of the State Security Council, chaired by then-president P.W. Botha.

### Funds needed for Cuba, South Africa reporting trips

Militant staff writer Sara Lobman and New International editor Mary-Alice Waters just returned from Cuba. They reported on important meetings, conferences, and other political developments there. Several *Militant* reporters have just returned from a month-long trip to South Africa.

These reporting trips, which give our readers news and analysis of world political events that can be found nowhere else, are expensive. They are only possible through the generous contributions of our readers and supporters. Please send us a contribution to help cover some of our costs. Donations can be sent to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.



# Should gays in the military be segregated?

BY SARA LOBMAN

President Bill Clinton's statement at a March 23 press conference that he would "not rule out" segregating homosexual troops in the armed forces was met with outrage by gay rights activists and many others.

"Segregation—by isolating gay soldiers in specified jobs or units or separate living quarters—is both impractical and discriminatory," the *New York Times* said in an editorial under the headline "No Gay Stockades, Please." Such segregation, an earlier *Times* article pointed out, would require first determining the sexual orientation of every soldier.

Groups that are organizing a national rally in Washington, D.C., for gay rights April 25 threatened to turn the

## AS I SEE IT

march into a protest against Clinton if he did not back off from his statements about segregating gays in the military. "The march could either be a celebration or a protest that we're not getting equal treatment," Andrew Barrer said. Barrer is a major fund-raiser for the Democratic Party and a board member of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

During the 1992 election campaign, Clinton promised to rapidly overturn the ban on homosexuals serving in the armed forces. Hundreds of gays are expelled from the military each year as a result of this policy. Since the president's inauguration, however, it has become clear that many ruling-class figures—in both the government and the military—are opposed to ending the ban.

Shortly after taking office, Clinton agreed to delay any action for six months, instead instructing Defense Secretary Les Aspin to prepare a new policy that would also address the question of whether gays should be allowed in combat and on warships. On March 29, Senate hearings opened on the subject. Until the previous week, no one had seriously suggested segregating homosexual troops.

### Rulers need strong military

Why has there been such furious opposition by layers of the military brass and others to dropping the ban on gays? The pitch of the debate cannot be explained simply by antigay prejudice—it has more to do with the U.S. military than with bigotry.

The rulers in the United States face a serious and very real problem. In order to defend the place of U.S. imperialism in the world, they know it will be necessary to fight more and more wars. The U.S. armed forces will lead more interventions like those in Iraq, Somalia, and Yugoslavia,

not less. The targets will be working people around the world who challenge their interests as well as other capitalist powers with whom the U.S. rulers compete for profits, markets, and raw materials. In order to successfully wage these wars, the capitalist class needs a highly disciplined military.

"The central issue is not civil rights," Bernard Trainor and Eric Chase wrote in a column that appeared in the March 29 issue of the *New York Times*, "but whether an openly gay society will degrade the military's ability to fulfill its mission of fighting and winning wars." Trainor is a retired marine lieutenant. He directs the national security program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Eric Chase is a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserves.

The military brass fears lifting the ban on gays for the same reason it forbids sexual relationships between officers and enlisted troops and avoids placing close relatives in the same unit. Combat situations require the strictest discipline and loyalty to the unit as a whole. Any personal relationship that might skew that loyalty is a threat to the army's hierarchy.

### Blacks, women, and gays

"The military's policy on homosexuality is often compared to its old color bar," Republican senator Dan Coats said early in the debate, explaining his opposition to lifting the ban. "A better comparison is the natural tension between the sexes."

Many, like Coats, try to defend the antigay ban by pointing to the separate facilities that exist for men and women. "No one would put young men and women in bunks next to each other and then try to regulate their behavior," Coats says. The *Times* editorial points to the heterosexual "fear they might be viewed as sexual targets by members of their own sex."

But this is based on a myth. Placing men or women, some of whom might be gay, in a predominantly heterosexual unit is *not* the same as having coed units of men and women. Men share bathrooms, showers, and locker rooms with homosexual schoolmates and workmates from high school on. So do women. But if men and women slept in the same rooms in dormitories—whether in army barracks or on campus—or took showers together, it is likely that incidents involving sexual activity would occur. The same is not true for gay and straight men in similar situations. In fact, there are thousands of gays currently in the military. Discrimination against them, including expulsions from the army, should be ended.

It is true that there are some similarities between the discrimination that Blacks faced in the military during and prior to World War II and the situation confronting gay soldiers to-

day. But there are also differences. Segregation on the basis of color was purely a product of racism. It had absolutely no objective basis. The same cannot be said about gays.

An article by conservative columnist William Buckley, entitled "Question of military roommates isn't trivial," appeared in a recent issue of the *Conservative Chronicle*. Buckley argues against persecution of gays in the military through dishonorable discharges because of soldiers' admitted sexual preference, but he is for some form of discrimination.

Buckley quotes a letter he received from air force captain Kenneth Bashford, who explains that the military does have coed dormitories, "which means unmarried members of both sexes are permitted to live together in the same building. We do not, however, have coed rooms," Bashford says.

"Now suppose Private John Smith, who enlisted in the Army as an admitted homosexual, reports to his first duty station upon completion of basic training," Bashford continues. "He knows the policy is two persons of the same sex per room. He asks to be assigned to a room with another known homosexual male. What should the Army's policy be with respect to Private Smith's request?" Bashford says the army will have to assign the hypothetical private to a room only with a known heterosexual soldier, a view Buckley endorses.

This would mean the military would have to know the sexual preference of all soldiers, an outrageous invasion of privacy.

Of course Bashford's hypothetical situation could pose the same question as men and women sharing the same room in the barracks or on campus. Most working people would object to ending segregation by sex of bathrooms or sleeping quarters on campuses, in hospitals and other public institutions, or in the army—and correctly so.

Buckley and Bashford's starting point, however, is how to maintain discipline and strengthen the U.S. military.

Working people should oppose all discrimination in the military, including that directed against homosexuals. Whether or not open gays in the military will weaken discipline is not our concern. Moves to limit the rights of gay people only strengthen the hand of those who would like to see the rights of all workers restricted.

Most importantly, all working people, Black and white, male and female, gay and straight, should fight to dismantle the U.S. military. The cost of its wars must be measured in the lives of hundreds of millions of workers and farmers in this century alone. Its very existence is a threat to the struggles of working people the world over. Our demand should be: not one penny, not one person for the imperialist war machine.

# Miners: 'we won battle but struggle not over yet'

Continued from front page

mation packets. He talked to us while he collated and stapled.

"People from all over gave us support. Even nonunion businesses helped out," Neff noted. "Wal-Mart let the family auxiliary do a bake sale on their property."

During the strike, 200 miners and family members a day were served from the strike kitchen, located in the basement of the same building as the union offices. "This didn't just happen out of thin air," said Neff. "We were ready to go at a moment's notice, and we're ready to go again if we have to."

What did Neff think about the prospect of something positive coming out of the negotiations?

"Well, the companies and the union are talking—that's progress in and of itself," he said. "The bargaining is not done until the whole package is complete."

"Everybody knows we accomplished a good deal. We had an unfair-labor-practices strike and forced Peabody to come across with the information we need to bargain with."

"We were victorious in our strike, but we're cautious about our victory. We know we won the battle, but the struggle is not over yet."

We also spoke with John Cox, director of UMW Region 3.

"What we are doing is organizing to keep everyone involved," said Cox. "We are going to be organizing days for each local to wear camouflage clothing or bandannas to demonstrate our unity and let the companies know the union is still present and fighting."

"The locals that were on strike have left the picket shacks up," he said, "to remind the company that we are ready to go again on May 3."

"We don't plan to lose any momentum. On April 30, if we don't have a contract, the locals that were not on strike will be putting up picket shacks as well to show the companies that we are ready."

"We're continuing our outreach program through the family auxiliaries and other avenues. You've seen the signs up in the

windows of businesses in town," he said. "They'll stay up until this is settled."

"Of course, we don't want to have to go out again," Cox added. "But we're not letting our guard down. We're ready to go if we have to. We were pretty well prepared last time. We'll be even better prepared this time."

Miners we spoke with had some different views of the strike. An electrician from Old Ben Sparta Number 2 mine, who has worked in the coal mines for 20 years and has been through a number of strikes, said, "Where I work lots of guys say they are tired of what they consider foot-dragging. The way a lot of them see it—maybe nonunion miners don't see it this way—to be a coal miner means 'no contract, no work.' People are saying we all need to go out together."

"Guys where I work have been getting ready—paying ahead on their bills, postponing purchases, putting some money aside. And some of them are getting tired of the waiting."

While we were waiting for the local presidents' meeting to end, we looked at the dozens of items on the union's bulletin boards.

There were solidarity letters from Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-901 in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, and from Service Employees' International Union Local 73 in St. Louis.

There was a leaflet for a benefit dance—price \$4.00: "Wear your camouflage or bring canned goods for \$1.00 discount." An advertisement for a special dinner offer to strikers from Blind's Restaurant was also still posted. "Bring your union card," it reads.

When the local presidents' meeting ended we spoke with Bill Brumfield, a UMW international representative currently assigned to Region 3.

He explained that part of the union's outreach work is a corporate campaign directed at Hanson P.L.C., a British company that controls Peabody Holdings Co., itself the parent of Peabody Coal and Eastern Associated Coal—the two targets of the

Continued on Page 12



Militant/John Naubert  
Nonunion coal miners on strike at Marrowbone mine complex in West Virginia

## Nonunion coal miners strike

BY ELIZABETH LARISCY

MADISON, West Virginia — When Ziegler Coal Co. decided to cut health benefits, threaten pensions, and change work schedules and bonus pay rates for the miners at the Marrowbone Development Co. mine complex, 400 miners walked out, shutting down one of the largest nonunion coal operations in the state. The action shut down a strip mine, two underground mines, and a prep plant in Mingo County.

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) has tried unsuccessfully to unionize these mines a number of times. But this strike was initiated by four of the Marrowbone miners themselves. The UMWA has jumped into the fight to help them out.

On March 23, the company held three-hour meetings with miners from each shift to inform them of benefit and bonus cuts. The next day, four miners from the Triad strip mine picketed their entrance and turned back the day shift. Management fired those four. Then other miners began to picket the rest of

the mines in the complex and shut down the whole operation.

These mines provide coal to Carolina Light and Power and Georgia Light and Power.

A large number of the miners are now signing cards to join the UMWA. The miners have refused company pleas to return to work and discuss the issues. On March 29, when the company asked miners to come in and talk, only three crossed the picket lines.

Marrowbone human resources manager Sheldon Hays told the *Charleston, West Virginia Gazette*, "We're trying to desperately communicate to them the facts of the situation. . . . Hopefully they'll understand and decide the better choice is to come back to work where we're able to communicate to them face-to-face as we have done the last 17 years."

But the miners are holding firm. "These people have to be reinstated before we go back to work," Joe Stanley, a strike leader, said.



# 'People on margin felt their time had come'

## 'Slavic Review' praises book on Second Congress of Communist International

The following appeared as a review in *Slavic Review*, one of the most authoritative academic journals of Eastern European history. The author, Ronald Grigor Suny, is a professor at the University of Michigan.

*Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite: Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920, volumes 1 and 2, Ed. John Riddell. The Communist International in Lenin's Time. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1991. xiii, 1147 pp. \$140.00, hard bound; \$60.00, paper.*

The Second Congress proceedings form part of the Pathfinder series, *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*, edited by John Riddell. A new installment, on the Baku congress of 1920, will appear this year.

BY RONALD GRIGOR SUNY

Reading through the thousand pages of proceedings of the second Comintern congress propels one back into an extraordinary moment of conviction and confidence, when for a brief instant people of the margins felt that their time had come. This was really the

### IN REVIEW

foundational gathering of the new International, for the first congress a year earlier had collected only a few dozen delegates, almost all of them caught by blockade and civil war in Soviet territory, some of them with quite dubious connections with mass movements.

In contrast, in summer 1920 the bolsheviks were riding high, as the foreign intervention in the Russian civil war wound down and the anti-imperialist struggle appear to be in the ascendancy in Turkey, India and China. Over 200 delegates, some representing movements of considerable strength in both Europe and Asia, arrived at the second congress to debate the conditions for admission to the new International, the "national and colonial question," attitudes toward parliamentarism and trade unions. Though some, like Britain's Jack Tanner of the Shop Stewards Movement, questioned the relevance of Russia's revolutionary experience for more advanced industrial societies, others, including future stalinists like Hungary's Mátyás Rákosi, already spoke in a language of iron discipline and the danger of deviation from the Soviet example.

Some of the debates now have a dissonant ring, particularly the arrogant tone taken



M. N. Roy (left), delegate from India, and Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin at Second Congress of Communist International. Drawings are by Isaac Brodsky.

toward "bourgeois democracy" and western parliaments, and the assertion of the superiority of Soviet democracy. But others, particularly these early discussions of strategies for transformation of the colonial and "semi-colonial" world, not only had profound consequences in the coming decades but resonate today in the post-Soviet age of rampant nationalism.

Though some militants favored subordinating nationalism strictly to class considerations, in his theses Lenin demonstrated both an awareness of the power of nationalism, even as he hoped to harness it to the proletarian revolution, and his own readiness to ally with "bourgeois nationalists." In his original Thesis no. 11, Lenin had argued that in backward countries with feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations, "all communist parties must aid the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in these countries."

The young Indian revolutionary M. N. Roy disagreed with Lenin's support of the national bourgeoisie and distinguished more clearly than Lenin the two opposing movements in the colonial world: "the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement, with a program of political independence under the bourgeois order, and . . . the mass action of the ignorant and poor peasants and workers for their liberation from all sorts of exploitation."

Both Roy and Lenin compromised in their discussions over the final draft, and the final resolution stated that "the Communist International should arrive at temporary agreements and, yes, even establish an alliance with the revolutionary move-

ment in the colonies and backward countries. But it cannot merge with this movement. Instead it absolutely must maintain the independent character of the proletarian movement, even in its embryonic stage."

Though the exact nature of the cooperation between nationalists and communists was not prescribed, the Lenin-Roy position adopted by the Congress allowed for provisional common efforts limited by the communists' ultimate promotion of the social revolution.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY RICH STUART

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders of the worldwide struggles against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Pathfinder has extended through April 30 its special Women's History Month offer. Members of the Pathfinder Readers Club will get a discount of 25 percent off the cover price of 11 titles related to the fight for women's liberation, including three recently reissued books, *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*; *Problems of Women's Liberation*; and *Sexism and Science*. To join the Pathfinder Readers Club, write or visit the Pathfinder bookstore nearest you.

Staffers from the Pathfinder bookstore in Washington, D.C., signed up a new member of the Readers Club at a recent demonstration of 800 protesting the U.S. government policy toward Haitian refugees. The book table set up by the Pathfinder bookstore sold all of its French-language books, including titles by Thomas Sankara, Karl Marx, V. I. Lenin, and Che Guevara. Also sold were books in English and French on Cuba and South Africa, and books by Malcolm X. The Pathfinder bookstore plans another large literature table at the upcoming April 2 Haitian rights protest, also in Washington, D.C.

The March 2 issue of *Voice*, a leading Black-oriented newspaper in Britain, includes Pathfinder's *February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X as one of five books by or about Malcolm X it recommends. *Voice* says of the Pathfinder book, "If you want to find out the true essence of Malcolm and what made him such an impressive figure then read his speeches." The same issue announces a

The intricacies and nuances of these negotiations, in which even junior members of the revolutionary movement could dispute the positions of the most veteran, are extraordinarily fascinating, especially when one remembers the desiccated debates that were to follow in the post-leninist years. Thanks to the colossal editorial and translation work of John Riddell and his dedicated team, these discussions can be followed in the two excellent volumes under review. (Regrettably Lenin's original Theses were omitted because they are readily available in translation elsewhere.)

The publication of the documentary record of the Communist International in Lenin's times is part of an effort by the Socialist Workers' Party, the major trotskyst party in the United States, to recover a militant past that is rapidly being rewritten. Like the three previous volumes — on the pre-Comintern years 1907–1916, preparing the founding congress 1918–1919 and the proceedings of the first congress, March 1919 — these last two are marked by painstaking editorial work, the same careful attention to detail, consultation with scholars in the field, complete presentation of supporting documents, and elaborate glossaries, chronologies, indexes and all the necessary apparatus that make such collections so useful to researchers.

The informative introduction by Riddell is unaffected by the occasional use of the language of commitment and what is obviously a labor of love and an important political intervention for its editors is at the same time a major contribution to the history of the socialist movements.

contest, sponsored by "The Write Thing," offering seven of Pathfinder's books by Malcolm X as the contest prizes. The movie *Malcolm X* opened in Britain in early March.

The *Los Angeles Times* Billboard section prominently featured an announcement of the book launch to be held at the Los Angeles Pathfinder bookstore March 27 celebrating the publication of two of Pathfinder's newest titles, *February 1965: The Final Speeches* and *Habla Malcolm X (Malcolm X Speaks)*. The bookstore, which burned to the ground during last year's antipolice riot, has received substantial media coverage since its reopening last fall.

Pathfinder's Black History Month poster, featuring a broad selection of its titles, was the centerpiece of Black History Month displays at numerous bookstores and libraries in February. Among those featuring the poster were three branches of the San Francisco Public Library. One branch library put the poster in the front window, another in the library's young adult section, and the third used the poster to highlight a display of Pathfinder pamphlets of Malcolm X speeches.

The Morgantown, West Virginia, Pathfinder bookstore signed up four new members of the Pathfinder Readers Club during Black History Month. One of them is a member of the United Mine Workers of America. The New York Pathfinder bookstore added a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union to the Readers Club in February. The Pathfinder bookstore in St. Paul, Minnesota, signed up six new Readers Club members and the Miami Pathfinder bookstore increased the growing Readers Club membership around the world by five new members in February.

## The Communist International in Lenin's Time

This comprehensive series presents, for the first time in English, the complete proceedings of the Communist International's first four congresses, held between 1919 and 1922; the 1920 Baku congress; and documents from the period leading up to its foundation.

### Baku 1920—The First Congress of the Peoples of the East

PROCEEDINGS AND DOCUMENTS

Two thousand delegates from across Asia, convened by the Communist International, appealed to oppressed peoples in September 1920, to unite across national boundaries with revolutionary workers everywhere "for the liberation of all mankind from the yoke of capitalist and imperialist slavery!" 288 pp., \$18.95. Available July 1993.

### Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International

DOCUMENTS 1907-1916: THE PREPARATORY YEARS

The debate among revolutionary working-class leaders, including V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, on a socialist response to World War I. Includes debates from the 1915 Zimmerwald antiwar conference. 604 pp., \$31.95

### The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power

DOCUMENTS 1918-1919: PREPARING THE FOUNDING CONFERENCE

A day-to-day account of the 1918-19 German revolution in the words of its main leaders, including Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. 540 pp., \$30.95



### Founding the Communist International

PROCEEDINGS AND DOCUMENTS OF THE FIRST CONGRESS: MARCH 1919

Delegates from 20 countries discuss the worker and peasant upsurge that swept Central Europe and Asia following World War I. Includes the manifesto announcing the founding of the new revolutionary International. 424 pp., \$26.95

### Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!

PROCEEDINGS AND DOCUMENTS OF THE SECOND CONGRESS, 1920

The debate among delegates from 37 countries takes up key questions of working-class strategy and program and offers a vivid portrait of social struggles in the era of the October revolution. Two volumes, 1,147 pp. total \$60 set.

Available from Pathfinder or at bookstores listed on page 12. If ordering by mail, please add \$3.00 for the first title and \$0.50 for each additional book to cover postage and handling.

PATHFINDER, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014 FAX (212) 727-0150



# German workers

Continued from front page  
a miner from Gelsenkirchen.

Auto workers at Volkswagen and Opel, also organized by IG Metall, came with their own banners. Flags identified other unions, including the public sector and transport union (ÖTV), the union of food and restaurant workers (NGG), and the salaried and white collar workers union (DAG).

"We are showing our solidarity," explained Gerhard Schiller, who came with two coworkers from a car repair shop in Dortmund, "because we all depend on each other."

The presence of a delegation of steelworkers from France and a steelworker from the United States was announced from the platform to loud applause. "Workers have the same problem everywhere," explained one of the unionists among the 450-strong delegation from France.

"Our goal is to keep our jobs," declared a steelworker from Thyssen in Duisburg. "Until now I thought I had a secure job, but now... we can no longer put up with this."

"I hope this demonstration gets the politicians to think about the situation in steel and mining," said Eigenwillig, the miner from Gelsenkirchen.

Binboga and Polat, two young workers at Kloeckner in Bremen, said that the steel bosses raked in huge profits in boom years in the past. Now, during a severe recession, they go after the workers. "We hope the federal government will do something about it," they said.

"Steel is needed," said Bernhard Mechenbier from Dortmund. "The problem is overproduction. There is more steel than can be sold."

A fire fighter from the Krupp steel mill in Bochum, who spoke with Evan Roberts, the steelworker at the rally from the United States, said more protectionist measures against cheap steel imports from Japan and Korea are needed. "It is the bosses' drive to increase their profits that is the problem," Roberts replied. "We need to build solidarity among workers across borders." Roberts' union local is on strike against Trinity Industries in Bessemer, Alabama.

Speakers at the rally included Franz Steinkühler, the IG Metall chairperson, who called for a "national steel conference" of federal and state governments, steel companies, and trade unions, and Dieter Schulte, responsible for the steel industry on the IG Metall managing board.

"Steel is needed everywhere because this material is so ecological," he said. Schulte called for a "fair balance of interests with Eastern Europe," calling it a "scandal," when Eastern European steelworkers receiving starvation wages make cheap imports possible, causing job losses here, while the steel traders get rich."

He called for the steel industry to be organized on the continent-wide basis in Europe.

Heinz-Werner Meyer, chairman of the trade union confederation DGB, and representatives of both the Catholic and Protestant churches also spoke at the rally.

There was entertainment from rock musicians Klaus Lage and Wolfgang Niedecken, a workers' choir, and a Turkish folklore group.

## Coal miners' struggle

Continued from Page 10  
UMWA's selective strike.

A few miles outside Marissa on Illinois Highway 4 is Peabody's Baldwin mine. Until a few days ago a simple chain-link fence about 100 feet from the highway separated Peabody's property from the public right-of-way. Recently 12-inch-diameter steel posts about five feet tall have been sunk into the ground on either side of the mine road, linked to one another and the chain-link fence by several strands of razor-sharp barbed wire.

The union picket shack now stands within this barbed-wire enclosure.

This new fortification confirms a rumor we heard that Peabody has begun moving property lines at several mines farther out toward the roads.

Both sides are getting ready for the second round in the fight for a contract.

John Hawkins is a laid-off coal miner and member of UMWA Local 2368 in Brookwood, Alabama. Bob Kissinger is a teacher and member of the Chicago Teachers Union.

# MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation are welcome to attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

At the Militant Labor Forum you can express your opinion, listen to the views of fellow fighters, and exchange ideas on how best to advance the interests of workers and farmers the world over.

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Abortion Rights under Continued Attack.** Sat., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Translation to Spanish.

### San Francisco

**Problems and Challenges Facing Cuban Women: Reportback from the Women's International Solidarity Conference Held in Havana.** Speaker: Judy White, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 10. Dinner: 5 p.m., program: 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: forum, \$5; dinner, \$6. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

## IOWA

### Des Moines

**Socialist Educational Conference.** Fri., April 9: South Africa: White Regime's Final Hour. 2:30

p.m.; Dinner, 5 p.m.; Sat., April 10: Cuba Today, 6:30 p.m.; Sun., April 11: World Capitalist Disorder Accelerates: Challenges Facing the Working Class, 11 a.m. Classes also scheduled. Location: Des Moines Holiday Inn, 1050 6th Ave. Registration: to be announced. For more information: (515) 246-8249.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**Clinton's Economic Policy: "Shared Sacrifice" or Making Workers Pay?** Speakers: Sol Haas, Action Alliance of Senior Citizens; representative, Kensington Welfare Rights Union; Helen Meyers, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Transportation Union. Sat., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

**What's Behind the Crisis in Russia?** Speaker: Pat O'Reilly, Socialist Workers Party, member, Amalgamated Transportation Union. Sat., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Translation to Spanish.

## AUSTRALIA

### Sydney

**The Crisis of Bureaucratic Rule in Russia.**

# Cleanup work starts after storm hits Cuba

Continued from Page 6

ernment would offer mattresses, appliances, and clothes to victims at highly subsidized prices. Now these goods are simply not available, she said. The warehouses are empty. This makes it extremely difficult on people who lost almost everything in the storm.

Both major traffic tunnels in Havana were completely flooded for more than a week. Since bicycles are the most common form of transportation seen in Havana now, as a result of the severe shortage of gasoline, people spent hours more traveling to and from work. Additional precious fuel was also needed for buses to get around the city and for vehicles helping in the clean-up and repair work.

In spite of this, the government and the mass organizations are taking special measures to make the lives of storm victims easier. The top priority has been to get water, electricity, and gas to everyone in the city, and to begin the general cleanup of mud and water from peoples homes.

Workers are increasing production in some factories that make cement and other materials for repairing houses. Many of these had been almost completely shut down due to lack of raw materials and especially fuel cutbacks. Material from damaged homes is being salvaged to repair those that can be fixed.

Several Vedado residents told us that extra food rations were being provided to those affected by the flood. And, since new refrig-

erators and other appliances are simply not available, those damaged by the storm are prioritized for repair.

There is also a massive effort to rapidly repair the big tourist hotels that were damaged. The Cuban government is promoting the development of tourism on the island as a way to bring in the hard currency so desperately needed.

Not everyone agrees with the priorities. "It's just not right," a cab driver told us one evening as we drove past the massive repair effort at the Riviera hotel. He argued that major resources being used to reconstruct hotels like the Riviera was unacceptable as long as many nearby homes had not been repaired.

Work at social centers like the Castellito, which is used by Cubans, not tourists, is discussed out with neighborhood residents. Special teams are working through the area house by house to assess the damage and determine what can be done. Robaina made a point of asking each team captain at the Castellito meeting if there were any special problems among local residents that had come to their attention or if there was resentment at the use of resources to repair the recreation areas. No one reported any problems.

"We've assigned a big part of our leadership to this repair work," youth leader Ibis Alvisa González explained. "It's important for morale that the public facilities be functional as soon as possible." Even so, the Castellito and other places will not be returned to the

Speaker: Paul Shaw, Communist League. Sat., April 10, 6 p.m. 36 Chalmers St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$3. Tel: 02-281 3297.

## CANADA

### Montréal

**Imperialism's Dilemma in Russia.** Sat., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

## CANADA

### Toronto

**Striking Yellowknife Miners Step Up Fight for Justice.** Speaker: Heidi Rose, participant in recent solidarity event in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Sat., April 3, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**What Malcolm X Means Today.** Sat., April 24, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

### Wellington

**The Crisis in Russia: Dilemma for Imperialism.** Sat., April 17, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

# CALENDAR

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Looking at Democracy: Cuba and the U.S.** Speaker: Dr. Juan Antonio Blanco, directs non-governmental organization in Havana, Cuba, dedicated to the study of politics and ethics. Fri., April 16, 7 p.m. Cornucopia Room at University of Illinois, Circle Center, 750 S. Halsted St. Donation: \$3-\$7. Sponsor: Coalition Against U.S. Intervention in Cuba.

Tel: 071-928-7993.

**Manchester:** Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839 1766.

**Sheffield:** 1 Gower St., Spital Hill, Postal code: S47HA. Tel: 0742-765070.

## CANADA

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assertedly, can help you "grab your share" of the Russian market. Includes a free update in six months.

**Sound investment environment** — A Denver paper headlined the

story, "Scam gives Russians a sour taste of capitalism." In St. Petersburg, some 450,000 people were swindled in an investment scam, heavily promoted on TV, which promised a 250 percent return in 90 days. Exposure of the hoax sparked angry demonstrations including an attempted rush on city hall.

**Meanwhile, back at the ranch** — In Colorado, a group of con artists pleaded guilty to swindling gullible investors out of \$20 million they sank into a nonexistent global computer distribution network. Its inventory consisted of boxes packed with dirt and bricks.

**Lucky they didn't stone her** — At a prosperous San Diego synagogue, the senior rabbi, Michael Sternfeld, confessed to "the worst sin I ever committed in my life" — an extramarital affair with associate Rabbi Laurie Coskey. The matter was dealt with decisively. He will remain at his post. She's fired.

**Far out** — For the coming Xmas season, Barbie's boy friend, Ken, will be an up-to-date doll. Decked out in a leather-type vest plus a heavy neck chain and ring, he's sporting an earring in his left ear. And his brown hair is streaked with blond. "It's a real breakthrough," a

company spokesperson confides.

**Home Alone III** — The Tyco company's Talking Family Dollhouse includes mom, dad, Jen and Baby. "It's a very '90s family," a spokesperson says. Mom and dad both go to work. And, one reporter noted, with Jen in school, that leaves Baby home alone.

**Like a discharge of energy** — John Shoven, a university prof and Bank of America hireling, explains that when the bank swallows up the Pacific Security Bank, the consequent layoff of some 4,000 employees will be "a release of resources."

**Things are tough all over** — Southern California sales of homes in the \$1 million bracket dropped 29 percent last year. Moreover, two years ago, a third of those buying such homes paid spot cash. Last year only a quarter of the big-time buyers coughed up the entire amount.

**The fast track** — We're not familiar with the northern California town of Los Altos, but we suspect many folks there are well-heeled. At most banks, the express button on cash-dispensing ATM machines will yield, variously, \$40 to \$100. In Los Altos, tap the express button and the machine coughs up \$500.

## Canadian rulers forced prime minister to resign

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney did not resign voluntarily, "he was unceremoniously dumped by Canada's rulers who had lost confidence in his capacity to defend and further their interests in the midst of a world economic depression," said Steve Penner, a leader of the Communist League in Canada. Penner was speaking at a Militant Labor Forum here March 13.

On February 24 Mulroney, Canadian prime minister since 1984, announced his decision to resign after a new leader of the ruling Progressive Conservative Party is elected in June. The Conservatives, whose popularity has plunged recently, hope that with the election of a new leader they may have a shot at winning the next parliamentary elections, which must be held by December.

Penner referred to numerous articles in the big-business press that point to the rulers decision to dump Mulroney. Canada's next prime minister and his or her party "need a sound fiscal policy executed with courage," said an editorial in the *Financial Post*. "Otherwise, if elected they will preside over Canada's bankruptcy, a fitting judgment on Mulroney's ten years of disinterest in fiscal discipline."

"For working people who have gone through two decades of capitalist austerity," said Penner, "the claim that the Mulroney government and its predecessors failed to carry out deep enough cuts in government spending seems absurd. But, the capitalist rulers know they cannot begin to resolve their economic crisis without substantially driving down workers' wages and the social programs we've won through decades of struggle."

### Mulroney promised to slash spending

The Mulroney government tried to implement such a perspective. A *Financial Post* article recalled that Mulroney won the Conservative Party leadership with a program centered on slashing federal government spending.

One of the actual successes of the Mulroney government on this front has been its enactment of a series of measures that begin to undermine the universality of social services. In 1991 it passed budget "clawback" proposals that impose taxes on old-age pensions and family allowance payments to people in higher tax brackets.

"The aim of such attacks," Penner said, "is not the wealthy. Their goal is to set up much deeper attacks on the social programs won by working people, forcing a growing layer to depend on private charity for their existence."

At the beginning of this year the federal government took another step to eliminate family allowances as a universal payment to people with children, instead providing payments only to those below a given income.

"The current attack by the Mulroney government against unemployment insurance (UIC) is one of the most deep-going attacks against the social programs yet attempted by the bosses," Penner said. It would eliminate UIC payments to workers fired by their boss — unless they could prove the firing was unjust — as well as for workers who quit.

An article in the *Financial Post* said that when Mulroney tried to enact the first stage of his austerity program in 1985, removing cost-of-living indexation for old-age pensioners, the Tory government backed down in face of a cross-country mobilization of retired working people that won broad popular support.

The government was also forced to back

down in 1987 when letter carriers waged a militant strike with significant support from other unionists against an attempt to step up direct attacks on the unions through use of scabs.

Today's opposition to the cuts in unemployment insurance is widespread. Some 45,000 employed and unemployed workers and students marched in protest in Montreal in early February, and 5,000 rallied in Toronto March 13.

"The rulers dumped Mulroney because he didn't accomplish anything like what they insist is required," Penner explained. "They are determined to deepen their attacks even though they will inevitably provoke greater battles."

Canadian capitalism has been one of the hardest hit by the depression in the major industrialized nations. As one of the smaller imperialist countries Canada is in a worse position to compete in trade wars among its rival capitalist powers. The Canadian capitalists are particularly vulnerable to competition with U.S. big business. Eighty percent of Canada's total trade is with the United States. Despite the 1989 U.S.-Canada free trade agreement, trade wars over steel, autos, lumber, fish products, beer, and other commodities keep breaking out, pointing toward the even sharper conflicts that lie ahead, Penner said.

Nevertheless, Canadian capitalism has little choice than to move toward closer integration with U.S. capital, he added, even though Canada's rulers often end up with the short end of the stick.

### Canadian bosses lost edge on U.S. rivals

Canadian capitalists lost their former edge in labor productivity and labor costs over their U.S. rivals during the 1980s. Between 1981 and 1989 Canadian manufacturing experienced a much lower rate of growth of output per hour than any other Group of Seven major industrial country, including Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States.

This reality will compel Canada's capitalists to push even harder against union rights and workers' living standards, said Penner.

"It will also press many employers to look to closer integration with U.S. capitalism in order to survive the sharpening competition and trade wars," Penner pointed out. Both major Canadian airlines, Canadian International and Air Canada, which are close to bankruptcy, have concluded they cannot survive without a major alliance or merger with a U.S. airline.

As a result of these economic pressures, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Canadian capitalism to maintain itself as a relatively distinct economic entity from the United States.

This is reflected in the foreign policy of the Canadian rulers. In the last several years Ottawa has made a shift toward more open backing of U.S. foreign policy. Mulroney's decision to send 2,000 troops to back Washington's efforts in its 1991 war against Iraq was the first direct use of Canadian troops in an imperialist-led war since the Korean War in the early 1950s, Penner noted.



**Prime Minister Brian Mulroney**

Penner said that the defeat of the referendum on constitutional revisions last fall dealt a blow to Mulroney's government. "The referendum was not aimed at producing a more democratic political setup in Canada and acknowledging the national rights of Natives and Quebecois, as was claimed," he said. "The entire process was simply a faction fight within the ruling class."

"On one side was Mulroney trying to strengthen the Canadian national state and prevent the breakup of

Canada in face of persistent demands for substantial autonomy or political independence for Quebec. On the other side was an equally reactionary campaign by a wing of Quebec capitalists opposing the agreement in order to press for more powers for the Quebec government in order to better defend their class interests. Neither campaign had anything whatsoever to do with combating the real oppression and discrim-

ination that Native people and French-speaking Quebecois face as national minorities in Canada." Mulroney's effort to reach a constitutional agreement that could unite Canada's capitalist rulers was a complete failure.

"Support for one or another wing of the capitalist rulers in their trade wars, shooting wars, and political disputes such as the referendum is a dead end for the labor movement," Penner argued. "Such policies serve only to tie the fate of working people to the capitalists who oppress and exploit us while turning workers of different nationalities against one another."

"When the bosses demand 'we' tighten 'our' belts in order to resolve 'our' economic crisis they're not talking about themselves. They're simply trying to convince working people to accept lower wages and working conditions in order to maintain their profits and wealth at our expense."

"Working people should fight to defend our class interests against the bosses, their parties, and their government," Penner said. "That is the only way working people can unite in this country and internationally and build a social movement ultimately capable of taking power away from the few wealthy capitalist families and begin the fight to replace their system with one that serves the needs of the toiling majority — socialism."

## 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO

**THE MILITANT**  
Published in the Interest of the Working People  
April 15, 1968 Price 10¢

The murder of Martin Luther King right under the noses of dozens of Memphis cops is supposed to be some sort of a departure from the "standards" of Memphis "law and order." The assassin is supposed to be a "demented" man and the killing a "unique incident."

That opinion hardly reconciles with the events of the last two months in Memphis, much less the past decades of racist violence and oppression.

Since Feb. 11, black sanitation workers of Memphis have been fighting a just battle for a better wage, union recognition, a written contract and dues checkoff. These elementary rights have been met with every level of resistance by the city and state, from phony court orders to massive police attacks on the black community supporting the striking workers.

The peaceful demonstration led by Martin Luther King himself on March 28 was attacked violently. Hundreds of black people were injured, and one 16-year-old Afro-American youth was killed by cops. Three others were gunned down. The cops attacked everybody with tear gas, Mace and clubs. Thousands of national guardsmen were called in to suppress the black community.

That is the real background in Memphis to the murder of Dr. King.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS  
April 10, 1943

How powerful is the Partisan movement in Yugoslavia? Moscow dispatches claim for the Partisans an army of approximately

300,000. London sources concede that the Partisans dispose of forces superior to those of Mikhailovich. We now have an indirect testimony concerning their strength from Berlin. This is contained in a communique of the German High Command for March 30 in which it is stated:

"German and Croat troops, cooperating with part of the Italian army, have smashed in [a] battle lasting many weeks a Communist rising in South Croatia... Only small remnants of the Communist bands succeeded in escaping into the high mountains."

This communique cannot have reference to any forces other than those of Partisans. Mikhailovich can claim no followers in Southern Croatia.

The territory specified by the German High Command constitutes only a small part of Yugoslavia and of the areas in which Partisans operate. Yet, it is officially acknowledged that in addition to German troops, native Croat formations and even a "part of the Italian army" had to be mobilized.

The substance of the Nazi claim is that they succeeded not in annihilating the guerrillas but only in dispersing and driving [them] into their "high mountain" strongholds, which constitute the base of guerrilla operations in the first place.

If the Partisans have such a redoubtable contingent in Southern Croatia, then they must constitute a real power there and in other sections of Yugoslavia.

It ought also to be borne in mind that the main German operations against the Partisans have been taking place in Bosnia. Concerning this campaign there has been silence. Meanwhile, the Partisan High Command has been broadcasting over its short wave radio "Free Yugoslavia" news of successes in this area against the Axis occupation forces and their collaborators, headed by native landlords, capitalists and the local and central bureaucracy.



## German workers show the way

Seventy thousand steelworkers from eastern and western Germany demonstrated in Bonn against layoffs March 26. Hundreds of thousands of metal and electrical workers called warning strikes throughout eastern Germany to protest the reneging on a wage agreement by employers.

Much more than immediate job and wage disputes is behind these mass protests. They are a result of the attempted reunification of Germany, which has turned out to be a nightmare for the billionaire families that rule Europe's strongest imperialist power.

German capitalism has been unable to absorb the workers' state in the east. "It is like a python that has swallowed a sheep," whined a German banker. Getting rid of this workers' state will involve a much bigger job than the government simply putting state-owned industries up for sale. The capitalist rulers will have to crush the working class in battle and drive it down to a level where they can again make handsome profits there. They are far from being able to do so.

The German government has had to pour billions of dollars into the eastern region to sustain the growing numbers of unemployed and underemployed workers there. Meanwhile, Germany's economy has slid into a recession, exacerbated by the current world depression.

To safeguard their profits, the German employers have launched an assault on working people. They have announced mass layoffs and fostered a chauvinist campaign against immigrants.

But Germany's unification created another huge problem for the bosses. It brought closer together the working

people of east and west, who for decades had been divided by the Berlin Wall. When workers and farmers in the east tore down that wall and swept away the Stalinist gangsters of East Germany, they opened up the possibility for the working class to fight together throughout the country.

The employers' attacks have sparked resistance by working people. In recent months, successive demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people have protested attacks on immigrants. Last year public employees waged a successful strike for pay raises, opposing attempts by employers to make workers shoulder the costs of reunification.

The most recent labor struggles show that workers are not going along with the "solidarity pact" of government austerity measures previously accepted by the union officialdom.

The March 26 demonstration of 70,000 was the first national labor demonstration of workers from east and west, and gave a glimpse of their potential united power. The early April warning strikes are the first officially organized workers' protests in eastern Germany since the 1930s. These mobilizations are a harbinger of future battles by workers, not only in Germany but in Eastern Europe, as the capitalists — and bureaucrats who aspire to be capitalists — try to impose austerity on working people and meet with resistance.

The labor mobilizations in Germany set an example for working people worldwide, who face a common problem: capitalism and its unemployment, racism, and wars. The labor movement in the United States and throughout the world should give full support to this fight. It's our fight too.

## Defend free speech in Miami

All those who support free speech should join with the Antonio Maceo Brigade and the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC) to condemn the violent assault by right-wing thugs on a peaceful March 17 picket line in Miami. The demonstrators who were attacked were opposing the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. At a recent press conference, the two Cuban-American organizations vigorously rejected any justification for the violence and demanded that the government prosecute the attackers.

For several decades right-wing forces imposed their politics on the Cuban-American community in Miami through intimidation and violence. They terrorized anyone who spoke in favor of normalizing U.S. relations with Cuba. This has been changing in recent years. Substantial numbers of Cuban-Americans oppose Washington's barbaric embargo against the island and many are expressing that view with increasing confidence.

The recent generation of Cuban immigrants, especially those who have come to the United States in the last decade, find themselves thrown into the factories and unemployment lines. Under the impact of the capitalist economic crisis and the employers' attacks on the rights of working people, many of these Cuban-American workers are questioning Washington's policies abroad. As a result, the right-wing minority is becoming more isolated.

When the directors of Radio Mambi began broadcasting appeals inciting listeners to attack the picket line, they assumed they could get away with it. But they were wrong. About 150 people, mostly Cuban-Americans, turned out for the legal protest against the trade embargo and refused to be intimidated. Now a public campaign has been launched to protest the violent attack.

Working people in Miami and elsewhere should wholeheartedly support this campaign. The ATC has publicly demanded that the Florida state district attorney's office prosecute those responsible for the violence. These thugs belong in jail. At the press conference, 67-year-old Ignacio Tapia showed the injuries on his back from the bicycle chain one of the attackers beat him with. "I want the individuals who did this to get the sanction they deserve," he demanded.

The cops arrested only some of the assailants and quickly released them, issuing minor charges against them. At the same time they wrongfully arrested Antonio Maceo Brigade leader Andrés Gómez and charged him with disorderly conduct. The charges against the peaceful demonstrators should be dropped.

Opponents of the U.S. embargo should feel encouraged by these events to promote more public actions and discussions to win additional support against Washington's criminal policies toward Cuba as well.

## Emergency aid to Cuba

The devastating winter storm that swept across Cuba March 13-14 shines a spotlight on Washington's criminal policy toward that country. It also points to the need for emergency aid from governments around the world to help alleviate the storm's catastrophic impact on the island.

The storm caused agricultural losses worth \$210 million. Much of the winter food crop was destroyed, including more than 2 million banana plants and many other fruits and vegetables. More than 36,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in the winds and the flooding that followed.

The Cuban people have mobilized to try to limit the damage from the storm. As soon as the weather cleared, volunteer brigades were on their way to the fields to rescue what was possible of the potato and banana crops. Factories that produce construction materials are stepping up production and teams of workers and volunteers have begun to repair houses, hotels, and stores. But cleanup and reconstruction efforts are severely hampered by lack of resources.

Cuba, like other Third World countries, has also had to deal with the hypocrisy of the imperialist governments and their so-called relief organizations. United Nations representatives have called for their agencies to contribute \$4 million in disaster aid. But so far only \$25,000 has been sent. This measly sum will not pay even one percent of the cost of replacing the overhead crane that was destroyed, one of only two in the entire country.

The Cuban government has issued an urgent appeal for powdered milk, wheat, vegetable oil, canned goods, antibiotics, fertilizers, and other immediate needs. Working people in the United States and around the world should demand a response to this request.

The devastation by the storm comes in the midst of a severe economic crisis in Cuba, caused by the collapse of

trade with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe beginning in 1989 and brutally exacerbated by the U.S. trade embargo. In spite of this crisis, the Cuban people are making extraordinary efforts to produce an adequate supply of food for the population.

The more than 30-year trade embargo is aimed at punishing the workers and farmers of Cuba for getting rid of a U.S.-backed dictatorship and imperialist domination of the island in 1959, establishing their own government, and launching a fight to organize a society based on human needs, not profits.

The embargo prohibits any U.S.-produced medicine, food, or other goods from being sold to Cuba. The so-called Cuban Democracy Act, approved last year, even threatens U.S. subsidiaries in other countries with penalties if they do business with Cuba.

The trade ban is a club the U.S. rulers use to try to force the Cuban people back under their thumb. But it is a very ineffective club. Many politicians in the Clinton administration and other ruling-class figures have begun campaigning for getting rid of the embargo. They do this because they think Cuba is like Eastern Europe. They argue Fidel Castro's government will be forced to make concessions once the embargo is lifted, which will lead to the Cuban revolution's downfall.

We disagree. We think the working class in Cuba is stronger today to defend and advance the revolution. Working people in the United States and around the world have every interest in demanding the normalization of relations between Washington and Havana, the lifting of the embargo, and an end to all travel restrictions.

End the U.S. trade embargo!  
Emergency aid to Cuba now!

## The facts and nothing but the facts

### Some pointers on writing articles for the 'Militant'

The *Militant* is based on the facts.

"What's the big deal?" a reader may wonder. "Isn't that the way a newspaper is supposed to be written?"

Yes. But it's what distinguishes the *Militant* from the vast majority of newspapers and magazines. The big-business media puts its vested interest in defending capitalism ahead of reporting the truth. Many publications that advocate social change start with preconceived notions and try to make the facts fit those doctrines.

The *Militant*, on the other hand, analyzes news developments from the standpoint that working people need the truth to draw accurate conclusions and chart an effective political strategy in defense of their interests.

Because of this, all the facts reported in *Militant* articles, whether news or commentary, must be backed up. No article appears in print until all sources for the reported facts are checked by a copy editor. This is true whether the

## DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

article is written by a contributing correspondent, a member of the *Militant* staff, or the paper's editors.

Up to two-thirds of the *Militant's* articles are firsthand reports by worker-correspondents from around the world, making this paper an invaluable tool for working-class fighters. Whenever such articles are sent in, they should be accompanied by all the necessary sources — newspaper clippings, leaflets, documents, etc.

The *Militant's* guidelines, in fact, instruct the paper's copy editors as follows: "Make no assumptions, despite what you may know or have read about the subject of the article. Approach copyediting the article as if you know nothing about the subject and insist on proof for every fact before you allow it to appear in the *Militant*." That's a high standard, but it allows this socialist newspaper to make a promise to working people: we tell the truth.

In sourcing an article, the author should underline each relevant fact on the accompanying news clipping or document, label it with a number or letter, and use that label to indicate where the fact appears in the article submitted.

What kinds of facts need to be backed up with printed source material? Names of individuals, organizations, and places. Quotations are particularly important, as are dates and figures. Even "common knowledge" facts, such as the date of a well-known event, should be checked; they're one of the biggest sources of factual errors that creep in. When the source is an interview or other firsthand information, that should be noted as well.

Even after an article is printed, the *Militant* editorial office keeps copies of the sources on file for a period of time. If any reader challenges the accuracy of a fact reported in the paper, it can be readily checked. Corrections are printed when necessary.

Articles sent in to the *Militant* should be typed (or neatly handwritten) triple-spaced, with a maximum of 42 characters on each line. This may take more pages and, if faxed, cost slightly more, but it is essential to allow enough space for editing and copyediting.

Readers appreciate knowing when a worker-correspondent is a union member, so authors should be sure to mention the full name and local number of their union.

A good photograph can be as informative as an article and helps liven up the paper. Readers are encouraged to send in photos of important political events, such as strikes, demonstrations, and political meetings, including *Militant* Labor Forums. Pictures of *Militant* supporters getting the paper around are also valuable. To be used, rolls of film and prints should be clearly identified with names, dates, and places. Don't forget the name of the photographer.

It is important that photographs are sent in rapidly so that they can accompany a news article. Usually this means sending the undeveloped roll of film rather than waiting for prints to be made. Black and white film is preferable, but not essential.

The *Militant* is a weekly paper. It is printed every Thursday and the closing news date is usually the day before. But pages of the issue start filling up with articles as soon as the new week begins. While the *Militant* does respond to major late-breaking news, it's good to keep in mind that articles received Wednesday or Thursday have a better chance of making it into the next issue than those received later in the week.

— THE EDITORS

\* \* \*

### Deadlines for calendar notices

The deadline for receiving notices for the Calendar and *Militant* Labor Forum columns is noon on the Wednesday before publication. The *Militant* will only include events scheduled at least one week after the closing news date.



# ANC youth leader meets Alabama strikers

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know

false statements in the news media. They appealed for food and gathered it into a large, visible pile to show how much community support they really had. They reached out to truck drivers and other workers involved in bringing supplies to the plant. This helped shut down all production.

De Klerk explained how the labor movement in South Africa today takes up general social

some of the oldest in the industry, along with low-paid nonunion workers, Lorenzo hopes to run a profitable company.

Members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) who led the strike at Eastern were shocked at the news of a Lorenzo comeback. "I thought that the bankruptcy court banned him from the airline industry for seven years," one USAir mechanic said.

The state of Maryland offered Lorenzo financial incentives to come to BWI Airport. But the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), and the IAM protested and forced the state to back down. Maryland transportation secretary James Lighthizer said the opposition was "absolutely ferocious."

Union representatives held a news conference and attended hearings March 17. The AFA passed out flyers urging members to "Come to Annapolis and stop Frank!"

At the hearings opposition was widespread and no one spoke in favor of the new airline. A United Airlines pilot said that "the lives of thousands of airline workers have been devastated," referring to Lorenzo's dealings with the unions at Eastern and Continental.

Although Maryland withdrew its incentive package, the federal government can approve Lorenzo's application to fly from BWI airport. The unions are threatening more actions if this occurs.

## Miners, Steelworkers back glass strike in W. Virginia

Coal miners in camouflage and steelworkers from Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. joined striking glass workers in a rally and march in Weston, West Virginia March 20. The demonstration of 350 was called by the West Virginia AFL-CIO to back the five-week strike by Aluminum, Brick and Glass Workers Union Local 162 against Louis Glass.

Louis, a subsidiary of Colgate-Palmolive, wants deep concessions from the workers in seniority rights, health coverage, wages, and benefits. The two-mile march and rally buoyed the spirits of the 320 glass workers who have maintained 24-hour picket lines. The company has not tried to run the plant since the strike started.

Rick Myers, vice-president of the striking union, told the *Militant* the workers are determined to see their fight through to victory. Community support has been demonstrated through regular donations of food and money.

Participating in the demonstration were 75 coal miners who discussed their fight against Peabody Holdings Co.; Steelworkers Local 5668 members who won a hard-fought strike against Ravenswood Aluminum last year; and some coal miners from Tennessee who are trying to win a union contract.

## Safety charges dropped against Westray mine

The chief prosecutor of Nova Scotia dropped all safety charges against the owner and managers of the Westray mine where 26 miners were killed in an underground explosion May 9, 1992. The prosecutor claimed he dropped the safety charges to avoid possible legal conflicts with criminal charges. But no criminal charges have been announced.

The trial on 18 safety violations was set to begin April 19. The mine owner, Curragh Resources, and four mine managers were charged with inadequate training of miners and operating acetylene torches underground. Additional charges of allowing dangerous levels of methane and coal dust to accumulate in the mine were dropped by the prosecutor in December.

The gas and dust accumulation charges were thoroughly documented after the explosion in interviews with Westray miners.

Dropping the charges brought an angry response. Chris Martin, whose brother died in the explosion, said, "It just scares us to death that the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] may not lay their charges and the government will come out and say it was the men's fault or the mine will come out and say it was the men's fault."

This is the second time Curragh evaded responsibility for the explosion. On November 13 the Nova Scotia Supreme Court stopped a provincial government public inquiry into the explosion.

Curragh wants to reopen the mine. But the 100-member Westray Families Group opposes the reopening. They want the Provincial Government to lift Curragh's right to operate a mine in Nova Scotia.

However, president of United Steelworkers Local 9332 Randy Facette claims to represent 75 former Westray miners and is calling for the mine to reopen.

On March 5, the Westray Families Group was informed that the section of the mine where the explosion is believed to have originated, had flooded. This would probably wash away any remaining evidence. That section of the mine was to have been left intact in a "controlled" flooding program approved by the government in January over stiff opposition.

"Is Westray ever going to be accountable?" asked family spokesperson Kenton Teasedale.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Denise McInerney, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9226 in Bessemer, Alabama; Edwin Fruit, member of International Association of Machinists Local Lodge 846 in Baltimore; Bernie Senter, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union Local 8-957 in Morgantown, West Virginia; and Roger Annis, member of Canadian Auto Workers union Local 1900 in Montreal.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

"How can you be sure that there will really be democratic elections within the next year in South Africa?" a Trinity Industries striker asked Eldred de Klerk of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League. De Klerk is taking part in a nationwide tour in the United States to build international solidarity with the unfolding revolution in South Africa.

"The unions will make sure that elections are held," de Klerk responded. "If anyone tried to prevent democratic elections, there would be a strike throughout South Africa by millions of trade unionists."

During a visit to the union hall and picket line, the South African political activist and the Trinity strikers exchanged experiences. De Klerk learned about the harassment, violence, and news media slanders directed against the strikers in their six-month fight against this Bessemer, Alabama company.

De Klerk compared the situation to a strike he was involved in with women garment workers in South Africa. Those strikers went house by house and block by block talking to people to counter

questions that affect the entire working class, including the demand for democratic elections. "The unions do not just take up questions plant by plant, contract by contract. Millions go out on strike together to place demands on the government."

Trinity is now threatening to close the struck plant. Many strikers told de Klerk that shutting down the plant would be better than conceding to an unfair contract. The Trinity strikers also explained how the courts have intervened on the side of the company with injunctions and restraining orders limiting the number and location of pickets.

## Lorenzo comeback effort bumps into unions

"It would be like letting Hitler govern Germany again." This was the reaction of Erwin Freed, a mechanic at USAir who worked 22 years for Eastern Airlines, when he heard that Frank Lorenzo was trying to operate an airline from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport.

Lorenzo, driven out of the airline industry as a result of the 1989-90 Eastern Airlines strike, wants to start a new airline operating chiefly on the eastern seaboard. Using a fleet of DC-9s,

## LETTERS

### Protest Gunn's murder

On two days notice, 150 people gathered at the Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C. to protest the March 10 murder of Dr. David Gunn. Gunn was shot down in front of his abortion clinic by a member of Rescue America in Pensacola, Florida, during an anti-choice demonstration.

"Back alleys, no more, equal rights for young and poor," and "Women's rights are human rights, stop the violence now," were among the most popular chants at the protest.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) and several other organizations also held a press conference.

Eleanor Smeal, head of the Feminist Majority and former president of NOW, denounced the Florida attorney general's assessment that the murder is a "local problem." "There were 118 acts of violence against clinics last year alone," she said.

Smeal added, "President Clinton has the obligation to investigate every death threat against every clinic worker and give equal justice to women under the law."

Meg Hall  
Washington, D.C.

### Japan unemployment

The bankruptcy rate in Japan has risen because of the worldwide recession, as the *Militant* reported in its February 19 issue. We can see many bankruptcies in the small- and middle-sized companies as well as many laid off at big companies, especially the electric and au-

tomobile industries. Nissan is going to close its Zama factory, one of five major factories. Hitachi is firing 2,000 workers in the next two years. Pioneer, the audio products manufacturer, proposed that middle-class managers be dismissed. But the unemployment rate reported officially stays at 2.2 percent.

A lot of foreigners came to work in Japan over these years. It is difficult for foreigners to get proper working visas because the Japanese government will not open the country to foreign workers. The Japanese government, however, allows Japanese abroad to get their spouse a visa regardless of nationality because of the shortage of workers.

Peruvian and Brazilian workers who are daughters and sons of Japanese emigrants a long time ago come to stay here on visas for at least three years, while other foreigners must renew their visas once a year. Most of these "foreign Japanese" work at so-called "3 K" work places — which means 1) dangerous, 2) dirty, and 3) hard — where ordinary Japanese do not like to work.

Other foreign Japanese work at automobile factories such as Toyota, Nissan, etc. These companies are firing them because of the recession right now. Backed up by the immigration offices, companies do not give a one-month advance notice or pay one month's average wage when they want to fire these workers. These foreign workers are eventually forced to go home or stay illegally under worse working conditions and lower wages.

The Japanese government has

expelled foreigners from the work force, so the official unemployment rate has not risen as it would if foreign workers lost their jobs.

Now companies are dismissing part-time workers, who are mostly housewives. The government does not figure the part-time worker as part of the work force. The unemployment rate remains the same.

Neo Yamashita  
Osaka, Japan

### Better than before

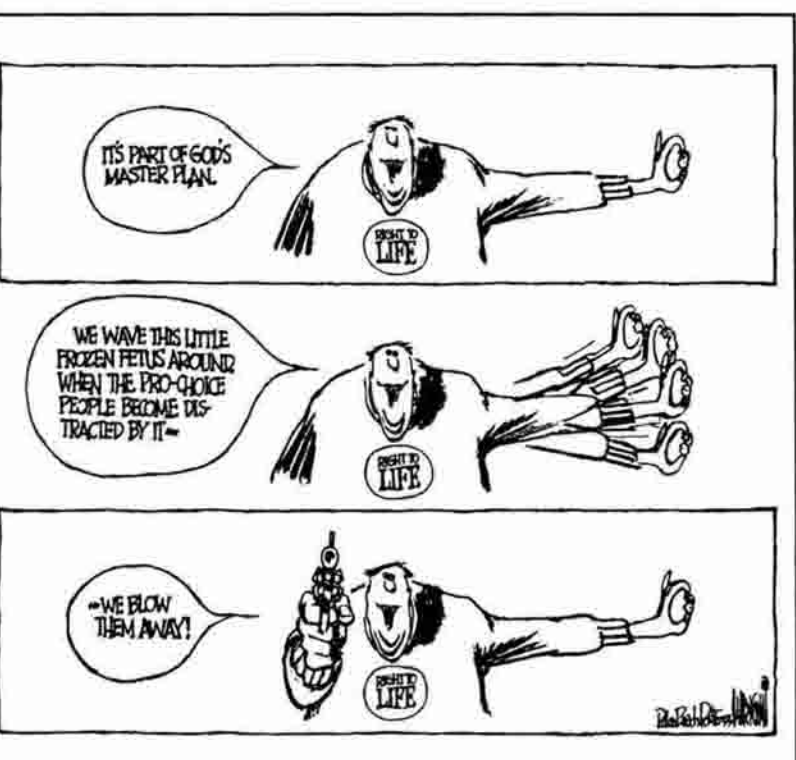
I find the *Militant's* coverage better than it has been in the past: the ANC pieces, the rail coverage, the miners' strike, the fight that needs to be organized to save the social wages, etc. I look forward to a bold spring sales campaign.

Larry Lane  
Albany, New York

### Cops kill Black motorist

One hundred angry but disciplined protesters demonstrated in Chattanooga, Tennessee, February 27 against the February 5 death in police custody of Black motorist Larry Powell. Powell was stopped by Hamilton County sheriffs' deputies and arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Once handcuffed, Powell was beaten and choked to death with a police nightstick while surrounded by seven white cops.

The march and rally was organized by an ad hoc coalition and the Concerned Citizens for Justice



(CCJ), a 10-year-old organization formed to protest police brutality in the Chattanooga area. CCJ spokesperson Lorenzo Ervin pointed out that Powell was the 23rd person who has died in Chattanooga or Hamilton County police custody since 1978.

Marchers, who carried placards with the names of the 23 victims, demanded that the police be prosecuted for Powell's death.

Chants of "Jail the guilty cops" and "No justice, no peace" rang through downtown Chattanooga as the demonstrators marched from City Hall to the rally site on the

courthouse steps. Marchers and rally speakers included friends of Larry Powell, other victims of police brutality or their surviving relatives, members of the Justice Alliance, the Black Muslims, and others.

Bob Braxton  
Atlanta, Georgia

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## Miami opponents of Cuba embargo condemn violent attack on picket line

BY JANET MCGUINN

MIAMI — "We are the victims of violence and we demand justice," said Andrés Gómez, National Coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade (BAM), at a press conference here March 30. The media event was called in response to an attack by right-wing Cuban-Americans on a March 17 picket line, which was called to protest the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

Gómez announced that the Alliance of Workers in the Community (ATC), which had sponsored the picket line along with the BAM would be requesting an investigation of the attack by the state district attorney's office in Miami. "The first picket to arrive was beaten to the ground just for carrying a sign calling for an end to the blockade," stated Gómez.

A statement issued to the press by the two Cuban-American groups that oppose the embargo on Cuba read, "The violence inflicted on the participants of the lawful and peaceful picket is an intolerable attack on fundamental First Amendment rights. It has no place in a democratic society and needs condemnation. The State Attorney's Office has the duty to seek and prosecute those responsible for the violence."

Gómez stated that 27 pickets had been injured, seven of them seriously. At the press conference five of the injured made brief descriptive statements. "They hit me in the head and savagely beat us," said Andrea Martínez.

Ignacio Tapia, a 67-year-old Mexican immigrant, said that he had been hit in the chest and beaten across his back with a bicycle chain. Lifting his shirt to show the wounds, he stated, "We believe that our constitutional



Andrés Gómez, coordinator of Antonio Maceo Brigade, at March 30 press conference.

rights as a people have been violated."

The ATC is a Cuban-American group that organizes activities opposing the embargo and BAM is an organization that supports the Cuban revolution. Their March 17 picket was held in front of Spanish-language WAQI, Radio Mambí, a station known for its right-wing political orientation. Station director Armando Pérez Roura has openly called for terrorist attacks on Cuba.

Gómez said that this was the third protest in front of Radio Mambí in four years and the only one to be violently disrupted. He attributed this to the role played that day by the radio station and Pérez Roura. "This was different. This [attack] happened because the station called people out to confront us."

Throughout the day of the picket, Pérez Roura broadcast an editorial militantly encouraging right-wingers to take action

against the antiembargo protesters. In response several hundred, including members of the right-wing terrorist group Alpha 66 and paramilitary Commandos L, turned out to physically confront the picket line.

At the press conference Gómez said that a complaint would be filed with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) against Radio Mambí. The station "has violated the spirit of the law of the airways," said Gómez.

In response to the ATC and BAM statement, Pérez Roura told Spanish-language WLTU-Channel 23 that "It was the members of the ATC and BAM that provoked the incident. We will bring them to court so they will have to register as agents of a foreign nation."

According to Engineer-in-Chief John Theimer of the Miami FCC, Title 18 of the FCC Federal Code makes it a criminal act for a radio station to broadcast "with intent to incite a riot." Theimer said he will forward transcripts of the Radio Mambí broadcast submitted by the ATC and BAM to the FCC in Washington, D.C.

Gómez also told *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish-language version of the *Miami Herald*, that a complaint had been filed with Americas Watch and the Fund for Free Expression. These are human rights organizations that documented abuses in Miami by right-wing Cuban-Americans in a report issued last year titled "Dangerous Dialogue."

Asked by one reporter whether the ATC and BAM would picket Radio Mambí again, Gómez responded, "We will picket them in the future as we have the right to. No one in the city has the right to determine when and where we will picket."

## Greek workers strike, march against austerity

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece — Thousands of workers marched here March 18 during a 24-hour strike called by the General Confederation of Workers of Greece (GSEE), the country's main union federation.

The action came at a time of deadlocked negotiations between the government and GSEE concerning a collective wage agreement. With inflation running at nearly 16 percent per year, the union federation, which organizes private sector workers, is demanding a yearly 17 percent wage increase. Most employers' associations are offering a 9 percent raise.

Government austerity measures and attacks on the social wage are coming as working people need social services the most. While official unemployment is nearly 10 percent, less than 10 percent of the jobless receive any compensation at all. Public hospitals offering low-cost health care are run down or closing, while private medical institutions are proliferating but are out of reach for working people.

The conservative government of Constantinos Mitsotakis is on a serious privatization drive. State enterprises in telecommunications, energy, transportation, and shipbuilding are being sold off to private investors.

GSEE officials estimated that 60 to 70 percent of workers participated in the 24-hour strike action. The week prior to the March 18 strike, 200,000 union members took part in a GSEE-organized referendum at local labor centers. Roughly 80 percent voted for strike action to protest the government privatization moves and demand higher wages to compensate for inflation.

Workers at the March 18 union rally expressed different views about what they thought they can accomplish with a fight against privatization.

Kostas, who works at the country's sec-

ond largest shipyard at Elefsína near Athens, said the government had just sold the shipyard to the "Perataki group," based in London. The new owners plan to cut the work force of 2,000 in half, he said, by introducing large-scale subcontracting. Kostas was pessimistic about the outcome of a fight against privatization. "There is very little work at the moment, so I don't know how effective we will be [with the strike]," he said. "But there is no choice."

"We need to get rid of this government and bring PASOK back to power," a coworker of Kostas said, referring to the social democratic Panhellenic Socialist Movement, which ran the government for most of the 1980s.

Out of the four oil refineries in the country, two are privately owned. "You could see the results of privatization there," said a worker at Aspropirgos, the country's largest refinery, which is still owned by the government. "Fourteen workers were killed by an explosion at Petrola two months ago," he said. Petrola is privately owned. "There they could not care less about safety, quality, or the environment."

Last June, 8,000 bus drivers in Athens went on strike to protest privatization of the bus company. The government fired all drivers when they refused an order to return to work. Today only 2,000 have been called back to work for a semiprivate company under a scheme of employee ownership. Many bus drivers participated at the march.

"I have three children," said one driver, "and I have been living on 50,000 drachmas [US\$230] per month from the unemployment office." Four bus drivers' union members are still in jail on charges stemming from last summer's strike. The union and their families have organized ongoing solidarity activities and a defense effort.

Phone company workers marched at the March 18 demonstration with a banner condemning the planned sale of the telecommu-

nications monopoly. Most slogans by this contingent echoed the union officialdom's nationalist positions. "They are fooling you with the phone company sale; they are undermining the defense of the country," many workers chanted, as well as "They sold the bus company and the shipyards and are now selling off Macedonia."

The last chant was referring to the fact that the Greek rulers are being forced by their senior imperialist partners in the European Community to accept recognition of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. The Mitsotakis regime has waged a fierce international campaign against recognition

of Macedonia with the full backing of the social democratic opposition and most union officials.

Members of the Antiwar Antinationalist Coalition also participated at the March 18 rally. "Recognition of the republic of Macedonia would not be a defeat for the Greek people but for Greek nationalism," said a statement coalition members distributed at the demonstration. The statement opposed moves for military intervention in the former Yugoslavia and called for "opening the borders to war refugees." Several strikers reacted favorably to the statement while others disagreed.

## British miners, rail workers protest massive job cuts

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON — Three thousand British workers, one-third of them coal miners, marched and rallied here March 29 to protest pit closures. The demonstration, called by the Trades Union Congress, the British labor federation, coincided with a debate in the Parliament on a government plan to close several mines. The closures would eliminate up to 30,000 jobs of miners and 70,000 other workers in rail, engineering, power, and other industries.

The same day, the Parliament voted to immediately close 19 mines, leaving 12 others operating for now that had been scheduled to close. London's announcement last fall that it would shut down 31 mines caused a storm of protest from the labor movement, forcing John Major's government to back off.

The TUC action was a prelude to the 24-hour strike called for Friday, April 2, by the National Union of Mine Workers

(NUM), the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) rail workers, London bus workers, and others to protest job losses. NUM and RMT members voted by about 60 percent margins to carry out the protest strikes.

The depth of opposition to the mine closures is shown by the fact that the Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM), which split from the NUM during the 1984-85 coal strike, announced its members would vote April 2 on whether they conduct a 24-hour strike. "We have tried to save the coal industry by every proper and intelligent way and this has not worked. Striking was always seen as our last resort," UDM president Neil Greatrex said.

NUM president Arthur Scargill spoke at the March 29 demonstration. He said the fight was to keep all 31 of the mines open that the government threatened to close. He called on all workers to join the strike action April 2.