

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Mine workers rally at A.T. Massey

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Mass rallies demand end to repression in Algeria



May 3 march in Algiers, capital of Algeria, the scene of several recent mass protests. Sign reads: "Stop the repression in Kabylia." Courtesy of New Press Algeria

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Hundreds of thousands of Berber people, wearing black armbands and chanting "government assassins," marched in Tizi Ouzou May 21 demanding the removal of the police who have killed dozens of protesters in

Kabylia, a heavily Berber region in the northeastern part of the country, over the past month. They were attacked and tear-gassed by police, and at least 20 people were injured.

The mobilization comes on the heels of weeks of demonstrations involving tens of

thousands who have faced police repression. Up to 80 people have been killed by the police over the course of a week of protests in Kabylia. Widespread demonstrations were sparked by the April 18 death of

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## NY meeting discusses opportunities to build communist movement today

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

NEW YORK—An overflow crowd of 350 people packed a hall at Columbia University here for a public meeting held May 20 on the topic "In Defense of Leninism: Expanding Opportunities for Communists Today."

The meeting focused on the response by

the communist movement to the toughening resistance among workers and farmers around the country and to the increasing receptivity to revolutionary literature by many working people and youth. It served as a springboard for the campaign by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Social-

ists to double the membership of the YS over the next three months.

The event launched an international campaign to sell Pathfinder's newest title, *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, by Jack Barnes, which had just come off the

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## Laundry workers strike for a union in Baltimore

BY BETH FLETCHER AND KATHIE FITZGERALD

BALTIMORE—Blowing whistles and chanting "Who's got the power? Union power," 450 strikers at Up-To-Date Laundry and their supporters rallied here May 16 at the University of Maryland Medical Center. A sea of red-shirted members of the textile and garment workers union and a number of other unionists demanded the university cancel its contract with Up-To-Date.

Nearly 250 workers at Baltimore's Up-To-Date Laundry walked off the job April 23 to protest the firing of 16 of their co-workers for trying to win company recognition of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). The strikers are fighting to organize a union to press their demands for a living wage and health benefits, and to address conditions on the job.

At the rally several strikers described the dangerous working conditions they face. "We handle laundry with blood and infectious waste," said Rodney Prater, who works

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## Economic crisis spurs protests across Latin America

BY RÓGER CALERO

The impact of the economic slowdown in the United States on the economies of Latin America, combined with the relentless pressure by finance capital on governments there to implement austerity measures, are provoking ongoing protests by workers and peasants from the Southern Cone to the Río Grande. The seesaw battles in which working people are resisting their further impoverishment are often taking the character of social movements involving labor unions, peasant organizations, neighborhood groups, and native peoples.

In Argentina, more than 3,000 workers have been occupying a section of a national highway through the La Matanza district on the outskirts of Buenos Aires demanding the government fulfill promises made last November. At that time an agreement to end the roadblocks came after the government said it would provide 8,000 government-subsidized jobs, 10,000 pairs of shoes, 2,000 scholarships to students, and 2 million pesos' worth of medicines and work tools to thousands of unemployed workers and their families.

"The government is not going to negotiate," said Labor Minister Patricia Bullrich about the new roadblocks. Otherwise, "we demonstrate to the country that anyone that

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JACK BARNES

# Macedonian forces bombard villages in assault on Albanians

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

A military offensive mounted in early May by the Macedonian armed forces and police against Albanian rebels in the north of the country has to date not been crowned with success, in spite of the destruction that has been wrought. Skopje's forces have been hampered by the sympathy enjoyed by the rebel forces among the area's workers and farmers, many of whom support their stance in favor of Albanian equality.

NATO forces in Kosova and the government in Belgrade have backed up Skopje's campaign, sealing off the border areas to restrict the rebels' options.

A newly formed "government of national unity" declared a two-day cessation to widespread bombardment of the area May 15. President Boris Trajkovski threatened an operation to "eliminate the terrorists," if the guerrillas did not withdraw from the area. The deadline passed without an immediate renewed offensive. Meanwhile, police and soldiers continue their wide-ranging crack-down in the region.

The events marked a resumption in the open conflict that first flared up in February around Tetovo in the western part of the country. Guerrilla forces have been active in the cities and towns where Albanians form the majority. Around one-third of Macedonia's 2 million people identify themselves as Albanian, and some two-thirds as Slav. Albanians face discrimination in education, employment, and other facets of social life in Macedonia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia.

The government launched its offensive after rebels killed two army soldiers in an ambush. Eight members of an elite military unit had been killed in a similar attack a week earlier. On May 3 the bombardment began.

In one key operation, the Macedonian army lined up tanks and artillery along the highway northeast of Skopje, and lobbed shells into a number of villages, including Lojane, Slupcane, Lipkovo, and Matejce, where ground fighting was also reported. The Albanian-majority villages form part of

a rebel-held 20-mile-long swath of Macedonian territory northwest of Kumanovo, reported the *Washington Post*. The combined population of the area before the fighting began stood at 26,000 people.

## 16,000 refugees from Macedonia

Some 9,000 people have fled into neighboring Kosova in the last month alone, bringing to 16,000 the total number of refugees created as a result of the fighting in Macedonia this year. In the village of Slupcane around three-quarters of the houses have sustained damage, ranging from broken windows to total destruction.

Policemen have joined soldiers at checkpoints to enforce a virtual siege of the area, and have rounded up thousands of civilians. Salih, a farmer from the village of Opae, told of being seized by a group of 10 cops. "They beat me with all their strength," he said. "They said they would cut my throat with a knife."

In spite of these methods, many villagers have defied government threats, and refused to move. Some "10,000 civilians remain in the hill villages under government siege," reported the *New York Times*.

"Theirs is a collective act of defiance...that has enormously frustrated the Macedonian government," observed *Washington Post* reporter Jeffrey Smith. In contrast to Skopje's claims that the villagers are being used by the rebels as a "human shield," Smith reported that "some may remain out of resolve to press for the Albanians' political goals, including better jobs, more political power, and more schooling in their own language."

The government has refused to negotiate with rebel representatives. "We are dealing with forces that have the clear intention to destroy the state and to introduce fear and terror," said Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski after the announcement of the "national unity" government.

The new government was formed amid pledges to "address ethnic grievances," according to a *Post* dispatch. It incorporates



Macedonian army helicopter fires antismissile flares after a strike in village of Vaksince

the representatives of the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity and the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, two former opposition parties with electoral bases among the Albanian and Slav populations respectively. They join the Democratic Party for Albanians, and the dominant grouping led by Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski—the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity—as the main forces in the new regime.

Spokespeople for the imperialist powers in NATO and the European Union helped to prod President Trajkovski into the unity government talks. Six days after its consolidation, NATO secretary general Lord Robertson urged the new government to implement "reforms" aimed at mollifying the Albanian population. Such measures would "undermine the political agenda of the gunmen," he claimed.

But even leaders of the established Albanian parties acknowledge they are losing support among the Albanian minority because of any lack of movement by previous governments to address their concerns.

During a visit to Albania on May 17,

Robertson promised that NATO would help Skopje "aggressively cleanse" its border with Kosova. "Tough policing of the border is so important because it makes it very difficult for these people to relocate themselves from one theater of fighting to another," he said. NATO's KFOR occupation forces in Kosova have mounted heavy patrols on the border of Macedonia.

The Macedonian prime minister met his counterpart from Belgrade, Zoran Djindjic, on May 10, and declared afterwards that they would cooperate "in their efforts to contain ethnic Albanian militants," reported the *Associated Press*. In March, the U.S. forces in control of the southeast zone of Kosova had agreed to free Belgrade's hand in opposing Albanian guerrillas within its borders.

At the same time, Washington has stepped up its pressure on President Vojislav Kostunica of Yugoslavia to hand over his predecessor, Slobodan Milosevic. The May 10 *New York Times* reported that during a visit by Kostunica to the United States, President George Bush insisted that "American financial aid to Belgrade would depend on cooperation with the war crimes tribunal in the Hague."

## Strike in Greece defends pensions

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS—More than 50,000 working people marched to the Greek parliament May 17 as part of a general strike to protest government moves to gut the state pension system. Marches took place in cities throughout the country. The action was a follow-up to a general strike and a march of 100,000 April 26 and a protest of 15,000 on May 1.

Called by the General Confederation of Greek Workers and ADEDY, the civil service union federation, the mobilizations are demanding a halt to plans by the social democratic Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) government to raise the retirement age by at least five years, to cut benefits by about 29 percent, and to take away benefits from workers in hazardous jobs, such as the mining and chemical industries.

Facing mounting opposition leading up

to the April 26 strike, the government announced it would freeze its proposals and called for negotiations with the unions.

The May 17 strike called for additional state funding for the pension fund and for signing up 1 million immigrants and other workers not currently covered by it.

Workers in the metal industry, from shipyards and ports, in transit and the rail system, and others joined the strike and march, as did many unorganized workers who hadn't participated in the April 26 action to the same extent. This time, many shopkeepers also struck. A walk through neighborhoods in Athens confirmed that more than half of the small stores had their shutters down in support of the strike, with many having signs posted to that effect.

Natasha Terlexis is a member of the Federation of Air Transport Employees.

## THE MILITANT

### Israel out of West Bank, Gaza

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# Strikers resist union busting at Titan Tire

BY SUSAN LAMONT

NATCHEZ, Mississippi—After more than 32 months on strike, steelworkers at Titan Tire's plant here remain committed and confident in their fight against company efforts to break their union and run the plant with scab labor.

About 300 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 303L went on strike in September 1998, four months after steelworkers at Titan's Des Moines, Iowa, plant walked out. Both strikes were provoked by Titan Tire Corp.'s moves to force the rubber workers to labor under increasingly harsh conditions.

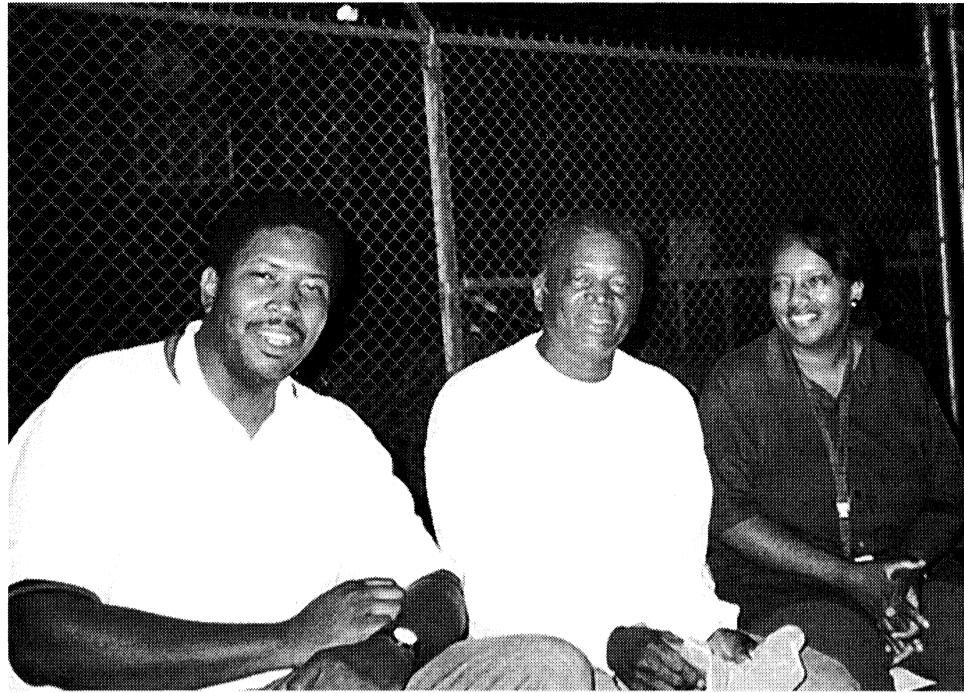
In the case of the Natchez facility, the company took over the plant in 1998. While the local was willing to give some concessions, CEO Maurice Taylor demanded more givebacks. When the union refused, he fired the union workforce, telling them they could only return to work on his terms. Local 303L members set up their picket line and it has remained up around the clock ever since.

"People should at least have some say so," said Jeffrey Free, who was staffing the picket line when *Militant* reporters visited recently. Free, 34, was hired in 1995, and worked in the mixing department. Before that, he worked construction on the oil rigs that line the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of nearby Louisiana. "Taylor came in and said he would take everything away from us. We had made an agreement and then he tried to take it away. He was trying to control us."

"My mother always said if I start something, then finish it," Free continued. "Taylor is wrong. And I am here to stand and fight as long as it takes. I need to find some work, but I will never move off or leave the fight."

While they continue to picket, some strikers have been able to get other jobs as truck drivers or at the Fruit of the Loom distribution center across the Mississippi River in Louisiana. But decent paying jobs are hard to find in this small city. One striker told the *Militant* that when he interviewed for a job at Wal-Mart and they found out he was on strike at Titan, they said he wouldn't be hired.

Local 303L members were encouraged to hear that their co-fighters in Des Moines had recently begun negotiations with the company for the first time in more than a year. "It's good that Des Moines is making



Photos: Militant/Susan LaMont  
Steelworkers on picket line at Titan Tire plant in Natchez, Mississippi, May 12. The unionists walked off the job in 1998 after the company threatened to lower wages, demanded they dump the union, and threatened to move work to another facility. On the picket line (left), from left to right: James White, Jeffrey Free, and Linda Reynolds.

progress," said James White, 57, a strike activist who worked as a tire builder in the plant for 31 years before the strike. "We've always said that we would support each other, that each local would stay out until both locals settled with Taylor."

Since April, the Natchez plant has been idled, with only a dozen or so employees inside for maintenance. Earlier this spring, Taylor began laying off the scab workforce and reduced operations to producing rubber for its nonunion plant in Brownsville, Texas.

On April 23, Taylor sent the city of Natchez a letter stating that Titan intends to exercise an option in its lease to purchase the plant and property for \$100. The city has owned the plant since it was built in 1939 and leased

it to Armstrong Tire and Rubber Company, which ran the plant for many years.

"By transferring the plant to Titan now, the city has cleared the way for Titan to abandon Natchez if that is Titan's whim," said Local 303L president Leo Bradley in the April 25 issue of *Solidarity News*, published by the USWA Titan International Council. "The city should explore every viable legal option to stop Titan from taking the plant." Local 303L members are circulating a petition urging the city to act to keep the plant from falling into Titan's hands. According to the lease, the city has 60 days to turn the plant over to Titan.

Strikers here were encouraged by the April 30 National Labor Relations Board decision to uphold a February 1999 ruling

by an administrative law judge finding Titan Tire Corp., a subsidiary of Titan International Inc., guilty of numerous federal labor law violations involving the Des Moines USWA Local 164. The NLRB also cited Taylor for making unlawful threats to move jobs and equipment from the Des Moines plant to Brownsville.

"Morrie Taylor wants to have his way with the steelworkers and bust the union," said White. "He thought we would roll over. But we surprised him—and we surprised ourselves too!"

*Susan LaMont is a garment worker and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Centreville, Alabama.*

## Protest condemns cop killing in Minneapolis

BY TOM FISKE

MINNEAPOLIS—"We need to achieve justice for my brother. My brother is dead," said Fidel DePaz to a protest of 50 people here at police headquarters May 16. "However, we have to fight this fight for our children and for others today. We need to set an

example and bring the guilty policeman to justice."

Efrain DePaz died after being shot in the neck by police Sergeant John Pielow April 28. DePaz, 21, was a restaurant and landscape worker who came to Minneapolis from Mexico to help support his family.

Police say they began chasing the car in which DePaz was riding after it sped past them in the southwestern part of Minneapolis. The car hit three parked cars, flipping one onto its top, and then crashed head-on into a second parked car on the other side of the street. According to witnesses the impact of both crashes was substantial.

The cops say that Sergeant Pielow went to the car with his gun drawn and told DePaz to get out. Allegedly DePaz began to reach under the seat and the sergeant reached inside the car, supposedly to pull DePaz out. At that point, according to the cop version of the story, Pielow's gun fired. A police search of the car failed to find any weapon.

Another witness told a very different story, according to an article in the Black community newspaper the *Spokesman-Recorder*. A young person who lives near the scene said he heard the crash and came out to see what was going on. "The car came to a stop, and out of nowhere a cop walked up and shot him. I didn't hear the police say anything—he just walked up and shot him."

Neighbors also reported that medical aid was not offered to DePaz until emergency personnel arrived on the scene 15 to 20 minutes later. DePaz's older brother has told the media here that the cops have told him little besides "they let a shot go by accident."

The demonstration May 16 was called by leaders of St. Stephen's Church. Attending were a number of Mexican and other Latino working people. Joining the action were some young people who had been involved in protests against the cop killing of Alfred Sanders, a Black worker, a few months earlier. The protest also included a delegation of four workers from United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 at the Dakota Premium Foods beef slaughterhouse, and members of Isaiah, a church-based community organization.

The action was called to pressure the cops to conduct a complete investigation. Participants at the demonstration conducted an impromptu discussion outside the police headquarters and decided that it was important to demand the indictment of Pielow and his jailing. In the discussion a number of participants referred to the slap-on-the-wrist indictments of the cops who killed Timothy Thomas in Cincinnati and the need to bring the police to justice for similar crimes. Another demonstration has been called for May 26.

## Workers in California fight eviction by landlord

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—"If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything," said Kendra Wilson at a rally of 30 people. Wilson and two other former tenants of landlord Jerry Curtis called the action to protest being forced out of a building that had been allowed to become so rundown the roof had blown off.

"We were all forced out. Our things were ruined. We could have moved out and stayed quiet. But we decided to let Jerry Curtis know he could not just change the locks and have us leave quietly. You have to stand up for your rights," Wilson continued. Wilson,

Andria Crosby, and Ira Jones, who describe themselves as "everyday people," filed suit April 26 against Curtis, who is deputy attorney general for the State Justice Department. The women claim Curtis locked them out, repaired the building, and is charging new tenants rents that are up to \$325 higher than they were paying.

Wilson described the events that led to them being forced out of the building at 3474 Boston Avenue in Oakland. "We knew there was a problem with the roof in 1999. We wrote two letters to Curtis at that time. All we got was 'When are you moving?' because he wanted to rent to someone else

for a higher rent. Then the roof blew off on October 22. We called and he promised to send someone out. He left on vacation without doing anything, leaving us exposed to the elements. A few days later roofers came, took a look, but didn't do any work."

"On October 25 it rained. I got a call at school that the rain was pouring into my apartment. When I got there I found 30 leaks, water pouring out of every electrical outlet, and everything I owned ruined."

Wilson, Jones, and Crosby were evacuated by the Oakland Fire Department and the building was "blue tagged" as an electrocution hazard. A TV station covered the story on the local news. The City of Oakland cited Curtis and ordered him to bring the building into compliance with the city's building code. Then the three tenants received letters demanding they vacate the premises and then, after the repairs were completed, received a second letter stating they would not be allowed to move back as they had "brought shame" to Curtis by speaking to the television reporters.

"This isn't supposed to happen to good tenants," Jones told the demonstrators. "I always paid my rent, faithfully and on time. We took care of the property. We always reported when repairs had to be made. Good tenants aren't supposed to be made homeless."

That was exactly the position Andria Crosby was in after the lockout. For weeks she slept on the floor of a friend's apartment. The press conference was the first time she had spoken in public. "I'm nervous, but I'm not afraid. We have to show he can't mess with us without consequences."

Literature produced by the women to build the demonstration echoed this theme: "Silence is a form of acceptance," it said.

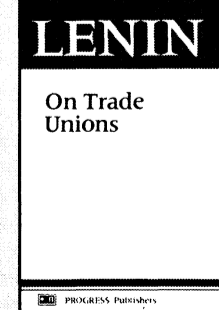
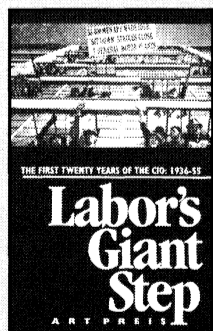
The rally also heard from their lawyers, attorneys Kenneth Goldstein and Ira Jacobowitz.

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# YS builds July 22–30 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

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BY ARNAR SIGURDSSON AND ÓLÓF ANDRA PROPPÉ

REYKJAVIK, Iceland—Workers and young people joined the annual trade union-organized May Day march here in larger numbers than usual this year. The official slogan of the march was “Welfare for all.” Contingents carried banners reading, “Against racism” and “Iceland for all.” One banner carried by a small group of Thai women read “Equal rights for immigrants!” in Thai, English, and Icelandic. There was a contingent of music teachers, who are fighting for better wages, and vegetable farmers who receive low prices for their produce.

In the months leading up to the march, the Organization of Icelandic Nationalists, an ultrarightist group, had been given media airtime for their racist and anti-immigrant views.

Members of the Young Socialists joined with other young people to highlight antiracism at the march and to be on alert to defend it against the possibility of the Nationalists intervening in or trying to disrupt the march. The Nationalists did not show up.

After the march YS members and other supporters of the *Militant* organized an open house at the Pathfinder bookstore to celebrate the publication of the Icelandic edition of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes. Twenty-five participants in the march attended the event.

One participant said he was impressed when he saw people selling the *Militant* on the street, and asked what else was done to help distribute the socialist paper and literature. “We set up weekly sales at the high schools, at factories, and in front of supermarkets,” explained YS member Hildur Magnúsdóttir. Participants in the march purchased 21 copies of the new Icelandic pamphlet, 9 single copies of the *Militant*, and a *Militant* subscription.

Since the mobilization participants in the action have formed a new antiracist group called Global Village—An Organization Against Racist Prejudice in Iceland. Some 200 people attended the founding meeting. Several YS members joined the discussion, explaining how racism is a product of capitalist society. The YS set up a literature table, selling *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It* by Leon Trotsky and two copies of the *Militant*.

At a recent *Militant* Labor Forum YS member Hallbjörn Thór Gudmundsson and *Militant* supporter Gylfi Páll Hersir spoke on the recent imperialist military provocations against China.

“The U.S. ruling class’s aggressive foreign policy towards China is reflected in its domestic policy,” Gudmundsson said, “such as the frame up of Wen Ho Lee. In Iceland you see the same pattern. The Icelandic government is rapidly increasing its participation in ‘peace keeping missions’ around the world and at the same time strengthening

the police force at home. The number of policemen has increased by 10 percent in the last five years. Now there is one policeman for every 830 people in the country,” he said.

Andri Bjarnason, one of the 13 participants at the forum, had met the YS at a high school literature table. In response to one participant who said Taiwan has the right to arm itself, he responded that it was the United States that was using Taiwan in its assault against China, something Washington did not have the right to do.

The YS and supporters of the *Militant* have stepped up sales of revolutionary and communist literature. Recently they participated in a team to Selfoss, a town in a farming area in the south of Iceland. The team sold every copy of the *Militant* it had with them and three copies of the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*.

The YS is also visiting high schools to raise the idea of taking part in the August World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers.



BY JOHN CRYSDALE

PHILADELPHIA—Young Socialists have been working with many young people to build the upcoming Second Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange that is being held in Havana July 22–30. Students from the University of Pennsylvania, Bryn Mawr, and Haverford colleges; three students from Masterman high school; and three young workers have formed a committee to help organize the delegation going from the Philadelphia area.

“The Cuban government seems like the antithesis of the American government,” said Alex Porsen, a student at Masterman High School, at the first meeting on May 2. “This conference seems like a great opportunity for people to see Cuba for themselves.” Porsen and other Masterman students have been building the U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange at their school.

Jessica Work, a student at the University of Pennsylvania, decided she wanted to go to Cuba after hearing Oscar Redondo, of the Cuban Interests Section, and Jorge González, from the Cuban Ministry of Culture speak at her school in April. “I want to witness firsthand the situation there, instead of blindly accepting what teachers and textbooks have told me,” she said.

So far about a dozen people are participating in the meetings of the committee, which is organizing to find affordable airfare, raise funds, and publicize the Youth Exchange. To raise money the committee is asking university department heads, churches, and other organizations for grants. Committee members are offering to speak on their experiences in Cuba to churches and organizations that make a contribution. So far a grant of \$1,500 has been received from the Philadelphia Cuba Support Coalition toward the effort. One fundraising plan is to make and sell T-shirts featuring Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto “Che” Guevara.

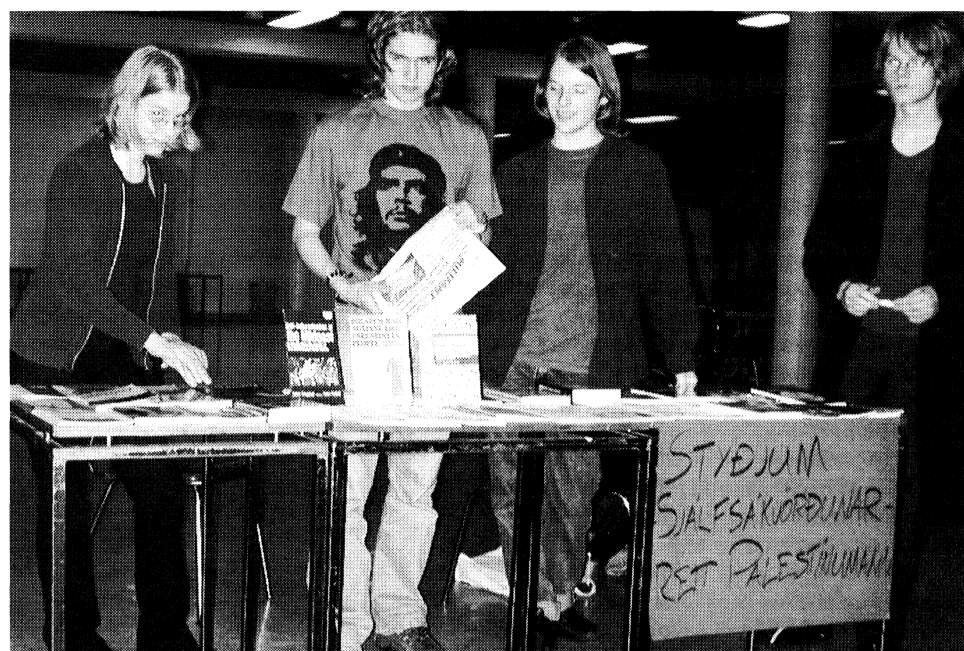
Members of the local group are also reaching out to youth by setting up weekly tables at campuses and political events to build the conference and use the opportunity to raise funds at the same time.



BY KRISTOFFER SCHULTZ AND DANIEL AHL

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The Young Socialists and Communist League in Sweden have been working on building the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS) in Algiers, August 8–16. On April 2 we attended a meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden, of the National Preparatory Committee, which has set a goal of sending 60 young people to the festival. The WFYS is a gathering of thousands of youth from different organizations, and gives youth groups an opportunity to discuss with other revolutionary-minded young people the fight against imperialism.

Over the Easter weekend, an educational conference was organized by the Communist League and the YS to celebrate publication of the Pathfinder title *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington’s First Military Defeat in the*



Gudmundur Jonsson

Young Socialists in Reykjavik, Iceland, with a literature table of revolutionary books and papers at a May 10 rock concert to support Palestinian struggle.

Americas. Anton Halldin, 22, who first met the YS at the Gothenburg Book Fair in 1999, attended the three-day event.

As part of our political preparation for the WFYS, a class was held on the 1954–65 Algerian revolution. The readings described the workers and farmers government that was brought to power in March 1963 and overthrown by a counterrevolutionary coup in June 1965. The Education for Socialists bulletins *The Workers and Farmers Government* by Joseph Hansen and *Workers and Farmers Governments Since the Second World War* by Robert Chester, both published by Pathfinder Press, were pointed to in the discussion as invaluable reading material.

René Gonzales Gles, a leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) in Cuba, spoke at a meeting April 28 hosted by the YS at the Pathfinder Bookstore and attended by 25 people. Gonzales, who is responsible for the UJC relations in Scandinavian countries, visited Stockholm as part of a month-long

tour to meet with political and solidarity organizations in the region.

“Culture is our primary weapon” in Cuba, Gonzales said, “and right now our struggle is an ideological one. We are confident that we can defend ourselves militarily, we have proven that. But we need to work politically and broaden our culture to defend the values of our socialist revolution.” Gonzales, who was active in organizing the 14th World Festival for Youth and Students held in Havana in 1997, said that the UJC is planning to send a delegation of 300 to the festival in Algiers.

On May Day the YS and Communist League set up three Pathfinder book tables at a rally sponsored by the Left Party, which attracted some 7,000 people, and a fourth table at a rally organized by the Social Democratic Party. Workers and youth at the rallies bought 2,000 kronor (\$200) worth of Pathfinder literature, five subscriptions to the *Militant*, four to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 27 single issues of the *Militant*.

## Colorado students report on Cuba trip

BY HELEN MEYERS

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colorado—Seventy-five people attended a May 14 slide presentation on Cuba presented by four students who participated in the recent national congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). The lively meeting was sponsored by La Junta, a student group in the Latin American Studies Department, and included discussion and a Mexican dinner.

The April 29–30 CTC congress in Havana was attended by 1,600 elected delegates and concluded with a May Day march of 600,000 Cuban working people. The congress proceedings were informed by a five-month discussion period organized in workplaces across the country. International delegations from across the Americas and many other countries participated in the events along with visits to factories and other worksites to learn more about the Cuban Revolution.

Nicole Garst, Dan Packard, Eduardo Gabrielloff, and Julie Weitzer, all students at Colorado College here, presented a slide show depicting various aspects of what they saw in Cuba. A lively discussion took place throughout the evening. An hour after the meeting had ended many of the participants were still in the room informally discussing the Cuban Revolution.

The speakers explained that there are problems in Cuba today but they are not like those that exist in the United States. One slide showed four young people who had been roller blading on the stairs at the University of Havana talking to a policeman. “It was not like the United States where a cop just says I am the boss and you have to do this,” Nicole Garst said. “We saw a discussion taking place between these young people and the policeman. Then the young people just skated away.”

Another slide was of a street in Havana that had been closed so that young students could paint on it. “It was good to see people rule the roads instead of cars,” Garst said. Dan Packard told the audience that while walking on the street some people ap-

proached the group asking for U.S. dollars. They spoke about an experience where they were taken to a police station after being stopped while riding in an unlicensed taxi.

After seeing a slide of people playing bagpipes and flutes in a park, several participants asked about arts and culture in Cuba. One of the students said there are cultural centers throughout Cuba where students, workers, and farmers can get musical instruments and training. In addition, artists receive subsidies from the government so they can continue their work.

“What other leaders are being developed in Cuba?” one person at the meeting asked. “There is a big movement to promote new leaders,” Garst said. She pointed to the leadership and the elected delegates at the CTC congress where “there were several younger leaders and the delegates were multiracial.”

Eduardo Gabrielloff explained there is a shortage of child care available in Cuba and this was an issue at the CTC congress. Many delegates pointed out that access to child care had declined given the economic difficulties the country had confronted over the past decade. Given the shortage of spaces, having only six months of paid maternity leave was a problem. An exchange on this question with delegates included Cuban president Fidel Castro who attended sessions of the congress. Gabrielloff said he was surprised when the congress decided to give workers one year maternity leave as a way to help solve the problem and that the decision was implemented by the government the next day. “You’d never see action that fast in the United States,” he said.

Packard explained that the trip had helped them take a closer look at socialism. “One of us was an anarchist but now is a socialist,” he said. Gabrielloff ended the meeting by saying, “I used to be pessimistic, but now I am not.”

A number of participants expressed interest in helping to form a Cuba solidarity committee to organize students and other youth to go to the Second Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, scheduled for July 22–30 in Havana.

### Young Socialist Fund Drive May 6–July 1

| City                        | Goal           | Paid         |            |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|------------|
| New York                    | 700            | 260          | 37%        |
| Twin Cities                 | 300            | 78           | 26%        |
| Tucson                      | 300            | 45           | 15%        |
| Chicago                     | 300            |              | 0%         |
| Los Angeles                 | 450            |              | 0%         |
| Philadelphia                | 150            |              | 0%         |
| Pittsburgh                  | 200            |              | 0%         |
| Seattle                     | 90             |              | 0%         |
| Tuscaloosa                  |                |              |            |
| Other                       |                | 452          |            |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$2,490</b> | <b>\$835</b> | <b>34%</b> |
| <b>Nat'l goal/should be</b> | <b>\$2,400</b> | <b>\$600</b> | <b>25%</b> |

# Target week and new book will give boost to circulation drive

BY RÓGER CALERO

The May 20 meeting in New York, "In Defense of Leninism: Expanding Opportunities for Communists Today," kicked off the final segment of the international circulation drive to win new subscribers to the *Militant* and its sister monthly publication *Perspectiva Mundial*. The event also launched a campaign to sell *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, one of three Pathfinder titles that are part of the subscription drive.

Making the most of every day of the May 26-June 3 target week in the drive will be the best way for all partisans of the *Militant* to bring the revolutionary perspective discussed at the May 20 meeting to workers, farmers, and young people, along with news and information about the resistance of working people around the world to the assaults, racism, and wars of the capitalists and their governments.

*Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*—available to new subscribers for only \$5—together with two other pamphlets, is an effective tool to explain why workers and farmers in the United States need to build a communist youth organization and party that will lead the coming battles for power in this country.

Already during the drive *Militant* supporters have put *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning and Pathfinder Was Born With the October Revolution* into the hands of hundreds of people, as indicated in the chart on this page. *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* should give a boost to these efforts heading into the final weeks of the campaign. For example, those attending the May 20 meeting purchased 58 copies of the new title and an additional \$334 in books along with several subscriptions.

At the meeting SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters said the campaign to double the size of the Young Socialists is simultaneously a campaign to double the number of candidates for party membership, the quality of the Militant Labor Forums, the reach of revolutionary and communist literature, the outreach of socialist election campaigns, and the exposure and face of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party. These political goals and spirit are what the circulation campaign and book distribution efforts are all about.

The day before the meeting socialist workers and Young Socialists set up tables in the Garment District in New York. In one afternoon they sold five copies of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, another \$139 worth of books, and a subscription to a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

In Upper Manhattan, Don Mackle reports a team sold several subscriptions and copies of the new book at a meeting in Harlem commemorating the birthday of revolutionary leader Malcolm X. A college student who bought a subscription said he has been increasingly angry about the reactionary assaults in the world. "At first I decided to just ignore everything," he said. "But now I decided I should do

something about the problems. I want to start reading and get to know more about what is going on." By the end of a short afternoon of sales the team had sold seven subscriptions to the *Militant*, one subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and more than \$125 in Pathfinder books. Three people took advantage of the special offer of \$15 for a *Militant* subscription and the new book.

Through the circulation campaign partisans of the *Militant* can look forward to finding the "ordinary working men and women," such as those described in the new book who were responsible for making the Cuban Revolution. There are plenty of places to do that today, such as at the action of coal miners in West Virginia in their fight against the mining bosses; the June 2 march in Cincinnati against police brutality; a June 9 rally demanding justice for the five longshore workers in South Carolina accused of "inciting to riot;" on the picket lines with garment workers in Baltimore; at rallies to demand equal rights for immigrants; and elsewhere. All are opportunities to introduce workers and farmers to the politics found in *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*.

Creativity and initiative, along with a well-planned effort during the target week can help put the drive on track.



BY BOB TUCKER

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—"This is a good paper for me to read," said one resident of Natchez, Mississippi, who lives two blocks from the Titan Tire plant. Workers from Birmingham who read the *Militant* introduced the paper to Titan Tire strikers and other working people in the city during a trip there in mid-May. As part of an antiunion drive, Titan bosses locked workers out of that plant more than two years ago. But the strike and round-the-clock picketing of the facility remain strong. One striker on the picket line decided to get a subscription just minutes before the two-day team left for home. Nine other single copies were sold there.

Back in Birmingham supporters of the *Militant* made a concerted effort to reach out to the growing number of Spanish-speaking workers in the area. In just two blocks of door-to-door sales, three workers



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Revolutionary literature on display at May 20 event in New York celebrating the publication of Pathfinder's new title *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*.

bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, sending Birmingham over our goal of five. We decided to raise our goal to seven *PM* subscriptions.

A number of people have filled out subscription forms and asked us to call them back later, and we plan some more door-to-door sales. It was quite a good week for us here and an excellent warm up for the worldwide target week.

## Militant/PM subscription drive to win new readers April 14-June 10 (week 5)

| Country               | Militant |      |     | PM   |      | Pamphlet |      |
|-----------------------|----------|------|-----|------|------|----------|------|
|                       | Goal     | Sold | %   | Goal | Sold | Goal     | Sold |
| Sweden                | 12       | 7    | 58% | 5    | 7    | 20       | 1    |
| <b>New Zealand</b>    |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| Auckland              | 10       | 7    | 70% | 1    |      | 20       | 11   |
| Christchurch          | 8        | 2    | 25% | 1    | 1    | 10       | 2    |
| <b>N.Z. total</b>     | 18       | 9    | 50% | 2    | 1    | 30       | 13   |
| <b>United States</b>  |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| Seattle*              | 25       | 17   | 68% | 8    | 5    | 55       | 17   |
| Fresno                | 9        | 6    | 67% | 9    | 1    | 15       | 2    |
| Washington*           | 27       | 18   | 67% | 26   | 20   | 60       | 48   |
| Miami                 | 22       | 14   | 64% | 20   | 12   | 70       | 30   |
| Grand Junction        | 25       | 15   | 60% | 5    | 5    | 35       | 30   |
| Los Angeles           | 50       | 30   | 60% | 25   | 21   | 80       | 7    |
| Omaha                 | 15       | 9    | 60% | 18   | 15   | 20       | 6    |
| Houston               | 35       | 20   | 57% | 15   | 4    | 50       | 15   |
| Newark                | 40       | 22   | 55% | 25   | 15   | 70       | 33   |
| Chicago               | 35       | 18   | 51% | 25   | 16   | 75       | 30   |
| Twin Cities           | 35       | 18   | 51% | 25   | 17   | 50       | 9    |
| Cleveland             | 20       | 10   | 50% | 6    |      | 30       | 19   |
| Des Moines            | 30       | 15   | 50% | 20   | 20   | 45       | 33   |
| Pittsburgh            | 40       | 19   | 48% | 5    | 1    | 55       | 15   |
| Detroit               | 20       | 9    | 45% | 5    | 2    | 40       | 15   |
| Allentown             | 18       | 8    | 44% | 5    | 2    | 20       | 9    |
| Birmingham*           | 25       | 11   | 44% | 7    | 6    | 45       | 13   |
| Charlotte             | 12       | 5    | 42% | 4    | 3    | 25       | 9    |
| Atlanta               | 30       | 12   | 40% | 15   | 8    | 40       | 20   |
| NY Garment Dist.      | 70       | 28   | 40% | 55   | 25   | 150      | 41   |
| Upper Manhattan       | 70       | 27   | 39% | 50   | 31   | 125      | 60   |
| San Francisco         | 50       | 18   | 36% | 25   | 17   | 100      | 38   |
| Philadelphia          | 30       | 10   | 33% | 10   | 6    | 45       | 12   |
| Boston*               | 25       | 8    | 32% | 10   | 8    | 20       | 7    |
| Brooklyn              | 75       | 22   | 29% | 40   | 16   | 150      | 38   |
| Tampa                 | 8        | 2    | 25% | 6    |      | 15       | 11   |
| Tucson                | 8        | 2    | 25% | 5    |      | 6        |      |
| <b>U.S. total</b>     | 849      | 393  | 46% | 469  | 276  | 1491     | 567  |
| <b>United Kingdom</b> | 35       | 12   | 34% | 10   | 5    | 70       | 5    |
| <b>Iceland*</b>       | 6        | 2    | 33% | 1    |      | 45       | 35   |
| <b>Australia</b>      | 12       | 4    | 33% | 2    | 1    | 25       | 16   |
| <b>Canada</b>         |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| Vancouver             | 15       | 7    | 47% | 2    | 1    | 35       | 8    |
| Montreal              | 12       | 3    | 25% | 5    | 2    | 40       | 21   |
| Toronto               | 20       | 3    | 15% | 3    | 1    | 40       | 12   |
| <b>Canada total</b>   | 47       | 13   | 28% | 10   | 4    | 115      | 41   |
| <b>Int'l totals</b>   | 979      | 440  | 44% | 499  | 294  | 1796     | 678  |
| <b>Goal/Should be</b> | 1000     | 620  | 62% | 500  | 310  | 1900     | 1178 |
| <b>IN THE UNIONS</b>  |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| <b>New Zealand</b>    |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| NDU                   | 2        | 1    | 50% |      |      | 2        | 1    |
| MWU                   | 1        | 0    | 0%  |      |      | 1        | 0    |
| <b>Total</b>          | 3        | 1    | 33% |      |      | 3        | 1    |
| <b>Canada</b>         |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| UFCW                  | 10       | 3    | 30% | 2    | 0    | 15       | 6    |
| UNITE                 | 2        |      | 0%  | 2    |      | 9        | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>          | 12       | 3    | 25% | 4    | 0    | 24       | 9    |
| <b>United States</b>  |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| UMWA                  | 25       | 5    | 20% | 1    |      | 25       | 0    |
| UFCW                  | 65       | 12   | 18% | 80   | 41   | 170      | 46   |
| UNITE                 | 35       | 2    | 6%  | 30   | 12   | 70       | 4    |
| <b>Total</b>          | 125      | 19   | 15% | 111  | 53   | 265      | 50   |
| <b>Australia</b>      |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |
| MUA                   | 2        |      | 0%  |      |      | 3        | 1    |
| Meat workers          | 2        |      |     |      |      | 3        |      |
| <b>Total</b>          | 2        | 0    | 0%  |      |      |          |      |
| <b>raised goal*</b>   |          |      |     |      |      |          |      |

## NAACP in North Carolina calls for clemency in death penalty case

BY CONNIE ALLEN

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—"We implore Gov. Mike Easley to do something. In this case we have proof that race was discussed by the jury. We cannot delay on this important issue. Justice delayed will be justice denied," said C. Renee Jarrett for the North Carolina NAACP at a press conference May 14 to demand clemency for Robert Bacon. Jarrett was joined by Charlotte area ministers, the Charlotte Coalition for a Moratorium Now, and James Ferguson II, president of North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers.

"The case of Robert Bacon is another dramatic illustration of just how deeply flawed the North Carolina death penalty apparatus is. Mr. Bacon's case highlights and illustrates the pernicious role that race plays in determining who lives and who dies," said Ferguson's statement.

Robert Bacon, a Black man, was convicted and sentenced to death in the 1987 murder of his girlfriend's husband, Bonnie Clark, who is white and Bacon's codefendant, was found guilty of murder in a separate trial for instigating and planning the killing of her husband. She was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Bacon was scheduled to be executed May 18. On May 10, Pamela Smith, a juror in a 1991 resentencing trial, said in an affidavit that racial bias contributed to the sentencing. "Some jurors felt it was wrong for a Black man to date a white woman," she said. "Jurors also felt that Black people commit more crime and that it is typical of Blacks to be involved in crime.... Some jurors were adamant in their feeling that Bacon was a Black man and 'he deserved what he got.'"

In a related development, attorneys for North Carolina death row prisoners filed a class-action lawsuit May 11 contending it is illegal to execute the prisoners because of the governor's role in defending death sentences for these individuals during his two terms as attorney general. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of Bacon and two others and will cover most of the 219 people on North Carolina's death row.

The North Carolina Supreme Court May 17 postponed Bacon's execution and announced that it would hear arguments in the class-action suit June 7.

This battle is another step in the mounting fight to stop the executions in North Carolina. At the May 14 press conference, Ferguson explained that the coalition is calling for a two-year moratorium to allow for those who believe the death penalty is inherently racist to present their evidence. He pointed to a new study by teachers at the University of North Carolina confirming "what Mr. Bacon's case illustrates: race continues to be a major aggravating factor in the imposition of the death penalty in North Carolina, as in the rest of the nation."

**From Pathfinder**

### Che Guevara Talks to Young People

"We are attacked a great deal because of what we are. But we are attacked much, much more because we show to every nation of the Americas what it's possible to be. What's important for imperialism — much more than Cuba's nickel mines or sugar mills, or Venezuela's oil, or Mexico's cotton, or Chile's copper, or Argentina's cattle, or Paraguay's grasslands, or Brazil's coffee — is the totality of these raw materials upon which the monopolies feed." —Che Guevara, July 28, 1960

**\$15.95**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

# Bush's energy plan aids capitalists, hits working people

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Working people here are raising voices of protest over the direction the state government is moving to increase electrical power generation. Two steps so far involve opening a boiler built in 1951 that the government admits puts out more pollution per megawatt of power than any other in the city, and placing 10 gas-fired turbines in "poor neighborhoods that already suffer from air pollution," in the words of a *New York Times* editorial.

According to the *Times*, the state government "cut regulatory corners and exploited a loophole in state laws to dodge full environmental reviews," and is pushing to quickly set up the new turbine facilities. Although four of the six plants could generate 88 megawatts, the state government decided to run them at 79.9 megawatts, thus avoiding the public and environmental review mandated for any facility generating 80 megawatts or more.

Two dozen opponents of a plant slated to be constructed in Queens held a rally after winning a judge's ruling that the state had repeatedly violated its own environmental laws in its drive to set up the plants.

"This shows they just can't go putting anything they want in this neighborhood," said Rita Normandeau, president of the Queensbridge Tenants Association. "We have a lot of kids with asthma because of the plants already here, and seniors with respiratory illnesses. We put up a big fight because that is the only thing that works, when they know you're not going away."

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani backed Con Edison's decision to open the oil-fired boiler near the Brooklyn Navy Yard. "I think there is going to be opposition to any power plant, but then people are going to wonder why the lights don't go on," he said. According to press reports, the city has 25 percent more capacity than needed for peak summertime loads.

In early March 200 people crowded a town hall meeting in Cortlandt, New York, to express their concern over the safety of operations at the nearby Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant. The facility has been plagued by incidents of radiation leaks and safety violations. The 27-year-old plant is being restarted after a 10-month shutdown last year following the rupture of a corroded steam generator tube. Superheated radioactive water leaked inside the plant, and some radioactive steam also escaped into the atmosphere.

## Houston event discusses Pathfinder title on Cuban victory at Bay of Pigs

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—A public event featuring the new Pathfinder book *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas* was hosted by a Barnes and Noble bookstore here May 12.

The speaker was Tom Leonard, a unionist and longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, and a participant in protest actions in Denver in 1961 against Washington's invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Twenty people attended the event.

The program, which was part of the store's weekly community affairs events featuring books carried in the store, was advertised by flyers available at the bookstore. In addition Barnes and Noble mailed out 100 postcards on the meeting and placed an advertisement in the *Houston Press*.

Alethea Nelson, community relations manager for the store and organizer of the event, welcomed the participants and introduced Leonard. A table displaying dozens of copies of *Playa Girón*, along with copies of *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces* and posters of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* in Spanish, French, and English, was set up next to the speakers' platform.

The store ordered 40 copies of *Playa Girón*, according to Nelson, who was

Entergy Nuclear, a company that operates nuclear power plants around the country, is buying the Indian Point 1—built in the 1950s—and Indian Point 2 nuclear plants. They are located just 35 miles north of New York City. Indian Point 1 has been mothballed for many years. The company has declared its intention to run them at maximum capacity. Entergy Nuclear last year bought the adjacent Indian Point 3 plant from the New York Power Authority.

These moves by capitalist energy monopolies and the rationalizations for them by government officials are similar to those at the heart of a "national energy plan" announced by U.S. president George Bush last week. Bush's proposals are fashioned to meet the growing energy needs of the U.S. economy, and include the relaxation of environmental and other regulations, which, as in New York, will mean greater health problems for working people. The administration will also seek to open up broader areas of the country—onshore and off—for increased exploitation by oil, gas, and coal companies, and encourage the expansion of electrical generation by nuclear power.

Standing on the banks of the Mississippi River in St. Paul, Minnesota, the president asserted May 17 that without accepting the moves contained in the administration's 170-page energy report, "Americans will face more, and more widespread, blackouts." This future, he asserted, "is unfortunately being previewed in rising prices at the gas pump and rolling blackouts in the great state of California."

### Wooing labor officials

A few days before announcing the energy plan, Bush sought to portray it as benefiting working people by inviting top officials from 23 labor unions to rub elbows with Vice President Richard Cheney for a few hours May 14. Seeing prospects for shoring up their declining dues base, the select group embraced the proposals.

James Hoffa, the president of the Teamsters union, called Bush's policy "the beginning of finding a solution to many of the problems we're having." He added, "The amount of people involved would be in the literally hundreds of thousands."

Hoffa also backed the promotion of nuclear power, telling conservative *Washington Post* columnist Robert Novak, "We're for it. America has been scared off this idea."

Douglas McCarron, president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, said, "If

pleased with initial sales of the book. As customers came up the store's escalator to the second floor they saw the book display and gathering. Several stopped for awhile to listen to the program.

Leonard encouraged those present to buy and read the book. Drawing upon his own experiences as a merchant seaman during the 1940s and '50s, he pointed out that while U.S. imperialism was defeated for the first time in the Americas at Playa Girón it was not its first defeat. Leonard spoke of the events following the end of World War II when U.S. soldiers in the Pacific demanded to come home, thereby thwarting Washington's desire to take China, and about U.S. imperialism's defeat in the 1950-53 Korean War.

"I want to draw your attention to the book's foreword in particular," he said. "It is written by Jack Barnes, who was a student at Carleton College in Minnesota at the time of the events." Leonard asked his audience to think about a quote from Fidel Castro in a March 1961 speech printed in the book that begins, "A victorious revolution will be seen in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba."

After the presentation those present participated in a lively discussion period for more than an hour, and several of them purchased copies of the featured book.

## New York teachers rally for raise



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Thousands of New York City teachers, members of the United Federation of Teachers, rallied at City Hall after school May 17. Teachers, who have been working without a contract since Nov. 15, 2000, are demanding raises of at least 20 percent over two years to bring their pay closer to what teachers in suburban areas earn. New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani has attacked the teachers union for opposing individual of "merit pay" and other measures that would undercut seniority and make teachers more vulnerable to management reprisals. Many teachers expressed concern with large class size and scant resources. Cody Onufrock, 24, who is just completing his first year teaching science, said, "With 34 kids in my class it's virtually impossible to keep up, just because of the sheer numbers. And I couldn't get books for the students."

—MAGGIE TROWE

it helps America, we're going to work with this administration."

According to a May 15 *Post* report, "Mike Mathis, director of government affairs for the Teamsters, said Cheney and other officials stressed 'over and over' the number of jobs that would be created by the policy's call for 1,300 to 1,900 new power plants over the next 20 years and 38,000 miles of natural gas transmission lines. "Those are good-paying, often union jobs," Mathis said."

The *Post* added, "Labor leaders cited a private study showing that oil drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which Bush's plan recommends, would create 25,000 Teamsters jobs and 700,000 jobs overall." The plan also calls for creating a national electricity grid similar to the interstate highway system, and for giving the federal government the right to seize private land for electrical power lines by "eminent domain."

### Expanding oil drilling on public lands

The federal government controls 31 percent of the land in the United States. Washington's aim is to reverse a policy that puts much of this off-limits to exploitation by the capitalists who own the giant energy companies. Towards this end, the report calls for beginning oil exploration on 8 percent of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as "the single most promising prospect in the United States."

Drilling in the refuge, Bush argues, can produce 600,000 barrels of oil a day for the next 47 years. "That happens to be exactly the amount the United States now imports from Iraq," he stated.

Reinforcing this American nationalist framework to drum up support for his energy plan, Bush further said the United States "imports 52 percent of all our oil. If we don't take action, those imports will only grow."

Besides oil and gas expansion, Bush's plan calls for stepping up the production of coal, which already accounts for 52 percent of all energy consumed in the United States. "Currently the United States has enough coal to last for another 250 years," the report states. "Yet very few coal-powered electric plants are now under construction."

The day after the president released the proposals of this energy task force, Bush signed an executive order instructing government agencies to issue energy impact statements, detailing how the proposed moves will affect the nation's "energy health." These statements will in practice be used to counteract the environmental impact statements that federal law for decades has required anyone wanting to drill oil wells, lay pipelines, or build power plants to prepare.

"Instead of 'why drill?' commented a

May 18 *New York Times* news analysis article by Douglas Jehl, "the basic presumption of the Bush team seems to be 'why not?' Under that approach, the interior secretary Gale A. Norton, is being instructed 'where opportunities exist' to review and modify restrictions that stand in the way of oil and gas leasing across America's public lands."

Emphasizing the speed with which they intend to move on this front, 85 recommendations made by the energy task force, which was headed by Cheney, can be carried out by executive decision, while only 20 depend on Congressional action.

Some press coverage of the plan has lifted the lid somewhat on the lack of enforcement of existing environmental regulations well before Bush entered the White House. According to the *New York Times*, "At least half of the country's 152 oil refineries are believed to be violating air-pollution laws, federal officials say, but with the refineries

Continued on Page 14

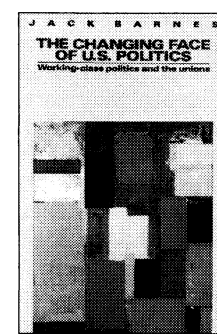
from Pathfinder

### The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Unions

JACK BARNES

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their



unions, and all of society. Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95

### The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

James P. Cannon

In this companion to Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*, Cannon and other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party defend the centrality of proletarianization within the political and organizational principles of Marxism in a polemic against a petty-bourgeois current in the party. The debate unfolded as Washington prepared to drag U.S. working people into the slaughter of World War II. \$19.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12

# Hollander workers approve new contract

BY BETH FLETCHER

FRACKVILLE, Pennsylvania—"We showed them we're not afraid to stand up to them, to stand up for each other," said Linda Kairitis, one of the striking UNITE members who just voted to end their three-week walkout against Hollander Home Fashions here.

Workers approved a new contract on May 18. The previous day 450 strikers at Hollander in Los Angeles voted to end their strike and the 100 union members in Tignall, Georgia, who had been honoring a picket line set up by their fellow unionists in California, announced they are returning to work.

Workers here report they won significant improvements in the health insurance plan and prescription drug program. The new contract provides a 25-cent wage increase the first year and 20 cents the following two years. "We didn't get the company contributions into a 401 (k) retirement plan," reported Mary Ann Subick, "but the company will pick up the service fee. At least we got a foot in the door."

Union members feel their strike put them in a stronger position to fight against health and safety hazards in the plant, for changes in the attendance policy, and against increased work given to piece rate workers.

## In Los Angeles, UNITE strikers are stronger at end of walkout

BY FRANCISCO CIPRIANO

VERNON, California—After two and a half months of being on strike, workers at Hollander Home Fashions here ratified a new contract May 17 in a 145-5 vote. "We won!" yelled several strikers as they came out of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees hall. The 450 workers had been on strike since March 8 at two Hollander plants in this city, located in downtown Los Angeles.

During the strike the unionists won the support of workers in the area, explained the issues in the dispute at a high school, joined picket lines, and leafleted in front of IKEA stores, which sell Hollander products.

Like the majority of the strikers here, Gregorio Rosales called the new contract a step forward. Rosales, who has worked at Hollander for close to four years, explained that the new contract includes a 401 (k) pension plan, which was one of the main demands of the workers.

Striker Martha Bonilla said the walkout

The strike here won support from other workers in the area. They were joined on the picket line by garment workers, members of the Teamsters, service workers, and municipal unions. Even as strikers here were taking down their picket line after ratifying the contract, a boilermaker came by the line with 30 chicken dinners he had cooked for the strikers, and a laid off coal miner dropped by with a personal contribution for the strike.

Remarking on their decision three weeks ago to set up picket lines and join their fellow unionists on strike in California, Diane Beckett, a single needle operator in the plant, explained, "How could we not have voted to strike? We would be letting them down."

"We have Los Angeles to thank for going out," said Subick. "They gave us the courage to stand up here. Otherwise we might not have gone out on strike and just took whatever Hollander said was their last best offer."

As Kassie Harding and Linda Kairitis were dismantling the picket tent and organizing to return co-workers' belongings to them Friday afternoon, Harding said this strike had changed them all. "This was a great experience. It was like a block party without beer. We went to Baltimore to sup-

port the laundry workers who are fighting for a union. We went to IKEA in Philadelphia" to inform the company and its customers about the strike issues.

Kairitis added, "For most of us this was our first time on strike. We're not going to stop. Now we're ready to go wherever the union needs us for solidarity."

"When we go back in the plant on Monday, I hope nobody walks in with their eyes down or their head down," said Subick. "We waged one hell of a fight and we should walk in there proud as peacocks."



Harold Blackwell

Workers at Hollander Home Fashions in Tignall, Georgia, honor picket lines of strikers from Los Angeles.

## Laundry workers strike for a union

Continued from front page

in the soil room. "Workers get stuck by syringes that are caught up in the laundry. We don't have protective clothing. The company is supposed to provide hepatitis shots, but they don't. Sometimes the temperature rises to over 100 degrees in the plant, and the ventilation is poor," Prater said.

Workers at Up-To-Date, the majority of whom are Black and Latino, have been fighting for a union for two years. They have filed numerous complaints with the Maryland Commission on Human Relations and the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission over racial discrimination and sexual harassment.

Maria Espinoza, who was hired by the company to recruit Latino workers, spoke at the rally about young female workers who were sexually harassed and faced physical abuse. "I felt awkward because the company wanted me to tell workers they would be

Maryland and Virginia. Ten workers drove in a van from the Flushing Shirt plant in Jefferson, Pennsylvania. Other unions represented included the Teamsters, Service Employees International Union, United Steelworkers of America, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Nearly 50 striking workers and family members from Hollander Home Fashions in Frackville, Pennsylvania, organized a bus to the rally. "This is what the union is about," said Diane Beckett, one of the Frackville Hollander strikers. "We have to stick together and help each other out."

The rally was addressed by Kweisi Mfume, national president of the NAACP, who described the laundry workers' fight for dignity. Other speakers included Bruce Raynor, secretary treasurer of UNITE; Richard Trumka, secretary treasurer of the

"was a victory because we won what we fought for," referring to the retirement plan. She said the new three-year contract includes a wage increase that the company had not offered in its initial proposal. The contract includes wage raises of 25 cents an hour the first and second years and 15 cents an hour the third year, she said.

Several strikers expressed their dissatisfaction with a company demand, agreed to as part of the contract signing, that the union could not take action against workers who crossed the picket line during the strike. Hollander agreed not to take any action against the strikers as well.

"The strike was beneficial for all the workers," Rosales said. "[We] got to know each other better, the owner realized the power of the union, and even though the 401 (k) is not what we expected, perhaps we will negotiate better conditions in the next contract."

Francisco Cipriano is a meat packer in Vernon, California.

## Protests for drivers licenses highlight attack on rights of all working people

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Ongoing protests in California by immigrant workers against government moves to require a Social Security number in order to get a drivers license has brought to the fore an attack on the democratic rights of all working people. The regulation is a back door move by the government to establish a national identity card.

The U.S. rulers have been trying to institute some form of mandatory identification card for more than two decades. Two efforts to institute a federal ID card, one by the administration of President Ronald Reagan in 1981 and another in 1986, were shelved due to widespread opposition among working people and others. In 1994 President William Clinton signed off on a national ID card recommended to him by a commission on immigration reform.

Among the other reactionary provisions of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, passed with bipartisan support in Congress under Clinton, was a measure requiring the Department of Transportation to issue regulations that would mandate every state to place a driver's Social Security number on the license or other identification cards issued by the state.

Several states had already begun linking drivers' licenses to federal databases. Georgia legislators passed a law requiring digitized fingerprints on all state drivers' licenses and IDs. Oregon and Alabama took similar actions. Some politicians want to go further. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a liberal Democrat from California, is an advocate of "biometric" security checks, such as fin-

gerprint, retina scan, or voice print, integrated into the driver's license.

Resistance to the drift toward a national ID card came from various quarters. In a 1996 *New York Times* opinion piece, Robert Smith wrote, "Don't we remember the Nazi experience in Europe, where identity documents listing religion and ethnic background facilitated the roundup of Jews? Don't we remember how we condemned South Africa in the 1970's and 80's for using a domestic passport to limit the movements of certain citizens but not others?"

In a July 1999 press release opposing the "creeping federalization of state-issued driver's licenses," ACLU Legislative Counsel Gregory Nojeim said, "National ID card proposals pose one of the greatest threats to personal privacy in the United States today. If mandated by Congress for one purpose, we know from experience that a national ID card would eventually be required for engaging in even the most routine transactions—from opening a bank account to boarding an airplane to entering a building."

House Majority Leader Richard Arney, a Texas Republican, said, "A national driver's license with 'biometric identifiers' or social security numbers is more suited to a police state than to a free country." In October 1999, responding to opposition, Congress repealed the section of the 1996 law that calls for uniform national drivers' license standards.

The construction of the national database linked to the Social Security number continues, however. Currently 29 states use the Social Security number as the drivers' license number or display it on the license.



Both photos: Militant/John Studer

Above, laundry workers on strike against Up-To-Date and their supporters rally May 16 at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. Right, national president of the NAACP Kweisi Mfume addresses the crowd.

deported if they joined the union," Espinoza said. "The union is my people. We want decent lives and opportunities for our families. I couldn't take this any more, and I resigned two weeks ago."

Susana Flores, a worker with one year at the plant, described a recent fire. "The fire extinguishers didn't work and the company officials didn't tell us to exit the building. We make \$6 an hour after one year, and we have to pay \$96 a week for health insurance. So you have to think twice about whether you pay for baby-sitting or medical coverage."

The rally was translated simultaneously into English and Spanish. An organizer led chants of "Si se puede!" (Yes, it can be done!) and "Viva la huelga!" (Long live the strike!). "For those of you who speak English, just yell 'Que viva!'" he said. The entire crowd responded enthusiastically with "Que viva!"

Garment and textile workers came to the Baltimore rally from shops in Philadelphia and Reading in Pennsylvania, and from



AFL-CIO; and other union leaders and elected officials from Maryland.

Students from Towson University in North Baltimore, the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and Johns Hopkins University joined the rally with signs and banners. They have been organizing to demand the university hospitals cancel their contracts with Up-To-Date Laundry until they recognize the union.

Striking laundry workers continue to picket the plant, located on De Soto Road in Baltimore.

Kathie Fitzgerald is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 622 in Jefferson, Pennsylvania.

# Building the communist movement by fol

## New York meeting launches movement campaign to double size of Young So

Continued from front page

presses. The Spanish-language edition was being readied for publication within a few days, and the French edition will be available a couple of weeks later. Giant blow-ups of the covers of all three editions hung at the front of the meeting room.

The event was hosted by the New York and New Jersey branches of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists. Those attending came from cities and towns across North America. Many were actively involved in struggles by working people—from protests in the Pennsylvania coalfields against hazardous fuel spills; to strike action by garment workers in California, Pennsylvania, and Georgia; to the anti-foreclosure fights of working farmers—as well as demonstrations against cop killings of workers in New Jersey, Florida, Ohio, and

party's Farm Work Committee. A June 14-16 international Active Workers Conference to be held in Ohio will draw on these meetings and take up the themes discussed at the New York event.

### Colorado experiences not unusual

The speakers program began with Mary-Alice Waters, a member of the SWP National Committee and the author of the preface to *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*. She opened her talk by describing some recent experiences of socialist workers in the Colorado coalfields.

Several weeks earlier, Waters said, a socialist miner sold a *Militant* subscription to a college student on campus. The student showed the *Militant* to her grandmother, who subscribed to the paper after seeing its coverage of the fight for government compensation by uranium miners. The student's grandmother, whose husband had died of cancer after years of work in the uranium mines, called the *Militant* business office and suggested contacting a number of people she knew who might be interested in the socialist paper.

Following this advice, a team of socialist workers traveled to the area and spent the weekend talking with several women, all of whose lives had been affected by the mine bosses' deadly profit drive and the government's cover-up of the hazardous working conditions endemic in the mines. The women have been fighting to force the government to pay compensation.

"The conclusion some of them drew from these experiences was that 'we must get rid of this government,'" said Waters. The supporters of the *Militant* used the socialist paper to point to an answer to the question, "And replace it with what?" They described how through their collective action working people can overturn capitalism and establish a government of workers and farmers.

The three bought subscriptions and a number of Pathfinder pamphlets. They took some subscription blanks for others who might be interested.

After describing similar experiences of socialists meeting interested miners, meat packers, and students in the region, Waters asked, "Is there something unusual in Colorado? Not a thing. This is happening everywhere in the United States. All we have to do is to find this resistance and follow its development."

The 60 percent jump in sales of Pathfinder books in the first four months of 2001, compared with the same period a year ago, are part of the same phenomenon, she said. They register both the receptivity to communist literature and the efforts by socialist workers to find those who are engaged in struggle.



More than 350 people from cities around the country attended May 20 public meeting



Militant/Linda Joyce

**Mary-Alice Waters, member of the SWP National Committee, addresses May 20 meeting. She explained how the response today to communist literature among working people and youth around the country, from uranium mining communities to college campuses, shows the opportunities today to build the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party.**

elsewhere. A number of young people and workers from around the country who had only recently met members of the communist movement also took part in the event. Among them were a construction worker in New Jersey who has long been active in rural struggles in Oaxaca, Mexico; a student in Erie, Pennsylvania; and two West African-born workers in New York.

Many took advantage of the reception before and after the program, which featured both a large display of Pathfinder literature as well as a generous spread of food, to discuss politics and exchange experiences.

The event was held in conjunction with a three-day meeting of the SWP's National Committee. Over the coming weeks, socialist workers in the meatpacking, garment and textile, and coal mining industries will each hold national meetings, as will the

She paid tribute to the work of the voluntary sales representatives who have promoted Pathfinder's titles to bookstores around the country. Some \$9,000 worth of sales in the last four months can be directly traced to this work, she said.

### Movement campaign to double YS size

Waters explained the joint decision by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists to campaign through the end of August to double the size of the revolutionary youth organization. This effort is "a deliberate decision to focus our attention on the real opportunities before us, in which the results all depend on what we do," she said.

This campaign, Waters stressed, will succeed only if it involves not just the Young Socialists but the whole communist movement. "Reaching the goal means a broad effort to double the number of candidates for party membership, to double the quality of the Militant Labor Forums, to double the reach of our literature, to double the reach of our regional sales teams, to double the outreach of our election campaigns, and to double the public exposure and face of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party."

The possibilities before the communist movement could be seen at the annual Tehran book fair in mid-May, said Waters. Volunteers staffing a Pathfinder booth at the fair reported a big response to their books.

This interest in revolutionary literature was heightened by the visit to Iran of Cuban president Fidel Castro at that time. The team reported much deeper discussions on the Cuban Revolution than at previous fairs—including with people who said they were supporters of Islam and did not consider themselves communists.

The Cuban leader's visit was a significant political event, Waters noted. In remarks to 700 enthusiastic students at the University of Tehran, Castro congratulated the Iranian people on their 1979 revolution that overthrew the shah, and explained that "the shah of U.S. imperialism" will also be overthrown.

### Strengthening of Cuban Revolution

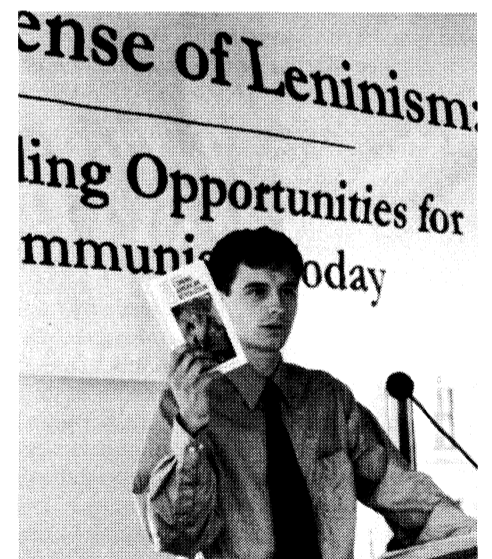
Castro's visit registers the strengthening of the Cuban Revolution today, explained Waters. Other examples confirm this, she said—from the Panamanian government extradite a CIA-trained anti-Cuba terrorist—a demand that has won support among many youth and others in Panama—to Revolutionary Armed Forces minister Raúl Castro's explanation that the Cuban people today are armed, organized, and prepared in their millions to defend their revolution against any U.S. attack. Castro's point was underscored by the sea of green at the opening of the Cuban trade union congress in late April, when the 1,600 union delegates showed up in their volunteer militia uniforms.

Maggie Trowe, farm work director of the SWP and a *Militant* staff writer, who had attended the congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) in Ha-

vana, also spoke. The work of the Socialist Workers Party and the YS in defense of the Cuban Revolution, she said, is part of "winning young people and workers and farmers to becoming part of a revolutionary communist movement that can follow the Cuban road and take power here in the United States."

Several other socialist workers and Young Socialists who had been part of the U.S. delegation to the CTC congress or to a conference in May on organic agriculture were also on the speakers platform.

Jacob Perasso, a member of the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialists, reinforced the points made by Waters about the campaign to double the size of the Young Socialists, describing experiences that show how a joint movement effort can succeed. Where Young Socialists and SWP members have begun to establish a regular, consistent presence in a workers district, they have attracted young people interested in joining the YS. In the New York Garment District, for example, he said, dozens of revolutionary-minded



Militant/Linda Joyce

**Young Socialists leader Jacob Perasso discussed campaign to double the size of the revolutionary youth organization over the next three months. He explained how this effort can be a success if it involves the whole communist movement.**

young people and workers have purchased Pathfinder books at literature tables, attended Militant Labor Forums, or participated in classes over the past year.

Everyone in the audience, "and I mean everyone," Perasso stressed, can be part of this recruitment campaign.

He appealed to young people attending the meeting. "If you find yourself in agreement with what is said here, you should join the Young Socialists. YS members will be staffing the Pathfinder book tables here tonight and are available for further discussion." One young woman took up Perasso's challenge immediately following the meeting by asking to join the youth organization. Several other youth expressed interest.

Less than three weeks before the meet-

### From Pathfinder

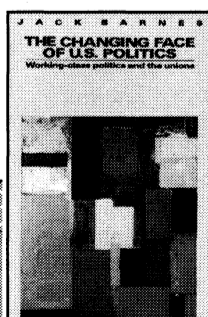
by V.I. Lenin

#### What Is To Be Done?

"The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be the trade-union secretary, but the tribune of the people, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression..."

#### Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism

"I trust that this pamphlet will help the reader to understand the fundamental economic question, that of the economic essence of imperialism," Lenin wrote in 1917. "For unless this is studied, it will be impossible to understand and appraise modern war and modern politics. **\$3.95**



#### Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, turmoil, and brutality of capitalism. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. **\$19.95**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.



# owing the resistance

## cialists and sell new Pathfinder book

ing, the volunteers in the Pathfinder Reprint Project had exceeded their goal of converting 50 percent of Pathfinder's books and pamphlets to electronic form by May Day. Tom Tomasko, a member of the project's steering committee based in San Francisco, celebrated the milestone in his remarks to the New York meeting.

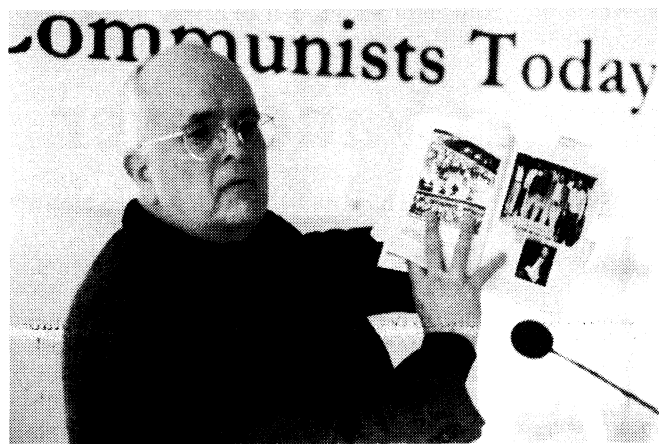
The 200-plus supporters of the communist movement play a key part in "keeping in print the ideas that are going to change the world," he said.

In addition to digitizing existing titles, the volunteers have taken on responsibilities for new Pathfinder titles, including "quality checks, and formatting and proof-reading new books after the editing is done."

They are now shouldering a new task that will take advantage of the possibilities to sell Pathfinder books through Internet booksellers. They will prepare reproductions of the covers and back page text on Pathfinder titles that will appear on the booksellers' web pages. "This will enhance the professional and attractive manner in which we present our books on line," said Tomasko.

### CPUSA shedding banner of Leninism

SWP national secretary Jack Barnes was the concluding speaker at the May 20 meeting.



Militant/Salm Kolis

SWP national secretary Jack Barnes displays photos in *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*. Barnes pointed to the stiffening resistance among working people who refuse to be relegated to victimhood and instead are acting to defend their class interests. Building a party today that will be capable of leading workers and farmers in revolutionary battles to challenge the capitalist rulers for power, as explained by Lenin in the pamphlet *What Is to Be Done?*, is just as necessary today as it was when the Bolsheviks led the October 1917 revolution, he said.



Militant/Sara Katz

Farmers protest in Sacramento, California, April 16.

Barnes reported that the communist movement here will increasingly be responsible for keeping in print and distributing the basic works of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party—which led workers and farmers to power in Russia in October 1917—and of the Communist International in its early years.

Pamphlets by Lenin such as *What Is To Be Done?* and *To The Rural Poor* are essential tools for workers and farmers seeking to build a land and labor alliance and a proletarian party. Both works were defining documents for the Bolshevik Party, as its cadre and leaders differentiated themselves from the centrist political formations active in the working class in Russia—groups that were revolutionary in words but that in practice rejected the perspective of leading working people in a revolutionary fight for power.

*What Is To Be Done*, said Barnes, is about the kind of proletarian party and cadres that are necessary for this task. In this fundamental work, Lenin explains that the ideas generalizing the working class's line of march toward political power cannot be conquered solely within the field of the struggle between workers and employers. They have to be brought from outside this arena, he insists—from "the sphere of relationships of all classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between all classes."

What is necessary is a workers party that acts as the "tribune of the people," as Lenin put it, and that as part of the struggles of the people is capable of leading working people along the road to power.

*To the Rural Poor* explains why the exploited producers on the land need to make common cause with the revolutionary working-class movement.

Today, Barnes said, Pathfinder has an opportunity and a responsibility to take on the task of keeping the basic works of Lenin in print. It is becoming clear that no one else will do so. The political current that had originally carried out this effort, represented in this country by the Communist Party USA, has strayed further and further from any interest in doing so as it implodes politically and organizationally.

For decades the Stalinist movement, turning against Lenin's revolutionary legacy, acted as an international murder machine aimed at the working-class vanguard in every country, Barnes explained. Their worst crime and the biggest obstacle, however, was that "they did so in the name of a prostituted Marxism and Leninism."

The collapse of the bureaucratic regimes and parties that dominated the former Soviet Union and Eastern European coun-



Militant/John Studer

Members of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees at May 16 rally in Baltimore for workers on strike at Up-to-Date Laundry (see front-page article). Socialist workers joined with strikers from Hollander Home Fashions in Pennsylvania and other unionists to take part in this action.

tries meant a weakening of that obstacle for the working class.

Today, this process has evolved further. The CPUSA leadership is in the process of shedding even the pretense of carrying the banner of Marxism and Leninism, said Barnes. CP leaders are declaring that Lenin was "too stiff" in the revolutionary and party-building perspectives he outlined in *What Is to Be Done?* The class struggle, they argue, "is not the only thread, not the only causal factor" in history. They point instead to "movements" such as the 1999 anti-World Trade Organization protests in Seattle. The CP is more and more explicitly moving away from its previous organized presence among industrial workers.

As part of this process, Barnes noted, the CP, as well as many other groups on the "left," write and speak today about the evolution of capitalism in Armageddon-like terms. They say that "capitalism is self-destructing," or that "chaos reigns." But the view that capitalism is going crazy leads to appealing to some "sane" capitalists to reform it.

"But the opposite is true," Barnes said. "This is how capitalism works, not how it is not working." That is why the line of march of the working class leads toward capitalism's overthrow, and not toward its reform.

### Space within working class

Explaining how capitalism works is crucial in explaining and responding to the ongoing probes and assaults against the rights of working people by the U.S. rulers today, the SWP leader said.

As the capitalists deepen their assault on the social gains of workers and farmers, they meet resistance. They anticipate that will deepen, and respond by seeking to restrict legal space.

The FBI's trampling on democratic rights, for example, is not an aberration. It's how it works, Barnes explained. Recent revelations that the cop agency withheld thousands of pages of evidence from the defense for Timothy McVeigh, the rightist whose case is being used to promote the federal death penalty, illustrate the FBI's normal mode of functioning.

But while the restrictions on legal space increase, Barnes said, the space within the working class to discuss politics—something the rulers don't have direct control over—continues to open.

He noted that in the period leading up to the Russian Revolution, including when the repression was at its worst, the regime couldn't arrest Lenin when he stayed in the workers districts. That was where the Bolsheviks were based, and where the police feared to tread.

Barnes pointed to the workers in

the mining communities who have responded enthusiastically to the *Militant*. This is who we reach for, he said—working people who want to fight, such as the miners' widows, who had been consigned by some to "victimhood."

Like Malcolm X, he said, we celebrate people awakening not to their suffering, but to their self-worth. Working people who not only experience the brutality of capitalism but resist it are also "more likely to want to open a revolutionary book, and reach out to others in struggle," he said. Those are the prospects that continue to open up for the communist movement.

The meeting was also an opportunity to raise money for the \$100,000 Pathfinder Fund. James Harris, a textile worker in Atlanta and the Socialist Workers candidate for president in 2000, who chaired the May 20 event, made an appeal to the audience for contributions.

Participants contributed \$5,288 and made new pledges or raised previous ones by almost \$2,000.

### Pathfinder Fund 2001

| Country/City                | Goal(\$)       | Paid          | %          |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| Canada                      | 5,000          | 3,442         | 69%        |
| New Zealand                 | 1,145          | 735           | 64%        |
| <b>United States</b>        |                |               |            |
| Newark                      | 3,000          | 2,740         | 91%        |
| San Francisco               | 8,000          | 6,908         | 86%        |
| Los Angeles                 | 6,000          | 4,845         | 81%        |
| Upper Manhattan             | 3,300          | 2,294         | 70%        |
| Detroit                     | 2,500          | 1,610         | 64%        |
| Brooklyn                    | 4,000          | 2,554         | 64%        |
| Boston                      | 3,750          | 2,315         | 62%        |
| Allentown                   | 900            | 550           | 61%        |
| Seattle                     | 8,000          | 4,830         | 60%        |
| Chicago                     | 6,500          | 3,612         | 56%        |
| Philadelphia                | 3,000          | 1,630         | 54%        |
| Birmingham                  | 2,500          | 1,295         | 52%        |
| Twin Cities                 | 4,000          | 1,993         | 50%        |
| NY Garment Dist             | 4,000          | 1,974         | 49%        |
| Charlotte                   | 2,700          | 1,305         | 48%        |
| Houston                     | 3,500          | 1,680         | 48%        |
| Washington D.C.             | 2,200          | 993           | 45%        |
| Atlanta                     | 3,200          | 1,045         | 33%        |
| Des Moines                  | 1,400          | 430           | 31%        |
| Tampa                       | 600            | 150           | 25%        |
| Omaha                       | 250            | 54            | 22%        |
| Pittsburgh                  | 6,000          | 1,258         | 21%        |
| Grand Junction              | 2,400          | 400           | 17%        |
| Miami                       | 2,000          | 235           | 12%        |
| Cleveland                   | 1,250          | 45            | 4%         |
| Fresno                      | 225            | 0             | 0%         |
| Other                       |                | 548           |            |
| <b>U.S. Total</b>           | <b>85,175</b>  | <b>47,293</b> | <b>56%</b> |
| Australia                   | 900            | 243           | 27%        |
| France                      | 620            |               |            |
| Iceland                     |                | 25            |            |
| <b>Int'l Total</b>          | <b>93,090</b>  | <b>51,788</b> | <b>52%</b> |
| <b>Int'l Goal/Should be</b> | <b>100,000</b> | <b>62,500</b> | <b>63%</b> |

# Mass rallies demand end to government repression in Algeria

Continued from front page

Guermah Massinissa, known as Moumouh, an 18-year-old Berber high school student. Massinissa was killed while in a police station in the Beni-Douala district of Tizi Ouzou.

The May 21 outpouring was organized by a coordinating committee representing Berber village committees that was formed May 17 in the town of Illoula. Berbers, an oppressed nationality in Algeria, comprise 30 percent of Algeria's 30 million people.

Tizi Ouzou, the capital of the Kabylia region, is located about 70 miles from Algiers, the capital of Algeria.

The protest was the largest action against the military regime in 10 years, and the largest in the history of Kabylia. The Berber Cultural Movement, the Autonomous Students Committee of Algiers, Tizi Ouzou high school students, and the Front of Socialist Forces have organized protests over the past month as well. Thousands of people mobilized in the capital of Algeria May 3 to condemn police violence and repression in Kabylia.

The protest also demanded jobs, better housing, and steps to end the rising impoverishment of growing layers of workers and farmers. The action, which organizers said drew 25,000, was sponsored by the main opposition party in Kabylia, the Socialist Forces Front.

Prior to the start of the demonstration, some 3,000 students, according to witnesses, also marched. They chanted "government, murderers, gendarmes, criminals" in Arabic and in French.

The May 5 *Economist* noted, "The streets of the two regional capitals, Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia, turned into battle zones as young men clashed with the riot police. In towns and villages throughout the region, protesters attacked and destroyed government buildings and tried to overrun police stations." Barricades were set up on the roads linking Tizi Ouzou to Algiers.

In the days following the massive action in Tizi Ouzou, radio reports and news wire stories indicate that protests are continuing

by students, youth, women, and journalists throughout the region and in Algiers. "Sporadic clashes erupted between youthful protesters and police in numerous small towns around Algeria's tense Berber region," the Dow Jones news wire reported May 23, "with several dozen demonstrators injured over the past 48 hours." Radio Beur FM, a Paris-based station, announced a demonstration of 5,000 students the same day in Algiers and a protest of 10,000 women in Tizi Ouzou. The actions all focused on denouncing the massacres of youth by the gendarmes. Algerian state television reported the construction of road barricades of trees and burning tires in the villages of El Kseur and Bakaro.

Also on May 23, some 50 journalists, joined by 400 others, organized a silent march to protest government attacks on freedom of the press. They wore tape over their mouths as they marched.

The demonstrators have raised the demand for recognition of Tamazight, the Berber language, lifting of restrictions on the press, and postponement of final examinations for secondary school students, who have been occupied with protests for the past month, until September. The government postponed the exams for two weeks, which the Berber Cultural Movement rejected.

A civil war has been widening and deep-



Demonstration May 21 in Tizi Ouzou, capital city of Kabylia, a region with a predominantly Berber population. Berbers, an oppressed nationality in Algeria, are protesting government repression, including the killing of some 80 people by police in the past month. Banner in center reads, "We've had enough of this government."

ening in Algeria since 1992. In December 1991 the French government prodded the regime in Algiers to annul the results of the national elections won by the Islamic Salvation Front, citing the danger of the "Islamic fundamentalism" of opposition groups, and to establish a military junta. The ensuing war has resulted in the deaths of 100,000 people.

Unemployment in Algeria is about 30 percent, and the country owes \$30 billion—nearly two-thirds of its annual Gross Domestic Product—to banks in the imperialist centers.

The ruling party, the National Liberation Front, bears the same name as the party that led the successful battle for independence from France, which had as many as 500,000

troops occupying the country from 1954 to 1962. By 1963 a workers and farmers government had been established under the leadership of Ahmed Ben Bella, which existed until 1965, when Ben Bella was overthrown by a military coup led by Houari Boumedienne.

Under the pressure of the mass protests, the government of President Abdel Aziz Bouteflika has set up commissions to investigate the deaths of protesters, which the government puts at around 40 but Berber sources say is closer to 80. The leadership body of village committees has called for a boycott of these commissions.

The coordinating committee has also called for a boycott of all government-sponsored ceremonies and sporting events.

## Rally backs transit strikers in Vancouver

BY CAMILO TORRES AND GABRIEL CHARBIN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Five hundred workers and young people held a rally May 12 at the Oakridge Transit Center here to win support for the strike by transit workers, now in its seventh week, against Translink and its subsidiary Coast Mountain Bus Company.

More than 3,500 bus drivers, mechanics, and office workers who are members of the Canadian Auto Workers and Office and Pro-

fessional Employees International Union are fighting concession demands by the company. They voted by a 98.6 percent margin April 1 to reject a contract that would give the company the right to institute part-time work, contract out services, and cut routes.

Striking worker James Johnston said the union is demanding "No part-timers and no contracting out. No cutbacks to services because they are already cutting back on routes. We don't raise kids part-time," he said, "we don't have part-time mortgages,

we don't have part-time bills, we need full-time jobs to pay for a full-time life."

Among the union members participating in the action were striking workers at Purdy's Chocolates, who are members of Local 2000 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union. A letter of solidarity was sent to the rally from the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), representing bus drivers in Seattle. ATU members from Vancouver, who run the Handy Dart system, explained that they too face a contract fight this summer over many of the same issues.

Police officers attempted to shut down the rally, which sparked a march by workers for several blocks around the transit center, with strikers chanting, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Translink has got to go!" In addition to rallies organized on an almost weekly basis, union members have distributed more than 50,000 leaflets around the city explaining their fight.

In a May 17 editorial, the *Vancouver Sun* threatened the strike by calling on Gordon Campbell, the newly elected Liberal party premier of British Columbia, to "fix the transit strike. And fix it fast." The editorial said public transportation, "at least for the many thousands of British Columbians who rely on it, is an essential service. The provincial government, therefore, has no choice, but to legislate them back to work."

Now we talk to each other and get to know each other on the picket line. With every day that passes, we get stronger and stronger," she said.

A union-organized rally in front of the plant May 4 drew strikers and delegations from 15 unions. The CEP local sent a representative to a May 12 rally in support of transit workers to let others know about the strike. The union is organizing a barbecue in front of the plant May 25. Strikers are considering a leafleting campaign of Purdy's stores.

Gabriel Charbin is a meat packer.

## Unionists strike chocolate plant in Canada

BY CAMILO TORRES AND GABRIEL CHARBIN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—"Before the strike we underestimated the immigrant women. We knew they were strong, but not this strong," said Margaret Florence, a warehouse worker now on strike against Purdy's Chocolate. "The company has always tried to intimidate and divide workers," added Penny Dean, the union chairperson. "They treat the immigrant workers differently." Some 95 percent of workers on strike are women and a big majority are immigrants, mainly from Southeast Asia.

Members of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) Local 2000, set up picket lines at Purdy's Chocolate April 30, the first strike against the company in its 94 years in existence. The company employs 600 workers and owns 47 stores in British Columbia and Alberta. The 105 strikers work in the production plant and are the only unionized employees at the company.

The main issues in the strike are job security, wages, and benefits. The company is offering an 80 cents raise over the next four years, and the union is demanding a 47-cents-an-hour increase each year. Part-time workers currently start at Can\$8.36 an hour, but do not receive benefits. Full-time workers earn between Can\$13 an hour in production to Can\$23 an hour in maintenance (Can\$1 = US 65 cents). Union members are also seeking long-term disability coverage to be added to their benefits.

The CEP signed its first collective bargaining agreement with the company in 1998 following mediation by the Labor Relations Board. The central issue then was for the company to end discrimination against some employees and eliminate a two-tier structure.

Workers are keeping picket lines up around the clock. They are being reinforced by CEP members from Pacific Press, where this city's two major dailies are printed. They volunteer their support before or after work. Many people in cars honk their horns in support and a few stop for information.

Police are enforcing an injunction issued by the courts in favor of Purdy's that prohibits workers from blocking cars coming into the struck plant.

Spirits are high on the picket line, said Dean. "Before the strike, we would say 'hi,' but we didn't know each other very well.

## Protests in Bolivia hold off austerity moves

BY HILDA CUZCO

A 10-day march by thousands of working people in Bolivia in early May forced the government to agree to hold off on a number of austerity measures aimed at workers and peasants. Protesters stood up to assaults by the police and a state of emergency declared by President Hugo Banzer. The president was finally forced to sign an agreement with labor leaders May 10.

Some 8,000 miners, peasants, retirees, teachers, and others marched from Oruro to the capital city La Paz in an action called by the Bolivian Workers Confederation (COB). At the same time, education and health-care workers went on strike, and peasants who grow coca continued their road blockades after a two-week march on the capital in April.

Facing widening protests, the government agreed to postpone sale of the state-owned postal service and airports, increase retirement pensions, and improve the minimum

wage starting next year. The COB has also demanded the release of unionists jailed during the protests and dismissal of charges against them. The labor confederation supports cancellation of the debts of small family farmers, estimated to be in the range of \$20 million.

In addition to the actions by workers and peasants, some 3,500 retirees went on a hunger strike to demand a raise in their pensions. After 14 days the government stated it would increase annual pensions from \$85 to \$130.

The local radio stations reported that retirees celebrated this victory along with their families in several cities. The hunger strike did, however, claim the life of a 71-year-old former miner in Cochabamba, who had fasted for eight days.

Teachers were particularly opposed to the plan to end government funding for schools, and to turn that responsibility over to localities. As part of the agreement, teachers re-

turned to work after Banzer promised the "decentralization" move will be put off until August 2002. The teachers' demand for a 50 percent wage hike was tabled, but the government agreed not to lay off or deduct pay from teachers who supported the labor action, as the minister of education had threatened.

Small coca farmers also held a march from the regions of Chapare and Yungas to La Paz to oppose the government's drive, backed by Washington, to completely eradicate the coca crop in Yungas province. Despite the government repression a small number of farmers were able to take their protest to the capital city. The peasants say they will not stop growing coca, the only way they can currently eke out a living, until the government works with them to come up with a viable alternative crop. The government agreed to postpone their moves to totally destroy the coca until next year. The coca farmers agreed, in turn, to end their road blockades.

# For working people, tax reform is a fraud

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

After all the dust has settled, it appears the only benefit working people will receive from the federal tax law now before Congress is some further information about the class structure of U.S. society and a reminder of the fraud of tax reform under capitalism for those who labor for a living.

While the superwealthy in general benefit from loopholes established for them in tax

## AS I SEE IT

laws, and have a myriad of ways of shielding income and wealth from taxation, some at least start out reporting income to the IRS.

What is fact and what is fiction?

Fiction: White House spokesperson: "The president's plan is aimed at helping people disproportionately in the lower brackets. On the whole this plan is targeted toward working families."

Fact: Internal Revenue Service figures show Bush's plan provides the greatest benefits to the wealthiest U.S. citizens, according to Joel Slemrod, a tax specialist at the University of Michigan (setting aside the strange notion that the government is "helping" workers by "giving back" taxes they should never have paid in the first place).

Fiction: There is no longer a superwealthy ruling class or a small number of families that run America.

Fact: There are 400 "top income earners" in the United States. Each hauls in at least \$110 million a year in income. (If this was earned from wages for 50 weeks at 40 hours, these people would be making \$55,000 an hour. But of course the people who rule

America don't work for a living! And that yearly income is a pittance compared to their accumulated wealth and what flows into their trusts, bank and corporate coffers, and foundations.)

Fact: Each of the top 400—called the "extraordinarily wealthy" not just the "merely wealthy and the affluent" by the *New York Times*—will receive a tax break of some \$1.14 million a year! Just who's helping who here?

Fact: The 400 comprise the top of the top 1 percent of "income earners," a category that includes 1.25 million people who make more than \$373,000 a year (making only \$186 an hour if in wages). The yearly tax savings for these "merely wealthy" drops to \$2,430 under the president's tax plan.

Fact (according to the *Times*): "Under the tax cut plans now moving through Congress, the tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans gain value over time while most of the breaks for everyone else lose value, according to both supporters and critics of these plans."

Fiction: Republican Bush is the one who is helping out the rich. The Democrats would never go this far.

Fact: IRS figures show that for the 400 extraordinarily wealthy people that the new tax law's "help" is on top of an average savings of \$6.4 million from a 1998 cut in tax rates on long-term capital gains, which was

approved by the Clinton administration.

Fact: From 1992 to 1998 the after-tax incomes of the top 1 percent jumped 47 percent, while the bottom 95 percent of U.S. citizens (the rest of us) saw income rise only 8 percent after taxes.

Fact: Poorer sections of the working class—what the *Times* calls the "bottom 20 percent" income group who earn under \$15,000 (about 25 million of us), will receive a paltry savings of about \$50, if anything at all. Fifty bucks.



Fact: Some 80 percent of working people in the United States today shell out more in payroll taxes—Social Security and Medicare deductions—than they do for income taxes. Corporate and individual income tax was first authorized in 1913, from which working people were exempt until the beginning of World War II.

The Senate Finance Committee approved

the \$1.35 billion tax cut plan May 15, which includes lower top tax rates sought by the Bush administration. The legislation is expected to be signed into law by May 25. Congress is also set to pass legislation that would eliminate inheritance taxes under a plan promoted by Bush that allows wealthy individuals to leave \$1.3 million to \$3 million to heirs and surviving spouses, tax free.

It's not over yet. Encouraged by these developments, U.S. treasury secretary Paul O'Neill, former chairman and CEO of Alcoa Aluminum Corporation, just came out with something that's obviously been on his mind for a long time. He told the *Financial Times* that corporate income tax and capital gains tax on businesses should be abolished. The tax system is an "abomination," he told the paper, and would work better if the government "collected taxes in a more direct way from the people who were paying the taxes." (He also said in the interview that anyone who is still able to work should be denied a Social Security pension or medical coverage by the government.) "Not only am I committed to working on this issue," he added, but "the president is also intrigued about the possibility of fixing this mess."

O'Neill, like other wealthy cabinet members, took a temporary hit when joining the administration when he had to unload massive quantities of stocks and other assets all at once. O'Neill, who acquired some \$117 million before taxes in stock and options with the aluminum company, couldn't find enough loopholes and deductions when he had to sell the stocks and ended up having to pay \$24 million in taxes this year, according to the *Washington Post*. No wonder he's fuming about the "mess" of tax laws.

# Economic crisis spurs protests across Latin America

Continued from front page

blocks roads can gain things."

None of the promises have been fulfilled, according to the protesters, with the exception of the creation of 1,000 jobs. In La Matanza district alone there are some 106,000 heads of households without a job and the unemployment rate stands at 20 percent, according to the Argentine newspaper *Diario Hoy*.

Alberto Ballestrini, mayor of La Matanza, expressed his concern about the volatility of the situation, and held the national government responsible for the roadblocks, as reported in *El Clarin*. He pointed out that only 80,000 pesos of the 2 million promised had been spent for medicines.

## Washington's demands

Argentina's economy has been in recession for nearly three years and the country's foreign debt stands at \$150 billion. Washington, through the International Monetary Fund and other institutions representing international finance capital, has been pressing Argentina's capitalist class to carry through a range of austerity measures and sweeping changes in the economy to facilitate debt payment and penetration of foreign capital into the economy.

President Fernando de la Rúa and Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo launched an economic plan that includes the reorganization of state agencies, the selling off of state banks and enterprises, and direct attacks on the labor code and pensions. These measures have been met by ongoing resistance by workers and others, leading to the resignation of the previous two economy ministers.

In a "march of the empty wheelchairs" May 15 some 500 disabled people gathered in the capital to demand the government respect the dignity and the rights of people with disabilities. The protesters placed some 200 empty wheelchairs in front of the government palace symbolizing "those that were absent." The cuts in programs for people with disabilities are part of Cavallo's "Competitive Law," as his economic plan is called.

"It is still hard for them to understand that our demands are not reduced to a sum of money," said Father Pablo Morelo, a leader of the coalition that organized the protest. "It is hard for them to understand that what we are talking about is health, education, and jobs," he added. Similar protests took place in different parts of the country. On May 9 there were street actions in the prov-



Unemployed workers in Argentina have set up roadblocks demanding jobs, medicine, and school and road repairs that government had promised to provide last November.

ince of Córdoba against the selling off of the provincial energy company to a private corporation.

Imperialist investors are concerned about the continuing bleak outlook for the Argentine economy and the effect it is having on neighboring Brazil. "Every day that goes by is just one more day that negative sentiment plagues the Brazilian market," said Douglas Smith, head of Latin American economic research at IDEAGlobal in New York. In language typical of an imperialist attitude and callous disregard for the lives of working people, Smith said that for wealthy investors, the "anticipation of whatever development—a devaluation, default, or debt restructuring—is a killer."

Adding to the already shaky situation, Brazil's rulers have announced the imposition of a "war economy" because of the impact of rising fuel costs. The country's president ordered businesses and residents to cut electrical consumption by 20 percent or face "the risk of blackouts" this summer. Bourgeois economists predict that at least 850,000 jobs will be lost due to energy rationing measures and that the gross domestic product will be reduced by 1.5 percent from the projected 4 percent.

## Strikes in Colombia

In Colombia, thousands of teachers and health-care workers went on strike May 15 to protest attempts by the government to cut the education and health-care budgets. The strike is planned to last until Congress makes

a decision on the proposed cuts. A national strike with the participation of the union federations has been announced for June 7.

"It is a patriotic strike for resources, for health, and education," said Gloria Inés Ramírez, president of the Colombian Federation of Teachers, and "against the adjustments to the commitments with the International Monetary Fund."

According to Ramírez, the government is looking to cut \$217 million in spending for schools, as part of a drive to reduce the budget deficit this year to 2.8 percent of the gross national product, down from 3.6 percent last year. This is one of the conditions that the IMF has imposed on Colombia in order to maintain a \$2.7 billion line of credit.

A day earlier Colombian president Andrés Pastrana warned that the current pension system will no longer be viable unless "reforms" are made. He was speaking to a meeting of government officials, trade union officials, and representatives of business associations that had met to find consensus on changes in the pension system as part of implementing IMF dictates.

The strike by teachers and health-care workers takes place as government repression and right-wing paramilitary assassinations against trade unionists and peasants have intensified. Washington provides the Colombian regime with \$1.3 billion in military aid.

Attacks by right-wing paramilitary forces are being met with protests by indigenous and Afrocolombians in the country, such as

a march of 30,000 people in Cali in mid-May. "We had to organize because of the latest events," said Jesús María Aranda, an indigenous leader of the march, referring to the massacre of 50 peasants and indigenous people during Easter in the province of Cauca and Valle del Cauca. Indigenous leader Floro Tunubalá told the press that some 500 people have been killed since September by the right-wing paramilitary groups or bourgeois opposition guerrilla forces.

The capitalist economic slowdown is also being felt in Mexico where employers have cut 96,000 jobs. Mexican president Vicente Fox is also moving to cut government spending by \$367 million and to impose taxes on food and medicine, among other measures.

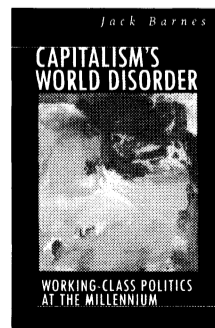
Thousands of Mexican teachers hit the streets May 15 to celebrate Teachers Day and demand better working conditions despite having just won an 11 percent wage increase. The teachers struck May 14 for a wage raise and improvements in benefits. Some are demanding a 100 percent wage hike, according to an Associated Press report.

## from Pathfinder

### Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

BY JACK BARNES

"The capitalist rulers offer us social disaster. They offer us depression. They offer us death from curable disease. They offer us war. They offer us fascism. They offer us an unending list of horrors. But we offer ourselves the ability to prevent those horrors from becoming the final reality, the confidence that we can transform that future."



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# Miners rally at A.T. Massey in W. Virginia

BY FRANK FORRESTAL  
AND LARRY QUINN

RACINE, West Virginia—Just after dawn on May 23, 150 miners assembled at John Slack Park for a protest march up to the Elk Run Mine, A.T. Massey's largest nonunion complex in Coal River Valley, a major coal producing area.

The demonstration was called by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The spirited crowd included elected officials of the UMWA International and District 17, retired and disabled union members, and a layer of working coal miners.

The protest was a boost to the union's renewed efforts to reorganize the southern coalfields of West Virginia. District 17's membership has plummeted from around 30,000 in 1979 to 4,000 today. Many of the miners present were veterans of previous battles against the coal bosses, including the 1984-85 strike against A.T. Massey.

In 1984, Massey refused to sign the agreement between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. This led to a bitter strike in which the UMWA was defeated. Several miners were framed up in the strike and remain in jail to this day. Since then Massey has expanded its nonunion operations, today employing 3,610 workers, 152 of whom—4.2 percent of the total—are UMWA members.

The company is now the largest coal producer in central Appalachia and the fifth largest in the United States, controlling 2.1 billion tons of coal reserves, up from about 700 million tons in 1987. Last year Massey mined 76.5 percent of its coal in southern West Virginia, where the company also owns 78 percent of its coal reserve. The company runs 18 coal mining complexes in southern West Virginia, eastern Kentucky, and southwestern Virginia.

Massey was a subsidiary of Fluor Corporation until it was spun off as a separate, publicly traded company last year. Its stock has skyrocketed over the last year from \$6 per share to \$26 per share in May, an increase of 315 percent.

Speaking in the parking lot, UMWA International president Cecil Roberts said, "A.T. Massey may have changed its name in the past few years, but Massey's attitude towards its workers, the environment, and Appalachia's economic well-being have not changed much since the UMWA was engaged in a bitter strike with them in the 1980s. In fact its attitude may be worse."

In a statement released to the press, the union president outlined several reasons for the protest, such as "the recent collapse of a Massey operation's coal slurry impoundment in Martin County, Kentucky; the fail-

ure of Massey to contribute what it owes to the West Virginia Workers Compensation Fund; an abysmal health and safety record that in this year alone has already resulted in two of West Virginia's five mining fatalities occurring at Massey operations; and Massey's regressive contract bargaining with UMWA members at several of the company's coal preparation plants."

Some of the UMWA pickets carried signs that read, "A.T. Massey, Pay Up!—\$30,000,000," referring to the figure the company owes to the West Virginia Workers Compensation Fund. Other signs pointed to a recent case of A.T. Massey coal dust fraud, where a Massey foreman pled guilty to fraudulent dust sampling.

Coalfield residents are still in an uproar over the callous disregard Massey showed last fall when it released more than 250 million gallons of sludge in Kentucky. Initially the company said the spill was caused by an "act of God," the same excuse the Pittston Coal company made in 1972 after the Buffalo Creek Disaster, which killed 125 people. There is growing concern about the safety of several coal waste impoundments in the Coal River Valley.

Massey was also cited by the Surface

Mine Board last year for allowing "fugitive dust" to coat the town of Sylvester, which is not far from the miners' protest action.

After the rally at the park, miners caravanned 15 miles, stopping about half a mile from the Elk Run Mine. From there miners marched to the mine's entrance. After chanting, "Union, Union" and singing union solidarity songs, several UMWA officials staged a civil disobedience sit-in on the busy highway, backing up traffic as far as the eye could see. About 30 minutes into the protest the West Virginia state police moved in and arrested a dozen protesters, including UMWA president Roberts.

Over the past few years the union has stepped up its organizing efforts at several Massey mines. Initially, Massey paid its miners union wages, but later began to cut wages and benefits, according to a few miners at the protest. They said Massey is notorious for using contractors, who are paid even less. This has led to growing unrest at Massey mines, and more miners are open to meeting with union organizers.

Last November, for example, the union called off a National Labor Relations Board election at Massey's Performance Coal mine when the company hired 46 new miners just

before the vote. The union decided to withdraw the union petition, but it was clear it was on the verge of carrying the vote. Miners said they are confident that they would win in the end.

The coal boom and the subsequent price rise—spot-market coal has been selling for up to \$70 a ton, almost triple last year's average price—has led to a rapid increase in coal production. Coal bosses are scrambling to meet their contracts and are desperate for qualified miners.

The labor shortage has gotten so bad in Kentucky that the coal bosses are advertising on local TV stations, and according to the Lexington *Herald-Leader*, "State mining officials say they have received serious inquiries recently about bringing in miners from Mexico, Russia, and the Ukraine."

The objective conditions are better today for miners to take back concessions they were forced to give up to the coal bosses over the past two decades. The organizing activity and rally at Elk Run Mine are a reflection of a new mood now seen among coal miners.

*Frank Forrestal and Larry Quinn are members of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248 in Pennsylvania.*

## Students back protesters jailed in Vieques struggle

Reprinted below is a May 24 letter sent by a *Militant* reader in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on the ongoing fight to get the U.S. Navy out of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. The struggle has become a focal point of politics in this U.S. colony since April 1999, when a U.S. warplane dropped a bomb that killed David Sanes, a Vieques resident and civilian guard employed by the Navy. The resumption of U.S. bombings and military exercises on Vieques in late April touched off a renewed wave of protests in Puerto Rico and in several U.S. cities. Thousands have rallied in San Juan, while other protesters have carried out civil disobedience on the Navy's firing range, and are now facing trials and jail sentences by a U.S. court.

What has been happening here for the past two years has been an unceasing struggle to get the Navy out of Vieques. The latest wave of those involved in civil disobedience against the April bombings are being sentenced to 40 days in prison and fines in some cases, except for those previously convicted, who are getting prison

terms of between 90 days and four months, as was the case with Rubén Berrios, president of the Puerto Rican Independence Party. Today, Al Sharpton [prominent Democratic Party politician in New York and president of the National Action Network] will be sentenced to 90 days.

There are a number of students who entered the firing range and who are now being sentenced. They are accusing one of the students of destruction of property, aggression, and sedition in addition to the trespassing charges.

We, the students, have set up a protest camp behind the federal jail in Guaynabo [in the San Juan area] in solidarity with all the civil disobedience protesters who are in jail and with those who will be jailed after the trials. And I say they will be jailed, because the judges here have taken an arrogant stance, making sarcastic comments in the middle of the trial, and they have a ridiculous number of marshals stationed inside the courtrooms. This is on top of the excessive sentences against our *compañeros* for a minor offense. The attitude of the federal authorities has been abusive and we the

people will not forgive them.

About two weeks ago, a teacher from Caguas died from kidney failure a few days after being released from prison. He had been on a hunger strike in jail, but the prison authorities had denied him water, sometimes for up to 18 hours, and they had put him in the hole with the excuse of monitoring him better. The family and the students think that denying him water during the hunger strike helped precipitate the death of this teacher.

On Monday, May 28, there will be a rally in support of those jailed for civil disobedience. As I mentioned, the students have a solidarity camp. This is one of three in the area. We have received a lot of support from the labor movement here. The unions are always following what we are doing and the support to the cause has been massive. They bring us ice and other things. The *compañeros* of the electrical workers union have provided us with electricity from a light post next to the camp. The support has been big. We have not seen support like this since the 1998 strike against the telephone company.

*José Sánchez  
San Juan, Puerto Rico*

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## —CALENDAR—

### MICHIGAN

#### Ann Arbor

**National Student and Youth Conference to Defend Affirmative Action and Integration, and Struggle for Equality.**

Fri.—Sun., June 1-3. University of Michigan campus. Organizers include: Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action and Integration, and Fight for Equality by Any Means Necessary; Rainbow/PUSH; and United for Equality and Affirmative Action. Register at <http://www.bamn.com/conference>.

### NEW YORK

#### Manhattan

**Stop the Killing Before It Starts! Rally against the Death Penalty.** Sun., June 3, 1:30 p.m. Bryant Park, 42nd Street and 6th Avenue. Sponsors include: New York Civil Liberties Union; AFSCME District Council 1707; HERE Local 100; New Yorkers against the Death Penalty. For more information, call (212) 344-3005, ext. 238.

### OHIO

#### Cincinnati

**March for Justice in Cincinnati.** Stop Police Killings and Abuse of Police Power. Sat., June 2. For more information call (313) 281-3331.

### NORTH CAROLINA

#### Columbia

**Drop All Charges against the Charleston Five!** March and rally to demand justice for International Longshoremen's Association members charged with "inciting to riot." Sat., June 9, 11:00 a.m. Assemble at Memorial Park (corner of Gadsden and Hampton). March to statehouse for a rally at noon. For more information, call (888) 716-7362, or visit [www.scpronet.com](http://www.scpronet.com)

A 'few bad Canadian apples'?—The police in Ottawa, Canada, have begun investigating a cop caught on videotape smash-



Harry Ring

ing the face of a handcuffed woman onto the trunk of a squad car. The opening of the probe was reported in the May 2 Montreal *Gazette*. The *Gazette* doesn't say when the person who shot the tape turned it over to the police. But the brutalization

occurred last November 25.

**The healthy society**—As it was reported in *USA Today*, we found the data difficult to follow. And in the medical field, there are reservations about the numbers. But the essence of the matter is that a massive, six-year study of children and teenagers showed a dramatic increase in the number taking antidepressant medications.

**Relax, it's only people**—The governor of North Carolina says he intends to speed up distribution of emergency funds to people whose homes were damaged or demolished by Hurricane Floyd. Because of red tape, he said, less than \$66 million of a \$464 million emergency fund

has been distributed. The hurricane slammed into the state in 1999.

**Note to pet people**—Our cat, we presume, doesn't read, and some may think that perhaps it's just as well. From London came a clipping that two distributors of choice frozen chicken cutlets issued recalls. The chicken, intended for pet food, was unfit for human consumption.

**Fly capitalist class**—In the coming years, predicts Boeing, first and business class passengers will fly on new, faster planes, while economy-class folks will continue to squeeze into the old jalopies. The aircraft giant told the *Times of London* that first-class flyers feel uncomfortable with economy travel-

ers walking through their area to get to the steerage section. Boeing also anticipates some airports will complete the segregation by building separate first-class terminals.

**P.S.**—Boeing's coming first-class jetliners will fly at a higher altitude, making for faster travel time and less turbulence. Also, we presume somewhat fresher recycled cabin air.

**Dacey situation**—The queen of the United Kingdom is no longer the richest person in her realm. And the richest person in the world is reputed to be Robson Walton, head of the Wal-Mart chain. Bill Gates, the computer software hustler, dropped to second spot—perhaps because of the humongous water bills he's been

running up at his Seattle pad.

**How many people has he bitten?**—In Newport News, Virginia, a police dog has been suspended for sinking his teeth into two cops. His rap sheet shows that earlier he bit another cop. The police are trying to determine why he bites them.

**Thought for the week**—"Nation-wide, at least 25,000 schools need major repairs or outright replacement...But in few places is the shortfall as keenly felt as in rural America, where economic decline and a population shift into the cities have left small towns with little money to support their schools—and the fear that they may become ghost towns if they allow their schools to close."—*Los Angeles Times*, May 13.

## Workers in Panama resisted 1989 U.S. invasion

The following is an excerpt from a speech delivered by Fidel Castro Dec. 21, 1989, the day after the U.S. invasion of Panama. After a secret swearing in ceremony declaring Guillermo Endara president of Panama at Ft. Clayton, one of 13 U.S. military bases in the canal zone, Washington unleashed a massive bombing of Panama City. U.S. forces eventually reached 26,000 as they launched savage attacks on military bases and working-class districts. Castro's speech was given at a ceremony called to present awards to the most outstanding Cuban athletes of the year, held at the Sports City complex in Havana. The entire text can be found in the pamphlet *Panama: The Truth About the U.S. Invasion*, which also contains articles by Cindy Jaquith, Don Rojas, and Nils Castro. Copyright © 1990 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

How much barbarity and abuse have we come to in this world? How much cruelty have we come to in this world? Thus, while the empire's wounded soldiers travel immediately to the best hospitals over there, Panamanians lie bleeding in the streets.

That's why I say that the events are sufficiently sad and sufficiently harsh as to make anyone angry and bitter. I'm no longer thinking just of the brutality, the illegality, and the unjustifiable action of the United States.

Alongside this, there is something else that has occurred that is truly historic, that is truly significant. This is the resistance of the people of Panama, the resistance of the units of the Defense Forces and the civilians organized in the Dignity Battalions and other units.

The empire believed the resistance would last minutes, perhaps hours. They thought that when they dropped paratroopers at night or attacked with planes and helicopters, not a single soldier or a single civilian combatant would remain at his post. That is the conception they have of Latin Americans. They still have not learned enough. That is their conception—or more accurately, that is their contempt for our peoples.

The truth is that they believed the battle would already be over by dawn. The president of the United States had a speech prepared for 7:00 a.m. to announce that everything had already been wrapped up. One could see discouragement, disgust, even panic on his face that morning. Tens of thousands of soldiers had been deployed in a surprise attack, along with hundreds of planes, helicopters, heavy artillery, and armored personnel carriers. But despite all this, they encountered everywhere the heroic resis-

tance of the Defense Forces and of civilians opposing the aggression.

In this respect they were unable to imitate Hitler. They were unable to imitate the fascists and the Nazis of 1939 or 1940. Because in many countries the Nazis were able to at least capture important cities in a matter of hours, fighting against well equipped

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

armies. Yet in twenty-four hours the empire was not able to capture the capital city of Panama. This was despite the fact that they began the attack from military bases within Panama itself, and despite their fabulous superiority in men and, above all, in weaponry. And yet they were unable to overcome the resistance of a handful, of a few thousand combatants.

Don't imagine that Panama had a large

military force. They possessed a few thousand men in their armed forces spread across the country, plus a few thousand civilians organized and trained in a relatively brief period of time. Don't imagine that large amounts of military equipment were in the hands of the Panamanians. Many of our municipalities in Cuba have more weapons and more firepower than the Panamanian people had as they confronted this aggression.

We ourselves have calculated our firepower in comparison with that of Panama. These calculations show that Cuba possesses 200 to 300 times greater firepower than Panama in terms of combat resources, quantity of arms, and the capability of our weaponry. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of Yankee troops, attacking by surprise in the early morning hours of December 20, were unable to capture Panama City. Even today they have had to take another twenty-four hours to try to overcome the resistance. And this is in a city cornered between the Pacific Ocean and the canal.

That is why we believe that the Panamanian people have written one of the most heroic chapters in the history of the hemisphere during the last forty-eight hours.

None of the empire's key objectives have been attained.

They did not succeed in capturing the

head of the Defense Forces, which was one of the main stated aims for this savage and illegal action. Their aim was to capture him and bring him to the United States.

See how far we have come: they have put into practice a new imperial principle whereby their armed forces can land in any part of the world to arrest persons they say are wanted by their courts. They can go into any part of the world and arrest people who in their view may have violated their laws, or whom they classify as terrorists.

This is the first time they have put this principle into practice. They have invaded a country and killed thousands of people under the pretext of capturing a senior official of a sovereign state in Latin America, a country that is a prominent member of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries and the United Nations. But they are frustrated because they say they have not attained their objective.

They also claimed that they were going to bring democracy. And they were going to do this through no less than a repugnant, puppet government. They have imposed a mercenary government over a river of blood, a river of Panamanian blood, the blood of the Panamanian people. In addition, they said they were going to guarantee implementation of the canal treaties and other, similar pretexts.



During 1989 invasion of Panama, U.S. soldiers guard prisoners suspected of being members of Dignity Battalions, whose members resisted U.S. assault.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

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### June 4, 1976

Here's how columnist Bob Seltzner evaluated the Local 65 elections in the May 1 *Daily Calumet*, a Gary-South Chicago newspaper.

"The near-record 55 per cent membership turnout in Wednesday's United Steel Worker Local 65 officer election in South Chicago had a message loud and clear....

"It is time for a change. It is clearly labeled for all bosses and would-be bosses....

"The old order as exemplified by International President I.W. Abel; Local 65 President Frank Mirocha; 10th Ward Alderman Edward Vrdolyak; and sub district director Carl Alessi was soundly rejected here.

"You don't have to be a magician to read that. It is very, very clear. And it was not wasted on the steel workers. They want their union back.

"As a key member of the victorious Chico group told me, 'They can't mistake this. This is a message to U.S. Steel and to Abel, the honeymoon is over.'

"At the international level this issue involved Abel, who took a personal hand in the Local 65 matter, and [a] former Local 65 president by the name of Edward Sadlowski. When Abel retires next spring, Sadlowski wants to succeed him. Abel doesn't want that. The only use Abel had for the Local 65 election Wednesday then was to embarrass Sadlowski. Abel wanted Sadlowski's supporter Chico to be defeated so he could ridicule Sadlowski for not carrying his own home local.

"It didn't go that way. Sadlowski gained enormous stature because not only was this his home local, a substantial effort was made to get rid of Chico."

### June 4, 1951

DETROIT, May 27—Charles Gordy Sr., Negro victim of police brutality, stands convicted this week of first degree murder. He had dared to defend the sanctity of his home against illegal police entry. That is his crime.

Last November after his home was invaded by Detroit cops without a warrant, his son manhandled, himself shot at, Gordy had fired back in self-defense and killed one of the police officers. For thus protecting his constitutional rights, he is now branded a murderer; the penalty in Michigan is mandatory life imprisonment.

The daily press for months used every trick in the book to stir up hatred for Gordy and sympathy for the cops. They described the police as protecting "law and order," and charged Gordy and his family with being crooks, slurring their characters without a shred of proof.

While a retrial is being demanded by the defense, it is not likely it will be granted. Against the forces line up against the Negro minority, an effective campaign can be waged only if the populace of the city is alerted. This requires the energetic intervention of the labor leaders and the Negro leadership in a united effort.

Gordy is not the only victim of the vicious "racist" police force in this city. He is one among many. Before him there were Beverly Lee, Leon Mosley, and others. The latest is Costello Hickson, beaten brutally last week by three cops after he had had a slight auto accident.

These cases will go on and on until the public is aroused, and with one voice says, "NO."

## Workers' rights vs. ID card

By demanding an end to state rules that require applicants for drivers licenses to have valid Social Security numbers, immigrant workers have taken the lead in fighting the rulers' latest moves to establish a national ID card. This fight is in the interests of and should be joined by all working people.

The requirement to show a Social Security number effectively prevents undocumented workers from Mexico and other countries from having a drivers license, a crucial form of identification not only to drive legally but for all kinds of other activities as well. And in many parts of the United States not driving severely limits job opportunities.

But it is important to see that what is involved is not fundamentally an issue for immigrants. The attack is more sweeping, and targets the entire working class. It is the latest effort by the employers to establish an internal passport, a document with a federal ID number and a digital photo or other "biometric identifiers" that can provide cops, employers, creditors, or landlords with information about any individual.

While such a national ID card plan was floated under President Ronald Reagan's administration in the 1980s, it gained impetus and was temporarily codified in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, signed by President William Clinton in 1996.

Open attempts by the government to institute a national ID card have been met with widespread opposition by working people and other defenders of democratic rights, and rightly so. But the federal and state governments have continued to push on this front and are trying to set up through the back door what they could not politically achieve through the front door.

The fact is that year by year the employers and the federal and state governments have been expanding mandatory identification checks, such as at airports, at police roadblocks, and thousands of stop-and-search operations by local cops. In fact, not having an ID when checking in for an airplane flight is one of the triggers for an interrogation before boarding a plane. National databases of driv-

ers license numbers, Social Security numbers, and other such identification tags have given the cops and other police agencies immediate access to a person's history.

Capitalist politicians always try to justify these measure by claiming they will be used to prevent "illegal immigration" or "crime" or "terrorism." In doing this they try to draw part of the working class into scapegoating other layers of working people and into believing that we have something in common with the imperialist government in Washington. They hope to blind workers and farmers to the growing unconstitutional violations of the right to privacy, numb us to an increasing number of cops and their unwarranted checks and searches, and make us believe the government has a right to keep track of the movement and history of any individual.

The rulers are responding to the increasing resistance of working people by undermining democratic rights and beefing up the repressive forces of the state.

Since the beginning of the modern working-class movement, the capitalist class has stepped up incursions on democratic rights in response to the development of consciousness and combativity among the toilers. That was the purpose of the Palmer raids that targeted union militants, socialists, and communists in the United States in the years following the Russian Revolution; the Smith Act frame-ups aimed at revolutionary communist workers on the eve of World War II; and FBI spying and disruption aimed at critics of U.S. government policy—from the Black and antiwar movements to the Socialist Workers Party.

Today, the very combativity the bosses fear is growing, and is beginning to pose an obstacle to their attack on fundamental democratic rights. Immigrant workers, gaining confidence from union-organizing victories and from their growing presence in U.S. society, are shouting, "We produce the wealth: we demand our rights!" and are calling for an end to requirements that every person must carry and show a Social Security card on demand.

It is in the interest of every worker and farmer to build and support such protests.

## Defend Charleston dockworkers!

The June 9 March and Rally for Workers' Rights in Columbia, South Carolina, will be an important opportunity to take a stand in support of union rights and against racism and police violence.

The central demand of the action is to drop all the charges against the Charleston Five—members of International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Local 1422 who are facing frame-up charges of "riot" that could carry up to 10 years in prison. Their crime? They took part in a mass picket against union-busting moves by the shipping bosses on Jan. 20, 2000, in Charleston, South Carolina. The state, county, and local authorities mobilized 600 cops who brutally assaulted the union members, injuring several workers. The thugs in blue who rioted against the longshoremen have never been charged, of course.

These workers who stood up for their rights, in the face of police decked out in riot gear, are part of the increasingly staunch resistance that toilers throughout the United States are putting up in face of the employers' attacks on our living and working conditions. Their fight is also a reflection of the beginnings of a social movement among Black workers and farmers against the racism that is endemic to American capitalism. Just days before the police assault on the Charleston dockworkers, tens of thousands

of people rallied in Columbia to demand that the South Carolina state government stop flying the Confederate battle flag over the capitol. Members of ILA Local 1422, the big majority of whom are Black, had organized buses to this action.

The police riot against the longshoremen, and the attempt by the state government to jail the cops' victims, provide a glimpse of what the U.S. rulers mean when they call for measures against "domestic terrorism." They are preparing to take on workers who stand up for their rights against the bosses, farmers who defend their land against foreclosure and demand a living wage, protesters against police brutality, and other such "troublemakers."

The Charleston Five and other members of the ILA have been speaking across the country to explain their fight and win support. They have gotten a serious hearing from Atlanta to San Francisco to New York among workers, students, and others who recognize the high stakes in this fight.

The June 9 rally in Columbia offers a chance to stand together and be counted. Supporters of the defense effort from Georgia to Delaware to Michigan are organizing buses to go. We encourage *Militant* readers to join them in building this action.

## Returning 'proud as peacocks'

Striking members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees who are returning to work after approving a new contract have set an example for the entire labor movement. As striker Mary Ann Subick explained, they are walking back into the plant "proud as peacocks." Indeed, they have put a feather in the cap of the labor movement and inspired thousands of other working people and unionists with the effectiveness of their fight.

From the start the union members took the moral high ground in their struggle for a wage increase, a company pension plan, and dignity on the job. By drawing a line in the sand and standing up for these basic rights, workers rejected the idea that because they happen to be immigrants, women, or Black that they deserve less from the boss. And they helped strengthen other struggles by reaching out to rallies of airline workers in Los Angeles and of strikers at the Up-To-Date laundry in Baltimore.

They were even able to bring news of their struggle to

members of unions from many countries at an international trade union conference in Cuba in May. Martha Bonilla, a striker from Los Angeles who was jailed for picket line activity, explained the strike and issues the workers were confronting to more than 600 participants from 58 countries, helping to bring to light the resistance of working people in the United States to the assaults by the employers and their government.

Readers of the *Militant* and workers in California, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere followed the contract struggle at Hollander with great interest. The decision of union members in Tignall, Georgia, to honor picket lines of strikers from Los Angeles for the more than two months it lasted was a singular act of solidarity that was a real blow to the company's attempt to wear down and break the strike in California. That they go back to work stronger, more united, and with deeper connections to other working people and unions is a good sign for struggles ahead.

## Energy plan aids capitalists

Continued from Page 6

stretched near capacity, the Bush administration is debating how hard to crack down." Refineries are now operating at 96 percent of their capacity, according to the American Petroleum Institute. Over the past 25 years only one refinery has been built in the United States, and more than 100 of them have been shut down since 1980.

The energy package projects streamlining regulations to speed the relicensing of nuclear reactors and licensing of new plants. Some 20 percent of the nation's energy is produced by the 103 nuclear power plants in operation throughout the country, many of them nearing 30 to 40 years of age and prone to a multitude of safety problems. Since the Three Mile Island nuclear accident near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1979, no new reactors have been licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and none have been built since the 1970s.

Pitching his proposals around nuclear power as a way of defending the environment while insisting the technology involved is now much safer, Bush asserted, "By renewing and expanding existing nuclear facilities, we can generate tens of thousands of megawatts of electricity, at a reasonable cost, without pumping a gram of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere."

Bush's energy policy also calls for a tax break to reduce the cost of decommissioning nuclear plants, and backs the industry's perspective of adding more reactors to sites that already have them. "Many U.S. nuclear plant sites were designed to host four to six reactors, and most operate only two or three," the report states.

The White House's energy plan asks Congress to renew a law that caps liabilities for nuclear power companies in the event of a disaster at their plants. It also calls for "reevaluating" a 25-year-old ban on breeder reactors and the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, which would extract the plutonium produced for further use in nuclear power plants.

Meanwhile, the administration has vowed to press forward with securing a national nuclear waste repository. Plants for decades have been storing nuclear waste on site on a temporary basis. One place under consideration by the administration is Yucca Mountain in Nevada, a former weapons testing area 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas. This proposal has generated opposition among individuals and groups concerned about the environment, and opened a debate among many in the area. The report emphasizes the urgency of establishing such a site. It warns that "the Department of Energy is over a decade behind schedule for accepting nuclear waste from utilities."

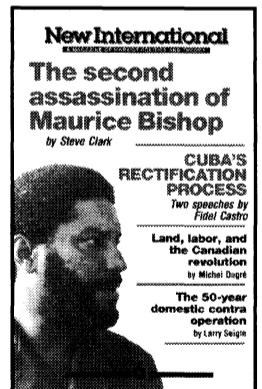
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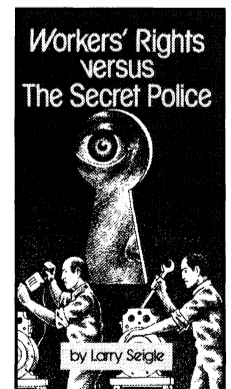
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Spanish-language pamphlet includes "Washington's 50-year Domestic Contra Operation." \$6.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

# Five-year limit on welfare approaches for tens of thousands

BY HILDA CUZCO

With a year-end welfare cutoff approaching, reports of the extent of the disaster facing tens of thousands of families across the country are making their way into the big-business media.

In New York, more than \$500 million in federal funds that was earmarked to be spent on programs aimed at helping working people leaving welfare, remains in the state government's treasury. This is more than half the total amount set aside by the state for transportation aid, job training, and other programs that were to have been put into operation over the past several years.

In New York City, the Giuliani administration announced plans to deny automatic enrollment to 38,000 working people in the Safety Net program, established to provide some benefits to those who at the end of this year will reach the five-year limit for receiving welfare. Under this program, created in 1997, state and local governments are required to provide a similar level of benefits to people pushed off welfare.

Jason Turner, director of the city's Human Resources Administration (HRA), told a city council hearing that welfare recipients should instead "redouble their efforts to work with HRA and find employment and close their case, and only if all of those efforts fail, reapply for the extended" benefits. City council members disputed Turner's statement and accused the Giuliani administration of backing proposals that would punish families who have been on welfare rolls over the past five years.

According to statistics from 1998, the most recent available, 24 percent of all children in the state live below the poverty line. The *New York Times* reported that "advocates for the poor contend that while many local welfare agencies have been eager to trim their rolls, sometimes removing people for failing to meet technicalities in program requirements, they have not been as eager to start programs to lift former welfare families out of poverty."

The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act eliminated the federally funded entitlement Aid to Families with Dependent Children and

set a five-year lifetime limit on an individual's ability to receive welfare payments.

Some states implemented a shorter cutoff. Indiana, for example, allows only two years and has struck 14,300 families from the welfare rolls since 1997. Only 129 received extensions from the state.

There are some worries among wings of the ruling class over the consequence of the 1996 law, especially in a period of economic slowdown. A recent report of the bipartisan Congressional Research Service pointed out that the new welfare law was adopted "during a period of extraordinary economic growth" and its results have "yet to be tested by a recession."

Harry Holzer, a former chief economist of the Labor Department, estimated "welfare rolls will rise by 5 to 7 percent for each percentage-point increase in the national unemployment rate." The new law gave states the power to use federal block grants for cash assistance, job-training programs, child care, and transportation. However, there is no allowance for extra funds when welfare rolls start to rise.

Another result of the 1996 "welfare reform" law is that nearly a million low-income families have lost Medicaid coverage, according to a study from Families USA. "Most parents moving from welfare to work are in jobs that provide no health coverage, but they are losing their Medicaid lifeline," said Ronald Pollack, the executive director of the organization.

## Socialists open new offices in Seattle

BY DEAN PEOPLES AND ERNEST MAILHOT

SEATTLE—More than three dozen people attended the grand opening of the new offices of the Socialist Workers Party and the reopening of the Pathfinder Bookstore in Seattle. The space also houses the headquarters of the Young Socialists and the meeting space for the Militant Labor Forum. It is located in a working-class community in Seattle.

Sean O'Rawe, the chairperson of Irish Northern Aid in Washington state, addressed the meeting. He pointed to the 20th anniversary of the hunger strike by Irish freedom fighters and the example they set. "The commitment of a few people can make a big difference," he said. "As long as one person is oppressed none of us are free. Keep up the good work."

Micah McCarty, a member of the Macah Nation who has been involved in the fight to defend the right of the Macah to whale, presented a prayer song in honor of those who "have a common concern for the human race and the planet earth." A descendant of one of the chiefs who was forced to sign the treaty ceding Macah lands in 1855, he stated: "Nowadays the settlers and Native Americans have a common bond in that they are both exploited by the capitalist corporations." Pathfinder's titles, he said, "help bring us up to date on struggles against imperialism today."

Dale Bartley, a member of the Transport Workers Union at Alaska Airlines, addressed the need for "a bookstore like this that can

## Comair announces layoff of 400 as pilot strike nears three months



Comair's 1,400 striking pilots rejected contract proposal from company as planes lie stranded for nearly three months. Bosses announced job cuts for 200 pilots.

Meanwhile, President George Bush is continuing the attack on Social Security begun under the Clinton administration. In early May the president named a bipartisan commission to draft a Social Security "overhaul" plan co-chaired by former New York Democratic senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and AOL Time Warner executive Richard Parsons.

Bush—casting Social Security as an individual retirement plan rather than a social wage covering disability payments, support for minors who have lost a parent, and old-age pensions among other benefits—has

been pushing a plan to allow people to put up to 2 percent of their Social Security payroll tax into private investment accounts. Moynihan and others on the commission have favored partial privatization of the Social Security entitlement for some time.

U.S. treasury secretary Paul O'Neill told the *Financial Times* May 18 that he questioned whether or not the government should guarantee health care and pension benefits to retirees. "Able-bodied adults who have the ability to earn income have an obligation not to pass part of their own responsibility on to a broader population," he said.

present the truth about history to youth today and be an alternative to the history conveyed by the mass media." Laurel Davis, an organizer for Service Employees District 1199 who has been involved in a successful union organizing drive at Northwest Hospital, also offered her congratulations and told about the struggle by hospital workers to get their first contract.

Becca Williamson from the Young Socialists detailed some of the YS's recent activities, including walking picket lines with state workers and teachers, cosponsoring a speaker from the Cuban Interests Section, participating in and speaking at an anti-tuition hikes rally, holding a class series on the *Communist Manifesto*, and getting out the word on the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

Rogelio Montes and Ana Guzman, unionists from Yakima, also sent messages. Montes, a member of the Western Council of Industrial Unions, explained that they couldn't attend the celebration because of a special union meeting. It had been called to discuss a National Labor Relations Board decision mandating Valley Manufactured Housing management to begin negotiations with their workers. Montes had been the main organizer of a year-long strike at Valley that ended a few months ago. Guzman, fired for union organizing, recently won her job back and back pay at Washington Fruit. The company is appealing the ruling. Both unionists sent greetings to the celebration explaining they look forward to speaking at a Militant Labor Forum soon and look forward to the

presence of Socialist Workers Party members at the August 5 farmworkers rally in Yakima.

Ernest Mailhot, the chairperson of the Socialist Workers Party in Seattle and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, said as more working people and youth get involved in the growing labor resistance from the strikers at Weyerhaeuser to the those at Hollander Home Fashions to the farmworkers in Yakima, "they will be looking for an alternative to the capitalist system which is the cause of the problems we face today," he said.

Participants contributed \$584 to help cover remodeling expenses and purchased \$183 worth of Pathfinder books along with four subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Among those attending the celebration was a Mexican worker who had called the bookstore after he read a review of the Pathfinder book *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas* in the Spanish-language newspaper *El Mundo*. Three young people helped sell \$115 in raffle tickets to raise funds to offset Young Socialists' travel expenses to the May 20 New York meeting. "In Defense of Leninism, Expanding Opportunities for Communists Today."

*Ernest Mailhot is a meat packer and member of UFCW Local 81. Dean Peoples is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 751 at Boeing.*

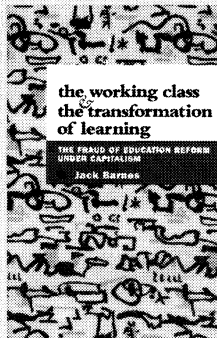
### FROM PATHFINDER

#### The Working Class & the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism

By Jack Barnes

"Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity. That is the historic truth." \$3



Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

## LETTERS

### Strike at Hollander

It was great to read the account of Hollander Home Fashions striker Marta Bonilla addressing the international meeting in solidarity with Cuba that took place at the end of the CTC congress in Havana (May 21 issue). There is one factual error. Bonilla says that the strikers in Los Angeles were inspired when their union sisters and brothers "in Tignall, Georgia, who are Anglo, honored their picket line." In fact, the big majority of the Tignall workers are Black. It is indeed inspiring that the workers in Georgia are standing in solidarity with the

Los Angeles strikers, who are in their big majority Latino immigrants, and with the new walkout in Pennsylvania. The fight at Hollander Home Fashions is a real answer to the bosses' attempts to foster racial divisions among workers. Naomi Craine Charlotte, North Carolina

### Kerrey and Vietnam War

The *Militant* coverage of the massacre of Vietnamese civilians by a Navy SEALs unit under command of former Senator Robert Kerrey was right on the mark. A communist response to the revela-

tions is exactly what is needed to make sense of the continued attacks by the big business media and U.S. government against the Vietnamese nation and their manipulative apologies for American military atrocities.

I was in Vietnam from April 1967 to May 1968 with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Responses by co-workers and veterans I spoke with about the revelations ranged from, "He's not a hero, he's a murderer" to "We have no right to judge him, we were all guilty of some criminal conduct over there." A few veterans thought that if there were

a trial over war crimes, it should start with Robert McNamara and Henry Kissinger, otherwise the real big criminals will get away.

Still another veteran stated, "All our special weapons and modern technology only served to prolong the inevitable. If we had fought, armed with the same weapons as they had, the war would have been over in six months. Only courage makes you face the weapons we had."

I and other veterans I spoke with recognized Kerrey's mission as very similar to, if not part of, the infamous Phoenix Program, a se-

cret CIA extermination operation designed to eliminate opponents of the Saigon regime and then blame the deaths on Vietnamese liberation fighters.

Rick Trujillo San Jose, California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

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.

## Palestinians condemn Israeli assaults

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Some 50,000 Palestinians condemned Israeli government assaults on the West Bank and Gaza strip in which the regime used F-16 warplanes to bomb installations of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

The Palestinians poured out for a funeral of those killed in the May 18 attacks, where the Israeli regime used warplanes for the first time in its eight-month-long crackdown on unrest in the occupied territories. The fighter-bombers led an aerial assault against security installations of the PNA in three West Bank towns and the Gaza Strip.

Standing by the rubble of the police building in Nablus, a police officer said, "We didn't hear anything in the sky. The building literally crumbled on top of our bodies.... Dozens of our colleagues were trapped." Of the 12 policemen killed in the raids, 11 died in Nablus, the West Bank's largest city with a population of 290,000. The city's governor, Mahmoud Aloul, called the May 18 strikes by the F-16 planes "a dangerous escalation."

The officer said that the silence and speed of the attack took him by surprise. He and his colleagues had been expecting to hear the sound of helicopter blades as warning of an Israeli raid in retaliation for a suicide bombing earlier on the same day in Netanya, on Israel's Mediterranean coastline.

The Hamas organization claimed responsibility for the explosion at the entrance to a shopping mall, in which Mahmoud Ahmed Marmash, a 21-year-old carpenter, deto-

### U.S. Army 'practices' urban warfare attack in New Jersey town

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In its latest urban warfare exercise, some 100 U.S. Army special operation soldiers from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, carried out a simulated assault May 9 next to a residential neighborhood in the New Jersey city of East Brunswick. They targeted a building slated for demolition.

That evening the city's police were flooded with more than 130 telephone calls about four explosions that were part of the exercises. The police informed those who called that soldiers were conducting a training exercise at an undisclosed location.

"They were very, very loud and it was very, very frightening," said Barbara and Edward Neminski. "We were sitting trying to get our children in bed. After [the explosion], they wouldn't go to sleep."

"The house shook, the windows shook, the chandeliers shook," said John McKenna, whose home is less than a half-mile from the building where the mock assault took place. "Why they would want to do it so close to a residential area, I can't understand. Why at least don't you tell people in the area?"

According to an article in the *New Jersey Star-Ledger*, "This and a similar exercise in Woodbridge were the first of a week's worth of training operations planned in Middlesex and Union counties, officials said. Unlike Wednesday night, the other exercises may involve soldiers in helicopters."

Walker Sokalski, deputy public affairs officer for the Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, said that the unit at the fort conducts similar field training four times a year. "It's a changing world and we have to be prepared to meet any challenge we see," he stated.

Under the administration of former president William Clinton, the Pentagon changed its structure to include for the first time a North American command and began training its military forces for use inside the United States. Congress in 1999 authorized the Pentagon to place specially trained National Guard units in the largest population centers for possible deployment throughout the country.



Palestinian youth battled Israeli soldiers in Hebron May 15. Tens of thousands participated in protests against Israeli repression in West Bank and Gaza that day.

nated a bomb strapped to his waist. Marmash and five others died in the blast, and some 70 people were injured. Tayeb Abdel Rahim, an advisor to PNA head Yasir Arafat, responded by condemning "operations aimed at civilians and innocent people, be they Palestinians or Israelis."

Meanwhile, the Israeli government deployed helicopter gunships against PNA headquarters in the northern West Bank towns of Jenin and Tulkarm, wounding at least 50 Palestinians. "This is war, my friends, this is war," commented Reuven Rivlin, the Israeli minister of communications.

The use of airpower is just one aspect of the Israeli escalation. The May 15 *New York Times* observed that "recently, Israel has been intensifying its military offensive.... It has conducted regular incursions into Palestinian territory...stepped up missile attacks on Palestinian security installations and continued to 'eliminate' suspects by assassination."

#### Use of tanks and bulldozers

In the last two months Israeli officers have stepped up their use of tanks and bulldozers in probes into first the Gaza Strip, and then into the West Bank. "By leveling refugee dwellings and destroying farmland, the Israelis have a clear field of vision from army outposts, denying cover to Palestinian gunmen, and can dominate the zones with their own gunfire," reported the May 3 *Times*. An Israeli officer dubbed one such area a "destruction zone."

After a May 2 raid into Gaza, during

which tank shells and machine guns were fired and homes were leveled with bulldozers, an army spokesperson described the demolition as "engineering work."

That such callous brutality has inflamed, rather than doused, the spirit of resistance among Palestinians was illustrated by mobilizations in towns and cities of the occupied territories May 15, the anniversary of the 1948 declaration of the state of Israel. Some 30,000 people converged onto the main north-south road from the Nusseirat, Bureij, and Mughazi refugee camps in the center of Gaza, chanting "no surrender." A similar number crowded into the main square of the West Bank town of Nablus.

In the Gaza protest, several old men carried the keys to their former homes in Israel—a symbolic reference to the events known by Palestinians as "Al Aqabah," or "the catastrophe." The formation 53 years ago of the new state, consummated through a war by Zionist military units against pan-Arab armies, involved the forceful expulsion of some 750,000 original inhabitants of Palestine.

The deaths of five Palestinian security officers the previous day in the West Bank town of Beituna helped to fuel the resolute mood of the protesters. Israeli troops shot the men as they prepared a meal, and dumped their bodies in a hole near a checkpoint. Later, the Israeli Defense Forces chief of staff Shaul Mofaz told the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Israeli Knesset, or parliament, that "this wasn't the outcome we intended." The operation, he said, had originally targeted members of

Force 17, the security guard of Yasir Arafat.

Mofaz told the committee that, "in his estimation, the armed confrontation with the Palestinian Authority will continue for months to come," reported the *Ha'aretz* newspaper. Correspondent Gideon Alon noted that Mofaz "also discussed the range of operations being carried out by the Israeli Defense Forces, [including] actions against communications channels, and... 'pinpoint strikes,' a euphemism for assassinations of Palestinian activists."

Foreign minister and former Labor prime minister Shimon Peres struck a similar note on May 15, stating that Israel is locked in a "battle for its existence." Peres, a key member of the coalition government of Likud Party leader Ariel Sharon, has taken the lead in presenting Tel Aviv's response to a report of the Mitchell Committee.

That body, headed by former U.S. senator George Mitchell, was established under the government of President William Clinton. While its report sweepingly characterizes the Palestinian resistance as "terrorism," and describes this as "the most 'reprehensible' of all forms of violence," according to the *Times*, it has aroused the ire of Israeli politicians by recommending a "freeze on the construction of settlements."

Peres rejected the "equation of settlements versus terror." The government is obliged to provide for the settlers' "ongoing needs," he said.

The construction of settlements in the West Bank, Gaza, and in East Jerusalem has sped up since the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords placed parts of the occupied territories under limited Palestinian control. The April 28 *Economist* reported, "During Oslo's seven-year era, the number of settler houses and flats grew by 52 percent, swelling the settler population in the West Bank and Gaza from 115,000 in 1993 to 200,000 in 2000. These figures do not include the 180,000 settlers who live in occupied East Jerusalem."

"According to Israel's Peace Now Movement," continued the British weekly magazine, "there are now 6,000 housing units being built in the occupied territories," although many remain unsold.

Writing in the May 12 *New York Times*, columnist Anthony Lewis observed that the settlements "are not peaceful villages but militarized encampments."

"[They] impinge on the daily lives of Palestinians in grinding, humiliating ways. In crowded Gaza, Jewish settlements occupy a quarter of the choicest land and seafont." All traffic, wrote Lewis, "comes to a stop so a settler bus with military guards can go through."

## 'Fight for the living, honor the dead'

### Rail workers and other unionists in New Zealand hold event to honor workers killed on the job

BY STUART NEEDHAM

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—Union members and other workers turned out for a well-attended International Workers' Memorial Day ceremony here April 28, under the slogan "Fight for the Living—Honour the Dead." The big majority of the 250 people present were railway workers, members of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU). Trains throughout New Zealand were stopped at midday for one minute to mark the event.

The ceremony honored two Christchurch railway workers, Neil Faithful and Robert Burt, killed in shunting accidents in April and May 2000. The day before the event Tranz Rail, the owner of New Zealand's railways, had been fined \$50,000 for Faithful's death. He was crushed when a train car derailed due

to faulty tracks. At the time the company had known for at least six months that the rails on that section of track had drifted dangerously apart, and should have had them repaired within 24 hours, but did nothing.

Zac, a Tranz Rail track maintenance worker for 20 years, told the *Militant* the rail bosses "have a different mind set from us" regarding maintenance. "I'm certain every worker on the ground floor seeing faults would readily fix them," he said. Before the railroad was sold off to a private company in 1993, the bosses would have weekend gangs carry out urgent repairs on track faults like those that caused Faithful's death. But now, Zac explained, the bosses don't want to spend the money. "They want to maximize returns to the shareholders," he said.

The general secretary of the RMTU, Wayne Butson, who spoke at the meeting, said that 10 railway workers had been killed in industrial accidents since the sell-off of the railroad in 1993, with three deaths occurring in the space of three months last year. A subsequent government inquiry found that the rate of fatalities at Tranz Rail is about eight times the national average.

Butson noted that New Zealand was "the home of some of the most appalling industrial health and safety statistics in the world." Paul Corliss, the industrial officer for the RMTU, said that about 160 workers die each year from workplace accidents, while a further 400 die of illnesses caused by unhealthy or unsafe work environments.

The meeting also honored Mike Smith, a bank worker, who was driven to suicide last year by work stress caused by pressure to reach sales targets. A number of bank workers, members of the Finance Sector Union, participated in the meeting. Special mention was also made of Adam Hopkins, a worker at the local Firestone tire factory who was killed two months ago after being caught in machinery at the plant. There had been three previous accidents on the same machine. Workers struck the plant for several days after the accident and were outraged when an injunction gained by the company forced them to return to work halfway through Hopkins's funeral.

Stuart Needham is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch.