

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba's land reform: an agrarian revolution

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U.S.-NATO bombings cut off water, electricity

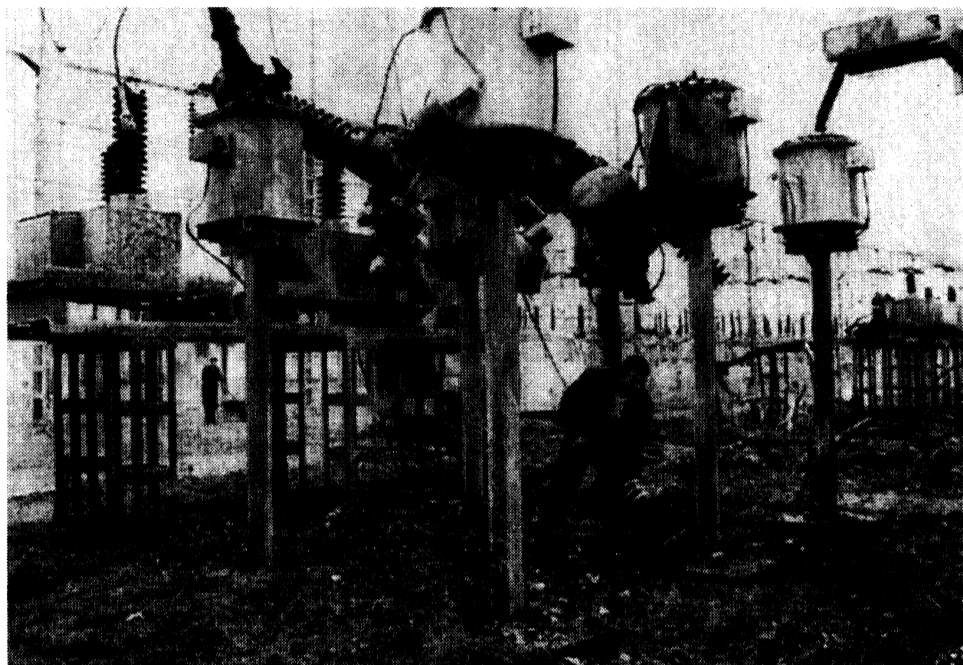
50,000 imperialist troops readied for Kosova invasion

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"Last night I was up reading with candles," said Bojan, 20, a university student in Novi Sad, in a May 25 telephone interview from Yugoslavia's third-largest city. "They've been bombing the power stations in the suburbs for the last two or three days. They stopped using the graphite bombs that cause temporary shortages and are using the real missiles targeting the transformers. Next on their list are probably our hydroelectric plants and other electricity generating factories."

In the latest escalation of the U.S.-NATO air raids against Yugoslavia, Washington and its imperialist allies are inflicting permanent damage to the country's power grid. Electricity cuts are now regular and widespread throughout Serbia, affecting everything from trams to bakeries to water pumps — coming on top of the systematic dismantling of industry and infrastructure at passed its 65th day as the *Militant* went to press. Millions are being deprived of access to drinking water at home.

"We've had no water for two days in my apartment," said Bojan, who asked that his last name not be used. "The pressure is too low because the pumps that run on electricity have gone silent. We now go to the fountain in the market to fill up bottles and buckets. You can see a big, beautiful line of hundreds of people. It's as if we were back 200



A worker inspects the damage after U.S.-NATO bombing of an electricity substation in Nis, Yugoslavia's second-largest city, May 26. Washington has begun systematic destruction of the country's power grid, causing shortages for millions of workers.

years ago."

At the same time, a spate of attacks on Kosova have resulted in the largest number of killings of Albanians by NATO bombs so far — nearly 200 in 10 days. The intensifi-

cation of the NATO bombing has also spurred a new explosion of deportations and brutalization of Kosovar Albanians, carried out largely by nationalist Serb paramilitary troops in black masks. The exodus into Macedonia reached 10,000 per day May 25.

This turn of events is of Washington's making. It is consistently producing the opposite result from NATO's alleged goal of protecting Albanians from "ethnic cleansing." The Clinton administration is now utilizing it to justify a major new deployment of troops in areas surrounding Yugoslavia.

The same day that power cuts blackened most of Serbia and expulsions of Kosovar Albanians reached a new peak in the last month, NATO announced its decision to send 50,000 "peacekeeping" troops to Macedonia

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N.Y. cop confesses he tortured Louima

BY AL DUNCAN

NEW YORK — "Your Honor, I plead guilty to the charges against me." With these words New York Police Department Officer Justin Volpe admitted before Federal Court Judge Eugene Nickerson that he did shove a wooden stick into the rectum of Abner Louima in the NYPD 70th precinct bathroom on Aug. 9, 1997. The cop also confessed that he beat Louima, a Haitian immigrant who was 30 at the time, and threatened to kill him if he told anyone about it.

The guilty plea came May 25, in the third
Continued on Page 14

Help sell 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

"We know a new pattern is being woven in struggle as working people emerge from a period of retreat, resisting the consequences of the rulers' final blow-off boom, of 'globalization' — their grandiloquent term that displays imperial arrogance while it masks brutal assaults on human dignity. The emerging pattern is taking shape, defined by the actions of a vanguard resisting indignity and isolation, whose ranks increase with every single worker or farmer who reaches out to others with the hand of solidarity and offers to fight together."

— Jack Barnes, December 1998

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PITTSBURGH — The above quote, taken from "A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics," the first article in *Capitalism's*
Continued on Page 5

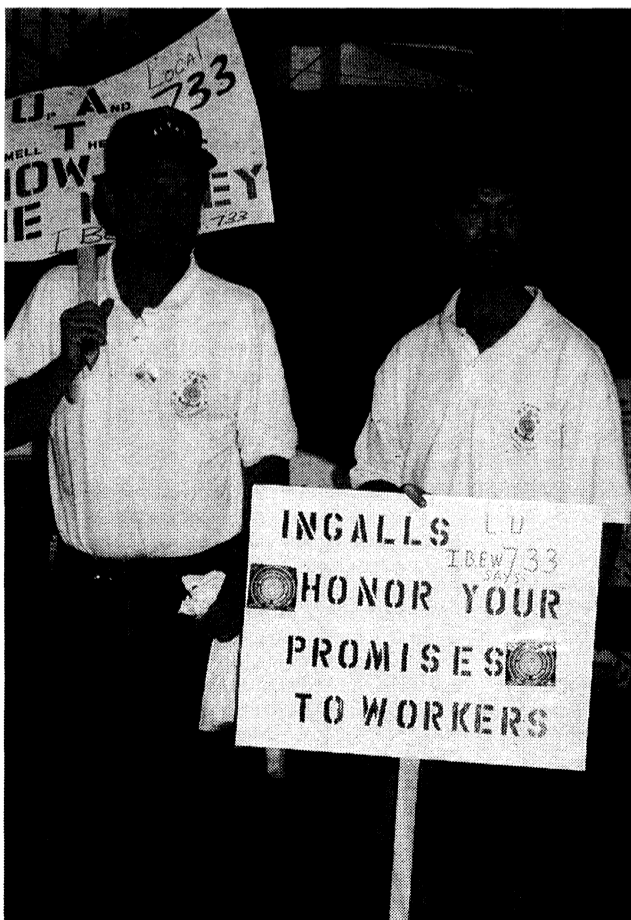
Mississippi shipyard workers strike, joining with Virginia unionists

BY KRISTIN MERIAM

PASCAGOULA, Mississippi — "Good news to Newport News, Ingalls workers want money too!" declares a picket sign posted at the main gate of Ingalls Shipbuilding in this Gulf Coast town. With 11,500 workers, it's Mississippi's largest private employer.

Eight thousand workers, members of 11 of the 13 unions at Ingalls, are now on strike. The International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1133 set up picket lines May 16. Members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 733 struck May 19, and the Metal Trades Council walked out the next day. Security guards and office workers ratified their contracts and most remain on the job.

This is the second major shipyard strike now under way in the United States. Members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia have
Continued on Page 12



T.J. Gorajec

Members of the IBEW picket Ingalls Shipbuilding

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—Jack Barnes, December 1994

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Jack Barnes

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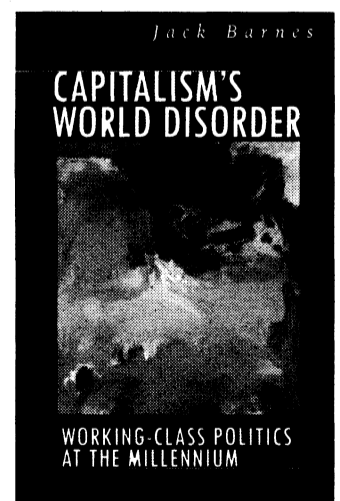
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turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are not chaos. They are the inevitable product of lawful and understandable forces unleashed by capitalism.

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Prime minister is elected in Israel

Labor Party candidate Ehud Barak, a former army chief of staff, was elected prime minister of Israel May 17, defeating former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu of the right-wing Likud Party by a vote of 55.9 to 43.9 percent. Described as a "dovish hawk," Barak "spent 35 years fighting the Arabs," reported London's *Financial Times*, referring to the Zionist efforts to crush the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. The campaign reflected increasing polarization in Israel, where the right-wing religious Shas party went from 10 to 17 parliamentary seats, making it the third-largest party.

Barak has promised to end the 21-year Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, which has become increasingly unpopular in the face of resistance by Lebanese fighters. Barak has made no statement indicating he would honor the 1993 agreement Tel Aviv signed with the Palestinian leadership in Oslo, Norway, however. That pact limited Palestinian self-administration to clumps of land in the West Bank and Gaza, with Tel Aviv retaining overall sovereignty, control of all borders, and authority over disputes on land and water usage. Meanwhile, the Zionist settlers have rushed to expand land grabs. On May 18 bulldozers began clearing ground in Arab east Jerusalem for 132 Israeli homes in an area inhabited by 11,000 Palestinians.

Yeltsin appoints another premier

Sergei Stepashin was confirmed as prime minister of Russia May 19, one week after President Boris Yeltsin abruptly dumped Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov. This was the third dismissal of a prime minister by Yeltsin in 15 months. "The situation in the economy is still not improving," said Yeltsin, citing his reason for dumping Primakov.

Last September Yeltsin appointed Primakov as prime minister nearly one month after Moscow devalued its currency and defaulted on some \$40 billion in domestic debt. Russia's gross domestic product fell 6 percent in 1998, leaving national output 45 percent below its level in 1989. Stepashin promised to bring "stability in the economy" by championing unpopular "economic reforms" sought by imperialist investors through the International Monetary Fund.

Russian sailors demand back pay

Russian sailors on two ships, the *Trunovsk* and the *Kutuzovo*, launched a hunger strike May 16 after sitting for nine months in the port of Kuwait. The crews are demanding the Vostoktransflot Vladivostok joint stock shipping company pay back wages and allow them to go home. They have worked in the Arab Persian Gulf since early 1998. The vessels have been held up since August last year for nonpayment of ship repairs.

Some 40 percent of Russian workers have gone weeks or months without payment of wages. Last year a strike wave rocked the country involving miners, rail workers, oil field workers, and others. Back wages owed to the toilers stood at \$11 billion in 1998.

Japan joblessness rises

Kanematsu, the ninth-largest trading company in Japan, announced May 18 a three-year plan to eliminate more than half its workforce of 17,000 people. Grippled by heavy debts, Kanematsu's president, Masao Yosomiya, said he would request banks to write off more than \$3 billion of the company's debt. Japan's eight largest banks announced May 21 steep fiscal year losses. The banks held some \$1 trillion in bad loans since the opening of 1999.

The move by Kanematsu indicates the country's jobless rate, which has reached a record high nearly every month since the beginning of the year, will most likely keep soaring.

Hidden unemployment reached the double digits, as the grinding economic crisis hit Japanese workers harder than at any time since the post-World War II boom.



Eighty-five thousand workers rally May Day in Tokyo. They joined nearly 2 million around Japan in calling for government measures to create jobs.

coerce him into cooperating with their attacks on democratic rights. Six people are known to be jailed in connection with the conspiracy charges. While targeting those with Arab names for now, the "terrorism investigation [has been] focusing increasingly on the role of United States citizens," the *Times* reported May 22.

Death row inmate is exonerated

Prosecutors in Cook County, Illinois, dropped rape and murder charges against death row inmate Ronald Jones May 17 — the fourth time this year that a prisoner facing execution in Illinois had been cleared. Jones's 1989 conviction was overturned two years ago after DNA tests cleared him of the crime. He remains in custody pending extradition to Tennessee for allegedly running from a work-release sentence in 1980.

Jones said at his murder trial that torture by the cops forced him to "confess" to a crime he didn't commit. Even after his conviction was thrown out two years ago, Jones waited an additional 22 months in jail while officials debated whether to order a second trial based on a claim that he was working with an accomplice.

U.S. gov't arrests alleged 'terrorist' on secret charges

Ihab Ali was taken into custody during a closed hearing in the Federal District Court in Manhattan May 19. The charges against him are not listed in public records. Ali was brought in for questioning before a federal grand jury that has been investigating the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania last year. According to the *New York Times*, investigators are trying to link Ali with Osama bin Laden, the Saudi businessman accused by Washington of masterminding the explosions. So far, U.S. government officials have presented no evidence against bin Laden. Two U.S. citizens, Wadih el-Hage and Ali Mohamed, were already in custody on charges of "conspiring with bin Laden to kill Americans abroad."

Mohamed was indicted publicly May 19 after he was secretly imprisoned for eight months. He was arrested last September as government officials unsuccessfully tried to

Customs accused of racist abuse

Janneral Denson, a U.S.-born Black woman, charged U.S. Customs Service agents with racist abuse at a Congressional hearing May 20. Denson was detained for two days in 1997 on her return home from Jamaica after Customs agents accused her of drug smuggling. They took Denson to a Miami hospital, handcuffed her to a bed rail, and forced her to drink four cups of a laxative.

Denson, who was nearly seven months pregnant at the time, said they told her "the only way I was going to get out of here was to drink the laxative."

Amanda Buritica, a Latina witness, testified that her detention in 1994 was "the most degrading, humiliating thing I have been through." She was held for 25 hours, also forced to take laxatives, and watched by agents during bowel movements. Buritica was awarded \$450,000 in a lawsuit against the Customs Service.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

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The big-business media constantly lie about Cuban workers and farmers, their revolution, and their government. 'Militant' reporters provide first-hand accounts on celebrations of 40 years of agrarian reform — "a step from which there was no retreat," as Fidel Castro put it — and other developments in Cuba. Don't miss a single issue!



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Kaiser workers stage protests in Houston

BY TONY DUTROW
AND LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON — More than 250 locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers, members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) from Spokane and Tacoma, Washington; Gramercy, Louisiana; and Newark, Ohio, converged here for a series of events to protest the policies of Maxxam, Inc.

Jointly organized by the Steelworkers, Earth First, and other environmental groups, the May 17-19 protests included marches and rallies, a strategy conference, and a protest at the Maxxam annual stockholders meeting. Maxxam, the parent company of Kaiser Aluminum, is headquartered here. Maxxam also owns Pacific Lumber, which has been clearcutting redwood forests.

Three thousand workers from five USWA locals have been battling Kaiser Aluminum for over seven months. In January Kaiser locked out the striking workers and has refused to negotiate. The bosses are demanding elimination of 800 jobs under a proposed contract that would not increase wages or pensions, despite concessions workers made over previous contracts.

Hundreds of locked-out Kaiser workers and supporters lined the street in front of Maxxam board chairman Charles Hurwitz's posh, high-rise apartment May 17. Billed as a candlelight vigil, the event quickly took on the tone of a boisterous strike picket line. Houston police in cruisers and on horseback spread out in front of the complex gate and glared at the disciplined protesters.

The next day, 300 steelworkers, environmental activists, and unionists joined a two-mile march to the Maxxam headquarters. Whitney Jasmin, who came as part of a busload of 39 workers from USWA Local 5702 in Gramercy, commented, "Today was very successful, very orderly, and showed Maxxam the solidarity we have among ourselves and with other organizations." Maxxam will take note that "we will be leaving here with a very high morale" to continue the battle, he said.

Solidarity from Crown oil workers

At a rally following the march, Alvin Freeman gave greetings to the steelworkers from members of Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers Local 4-227 who are locked out at Crown Central Petroleum in Pasadena, Texas. Comparing his experiences over the three years of their lockout, Freeman said, "We've been kicked out of stockholders meetings and the company had the FBI harass us and try to frame us up."

Other speakers at the rally included Harris County Green Party chairman David Cobb, Darryl Cherney from Earth First, and David Foster, director of USWA District 11. Other unionists and supporters attending the events included two USWA members from an auto parts plant in Oklahoma; a Reynolds Aluminum worker from Portland, Oregon; two electricians from Houston IBEW Local 716; and five members of Crown Local 4-277, as well as other local unionists. Five students scraped together gas money and drove in from University of Texas in Austin.

Nancy Johnson was among six women who came from USWA Local 341 in Newark. While riding on the bus back from the protest at the stockholders meeting, she described what it was like when she hired in as one of five women at the Kaiser plant in 1973.

Working in the remelt shop for 14 years, one of the toughest and dirtiest jobs, was a challenge at first. "There were no women's restrooms in the work area and no bath house," Johnson said she was forced to change clothes in her car. When the bosses complained about this, she stood her ground and they ultimately installed showers.

Johnson was the food coordinator for the April 24 rally Local 341 held in Newark and has traveled to spread the word about the fight at Kaiser. She and other local union members visited the MSI picket lines in Ohio during a strike by USWA members there. Activity by the "road warriors," as workers like Johnson are known, has included tracking down customers of Kaiser in Ohio and Kentucky, making them aware of the lockout. This "corporate campaign" was the focus of a workshop May 18.

"You take away our seniority, retest us on our jobs, cap our medical care and retirement, while our work tears up our body," said Rich Dolph from the floor mike at the stockholders meeting May 19. His remarks were directed at Hurwitz. Dolph, with 11



Militant/Barbara Graham

Several locked-out workers from Crown refinery in Pasadena, Texas, joined May 18 rally for locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers at Maxxam headquarters in Houston.

years in the Tacoma plant, was one of the many workers able to take the floor.

Maxxam stockholders meeting

"Are you our Frank Lorenzo and will there no longer be a Kaiser Aluminum?" he demanded of Hurwitz, comparing the board chairman to the boss of Eastern Airlines, where members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) waged a 17-month strike in 1989-91, ultimately driving Lorenzo's company out of the business.

Cindy Allsbrook also spoke. Her 24-year-old son, David Nathan Chain, was killed protesting Pacific Lumber's destruction of the California redwood forests. "Mr. Hurwitz, my son was killed in Grizzly Creek for what he believed in. I taught my children to put out a fire even it meant trespassing to do it," she said.

Hurwitz evaded answering these charges by boasting about the Headwaters Forest agreement brokered by the Clinton Administration last March. In that deal the government organized to purchase 7,500 acres of old-growth redwoods from Pacific Lumber — a fraction of the standing trees. The

buyout totaled \$480 million.

Hurwitz also disputed charges by the union and environmentalist groups that Pacific Lumber's logging operations and mills have devastated the area around Humboldt County, California. Hurwitz bragged of the houses, schools, libraries, and churches Maxxam has built there. Steelworkers note that these are classic company towns.

Other speakers at the meeting appealed to the board to make Maxxam and Kaiser more profitable by electing to the board former Ohio Democratic senator Howard Metzenbaum and New York Judge Abner Mikva. Nominations for the two were made by USWA officials and stockholders.

Heavy cop presence

Looking back at the metal detectors in the lobby of the swank Waterwood Country Club where the stockholders meeting took place, 70 miles north of Houston, Matt Miller of Local 341 told the *Militant*, "Getting in here was like getting into Fort Knox."

At least 40 cops including sheriffs, state troopers, and Texas rangers were on the site. Everyone entering the premises was forced

Party Building Fund backers draw on help from co-workers to raise money

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

NEWYORK — Supporters of the Socialist Workers 1999 Party Building Fund organized substantial collections over the past week totaling \$12,143. This effort helped the national fund drive get closer on target. By building on this effort and collecting \$16,235 each week over the next three weeks, we can close the gap and complete the drive successfully by the June 15 deadline.

The systematic effort by supporters in Detroit has steadily moved them up the chart and should serve as an example to fund backers throughout the country. The work done to win new pledges has been combined with selling copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* and encouraging people to get a current subscription to the *Militant*. "We have found that more and more workers who read the *Militant* and books by Pathfinder are open to taking these materials to work and encouraging co-workers to read them," said Willie Reid, a fund supporter who is a member of the United Auto Workers. "We decided that we needed to make a special effort to get these workers, who we've gotten to know through various labor struggles here, involved in the fund." A special focus is building a June 6 meeting featuring Jack Willey, a meatpacker from central Illinois who has recently been a part a *Militant* sales team reaching out to workers in that region.

"We decided to not only invite fighters we know to come to the meeting," said Reid, "but to involve them in building the meeting in their workplaces. That is, working with them to see if we can win a few others to participate in the meeting as well."

Through their efforts they were able to send in an additional \$1,030 collected on pledges this past week. In addition, Reid reported that the pledges in the Detroit area now go far over their initial goal, which they plan to raise.

Doing this prior to the fund events planned in many cities will make them events where workers, farmers, and youth can come together, share experiences and discuss working-class politics — and raise money.

Twin Cities also moved up the chart this week, sending in \$1,659 collected mostly at a fund meeting held on May 21. Several supporters spent the day doing door-to-door sales in southern Minnesota before heading up to Minneapolis for the meeting, which featured Maggie Trowe, a meatpacker from Des Moines, Iowa. Trowe spoke on the struggles of packinghouse workers today, including the fight to defend the rights of immigrant workers and why this is a central question for the working class and its unions. Lawrence Mikesch, a member of the Young Socialists, spoke on his experiences on a recent sales team to the Wyoming coal mining region.

He also prepared a photo exhibit of the trip for the meeting. Gaetan Whiston, a meatpacker from southern Minnesota, gave a pitch for the fund and encouraged participants to join a week-long *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* sales team to working-class neighborhoods and packinghouses in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, and Nebraska.

A meeting sponsored by supporters in New York and New Jersey added an additional \$2,609 to this week's total. The "Eye-witness Report from Yugoslavia" included a talk and photo display by Argiris Malapanis, who headed up an international team of reporters for the *Militant*. Twenty new pledges were made at the event.

By continuing to reach out to struggles in the working class and organizing discussions with workers supportive of the activities of the Socialist Workers Party, we can build the special meetings coming up in several cities and win new contributors to the fund. Cities that have already held a meeting should consider holding a wrap up event

to show picture identification and had their names put on a list.

"Two cops were at the door of each of our five buses, checking ID as we got off," declared Dave Crampton. Once inside, "you had to go through metal detectors. No umbrellas or cameras were allowed inside," he said. Crampton, a Kaiser worker from Newark, had spent several weeks in Houston building the events.

During the three days of activities, most of the platforms were shared by union officials and representatives of environmental groups. For example, the strategy conference featured David Foster, USWA District 11 and chief negotiator for the Kaiser Aluminum workers and David Brower, former executive director of the Sierra Club.

In addition to the workshop on the corporate campaign, another took place entitled "Fair Trade vs. Free Trade."

Jim Jontz of the American Lands Alliance led that workshop. He argued that the World Trade Organization has set up laws that stand above nation-states and in relation to the United States it "violates its rights as a sovereign nation," echoing many rightist and nationalist politicians, including Patrick Buchanan. Unionists were urged to protest the WTO, which will be meeting in Seattle in late November 1999.

At a May 18 public forum on "Sustainable Jobs and the Environment," speakers included Leo Gerard, International Secretary Treasurer of the USWA; Lori Wallach, an attorney for Ralph Nader's consumer advocacy group; and Cindy Allsbrook. Julia Butterfly Hill, who has been sitting in a redwood tree for nearly two years to protest Pacific Lumber's deforestation, spoke to the gathering by cell phone.

Kaiser workers plan to come back to Houston for the June 8 Kaiser Aluminum stockholders meeting. Gramercy workers announced they will have a rally June 27.

Nancy Johnson summed up what the locked-out Kaiser workers had accomplished over the three days. "I think this has been great. Even if it doesn't mean anything to Charles Hurwitz, it shows the community — everyone — we're behind the union and in the fight."

Tony Dutrow is a member of IBEW Local 716. Lea Sherman is a member of IAM Local 15.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY BUILDING FUND

City	Goal	Collected	%
Chicago	5,000	2,475	50%
Twin Cities	5,000	2,374	47%
Detroit	4,500	2,125	47%
Philadelphia	3,000	1,255	42%
Los Angeles	6,000	2,275	38%
San Francisco	9,000	2,885	32%
Pittsburgh	3,250	960	30%
New York	10,000	2,743	27%
Seattle	7,000	1,900	27%
Atlanta	3,000	810	27%
Des Moines	2,600	660	25%
Miami	3,000	750	25%
Boston	3,000	725	24%
Birmingham	2,250	525	23%
Newark	6,500	1,315	20%
Houston	5,000	800	16%
Washington, D.C.	4,200	215	5%
Cleveland	3,000		0%
Other		1,505	
Total	85,300	26,297	31%
Goal/should be	75,000	46,750	63%

'Stop bombing of Yugoslavia,' says Iceland YS

BY ÓLÓF ANDRA PROPPÉ
AND ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON.

REYKJAVÍK, Iceland — The Young Socialists in Iceland have been involved in several actions against the war in Yugoslavia. The YS raised the idea of protesting with young people and others during an action week of the Campaign against Military Bases (SHA).

Following that, on March 30, the SHA called a demonstration under the slogan "Stop the bombing of Yugoslavia." Exactly 50 years earlier, a battle took place between a mass of people protesting the participation of the Icelandic government in the founding of NATO on the one hand, and the police and right-wing thugs on the other.

The March 30 demonstration was attended by some 300 people, despite very cold weather. Supporters of the *Militant* sold 15 copies of the paper and one subscription. Among the protesters were many Yugoslavs, some of whom had travelled three hours from the northern town Blönduós, where dozens of people from Yugoslavia emigrated last year. A number of young people also attended.

An action group involving the Young Socialists and other young workers and students worked together to call another demonstration April 23 to protest the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, demand self-determination for Kosovo, the opening of all borders, and full rights for refugees. About 100 people gathered there.

Ógmundur Jónsson, a YS member, gave a speech that was later printed as an article in *Morgunblaðið*, the biggest newspaper in Iceland. "As long as there are people — and there still are — who don't see themselves as Serbs, Croats or Muslims, but state, 'I am a Yugoslav,' there will be resistance to both imperialism and nationalist rulers," Jónsson said.

A part of the action group that organized the April 23 action decided to form a contingent in the May Day march a week later carrying a banner demanding an end to the bombing of Yugoslavia and self-determination for Kosovo. A group of 10 Thai workers also participated in the march, carrying a banner that read, "Equal rights for immigrants" in Thai, English, and Icelandic. The YS also carried a banner with the name of the organization.

The march, which was organized by the trade unions in Reykjavik with the main slogan of "Work, family, education," was

smaller than usual. The slogans of those protesting the war had a very prominent place.

Following the march YS members and collaborators from the action group went to a trade union reception and continued discussing politics. The discussion resulted in a merger of the YS and the young workers from the action group.

In order to deepen our political understanding and strengthen the chapter, we are organizing a class series reading *Capitalism's World Disorder* among other things.

Coal fields team shows labor solidarity at mines

BY LAWRENCE MIKESH

GILLETTE, Wyoming — A team of three other *Militant* supporters and myself, a member of the Twin Cities Young Socialists chapter, traveled to Campbell County, Wyoming, to speak with coal miners and participate in the sales of the *Militant* and *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

By going to several coal mine portals, the team was able to catch hundreds of miners in the process of changing work shifts as they drove in and out of the mine entrances. We carried a sign reading "U.S. Out of Yugoslavia: Working class is the target of NATO bombing."

Many of the mine workers stopped to talk, and we took down the phone number of one miner who showed great interest in the ideas of the *Militant* and Pathfinder literature. We met him for breakfast the next morning. This miner has been working in Wyoming mines for 20 years. Most of the mines in this area are nonunion.

This particular miner explained that the nonunion mines in this region pay high wages and provide good health benefits. He said many workers are not aware of the fact that the mining companies keep wages high for the purpose of keeping the miners union out. Only with a union can these wages and working conditions be defended when the mining companies attempt to strip these workers of their wages and benefits. He emphasized that only a union will be able to defend their rights in times of economic crisis.

The team of activists left the mining region with a clearer impression of the class consciousness and labor solidarity situation within Campbell County, Wyoming. Miners remained very open to the working-class objectives put forth by the team and the *Militant*.

This reveals the importance this region and industry has, not only to the country, but to the struggles of the working class in the future.

N.Y. actions: 'U.S. Navy get out of Vieques!'

BY ITZA GARCÍA

NEWYORK — The Young Socialists in New York have participated in several actions demanding the U.S. Navy leave Vieques, Puerto Rico. Vieques is a small island dominated by U.S. military training bases.

The protests were sparked by the death of Vieques resident David Sanes and the injury of several others who were struck by a bomb dropped by a U.S. Navy warplane during military exercises April 19.

"They have an absolute disregard for human life being there. It's one more death, one more accident," said Raquel Rivera, 27, a member of the Puerto Rico Collective who marched in an April 30 demonstration of 60 people at the U.S. Federal Building in Manhattan.

"The U.S. Navy and all of their forces have no right to be in any part of Puerto Rico," said YS member Ralph Diaz, 24, who supports



Hundreds rally in Vieques, Puerto Rico, May 16, to protest the U.S. military's use of the island for bombing practice. Young Socialists join such protests and actions demanding independence.

independence for Puerto Rico. "I think it's important for me to participate in these demonstrations, not only as a Puerto Rican, but as a young person. It's reasons like this that I joined the Young Socialists."

Demonstrations were also held on May 7 and May 14. Puerto Rican activists and others spoke at a Militant Labor Forum May 7, and a forum of the Puerto Rico Collective May 13.

At the Militant Labor Forum, Evelyn Morales, a member of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, said that in addition to the danger and disruption of daily life caused by bombing practice, the long-time U.S. military exercises with live ammunition in Vieques have caused much higher cancer rates there than in the rest of Puerto Rico.

Morales, who is from Vieques, said most families have lost someone to cancer, including her own sister.

Freddie Marrero, another Puerto Rican activist who spoke at the forum, said that most of the NATO troops currently involved in the war in Yugoslavia have practiced in Vieques.

Washington has carried out military exercises in Vieques since World War II, when it stole two-thirds of the land from the Puerto Rican people. Residents and others throughout Puerto Rico have repeatedly protested the U.S. military presence there.

Since the April 19 bombing, hundreds of people have occupied so-called federal land on Vieques to demand that the U.S. military stop the exercises and get out.

The Young Socialists plans to participate with others in upcoming activities in defense of independence for Puerto Rico. These include July 7 demonstrations demanding justice for framed-up Puerto Rican professor José Solís and protests in Washington D.C. July 22–25 demanding freedom for the Puerto Rican political prisoners.

MILITANT PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL Subscription drive

MAY 1 - JUNE 27

	Militant		PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal
New Zealand						
Christchurch	16	7	44%	1	0	6
Auckland	30	8	27%	1	0	5
N.Z. total	46	15	33%	2	0	11
Sweden	16	5	31%	6	3	8
United Kingdom						
London	35	9	26%	8	1	30
Manchester						
UK total	35	9	26%	8	1	30
Canada						
Vancouver	30	8	27%	3	1	15
Montreal	20	5	25%	10	3	30
Toronto	35	3	9%	5	1	25
Canada total	85	16	19%	18	5	70
United States						
Birmingham, AL	35	13	37%	5	0	10
Atlanta	28	10	36%	7	2	16
Houston	35	11	31%	15	2	20
Philadelphia	32	10	31%	6	1	15
Los Angeles	65	20	31%	30	11	40
Seattle	45	12	27%	15	1	15
Miami	35	8	23%	15	4	20
Cleveland	40	8	20%	8	0	10
Washington, D.C.	50	10	20%	15	0	30
San Francisco	90	17	19%	40	4	40
Boston	35	6	17%	15	2	25
New York	120	20	17%	50	17	75
Des Moines	40	6	15%	20	14	20
Newark, NJ	125	18	14%	50	10	60
Pittsburgh	30	4	13%	5	0	20
Twin Cities, MN	50	6	12%	12	2	15
Detroit	35	3	9%	8	1	15
Chicago	50	4	8%	15	2	30
Central Illinois	20	1	5%	4	0	7
So. Minnesota	8	0	0%			
U.S. total	968	187	19%	335	73	483
Australia	14	2	14%	3	0	12
Iceland	8	1	13%			2
France	5	0	0%	3	0	25
Int'l totals	1177	235	21%	375	82	641
Goal/Should be	1100	418	38%	350	133	600

Young Socialists \$9,000 Fund Drive April 3–June 13

City	Goal	Receive	%
Chicago	500	239	48%
Seattle	250	116	46%
Santa Cruz	300	134	45%
San Francisco	1000	190	19%
Atlanta	300	0%	0%
Austin, MN	150	0%	0%
Boston	200	0%	0%
Detroit	200	0%	0%
Houston	100	0%	0%
Los Angeles	1000	0%	0%
New York	1000	0%	0%
Newark	200	0%	0%
Philadelphia	50	0%	0%
Salt Lake City	100	0%	0%
Springfield, IL	75	0%	0%
Twin Cities	400	0%	0%
Washington, D.C.	200	0%	0%
Other		500	
Total	6025	1179	20%

The YS has launched a \$9,000 fund drive to be completed by June 13. The funds are needed for the expenses in building a proletarian youth organization that is financially independent and can respond rapidly to political developments and maintain its national office.

All out now to get 'Capitalism's World Disorder' and 'Militant' into fighters' hands

Continued from front page

World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium, captures the spirit of the unfolding resistance of which there is more evidence every week.

Getting this book into the hands of workers on the front lines is the main goal of the campaign socialist workers are on to sell 1,500 copies by June 14. Over the next few weeks we need to continue an "all-out" approach — fielding regional teams, talking to co-workers on the job, reaching out to workers on strike, going to farms and meetings of farmers — to meet this goal and the quotas in the subscription drive for the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*.

There are currently three major strikes under way by members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA): at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia; at Titan Tire plants in Iowa and Mississippi; and at Kaiser Aluminum nationwide, where the strike became a lockout. This past week 8,000 shipyard workers struck Ingalls Shipbuilding. And thousands more shipyard workers in Avondale, Louisiana, are engaged in a battle for union recognition.

This deepening labor resistance takes place in the context of a massive U.S.-organized NATO bombing assault against working people in Yugoslavia. The war is the most important question for workers to discuss out today.

Join teams to meet workers in struggle

To meet this need, socialist workers across the United States are organizing special teams to get *Capitalism's World Disorder* and the *Militant* into workers' hands. To join one, see the listings on page 12.

There are weekly *Militant* sales and reporting teams to the Tidewater, Virginia, area — where the Newport News strike is taking place.

In the past few years, workers in the Ohio Valley have waged important union battles. Next week Steelworkers in the valley will vote on union contracts May 31 at Century Aluminum in Ravenswood, West Virginia, and at the Ormet Aluminum plant in Hannibal, Ohio. In the early 1990s, USWA members at Ravenswood Aluminum, now called Century and once a flagship plant of owned by Kaiser, won a bitter 20-month lockout. During the afternoon shift change May 22, some 50 USWA members there bought copies of the *Militant*, a clear signal that workers are not in a concession mood. A team of socialist workers are heading back this weekend.

Some 16,000 members of the Machinists Union at TWA are nearing the end of a 30-day "cooling off" period. A team is planning to go to St. Louis, where TWA has its main hub.

Danny Booher, a Steelworker from Pitts-



Joshua Carroll shows *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* to a participant in the May 18 rally in Houston against Kaiser Aluminum bosses.

burgh, helped lead a week-long team to the coal fields of West Virginia and southern Ohio. He reported that more than 150 *Militants* were sold at portals and plant gates, as well as six copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, a *Militant* subscription, and a copy of *New Internationalist* no. 11, featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

Recently, the UMWA won a representation election at Day Mining in Cabin Creek, West Virginia. The team visited the portal to find out that the 82 miners no longer worked there because the coal bosses shut it down. According to a miner who worked there, the company gave 60-day notice that the mine would be closed after the union was voted in.

The team was also successful on campus and in receiving commercial book orders from two stores. "Team members set up a literature table at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where we sold 23 *Militants* and several Pathfinder titles. We also got an order for \$380 worth of Pathfinder books from a local record store, including a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and a wide range of other books," said Kevin Dwire, who works at a UAW-organized plant that is currently on strike. Sales to commercial bookstores count toward the local quotas for the *Capitalism's World Disorder* sales campaign.

Three Black farmers and leaders of the fight for land bought copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* at the 2nd National Black

Farmers conference in New Orleans. Since the book campaign began, more than 15 farmers have bought the book. There will continue to be opportunities to reach out to farmers, as many farmers are planning to attend the upcoming National Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) conference in Tillery, North Carolina, on June 11-12.

As of May 25, sales of *Capitalism's World Disorder* during the campaign total 616, leaving 884 to go. Of these 193 have been sold through the work of socialist workers in their unions, toward the quota of 500. Closing this gap will be interconnected with reaching the goals of selling 1,100 *Militant* subscriptions, 350 *Perspectiva Mundial* subs, and 600 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* by June 27. The follow-

ing stories point to how this can be achieved.

BY MAGGIE TROWE AND AMY ROBERTS

STORM LAKE, Iowa — After four days of travel throughout Minnesota and Iowa, socialist participants in the Midwest meatpacking team have found a significant number of workers interested in their ideas. To date, 11 people have bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 38 people purchased copies of the *Militant*, and 31 have bought copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*.

We have visited six towns so far that have beef or pork cut-and-kill operations. Many of the workers we have talked to are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. Team members also attended a picnic in Marshalltown, Iowa, organized by

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder' April 1 - June 14

Country	Goal	Sold	%
New Zealand			
Auckland	12	17	142%
Christchurch	14	12	86%
N.Z. Total	26	29	112%
Iceland	4	3	75%
Sweden	6	4	67%
United Kingdom			
London	41	31	76%
Manchester	17	5	29%
UK Total	58	36	62%
Canada			
Vancouver	21	18	86%
Montreal	7	4	57%
Toronto	50	26	52%
Canada Total	78	48	62%
United States			
Atlanta	40	30	75%
Washington, D.C.	60	38	63%
Pittsburgh	40	24	60%
San Francisco	136	70	51%
Los Angeles	82	37	45%
Detroit	78	34	44%
Seattle	50	21	42%
C. Illinois	17	6	35%
Miami	45	15	33%
Houston	70	23	33%
Des Moines	55	18	33%
New York	120	38	32%
Boston	50	15	30%
Chicago	75	22	29%
Birmingham	60	17	28%
Newark	150	42	28%
Philadelphia	50	13	26%
Twin Cities, MN	50	12	24%
Cleveland	60	14	23%
S. Minnesota	14	1	7%
U.S. Total	1302	490	38%
Australia	20	6	30%
International total	1490	616	41%
Total goal/should be	1500	1095	73%

MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE In the unions						
	Militant		PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal
New Zealand						
EU	3	1	33%			
MWU	2	0	0%			
SFWU	2	0	0%			
N.Z. total	7	1	14%			
Canada						
IAM	5	1	20%			4 0
USWA	7	1	14%	1	1	6 0
UNITE	4	0	0%	1	1	6 0
Canada total	16	2	13%	2	2	16 0
United States						
UNITE	15	3	20%	20	3	12 1
IAM	50	0	0%	12	0	20 0
UAW	40	0	0%	4	0	15 0
UFCW	35	0	0%	25	0	20 0
USWA	35	0	0%	4	0	20 0
UTU	50	0	0%	5	0	20 0
U.S. total	225	3	1%	70	3	107 1
Australia						
AMWU	3	0	0%			2 0
MUA	2	0				1 0
Australia total	5	0	0%			3 0

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder' IN THE UNIONS			
	Goals	Sold	%
United States			
PACE (Houston)	15	12	80%
UTU	80	38	48%
UAW	75	33	44%
IAM	110	44	40%
USWA	80	24	30%
UFCW	80	19	24%
UNITE	70	10	14%
Total	510	180	35%
Should be	500	395	79%
United Kingdom			
TGWU	7	2	29%
RMT	4	1	25%
AEEU	2	0	0%
Total	6	3	50%
Canada			
IAM	7	5	71%
USWA	7	3	43%
UFCW	3	0	0%
Canada total	17	8	47%
Australia			
AMWU	5	2	40%
MUA	4	0	0%
Total	9	2	22%

AEEU—Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU—Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW—Canadian Auto Workers Union; EU—Engineers Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; IAM—International Association of Machinists; PACE—Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers; RMT—National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; SFWU—Service & Food Workers Union; TGWU—Transport and General Workers Union; UAW—United Auto Workers; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA—United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union

Titan Tire strikers say: 'Going back is not an option'

BY TIM MAILHOT

DETROIT — Eighty members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) on strike against Titan Tire traveled here for a day of activities May 20 to publicize their fight against the union busting efforts of company president and CEO Maurice Taylor, Jr. A busload of strikers came from Local 164 in Des Moines, Iowa, where workers have been striking since May 1, 1998, and another from Local 303L in Natchez, Mississippi, on strike since September. They were joined by 25 members of the Workers Justice Committee, composed of members of the unions who struck the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* in July 1995, and other unionists from the Detroit area.

The center of the day's activities was the annual shareholders meeting of Titan International, the parent company of Titan Tire. Early in the morning the unionists gathered in the parking lot of USWA District 2 offices before heading over to the shareholders meeting. Fighters from the two striking locals also had time to renew friendships and update each other on their strikes.

Carl Minor, a 10-year veteran of the Natchez plant, commented, "The unity keeps me going, even when we're sitting in buses 10, 12, 14 hours, leaving our families behind. I know we will succeed. Taylor's just a thug businessman."

The USWA International has been targeting the shareholders to convince them that Taylor's union-busting strategy is destroy-

ing their investments. For the first time, Titan International lost money in the fourth quarter of 1998. In addition, its first quarter 1999 pre-tax income is down more than 98 percent compared to 1998.

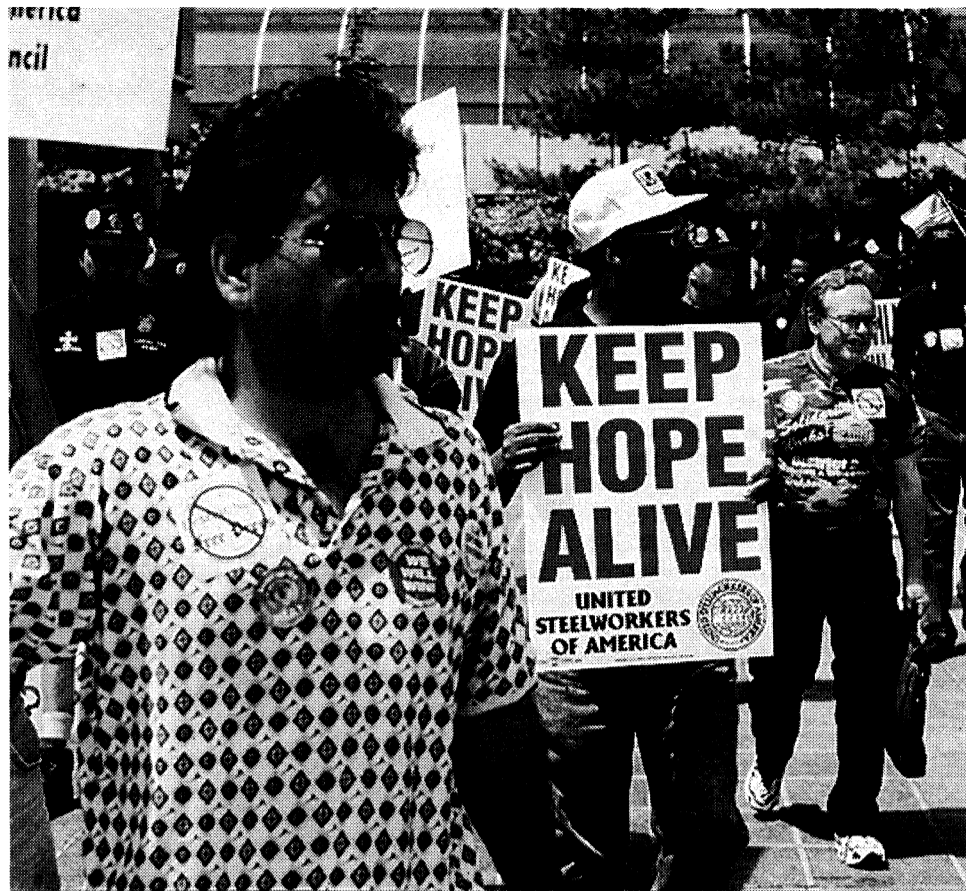
Security guards unsuccessfully tried to prevent the unionists from entering. About 120 workers walked into the room, surrounding the handful of regular stockholders in attendance. A stockholder in Titan International had signed over a share to each unionist so they could gain access.

Following opening comments from Taylor on how Titan's prospects were looking up for the rest of the year, the boss opened the floor for questions. Strikers immediately began asking why Taylor is dragging his feet on negotiating a contract when he could settle and get experienced workers back on the job. Taylor answered by attacking the negotiating committee as liars and union members as fools.

Leo T. Bradley, president of the USWA local in Natchez, was given the microphone by Taylor to address the shareholders about their strike. After a few minutes, Taylor became agitated, accused him of lying, and tried to take the microphone away, shouting "This is my meeting!"

As strikers continued to press him to answer their questions and quit lying to the shareholders, Taylor became more agitated. Finally he stalked out the door, ending the meeting.

The unionists next held a noisy picket outside the offices of MascoTech Inc., the



Militant/Tim Mailhot

Striking Steelworkers at Titan and others picket MascoTech in Michigan May 20

largest shareholder in Titan International. After lunch, they visited Grosse Pointe Farms, a private gated community outside Detroit where Taylor has a house. With picket signs in hand, the strikers and their supporters marched in for another picket line, only to be stopped by private cops a few houses short of reaching Taylor's. The strikers marched out blowing whistles and chanting, "Hey Morry, this is your wake up call. Settle up now!" An impromptu rally was then held on the highway in front of the entrance to the private community, drawing

the attention of local cops and honks from supporters passing by.

Tim Bartlett, a mill room worker with 11 years in the Des Moines plant, summed up the day's efforts this way: "I think he [Taylor] knows where we stand now, that it's not just John Peno [Local 164 president]. If we don't do something, our kids will have it like it was in the 1930s and '40s. Going back is not an option."

Tim Mailhot is a member of USWA Local 310 in Des Moines.

Cuban writer: 'the revolution must be defended'

BY TIM FAST

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — "The Cuban revolution must be defended." This was the central message of Pablo Armando Fernández, a widely published Cuban poet and novelist who spoke at a number of meetings of college students in the Twin Cities area April 29– May 2. "Forty years of the revolution have not been easy," he said. "The Cuban people face many difficulties. However, they are working through the difficulties. And they are doing this because they defend the revolution."

Born in a sugar mill town in Las Tunas province in 1929, Fernández was sent to the United States in 1945 by his parents to get an education. In the 1950s he published two collections of poetry and was a member of New York's literary circle that included figures like Norman Mailer and Carson McCullers. In the early 1950s he was unable to return home because of the domination of the island by the rule of pro-U.S. dic-

tator Fulgencio Batista.

In 1959 with the triumph of the revolution, Fernández went back to Cuba with the intention of advancing the fight of the exploited Cuban peasants and workers he knew as a child. He has remained true to this intention ever since. Fernández today is a leader of the Union of Writers and Artists in Cuba.

Fernández spoke to 40 students at Macalester College in St. Paul and to more than 180 students and faculty at three meetings at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. The topic of his talks was the experience of Cuba in fighting the commercialization of culture.

The tour was sponsored by the Department of Comparative Literature, the Department of American Studies, and the Spanish-Portuguese Department at the University of Minnesota, in collaboration with the Minnesota Cuba Committee, the local coalition of those opposed to Washington's policies against Cuba.

"Before 1959 there was not a single black family that lived in the Miramar neighborhood of Havana," Fernández told 125 youth at a meeting at the University of Minnesota. "Today this is all changed. The changes in these things is what we are defending in Cuba. When I return to my home town I see that the children of peasants have become doctors, engineers, and diplomats."

"For many years I thought about the question, 'What did it mean to be Cuban?'" the writer continued. "The only thing that brings Cubans together is their history. We need to know more about these things, such as the fact that Cuba is the only country in which a black man, Antonio Maceo, commanded white soldiers in the battle against Spanish colonial domination."

Many of Fernández's comments spoke to the question of artistic freedom in Cuba over the 40 years of the revolution. "There was censorship in Cuba. This was done by other

writers who set themselves up as bureaucrats in the Union of Writers and Artists. Raul Roa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the 1960s, had written a book that criticized the invasion of Hungary by the Soviet Union during the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The book disappeared.

"The leaders who came from the July 26th movement like Fidel Castro did not believe in controlling art. We went through some difficult periods. The socialist realism promoted by the bureaucrats never dominated in the same way as in the Soviet Union."

"Writing in Cuba has become much freer over the last five years. The main restriction we face is shortages of paper and ink. And also young writers today are freer in the sense that they don't think they have to limit themselves to social themes."

Fernández's talks were well received. A number of young people wanted to know how they could visit Cuba.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

Mon., May 31

Contract expirations:

- Car haulers nationwide
- Century Aluminum
Ravenswood, West Virginia

Thur., June 10

End of 'cooling off' period for Machinists at Trans World Airlines

Fri–Sat., June 11–12

National Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association meeting
Tillery, North Carolina
For more information, call: (252) 826-3017.

Fri–Sun., June 25–27

21st National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters
Des Moines, Iowa
Savery Hotel and Spa
Sponsor: Coal Employment Project

Sun., June 27, 2:00 p.m.

Steelworkers for Justice Rally — Support locked-out workers at Kaiser Aluminum

St. James Boat Club on U.S. 61
Gramercy, Louisiana
Sponsor: USWA Local 5702-01

Wed., July 7

Protest the frame-up of Dr. José Solís Jordán
Federal Buildings across U.S.
Committee in Solidarity with Dr. José Solís Jordán. For more information, call: (312) 409-0801.

Thurs–Sun., July 22–25

All Out to Washington, D.C.
It's time to bring Puerto Rican Prisoners home!
Washington, D.C.; Nat'l march Sat., July 24 For more information, call: (773) 278-0885 or (212) 927-9065.

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Cuba's land reform: an agrarian revolution

Farmers say: we will never return to debt slavery and imperialist rule

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL,
BRIAN TAYLOR,
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

GÜIRA DE MELENA, Cuba — “The agrarian reform whose 40th anniversary we are celebrating today was in reality an agrarian revolution,” declared Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the National Association of Small Farmers, in his remarks opening an international conference here May 16.

Those words expressed the convictions of Cubans who were holding political events and festivities around the island commemorating the May 17, 1959, agrarian reform law. That act, more than any other, defined the character of the workers and farmers government established by Cuban working people after they overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Carrying through this revolution in the countryside, millions of farmers, workers, and youth transformed social relations and themselves.

The international conference on the agrarian policy of the Cuban revolution was held May 15-18 at the Niceto Pérez national leadership school of the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba (ANAP), in this farming town in Havana province. It brought together more than 100 invited guests from 17 countries throughout the Americas and Spain.

Among the participants were representatives of several farm organizations, including the Papay Peasant Movement (MPP) of Haiti, National Confederation of Farm Women (CONAMUCO) of the Dominican Republic, Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil, National Farmers Union of St. Vincent, and National Federation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Black Organizations (FENOCIN) of Ecuador. There were also participants from Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and the United States. About 40 of the participants were from the MST.

The ANAP leadership organized visits to three different kinds of farm cooperatives in Havana province. This allowed conference participants to hear from ANAP members and other rural producers about the steps they are taking today to meet the challenge of increasing food production in face of the effects of the world capitalist economic crisis and the U.S. government's economic war against Cuban working people.

One was a farm of the kind known as an Agricultural Production Cooperative (CPA), where members pool their land and work it collectively. Another was a Credit and Services Cooperative (CCS), where farmers retain individual title to their land and work it themselves, but pool applications for credit, share tractors and other equipment, and sell as a cooperative. ANAP organizes both CPA and CCS members.

A third farm was one of the Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPC), which were created out of the 1993-94 reorganization of state farms. In these cooperatives, the land belongs to the state, and the harvest and equipment used belong collectively to the members. UBPC members continue to be organized by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Cuba's trade union federation.

No more evictions in Cuba

In talking with the cooperative members, one of the facts that struck visitors from abroad, especially those who were rural toilers themselves, was the fact that agrarian reform in Cuba has meant farmers there cannot lose the land they work. The debt slavery of capitalism has been abolished. Since the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959, no working farmer has been foreclosed on for nonpayment of debts or forced to sell their land to someone else.

Cuban president Fidel Castro underscored this point in his speech to a May 17 rally in Havana sponsored by ANAP. Under the Batista dictatorship, he pointed out, peasants had been “pariahs who were subjected to degradation, [including] eviction from their lands by the big landlords, who would come with the Rural Guards to bum down peasant huts” and impose capitalist “order” at gunpoint.

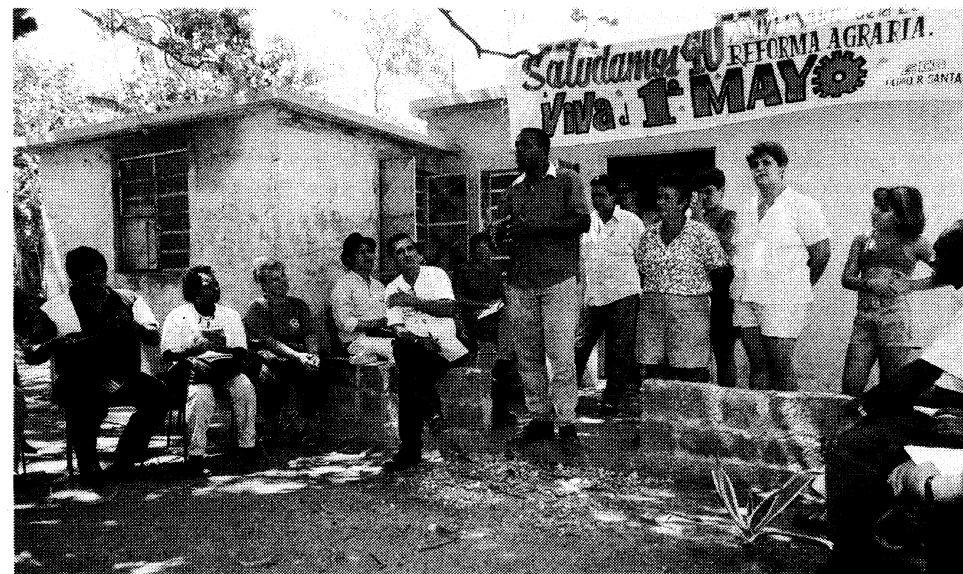
Today, Castro said, through their revolution, Cuban farmers “are the law — or more accurately, are the representatives of the law, the representatives of order, those who carry the guns, the defenders of their country” against U.S. aggression.

After the Havana rally, a ceremony was

held to present awards to a number of ANAP members from around the country for their work in strengthening the organization. Farmers from six provinces where ANAP has carried out the most outstanding work — headed by the province of Cienfuegos — were also honored. Other ANAP-sponsored events included a cultural gala with traditional musical poetry improvisation and a contest for Cuban peasant music.

In his inaugural words to the international gathering, ANAP president Lugo Fonte pointed to the farmers' leadership training school, established in 1962, as an example of the fact that the agrarian revolution has meant not only land but a broadening of education and culture.

Lugo Fonte was joined on the platform by José (Pepe) Ramírez, a founder and long-time president of ANAP. Ramírez was the in-



Militant/Martin Koppel

Conference participants meet with members of the Pedro Rodríguez Santana credit and services cooperative in Arquizar, Havana province. Cooperative members underscored the fact that since the May 1959 agrarian reform, Cuban farmers cannot be foreclosed on and lose their land, as in capitalist countries.

tiator of the Peasant Congress in Arms, organized by the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains of eastern Cuba in September 1958 during the final months of the war against the Batista regime.

Participants in the gathering approved a joint statement that was read at the Havana rally. The statement condemned the U.S.-led war against Yugoslavia and expressed commitment to campaign against the U.S. embargo of Cuba as well as to oppose the economic austerity measures demanded by imperialist powers and implemented by capitalist governments in every Latin American country except Cuba.

One of the highlights of the conference was a panel discussion on the agrarian policy of the revolution, followed by questions and discussion. Most of the speakers had been teenagers from peasant families at the time of the revolution and involved from the earliest days in implementing the land reform law.

José Manso, director of ANAP's leadership training school, outlined the history of land ownership in Cuba, from colonial times through the revolution. He pointed out that the revolutionary leadership carried out to the end the agrarian reform and other aspects of the revolutionary democratic program that Fidel Castro, in his 1953 speech known as “History Will Absolve Me,” presented in the courtroom where he and others were tried following their assault on the Moncada army barracks of the dictatorship.

More than a land reform

Mario La O, legal advisor for ANAP nationally, spoke about the 1959 and 1963 agrarian reform laws. Through the 1959 measure, the revolutionary government expropriated millions of acres of large plantations owned by U.S. and Cuban capitalists, “directly taking on imperialist interests,” he said. Hundreds of thousands of peasants received titles to the land they worked. The first title demonstratively went to a woman farmer in Guantánamo, one of Cuba's poorest provinces.

To implement the land reform, which restricted land ownership to 1,000 acres, the government established the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA). The second land reform, adopted in October 1963, expropriated holdings larger than 165 acres.

Mariano Tuero, an agronomist who works



Militant/Brian Taylor

Mavis Alvarez (center), of the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba, speaks on May 16 panel at international conference on Cuba's agrarian reform. Others on the platform are Armando Rama (left), international relations director of ANAP, and Mario La O, also of national ANAP staff.

the land he worked, saying the land didn't belong to him but to a rich landowner, and that he wouldn't take something that wasn't his.

In the discussion period, one of the participants, from a social service organization in Ecuador, asked, “What methodology did you use to raise the consciousness of peasants?” Alvarez laughed, and replied that at that time in her life, neither she nor anyone else working for INRA had even heard the word, nor would they have had the slightest idea what “methodology” might be. They were simply ardent supporters of the revolution and went out to work with other peasants, one by one, to win them through persuasion.

In this process ANAP played an important role “to open up the possibility for peasants to become active participants and mobilizers in society,” she said.

In the closing session of the conference, Ricardo Alarcón, the president of Cuba's National Assembly, addressed the international gathering. “We are not commemorating a historic date but speaking of the present,” he stressed. “Imperialism has failed to defeat us over the past 40 years,” and the agrarian revolution is one of the reasons they have failed.

U.S. hostility from the beginning

The U.S. government's hostility toward the Cuban revolution goes back to the very beginning, Alarcón pointed out — before the Cuban leadership had even begun carrying out socialist measures, and before it had established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The wealthy U.S. rulers reacted with increasing virulence to the agrarian reform and other measures that advanced the well-being and self-confidence of working people at the expense of the privileges and prerogatives of the capitalist minority.

To illustrate this fact, he pointed to a 1961 CIA report, made public in February of last year, noting that the U.S. spy agency's “Cuba Program,” a covert plan to support counter-revolutionary groups both in Cuba and in the United States — existing today under the name Cuba Project — had been launched in early 1959.

For Cuba, Alarcón stated, “May 17, 1959, is a date that truly marks our independence.” The 40th anniversary of that date was also marked — in Miami — by those who today call themselves the Association of Cuban Landowners in Exile, the Association of Cuban Cattlemen in Exile, and the Association of Cuban Tobacco Growers in Exile, “who were the owners and usurpers of Cuban land until May 17, 1959,” he noted.

A *USA Today* article describing this gathering was headlined, “Awaiting a return to the good life in Cuba.” Yes, Alarcón said, “That was the good life for the landlords. But for the peasants in Cuba, their return would be the return of slavery, hunger, unemployment, the hell of those days” that prevailed before the revolution.

Similarly, the Cuban leader cited with humor recent articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Miami Herald* reporting on a nasty legal

Continued on Page 14

Serb and Albanian workers are target of

Continued from front page

and Albania. This force — much larger than the 28,000 troops floated earlier — will be deployed in Kosova to enforce any deal the regime of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic is forced to sign. It will also serve as the first detachment in preparation for a ground invasion if Belgrade does not concede.

This unrelenting, U.S.-engineered war is speeding up divisions among the NATO member states and solidifying Washington's collision course with workers states other than Yugoslavia — particularly China.

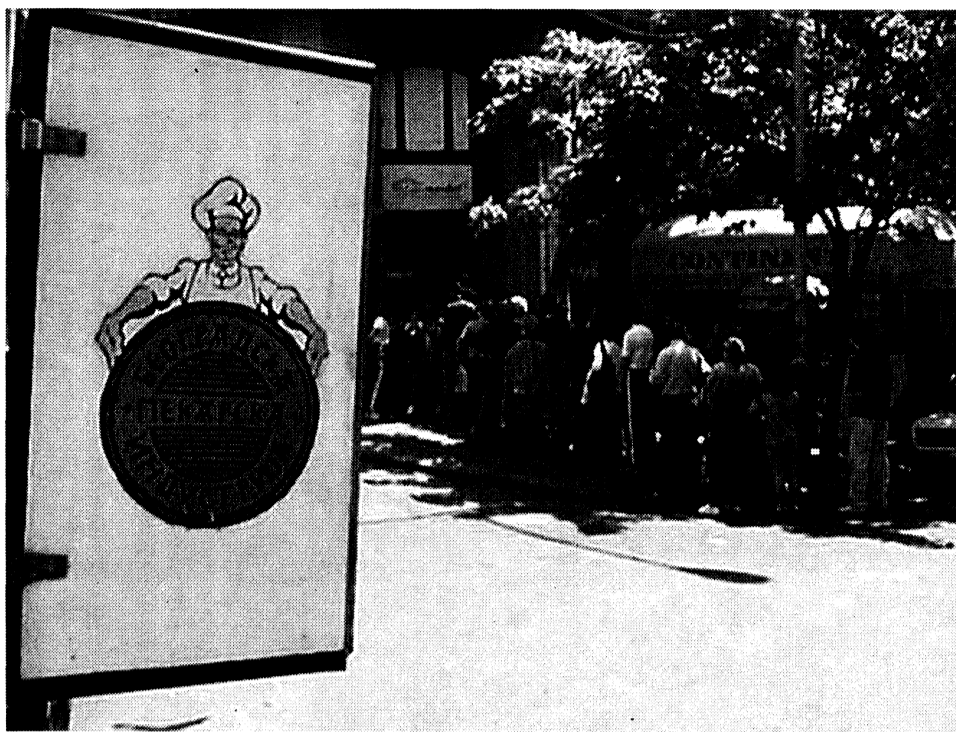
'Uncertainty is killing us'

"It's the uncertainty that's killing us," said Martina Vukasovic, a mathematics student at Belgrade University, in a May 25 interview. She was referring both to how erratic and unpredictable the power outages had become and to the prospects for ending the war. "Power comes for two to three hours, then no electricity for six hours, or more. You can't plan. The voltage is not stable either."

One of the computers at the office of the Students Union of Yugoslavia, which Vukasovic belongs to, was burned up, she said, "because the power is now switched on too strong some times, and the machine didn't have surge protection." The Students Union is the main student organization that emerged out of the four-month-long daily mobilizations for democratic rights two years ago.

The student marches, which often reached 20,000 per day, were part of a larger movement that forced the Milosevic regime to back off from annulling municipal election results that brought victories to an opposition coalition in 15 of Serbia's 19 largest cities. Within the working class, Nezavisnost (Independence), the trade union federation independent of government control, led in the 1996-97 mobilizations.

Many others reported similar hardships in everyday life. "You caught me at a bad time," said Branislav Canak, president of Nezavisnost, the evening of March 25. "Electricity just came on. I sat down to type



Bread line in Belgrade May 25. Destruction of power stations has caused shortages in bread, a basic staple, since bakeries run on electricity, as well as drinking water.

Yugoslavia's second-largest city and among the country's major industrial centers.

The destruction of most of the country's oil refineries and oil storage facilities has resulted in lack of gasoline. NATO warplanes are hitting such targets repeatedly. "Novi Sad is covered again with black smoke," said Vladimir, another university student, who lives less than a mile from Novi Sad's refinery that was bombed May 24 for the tenth time. "It burned for more than a day. There's nothing left there now."

This has affected public transportation. Bus service inside Belgrade has been cut to a third of its prewar level, while the popular tram lines are no longer dependable as power is cut off frequently. Bus lines to other cities are not running as often either. "Where they had 10 busses a day

and are attended by smaller crowds, Trifunovic said.

Even some articles in the big-business press in the United States have begun to acknowledge to a degree the extent of the damage to working people. "Although NATO spokesmen deny it," said a front-page article in the May 26 *International Herald Tribune*, Washington is "using its air strikes to damage the Serbian economy.... Increasingly, the impact of NATO air strikes has put people out of work and inflicted hardships in the daily lives of more Serbs."

Unemployment, already at 70 percent a month ago, has spread through the overwhelming majority of the population. According to Nezavisnost, nearly half of

Serbia's 3 million wage workers are now receiving no income whatsoever. "We are lucky, most workers have relatives in the countryside around here," said Christina Ranic, a member of the metal workers union in Kragujevac, an industrial center of 250,000 about 100 miles south

of Belgrade.

Ranic worked in the huge Zastava car manufacturing complex there, which used to employ up to 38,000 workers 10 years ago. It has now been reduced to rubble by a series of NATO air raids that began April 9. Warehouses in the suburbs of Kragujevac were bombed again recently. "Listen to the air sirens and the planes," Ranic said, as she spoke to this reporter by phone May 26.

The human toll of the bombing has exceeded 1,400 civilians dead and 6,000 wounded, according to official estimates.

Attacks in Kosova kill Albanians

The increasingly indiscriminate bombing has inflicted greater casualties among Albanians in Kosova, who Washington claims it is trying to protect. On May 13, U.S. F-16 fighter jets destroyed the village of Korisa, near Prizren, killing more than 80 people and wounding dozens of others. Over the next week, NATO attacks on a prison in Istock, northern Kosova, left 100 people dead, most of them inmates and a good number Albanians, and 200 wounded.

On May 21, NATO bombed a military base in Kosare, at Kosova's border with Albania, killing seven and wounding 25. All

of them were Albanians, part of a unit of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) that had taken over the abandoned facility six weeks earlier. The KLA is a guerrilla group in Kosova, which is now collaborating openly with Washington and NATO in the assault on Yugoslavia.

It is currently operating mostly out of Albania. NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said the Atlantic military alliance was not aware that the KLA was operating from there, even though a Reuters reporter and television crew filed reports from the site on May 2.

Washington has tried to justify each one of these incidents — just as the earlier attacks on the central market in Nis and a hospital in Belgrade — as "mistakes." Their growing number, however, is convincing more and more people — in both Yugoslavia and Albania — that the real target of the U.S.-NATO assault is working people throughout the region. "I don't know why they are doing this," said Kliton Nenaj, a construction engineering student at the University of Tirana, Albania's capital, referring to the above three attacks in Kosova. "It doesn't compute with their statements of supporting the Albanian people."

"It's very puzzling to me that they are killing so many Albanians," said Martina Vukasovic, a vocal opponent of the expulsions of Kosovar Albanians and the repressive policies of Belgrade. "How can they claim they are protecting them?"

"I now think the war will go on for a long time," said Dusan, a leader of the Students Union in Novi Sad, in a May 27 phone interview. "They are out to destroy the people. Put together the attacks on Albanians in Kosova, the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, the attacks on the power stations, and the indictment of Milosevic by the international court."

The international tribunal in The Hague had just decided to indict the Yugoslav president on "war crimes," which many opponents of his regime like Dusan resent, pointing out that it is only the people of Yugoslavia who can make such decisions. "We may even have to face a ground invasion," Dusan said, "something I didn't think would happen a few weeks ago."

New wave of expulsions, resistance

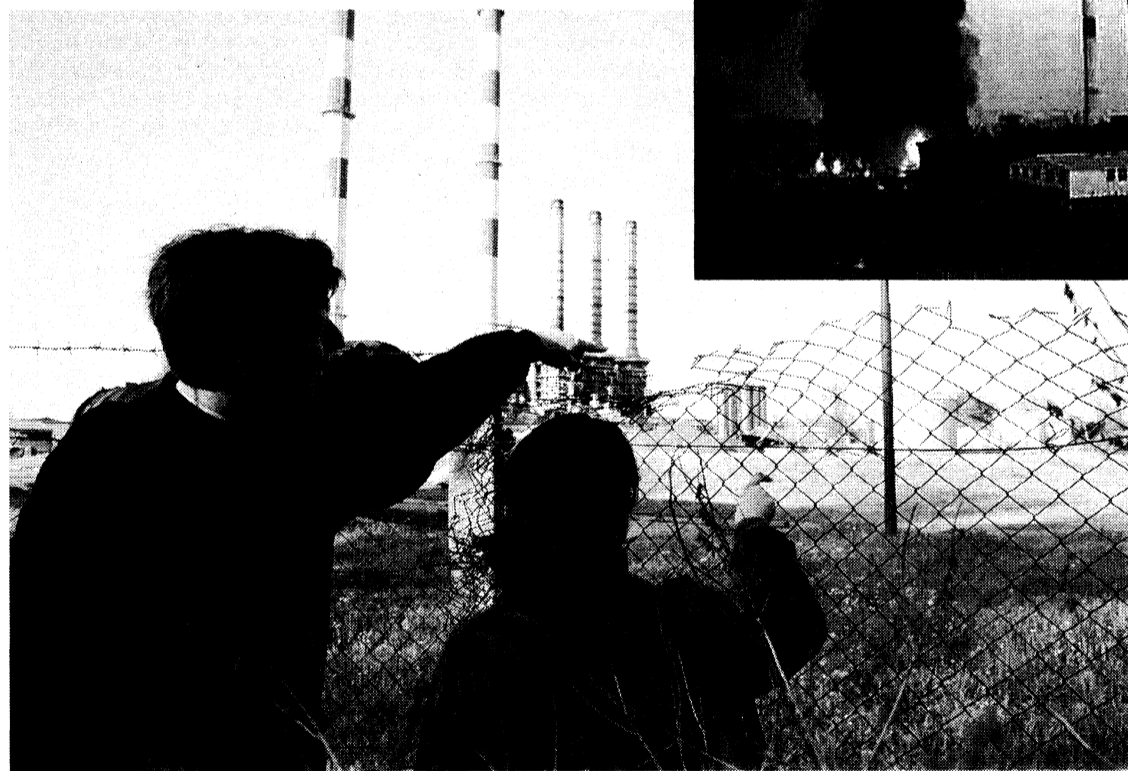
The intensification of the bombing has given additional cover to chauvinist Serb forces in Kosova to push more Albanians into Macedonia and Albania. Armesh Zhegrani, 23, was among the 10,000 who crossed the border into Macedonia May 25. He described how paramilitary troops with patches on their uniforms identifying them with Arkan — Zeljko Raznjajcovic, a Serb nationalist infamous for similar operations in Bosnia — pushed him and thousands of others out of Pristina.

The number of Albanians deported to Macedonia has reached 240,000. More than 850,000 Kosovars have been expelled so far, half the Albanian population of the province. This ethnic cleansing is more and more carried out by paramilitary forces, since the conscript army is becoming less reliable for this task.

Demonstrations in southern Serbia by parents of soldiers in Kosova, and reservists who turned down military draft orders to return to Kosova, continued May 23-25. The first such protests erupted a week earlier, mostly by mothers of the soldiers demanding their sons be brought back alive, not in coffins.

"Yesterday in Krusevac, 2,500 reservists that returned from Kosova protested when they received orders to return to the province," said a May 24 report by the Students Union of Yugoslavia, from their correspondent on the scene. When the reservists and their families marched to the district military headquarters, however, army officers, wary that the protests may spread, said the orders were for those who wanted to return to Kosova voluntarily. "Similar protests were held in Raska and Aleksandrovac."

Protests were also announced in nearby Prokuplje, according to the same sources, after coffins with the bodies of 11 Serb soldiers arrived there May 24. The same day, hundreds of people gathered at the center of Krusevac again, demanding their sons be brought back from Kosova. Military authorities stated such actions won't be permitted



Stanimir (above, left), a leader of the Students Union of Yugoslavia, showing Militant reporters on April 21 heating plant in New Belgrade damaged by U.S. -NATO bombing. The factory's oil depot and water treatment plant were destroyed in the April 4 assault (inset), depriving 400,000 of Belgrade's 2 million residents from heat and hot water. Boiler plants throughout Yugoslavia have been destroyed in city after city. "These are not military targets," Stanimir said. "NATO is after ordinary people."

some letters and send them off by e-mail a few minutes ago. We don't know how long we will have power this time."

In Belgrade, most shops were shut down May 24-25. Hospitals throughout the country had a hard time functioning. Bread lines have become common, as bakeries depend on electricity. Milk supplies have also dwindled for lack of refrigeration. In cities that have been hit the hardest by the bombing other food items are becoming scarce. "We now have shortages of milk, bread, sugar, and cooking oil," said Duci Petrovic, in a May 26 phone interview from Nis,

going to Nis or some other city, now there's only two," said Zorica Trifunovic May 25. So travel throughout the country is becoming more and more difficult. Most train lines are no longer running, as NATO has destroyed at least a dozen railways.

The spreading assaults have brought increasing weariness on the population. The music hubbubs against the NATO bombing on the main bridge in Belgrade, sponsored by the ruling parties, are taking place infrequently and in the early evening, not at night. And the antiwar rock concerts at Republic square at the city's center are no longer daily

Militant/Argiris Malapanis

U.S.-NATO assault

in the future, but made no arrests there.

The police stopped reservists from Aleksandrovac, who refused to return to Kosovo, from joining the demonstrators in Krusevac. "They were forced to return to Aleksandrovac where they held their own protest. More than 1,000 reservists and citizens took part," said the students' report.

The only place where authorities have arrested such protesters is in Cacak, western Serbia. Seven members of the Citizens Parliament who organized demonstrations were detained and tried, with six of them receiving fines ranging between \$200 and \$600. Cacak is a city where opposition parties hold an overwhelming majority in city hall. In Krusevac and Aleksandrovac, on the other hand, Milosevic has enjoyed widespread support in the past.

Dusan and Bojan in Novi Sad said these demonstrations did show the depth of opposition to the policies of the Milosevic regime. "But they can have no effect on the turn of events unless they spread in Belgrade and the other major cities," Dusan said.

Shifts on national self-determination

More young people and workers in Serbia are also concluding that support to the demands of Albanians for self-determination in Kosovo is essential to forge the kind of unity among working people that can undercut both Washington and Belgrade's course.

"I am personally in favor of a referendum for self-determination in Kosovo," Martina Vukasovic said. "This should have happened one, two years ago, or earlier. Autonomy is no longer enough to solve the problem."

Kosovo, where the pre-war population of 2.1 million was 90 percent Albanian, was an autonomous region of Serbia until 1989.

The Milosevic regime revoked autonomy in response to strikes and demonstrations at the end of the 1980s, which were led by miners demanding an end to Belgrade's austerity measures and national rights for Albanians in Kosovo. In the following years, the Albanian language was banned from state radio and TV programs.

The University of Pristina, where courses were taught both in Albanian and Serbo-Croatian, was closed to Albanians. Most industrial and other workers who refused to sign loyalty oaths to Serbia were fired from their jobs. In the fall of 1997, Belgrade began using special police forces and its military more and more to suppress student and other protests in Kosovo and to defeat the armed insurgency by the KLA.

"This has been a disastrous policy," said Vladimir. "There is no other exit from this than the Albanians in Kosovo having their own state now. This didn't have to happen. It was Milosevic who made it possible for Washington to attack us in this way. A federation of equals can only be voluntary."

"The killings and expulsions... paint a somber and painful picture of Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro, as if indicating that life together is no longer possible," said a May 20 open letter to Albanian friends, issued by Nezavisnost and more than a dozen other organizations. "We, however, believe that it is necessary and possible. The better future of citizens of Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, of Serbs and Albanians, as citizens of one state or close neighbors [emphasis added], will not arrive by itself or overnight. But it is something we can and must work on together."

According to a number of young people interviewed over the phone across Yugoslavia, opposition to "ethnic cleansing" among Serb soldiers is on the rise. "I had the opportunity to speak to a friend of mine who

is in the army in Prizren," said Ivan, a student from Belgrade who lives in Montenegro now, and asked that only his first name be used. "He told me he wants to go home, just like most in his unit of about 110. They don't feel they are defending our country there. They've mostly been involved in battles with KLA units. They hate the ethnic cleansing going on all around them. They haven't decided to desert yet; that's not an easy matter in the middle of a war."

Most of the same people would turn around and fight if NATO launched a ground offensive, Ivan said. Almost everyone interviewed made the same point. "If the United States sends ground troops, this is no longer



Above, October 14 plant producing bulldozers, excavators, and other heavy machinery in Krusevac, a city of 80,000 in southern Serbia. It was destroyed by NATO air raids April 12-15. Krusevac has recently been the scene of marches by thousands of parents of soldiers and by reservists who have refused orders to go back to Kosovo. They protested the NATO bombing and demanded that Belgrade bring their sons back alive. Opposition to "ethnic cleansing" is rising within Yugoslav army.

U.S. warplanes attacked village of Korisa, near Prizren, Kosovo, May 13, killing more than 80 Albanians (above). A few days later, NATO targeted a prison in Istock, Kosovo, leaving about 100 inmates dead and 200 wounded, many of them Albanians (right). "How can they claim they are protecting Albanians?" said Martina Vukasovic, a student at the University of Belgrade, pointing to these and other similar "mistakes" by NATO.



about Milosevic, it's about us," said Oliver Kokic, a part-time student in Belgrade who also works as a driver.

Debate among imperialist powers

This is exactly what the U.S. rulers are debating. With imperial arrogance, many bourgeois political figures exalt the virtues of the high-tech weaponry unleashed on the people of Yugoslavia and insist their "air campaign" will force Milosevic to eventually allow NATO troops into Kosovo and withdraw most of his forces from the region. "Air power is very seductive to American leaders," said Richard Dunn, a retired U.S. army colonel who works at the Center for National Security Issues.

He was describing how the new B-2 stealth bombers take off from the Whiteman Air Force base in Missouri, fly all the way to Yugoslavia to drop their bombs, and return home after their deadly missions. "You do it nice and cleanly. Nobody gets their feet muddy. A pilot flies over at 15,000 feet, kills only those people that need to be killed, flies home and has a beer with a beautiful young lady."

Many U.S. politicians and pundits, however, are arguing that preparation for a ground assault on Yugoslavia is necessary now. The air raids have not cowed Belgrade so far. Other sanctions, like the oil embargo and the attempt to stop tankers from unloading petroleum in Yugoslav ports,

have faltered.

Tankers from Russia and the Ukraine have been bringing enough oil through the Danube to keep limited supplies of fuel flowing. The governments of Bulgaria and Romania, which have cooperated with NATO in the use of their air space for attacks on Serbia, have refused to stop the ships.

So in order to maintain and strengthen its

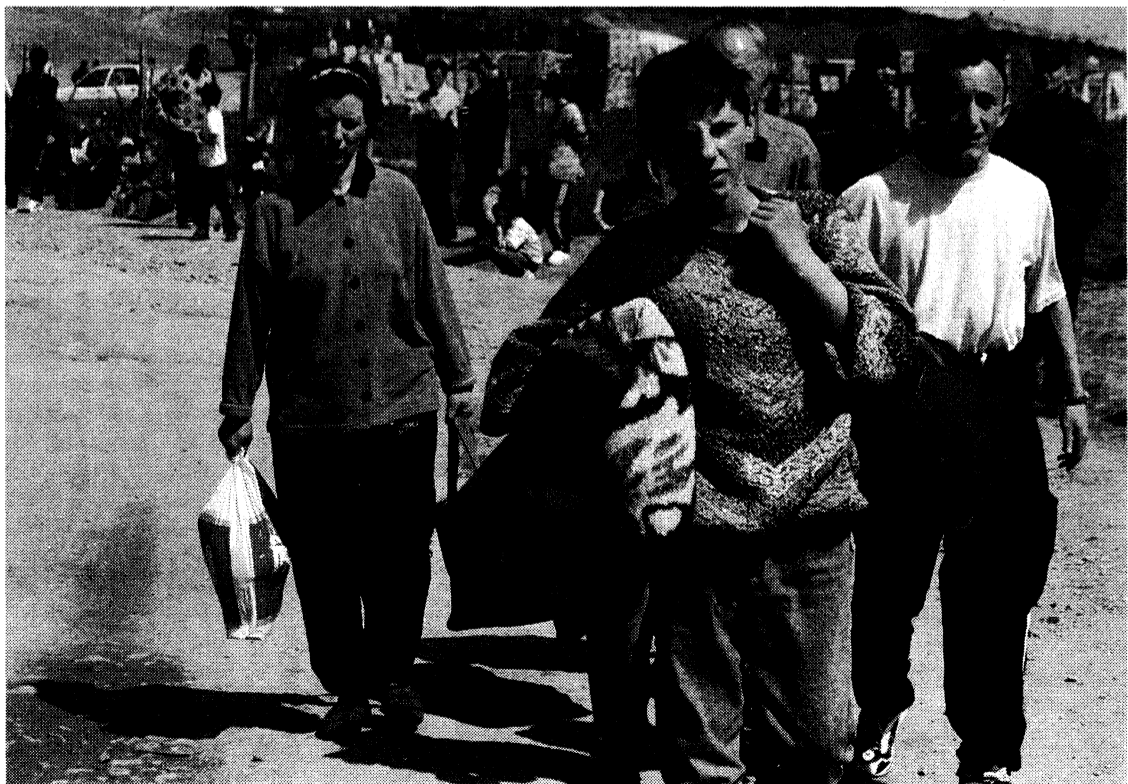
domination as the top military and economic power in Europe, Washington is pushing for the deployment of the "peacekeeping" force — a prelude to a NATO army of at least 150,000 to invade Yugoslavia if Belgrade doesn't obey U.S. wishes.

This course is exacerbating inter-imperialist competition and frictions. Bonn has said a ground invasion of Kosovo "would be unthinkable." On May 25, the governments of Greece, Italy, and the Czech Republic renewed calls on Washington for a 48-hour pause in the NATO bombing to give incentive to Belgrade for a negotiated solution. The U.S. government has so far rejected all such proposals.

Collision course with China

The assault on Yugoslavia has also brought to the fore a sharpening confrontation between Washington and Beijing, especially in the wake of the May 7 bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. On May 21, the Chinese government banned U.S. ships from docking in Hong Kong and other Chinese ports. In the United States, a congressional report was released May 26 accusing Beijing of widespread espionage to steal U.S. military secrets related to nuclear weapons.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao countered that the release of the 700-page report was meant to "disturb and destroy" Chinese-American relations and showed Washington was "clinging to the Cold War mentality."



Albanians expelled from Kosovo arrive at Stankovic camp near Skopje, Macedonia, April 16. A sizable minority among them opposes Washington's course. "No, the NATO bombings are not helping us," Ismet Selami, a farm worker from Petrovo, Kosovo; told the *Militant*. "They are making everything worse." A growing number of young people and trade unionists in Serbia are not only opposing the mass deportations by Belgrade but support self-determination for Kosovo.

Washington pushes Montenegro's breakup from Serbia

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — As the U.S.-NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia has intensified, tensions have risen in Montenegro. Washington has been trying to engineer a breaking away of this republic from the federation with Serbia.

About 5,000 people participated in a May 21 rally in the city of Cetinje, some 30 kilometers southwest of Podgorica, Montenegro's capital. They gathered to protest the Yugoslav federal army reinforcements of up to 1,300 troops around Cetinje.

"We are telling the army today that it is not welcome in our city," said Savo Paraca, the city's mayor, at the protest rally. The troop reinforcements in Cetinje are part of the Belgrade's efforts to keep Montenegro under a firm grip. "The Yugoslav army has blocked Montenegro completely, tension is increasing, Belgrade is tightening the noose," said a May 20 statement by the republic's Information Ministry. The Yugoslav army reportedly setup checkpoints on all major roads into Montenegro. Meanwhile, the Albanian population of Montenegro — 7 percent of the republic's prewar total of 650,000 — has been swelling with the influx of more than 70,000 Kosovar Albanians, adding another major element to the tense situation.

The army is controlled by the regime of Slobodan Milosevic, president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which is comprised of Montenegro and Serbia. Montenegro president Milo Djukanovic's administration has kept under its control a well-armed police force, rejecting demands by Belgrade to turn over its command to the federal army. The two armed forces face each other in an often hostile atmosphere.

"This tense situation could easily erupt into a civil war," said Dragan Duric, officer of international relations of the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Montenegro (CITUM), in an April 24 interview with *Militant* reporters in Podgorica.

The Djukanovic administration warned it will consider using its police force to remove the army checkpoints. "The police were ready to do it," said Dragisa Burzan, Montenegro's deputy prime minister, on May 20. "But it would be a very bloody thing to do. The prob-

lem is, it can move to a huge conflict."

After a week-long standoff, the Yugoslav army pulled back and tensions eased somewhat. "They struck some kind of agreement," said Ivan, a student from Belgrade who now lives in Montenegro, in a May 25 phone interview. "There's no army in the streets for the last few days. Only the police."

Djukanovic won the presidential elections last year and the coalition he heads controls the republic's parliament. He was a former official in the local affiliate of Milosevic's Socialist Party, which split last year, and advocates attempting a more rapid integration of the country into the world capitalist market than Belgrade has tried. Many in his government favor declaring independence for the republic. In a May 22 interview on the republic's state television, Djukanovic called for changing Yugoslavia's constitution "to provide autonomy to Montenegro." He also advocated turning the Yugoslav army into a professional army that "would protect those who do not want to participate in its service from violence and force."

A declaration of independence for Montenegro would tighten the encirclement of Serbia and deny Belgrade its only access to the Adriatic Sea through the port of Bar.

The People's Socialist Party, which is pro-Milosevic and opposed to independence for Montenegro, won 40 percent of the vote in last year's elections. Officials of this party and Belgrade often accuse Djukanovic's administration of being pro-imperialist. Djukanovic has refused to recognize Belgrade's declaration of a state of war in the face of NATO's assault. On May 21, Nebojsa Vujovic, spokesman for the Yugoslav foreign ministry, denounced Djukanovic and other Montenegro government officials for their recent visit to NATO member countries. "This is one country, one foreign policy," Vujovic said.

To appease the "pro-western" government of Montenegro, Washington has refrained from widespread bombings there. Industry and infrastructure have been largely spared. Unlike Serbia, destruction of residential areas has been isolated, although the May 1 bombing of the village of Murino and the



Above: Militant/Argiris Malapanis Albanians expelled from Kosova by Serb chauvinist forces at mosque in Ulcinj, Montenegro, near border with Albania, April 25 (above). More than 70,000 Kosovar Albanians have fled into Montenegro, bringing Albanian population in republic to 16 percent of total, up from 7 percent. This has added major element in tension between Montenegro's government and its police forces on one hand, and federal Yugoslav army on the other. To appease local administration, which is contemplating breaking off ties with Serbia, Washington has spared Montenegro from widespread assaults, unlike rest of Yugoslavia. April 28 bombing in outskirts of the capital, Podgorica (inset), has not been repeated many times since.

remote mountain commune of Plav killed four civilians, including two young girls who had fled Pristina, Kosova. The economic crisis in Montenegro, however, has been exacerbated by the bombing since the republic's economy is intertwined with the rest of Yugoslavia.

The sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia for the last eight years, at Washington's initiative, have "destroyed Montenegro's main industries, textile and metal," said Duric. About 50,000 workers lost their jobs and Montenegro's employed workforce declined to 115,000. In addition, while 70,000 workers are not regularly paid, average wages since last February declined from 200 to 160 Deutsche marks (1 DM = US\$.54) a month. According to Duric, "A working-class family of three needs a minimum monthly salary of 400DM for a normal life." To make ends meet thousands have turned to the flourishing black market, smuggling cigarettes and other products in short supply into Serbia. Others manage through help in food

from relatives who are farmers.

Djukanovic's attempts to rapidly open up the republic's economy to imperialist bank trusts have been enthusiastically applauded in the big-business press but have produced minimal results. "There is not one foreign bank functioning in Montenegro," said Duric, and only one factory has been "privatized" — a beer brewery employing 800 workers that was bought by a Belgian company.

The Confederation of Independent Trade Unions, which organizes 90,000 workers, has advocated selling "vouchers" that is, shares, of all companies to workers. The port at Bar, for example, is 80 percent state-owned, while employees bought 20 percent of its shares through their union.

In its program adopted at its 11th congress in September 1998, CITUM delegates concluded that the decades-long bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy by the regime of Josip Broz (Tito) "proved to be incompatible with elementary rights and political freedoms and with required economic efficiency. On the other hand, the liberal capitalist market economies in themselves proved incapable of providing full employment, righteous distribution, social security, human activities, and ecologically responsible care for the future." The union federation called on workers to "decisively oppose the march toward uncurbed capitalism." It made it clear that the task of the trade unions in Montenegro is not simply protection of the standard of living of workers but "general social relations, particularly those that are directly connected with economic and social rights of the workers."

"It will not be easy to establish capitalism in this region," Duric said, because of workers' unwillingness to give up without a fight the social conquests of the Yugoslav revolution of the 1940s. Most workers oppose large-scale layoffs and cuts in social programs — such as child-care centers and clinics that offer essential services to working people at affordable rates or free of charge — that many foreign investors demand, Duric said.

This was confirmed in interviews with a number of workers. "If foreign companies bring in capital and technology it's okay, but not at our expense," said Aleksandar Dabovic, a sailor in Podgorica. "Under Tito the economy was mismanaged and development limited. But we are used to a certain kind of socialism, protections for workers, that people in the 'West' don't have. We are not going to give that up. Look at what happened in Thailand and south Korea," he said, referring to the crisis in southeast Asia.

The trade union federation opposes NATO's bombing campaign against Yugoslavia. It also calls for "civil peace" between the federal army and police, while leaving the settlement of the issue of whether Montenegro should remain part of the federal republic for when the U.S.-NATO assault is over.

Argiris Malapanis contributed to this article.

Antiwar protest blocks port in Greece

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

THESSALONIKI, Greece — Up to 2,000 demonstrators blocked the port in this city in northern Greece for nearly four hours May 22, in protest of the NATO assault on Yugoslavia. The symbolic closure followed a march through the downtown area. Participants came from several other cities and towns, the largest contingent from Athens, some six hours away.

The downtown area rang with the chant, "Americans — murderers of peoples!" which has become one of the favorites in all the antiwar demonstrations. But other chants, such as "Turk, Greek, Serb, and Albanian we are brothers not enemies!" and "People of Balkans unite. Against imperialism resist!" were also heard.

The action was called by an ad hoc coalition, the Pan Greek Initiative, with the aim of having a national day of mobilizations at the Thessaloniki port and a protest march in the farming town of Larissa in central Greece.

The central demands were "NATO out of the Balkans!" and "No to any Greek participation in the war!" The ad hoc coalition consisted of various antiwar committees with links to different extra-parliamentary leftist organizations.

Thessaloniki has been the main port of entry for NATO forces and equipment headed for the nearby Republic of Macedonia. The city of Larissa is the location of a NATO air force base. The Greek government announced May 24 that it was demanding NATO halt the deployment of troops and supplies through the port at Thessaloniki through at least June 15, the date of the European Parliament elections.

At the rally here there were no chants, banners, or speakers supporting the right of self-determination for Kosova Albanians. The action was marked by a general absence of the Greek nationalist slogans that have been common at many "antiwar" demonstrations here. Addressing the crowd at the shut gates of the port, a representative of the Pan Greek Initiative coalition read a statement saying the action was aimed against NATO's bombing, against NATO domination of the region, against the so-called ethnic cleansing by the Belgrade regime, and against any Greek participation in the war.

On May 20 the newly formed Anti-War Internationalist Coalition held its first activity, a forum at the Athens Polytechnic University. The event was entitled, "Their humanism is barbarism. No to the bombing! No to ethnic cleansing!" One hundred people attended.

Bobbis Misailides, who took part in the three-week *Militant* reporting team to Yugoslavia and Albania, was the first speaker. He described how the central target of the NATO bombings is the working people of all Yugoslavia. "The NATO bombings gave cover for the ethnic cleansing being carried out in Kosova," he added, outlining why working people should champion the right of self-determination for Kosova to build unity among toilers.

The second speaker, Dimitris Belantis, an attorney and political activist, took issue with Misailides's comments. "In general it is correct to support the right to self-determination," he said. "But each case is concrete. Strategic questions involving the role of imperialism must be taken into account. That is why I question the wisdom of sup-

porting self-determination in Kosova. It is a way to support imperialist intervention."

The final speaker, Panos Kosmas, a leader of the Anti-War Internationalist Coalition, took aim at the Greek nationalist character of many "antiwar" actions. "These patriotic so-called anti-imperialist actions strengthen the rightist and nationalist forces. The extreme right is also against NATO and through these activities is building bridges with the left. In this we lose." He continued, "We should not forget that Greece is part of the imperialist bloc and considers the Balkans its zone of influence. Whatever strengthens Greek nationalism strengthens this war drive."

Such a march, billed as an antiwar action, took place May 14. Several hundred cops, organized by the Pan Greek Federation of Police Employees, marched through central Athens to the U.S. Embassy chanting "Americans — murderers of peoples!"

The war continues to be the major question working people are discussing. "Every day at the airport, members of the Pan Workers Struggle Front (PAME) faction of the civil aviation union leaflet the workers and passengers with antiwar flyers," said Natasha Terlexis, herself an airport worker in Athens. PAME is the union faction led by officials of the Communist Party of Greece and organized the largest contingents at the May Day march of 20,000.

"Where I work about 20 co-workers contributed some 150,000 drachmas (\$500) in donations for food to be sent to Serbia via the Greek Serbian Friendship Society," Terlexis said. "Folks were willing to contribute money to also go to the Albanian refugees but could not figure how to do it."

Northwest Airlines flight attendants: 'We will strike'

BY BILL SCHEER

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Flight attendants at Northwest Airlines, members of International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 2000, are gearing up in the fight to get a new contract. A number of them are staffing information offices, wearing "I will strike" tags, and participating in actions against the company. In addition, informational union meetings are taking place in cities around the country.

A strike authorization vote is currently taking place. If approved, the measure would enable the union officials to call a strike. "Everyone I talked to is voting yes," said

Northwest flight attendant Vicki Jahner. "We are angry we have not gotten our share," said Jahner, who has four years with the company. "Everyone is fed up."

The main issues in the dispute are retirement pay, wage increases, and job security on the company's Asian routes. The union local, with 11,000 flight attendants, has been working under a contract extension for two years and eight months. In the previous contract, signed in 1993, the local gave up significant pay concessions when the company cried poverty.

The union has not won a pay increase in a contract since 1986. Northwest Airlines has made record profits in four of the last five years. The three top company officers have cashed in stock options for tens of millions of dollars in the last few years.

Last September members of the different unions at Northwest Airlines won more self-confidence when the pilots landed significant concessions at the end of a 15-day strike, which shut down the operations of the company. Earlier in the summer a work-to-rule campaign and overtime ban had been organized by members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), including mechanics, cleaners, and baggage handlers. This resulted in delayed and canceled flights. Spokespersons for the company say that between the pilots' strike and the summer job action the company lost nearly \$1 billion.

The company then claimed that "settling with the unions is priority number one." However, eight months later neither the flight attendants nor the cleaners and mechanics have contracts.

Members of the IAM who are baggage handlers and reservations agents approved a contract with the company two months ago.

According to Lynn Sokal, a flight attendant with nine years at the airline, union members are encouraging each other to work just their bid schedule — the minimum required — and to accept no upgrade routes or extra work. The company relies on this extra work to meet its



Militant/Tony Lane

Dozens of Northwest pilots picket Minneapolis-St. Paul airport in June 1998. Their victorious strike last September encouraged flight attendants in fight to win a better contract.

schedule.

Sokal is a volunteer at the union's "Contract Action Team" (CAT) information office underneath a Northwest passenger gate at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. The office is staffed all day Wednesdays by volunteers. Flight attendants come to ask questions and to get leaflets to be passed out to other flight attendants.

Flight attendants have organized brief informational picket lines at some airports in the past months. Recently, a number of Northwest flight attendants organized a protest rally at the annual stockholders meeting in New York. Some 350 workers participated in a rally outside the meeting. Inside the meeting they peppered company chairman Gary Wilson with so many questions that the meeting was quickly adjourned.

Some flight attendants are working to get the support of the other unions at Northwest. Sokal says that she makes it a point to talk with the pilots about the issues in the fight and solicit their support. Sokal spoke to the May 13 meeting of IAM Local 1833, which comprises the mechanics, cleaners, customer service agents, clerical workers, and ramp workers at Northwest in the Twin Cities. Some ramp workers, mechanics, and cleaners wear buttons that express support for the flight attendants.

Mechanics and cleaners at the airline are without a contract also. After the job action

last summer, the union membership of the IAM at Northwest overwhelmingly rejected a proposed contract that was supported by the IAM officials. Subsequently the mechanics and cleaners voted out the IAM and voted to be represented by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). The IAM has contested the election to the National Mediation board. A ruling is due soon.

The strike authorization vote has resulted in negotiations between the flight attendants and the company being moved up to May 20. Under the Railway Labor Act, which governs airline contract negotiations, no strike could take place unless the National Mediation Board declares an impasse in the contract negotiations. Even then the flight attendants would be barred from any job actions for 30 days.

Officials of the flight attendants' local are promoting the idea of a "CHAOS" strike against the company, where most workers stay on the job while a few participate in job actions to disrupt the airline's functioning. It is a variant of the "selective strike strategy" advocated by the AFL-CIO tops for years in place of an all-out work stoppage.

The strike authorization ballots will be counted and announced June 5.

Bill Scheer is a cleaner at Northwest Airlines and a member of IAM Local 1833.

TWA workers could strike as of June 10

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

MIAMI — Federal mediators ruled in mid-May that negotiations between TWA and the International Association of Machinists (IAM) are at an impasse. This set off a government-imposed 30-day "cooling off" period that ends June 10. At that time, if there is no agreement, the union is free to strike.

The IAM represents 16,000 mechanics, ramp workers, flight attendants, and passenger service workers out of TWA's total workforce of 21,000. In recent years the union has taken major wage cuts, while the company has twice filed for bankruptcy. The bosses' offer includes work-rule changes that would raise productivity. The wage raise proposed by the company would not bring IAM members up to the industry standard.

Ernie Mailhot is a member of IAM Local 1126 in Miami.

S. Africa toilers seek to deepen democratic revolution

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa — Fourteen parties will contest South Africa's second nonracial democratic election on June 2. For workers and peasants in this country of 40 million people, the central question on the agenda is maintaining and broadening the democratic conquests won in the battle against the racist system of apartheid, and expanding the pace and scope of economic and social transformation.

The first nonracial election held in April 1994, marked a turning point in South Africa's democratic revolution after decades of mass struggle and subsequent negotiations that

began in the early 1990s between national liberation organizations and the apartheid ruling class. The 1994 poll registered the burial of white-minority rule. The Government of National Unity took office, in which the majority party, the African National Congress, shared the cabinet with the National Party, which subsequently quit the cabinet, and Inkatha Freedom Party. The five-year coalition arrangement ends this year.

Most working people see the ruling African National Congress (ANC) as the only party that represents their interests. Recent opinion polls credit the ANC with 62 percent support among those registered to vote.

The ANC standard-bearer is the organization's president, Thabo Mbeki, who is also the country's deputy president. South African president Nelson Mandela will retire from government after the poll.

The ANC is campaigning for a two-thirds majority of seats in parliament, or 67 percent of the vote, which would give the ANC the ability to amend the constitution. It garnered 63 percent of the vote in 1994. The organization "views the attainment of an overwhelming ANC majority as crucial to continuing — and accelerating — the process of reconstruction and development," said its secretary-general Kgalema Motlanthe.

The ANC campaign slogan is "Together, in every sector, fighting for change." In its election manifesto the party defends democratic conquests registered in the country's new constitution. The document reviews advances in providing basic necessities such as housing, water, and electricity to millions of working people. The organization's leadership is committed to using a large percentage of the national budget to provide such basic needs and to advance land reform, affirmative action, and other social measures to abolish South Africa's racist legacy.

Large rallies in recent months in townships and rural areas have confirmed popular support for the ANC. Millions of working people, among them women and youth

in urban and rural areas, are more confident today in advancing their rights as a result of democratic space won through struggle and entrenched in the constitution. They have participated in strikes and skirmishes, clashes to abolish racist practices in schools and workplaces, and struggles over land and housing throughout the country.

Defenders of white privilege

"The masses are telling us that the white minority still wants to defend its privileges," Mandela told an audience in Johannesburg on March 8. He said he had been told that opposition parties were important in a democracy, but the opposition had played "no useful role whatsoever" in transforming South Africa.

This remark captures the essence of the two principal opposition parties — the New National Party (NNP, formerly the National Party that ran apartheid from 1948) and the Democratic Party (DP).

The two parties, both of which have representatives in parliament, have loudly opposed virtually every step taken by the ANC government. Crime and job losses since 1994 are the fault of the ANC, they claim. They have opposed affirmative action, health care reforms to enable greater numbers of people to receive medical care, called for a reintroduction of the death penalty, and denounced actions by fighters aiming to advance working-class struggles. The NNP directs its appeal to whites and those classified under apartheid as "colored" — a section of the black population who were allowed privileges in comparison to Africans in the past. As part of the party's makeover, it fielded a list of candidates nationally of whom nearly half are black. NNP election posters proclaim: "Hang killers and rapists."

The DP has declared it seeks to become the largest opposition group in parliament and is trying to harness white middle class rage and fear over loss of privileges. This liberal capitalist party has accepted growing num-

bers of well-known rightists into its ranks.

Rightists more isolated

Among the tangible victories over the past five years is that rightist and bourgeois nationalist forces, who threatened large-scale violence against the democratic revolution, have been isolated.

While thousands of people are expected to vote for parties such as the right-wing Freedom Front, which has members in parliament and is led by former apartheid general Constand Viljoen, the concept of an Afrikaner "volkstaat," or mini-apartheid homeland, is cherished by fewer and fewer Afrikaners. "I wish that I could go to those meetings where Constand Viljoen speaks to the TV cameras and ask him, 'who says you speak for Afrikaners? You don't speak for me,'" said an Afrikaner worker here, who asked not be named.

The rightist Afrikaner Resistance Movement, led by Eugene Terre'Blanche, which formerly mobilized thousands of members in arms and carried out bombings prior to the 1994 poll, has all but disappeared as an organized entity. In early May, Terre'Blanche, seeking to avoid jail, applied to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for amnesty.

There are pockets of rightists, however, including those with connections in the police and army, who may lash out. Police in Gauteng province announced on May 12 that they had discovered several large arms caches that right-wingers were planning to use to disrupt the elections.

The Inkatha Freedom Party, led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, minister of home affairs in the current government, is also contesting the poll. Inkatha, which was responsible for many bloody attacks on working people in KwaZulu-Natal province up through 1994, is now focusing on getting re-elected. Political violence has declined sharply in the province, and ANC leaders are campaigning in what were previously considered "no-go" areas in rural areas.

The Coming Revolution in South Africa

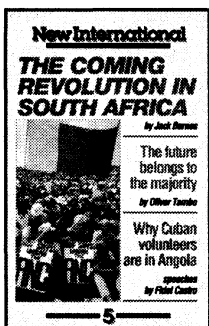
JACK BARNES

The one-person, one-vote elections in 1994, and the sweeping victory of the African National Congress, were historic steps in the democratic revolution in South Africa.

This article explores the social character and roots of apartheid in South African capitalism and the tasks of the toilers in city and countryside in dismantling the legacy of social and economic inequality. Only among the most committed cadres of this ANC-led struggle, Barnes writes, can the working class begin forging a communist leadership.

In *New International* no. 5. Also includes "Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola": 2 speeches by Fidel Castro. \$9.00

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.



Newport News strikers denounce safety problems in yard, gov't orders mediation

BY MARY MARTIN

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia — In the eighth week of their strike against Newport News Shipbuilding, some 9,000 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 8888 are standing firm.

Two workers who had crossed the picket line recently rejoined the strike, pointing to dangerous safety conditions in the yard. One of the workers, Michael Davis, said an im-

properly operated crane dropped a 7,500 pound load within five feet of his work station. Workers described the accidents they had witnessed in the yard, as well as intimidation by company supervisors at a May 19 press conference in Washington, D.C., organized by officials of the USWA International.

In response to the news conference and a formal complaint filed by the USWA with the Department of Labor, the Occupational Safety

and Health Administration (OSHA) opened a formal inquiry into safety violations at Newport News. The potential for accidents due to inexperience in the removal or refueling of radioactive nuclear fuel rods in the nuclear powered warships is of particular concern to shipyard workers and the entire community.

Currently the *USS Nimitz* and *USS Harry Truman* are in the yard for maintenance, and the *USS Ronald Reagan* is under construction. The bosses have signed on to an agreement with the U.S. Navy to cut costs to the government and the company is desperate to get out some production.

Feeling the impact of the strike, Washington used a little-known provision of the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act to order government mediation of the dispute. Announcing this move, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) spokesman David Hefert said, "In this case the strike also has national defense implications. Not to suggest this imperils the national defense, but certainly it has an effect on the U.S. Navy — they need their boats back."

Representatives of USWA Local 8888 and the company were ordered to resume negotiations with a federal mediator May 24. According to press reports, the union reduced its demand for a \$3.95 wage increase over three

years to \$3.70, but insisted pensions must be raised from a paltry \$300-\$500 to around \$900 per month. The company offered nothing new.

The Steelworkers went on strike April 5 after USWA Local 8888 members rejected the company's final offer of a nearly four-year contract with wage increases up to \$2.49 for some of the workers. The union sought a three-year contract with an across-the-board raise of \$3.95 per hour.

Hoping to lure more workers across the picket line, the company implemented what it called its "final wage offer" May 17, raising wages by \$1 per hour for anyone who would work during the strike. They claimed an impasse had been reached in negotiations and suggested the door was open to hiring replacement workers. But the offer had little impact and very few workers went back.

Local 8888 officials have filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board, charging Newport News with committing several unfair labor practices, including the unilaterally implementing a wage offer already rejected by the union members. An NLRB investigation is under way.

Mary Martin is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Clive Turnbull contributed to this article.

Mississippi shipyard strike

Continued from front page
been on strike since April 5.

The Ingalls workers rejected a contract proposal that included wage increases along with increases in health insurance premiums and co-payments. The company offered a 93-cent hourly raise for the first year of the three-year contract, 50 cents for the second year, and 47 cents for the third year. Strikers are demanding greater wage increases, totaling \$3 over three years, especially since they haven't had a raise in six years.

High-voltage electrician and IBEW member Ernest Moore said, "\$1.90 raise [over three years] is the best offer we've ever had, but it's seven years too late."

"Besides, \$1.90 is only for the top labor grade," added William Box. "Everyone else gets a percentage of that."

Insurance was a sore point with many of the pickets who spoke with *Militant* reporters May 22. They said Ingalls is self-insured and has made \$12 million off the insurance plan. According to strikers, the company had promised to use any profits from the health insurance to lower premiums and increase benefits for employees, but now the company is demanding workers pay even more — an additional \$10 a month, in each year, for the duration of the contract.

Workers are confident Ingalls can afford to pay higher wages. Several pickets pointed to the \$6 billion bid by Litton, the parent company of Ingalls, to buy the Newport News and Avondale shipyards. "Now is the time to strike," said Moore, "The company's making money, the sun is shining, the fish are biting."

"And other people are hiring!" chimed in Teresa Nelson, a shop steward in the Pipefitters union. Many of the strikers have already found jobs at nearby shipyards, including Friede Goldman, a nonunion company adjacent to Ingalls that builds offshore oil rigs. Consequently, workers don't feel much pressure to settle the strike quickly.

This is the first strike at Ingalls since 1974, Nelson told the *Militant*.

"In '74 the womenfolk made us go back," said Moore.

"But now the women work here too. We're all on strike this time," Nelson responded.

Women make up "about half" of the workforce said Shamika Straight, a 24-year-old painter with almost two years at Ingalls.

While specific safety measures are apparently not on the bargaining table, many strikers expressed concern about inadequate ventilation and flimsy walkways, and said they consider safety to be an issue in the strike.

IBEW member Tim Gorajec said the Occupational Safety and Health Administration "(OSHA) considers Ingalls one of the safest shipyards in the country. I hate to think what conditions are at some of the other shipyards!"

In adequate ventilation, high temperatures, and welding gases create hazardous conditions, sometimes resulting in workers passing out. An argon leak caused the deaths of four workers, the *Militant* was told.

Shipbuilding, he continued, is the second most dangerous industry in the United States, trailing only high steel [skyscraper construction].

"They have no system to check argon lines. There is no inspection system. It is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas" explained Gorajec. "You don't know if there is a leak until it is too late," he added.

James Bolan, an electrical apprentice for two years, said, "The bottom line is the company is worried about how much profit it makes, not about the people."

Bolan said workers are reprimanded and treated "like children."

"I am sick and tired of it," he said. "It is all about respect; we have not been getting what we deserve."

The spirit of the strike is expressed on buttons saying "Show us the money!" and picket signs reading "Peanuts are for elephants," "No pay St. Pé" (referring to company CEO Jerry St. Pé), and "If you're not union, join us now!"

Strikers here are aware of the Newport News strike and the ongoing fight to win union recognition at Avondale shipyard in New Orleans. Striking IBEW Local 733 has expressed its solidarity with the strikers at Newport News, sending them a contribution of \$500.

Kristin Meriam is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 12014 in Birmingham, Alabama.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Discussion on *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Speaker: James Harris, Socialist Workers Party 1996 Presidential candidate and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Atlanta. Fri., June 4, Program: 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Program, \$4, Dinner: \$6. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Colorado High School Shootings: Alienation, Polarization, Social Crisis. A discussion led by Gale Shangold, Socialist Workers Party, member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Fri., June 4, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (1 1/2 blocks west of Vermont) Donation: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

New England Fishermen and Family Farmers Fight for Survival. A panel of activists in Massa-

chusetts and Vermont discuss the economic and social crisis facing small exploited producers. Fri., June 4, 7:30 p.m. 683 Washington St. Dorchester at Codman Square. Donation: \$5. Tel: (617) 282-2254.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Initial Victory in Abner Louima's Fight Against Police Brutality — Jail All the Guilty Cops! Speakers: Al Duncan, Socialist Workers Party; Iris Baez, president of Anthony Baez Foundation, Parents Against Police Brutality. Fri., June 4, 7:30 p.m. 59 Fourth Avenue. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Fight for Irish Freedom Today. Panel discussion. Malachy McAllister, who is fighting deportation back to Ireland by the U.S. government; representative of Irish Northern Aid; Scott MX Turner, Irish activist; Andy Buchanan, Socialist Workers Party, member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Fri., June 4, 7:30 p.m. 87A Halsey St. (one block north of Broad

St.) Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

CANADA

Toronto

Israeli Election: Why Change of Government Won't Bring Peace. Speaker and open-mike discussion. Fri., June 4, 7:30 p.m. 851 Bloor Street West (east of Ossington) Donation requested. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Indonesia Today. Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League. Fri., June 4, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

UNITED KINGDOM

London

The Crisis in Farming. Speaker: Alan Harris, Communist League. June 4, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: (0171) 928-7993.

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Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

People are so paranoid — Maryland: Aberdeen Proving Ground — Construction begins this summer on a \$500-million plant to dispose of 1,500 tons of mustard



Harry Ring

gas, a chemical weapon stockpile that has concerned neighbors of the Army facility for years." — News item.

Nothing's perfect — For de-

acades, a nuclear energy plant in northern England has been releasing plutonium into the Irish Sea. The rationale was that the radioactive waste would be trapped in sediment at the bottom of the sea.

Now a study finds 36 percent is gone and scientists believe it may have been washed to Scotland and Scandinavia. The company said that over such a long period, a 36 percent loss is a good result.

Why? Because they got caught? — At San Diego State University, 25 students taking a course in business ethics were given "F"s for cheating. Most of them were put on probation.

Regimentation always helps — Responding to the Colorado shooting, Portsmouth, New Hampshire schools banned trench coats and dark clothing associated with shock singer Marilyn Manson. AP reported the top school honcho as saying she hoped the new rules would help students feel "less separated from one another."

Right on — At Denver West High School students must now wear their ID cards around their necks at all times. Only the main entrance is open, the other 25 are locked. Backpacks are frequently checked and lockers checked for "probable cause." And, of course, no trench coats or capes. On May 2 some 50 students

walked out in protest.

Two titans — Glayde Whitney, a psychology professor at Florida State University, and a non-closet racist, sparked protest by writing a foreword to a book by David Duke. Duke is the guy who formally withdrew from the Ku Klux Klan to win election to the state legislature. Whitney likens Duke to Socrates and Isaac Newton. Duke says the prof. is "one of the giants of his science."

A few more 'bad apples' — In Akron, Ohio, officials assigned a team of experts to investigate why the city's cops become criminals and police morale is low. The probe

seems to have been sparked by the conviction of a deputy chief for theft and a captain for murder.

Welcome to the millennium — New Hampshire was slated to repeal a statute that barred gays from adopting children or being foster parents. The law also provided that heterosexuals who adopted children had to certify there were no gays in the household.

That damn spell cheque — The May 24 "Great Society" reported that each year more than a million people die from work "accents." The problem, of course is accidents, not accents.

Why the Yeltsin regime is in constant turmoil

What's behind the instability in Russia? Why does President Boris Yeltsin sack one prime minister after another? Why can't the government put a lid on strikes by miners, sailors, and many other workers demanding their pay? And why are Washington and the other imperialist powers tightening a military encirclement of Russia?

The following selection helps shed light on these questions. It is from the fourth chapter of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, a talk presented in New York City on Nov. 7, 1992,

from the pages of

Capitalism's World Disorder

four days after the presidential elections. *Capitalism's World Disorder* is copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

Nixon made quite a sensation a few months ago, in March, when he gave a major speech in Washington, D.C., pointedly entitled "The New World," not the "New World Order." This supposedly discredited U.S. president warned his bipartisan colleagues to beware "the false premise" that "the Cold War is over and we have won it. . . . That's only half true," he said. "It is true, that as far as the Cold War is concerned, the Communists have lost it. It is not true, however, that the Free World has won it."

That question is not settled yet, Nixon said. And unless the U.S. rulers wage a successful fight to somehow transform Russia into a stable market economy, they will not be able to say they have won more than they have lost. Without that, he said, no durable regime — much less a reliable one, from the standpoint of Nixon's class — can be consolidated in Russia or anywhere else in the former Soviet Union.

Nixon's speech was front-page news, and not just here in the United States. It was televised live around the globe on CNN. It came only a few days after the publicizing of a memorandum Nixon had circulated to prominent ruling-class figures, in which he called Bush administration policy toward Russia "pathetically inadequate." That memo, entitled "How to Lose the Cold War," was also widely quoted in major newspapers in the United States and other countries.

"The hot-button issue in the 1950s was, 'Who lost China?'" Nixon said in his memo — referring to the accusation-framed-as-a-question that he and others hurled at major bourgeois politicians as part of launching the McCarthyite witch-hunt.

"If Yeltsin goes down," Nixon said, "the question of 'who lost Russia' will be an infinitely more devastating issue in the 1990s."

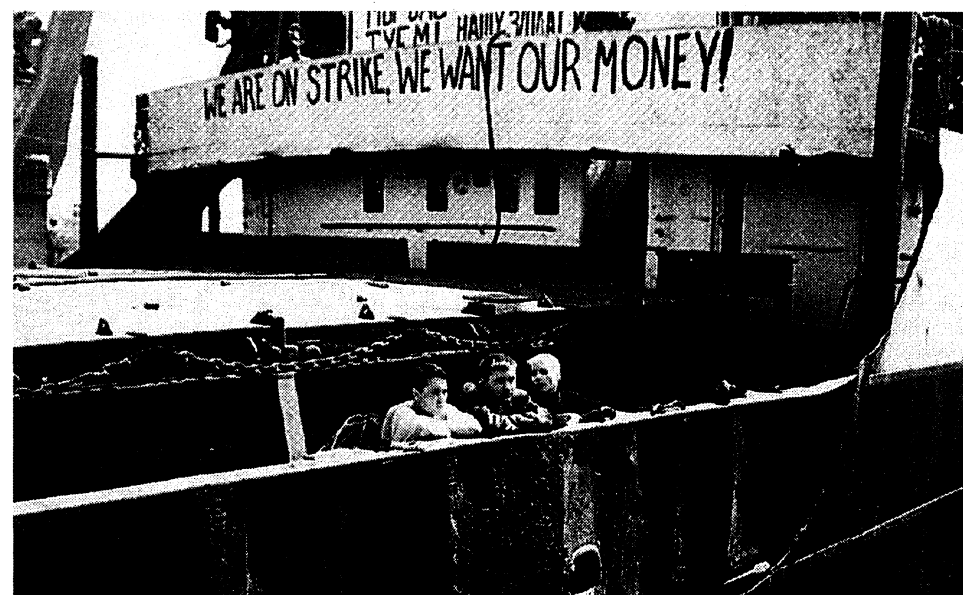
Nixon is well-qualified to make such a comparison, since he was a central instigator of the demagogic witch-hunting campaign four decades ago. The issue at that time was assessing blame for the revolutionary overturn in 1949 of the landlord-capitalist regime in China.

In his Washington, D.C., speech, Nixon said that the biggest obstacle to establishing a stable market system in Russia was what he called "the lack of a management class." The

"lack of a class" is indeed the major problem the imperialists confront in the workers states — but not "a management class." The privileged bureaucratic castes in these countries include hundreds of thousands of managers.

What they "lack" is a *capitalist class* — a necessary social class that has accumulated massive amounts of capital; that has established its historical dominance over production and exchange; and that has imposed the social relations necessary for that domination on the toiling majority, and to one degree or another gotten them to accept those relations as their own. But the emergence of such a class involves sharp assaults on the working class — assaults that will meet resistance and threaten social stability — as well as bloody turf wars among the rival wannabe capitalists themselves.

That is the harsh reality behind what Nixon is calling on the U.S. rulers to look at square in the face.



Russian sailors occupy ship *Lakhta* in port of Vladivostok. They have been striking since February demanding one year of back wages from the ship's new private owners.

N.Y. 'starved baby' trial is result of assault on welfare and solidarity

BY MEGANARNEY

"We need to take a careful look at the connection between the employers' broader war on labor and their assault on welfare and various public programs that provide income security for the working class — unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, pensions, and health-care insurance such as Medicare and Medicaid," says Jack Barnes in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. "These programs help make it possible for workers to make it through a lifetime. They help make it possible for workers to provide care for the young, to get an education, to have a retirement pension. They help tie the working class together as a class.

"As workers today face fewer possibilities of getting jobs and holding them, the capitalists' attacks on social welfare programs take a bigger toll. . . . The so-called culture war is at the heart of this assault. Its aim is decisive to the right, and ultimately to the class dominance of the entire bourgeoisie: to single out the layers of the working class who suffer most from this assault and blame them for the social crisis of capitalism. Point to them as an infection in the social order. Go after human solidarity."

The trial of Tabitha Walrond is a case in point. On May 19 a jury in the New York State Supreme Court convicted the 21-year-old Black woman of criminally negligent homicide in the death of her two-month-old son nearly two years ago. State prosecutors argued that she was guilty of "fatally starving" the child because she didn't change from breast feeding to formula and didn't get medical care. She faces up to four years in prison.

Walrond, who was on welfare at the time, sought prenatal care five months before Tyler's birth, and began the nightmarish task of trying to get Medicaid coverage. Recent laws forcing hundreds of thousands of working people off welfare in New York City have also resulted in many people eligible for Medicaid being turned away.

When Walrond first applied on behalf of her expected child, who should have been eligible, New York's Medicaid computer system

rejected the request. A social worker said the coverage would start as soon as a Social Security card and birth certificate were issued. But when Walrond returned to the medical center with the baby, they were turned away because he didn't have a Medicaid card. Walrond brought Tyler to her own postpartum checkup and her doctor noticed the child was underweight, but the Health Insurance Plan (HIP) medical center refused to treat him.

Walrond then went to three city offices for help, including one six days before the infant died. Each time the request was rejected. Months later, two different Medicaid cards and a HIP membership in the child's name arrived in the mail.

If this weren't enough, the Bronx district attorney put Walrond on trial. Prosecutors showed the jury grotesque photos of the child's body 22 hours after an autopsy, arguing they were the way Tyler looked the day he died. Several jurors told the press that although they believed many of the facts in Walrond's defense, it was those photos that convinced them

to convict her. Three pediatricians had testified in her defense, explaining that it is common for a woman to fail to notice severe weight loss in an infant she holds every day.

The brutal injustice meted out to Tabitha Walrond is a prime example of why working people need to oppose the scapegoating and means-testing of the worst off layers of our class. On page 249 of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, Barnes explains, "To the political vanguard of the working class, Social Security has always been about the battle to bring all welfare payments, all medical claims, all supplemental payments for education and child care into a comprehensive, nationwide, government-guaranteed entitlement.

"That is why the term 'the social wage' is a useful one. We are talking about something that goes beyond the wage any individual workers receives from an employer. We are talking about something that the working class and labor movement fight to establish as social rights for all."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



June 7, 1974

Fifty three years ago, when Northern Ireland was carved out of Ireland by the British imperialists, the slogan of the proimperialists Protestants was "a Protestant parliament for a Protestant people." Today, the Protestant reactionaries claim to stand for "majority rule," but the meaning is the same.

The struggle in Ireland is basically one of an oppressed nationality for self-determination. When the British conquest was completed in the late 1600s, land was confiscated from the native inhabitants and given to settlers loyal to the invading monarchy. This was the origin of the Protestant community in Northern Ireland.



June 6, 1949

Heroic tin miners of Bolivia, striking since May 28 against the arrest and deportation of their union and political leaders, are rallying support throughout the country. All government attempts to crush the strike have been futile. The massacre of scores of workers, the jailing of hundreds, the deportation of still more leaders on May 30, and the general mobilization order to alert the entire army against working-class demonstrations have all served only to tighten the workers' ranks.

The mining population numbers some 200,000 men, women and children, exploited with equal ruthlessness.

Louima case: Jail all guilty cops!

Working people in New York City and beyond can celebrate the victory of cop Justin Volpe pleading guilty to the torture of Abner Louima. At the same time we must continue to demand that the other police involved be convicted and jailed, and that the cops who killed Amadou Diallo likewise be brought to justice.

In his reluctant confession, Volpe said his intention was to humiliate and punish Louima. His statement illustrates the true character of all cops in capitalist society.

The cops' job is to mete out punishment to working people. They particularly target those of oppressed nationalities, and anyone who stands up for the rights of themselves and others. It's not a question of rooting out "rogue cops" or "bad apples." Every aspect of training the cops receive reinforces this behavior.

"We own the night" was the slogan of the cops in the Street Crimes Unit who gunned down Diallo in a hail of 41 bullets. Just one day after Volpe confessed to his brutality, a member of this cop group shot and critically wounded an unarmed 16-year-old Black youth in the Bronx.

Volpe initially bragged among his peers about sodomizing Louima. He expected his actions to be considered a badge of honor, until the outcry by working people put a spotlight on the cops' barbarism. Thousands of working people rallied in the streets after the facts came out about the injuries inflicted on the Haitian immigrant.

The role of the cops is to protect and serve the interests of the capitalist rulers. They are used — and will be used more — directly against workers who stand up to the employers. They are also a recruiting ground for every fascist movement. Working people in New York got a

glimpse of this last year, when a mobilization of 1,000 cops assaulted a rally of 40,000 construction workers protesting union-busting moves by city officials. The cops and their supporters rallied outside the offices of the Hospital Workers Local 1199 April 12 of this year, in response to the union's support for protests against the police killing of Amadou Diallo.

The court testimony other cops against Volpe do not dispel a "myth of a blue wall of silence," as suggested by the mayor and the big-business media. The "blue wall of silence" is very real, and hasn't changed. But in this case, the capitalist rulers seek to limit the political damage wrought by the recent protests against the cop execution of Diallo and the torture of Louima. They decided at least one cop must take the fall. They hope to hang the entire savagery on Volpe, if possible. The rulers and their cops always try to cover up for the brutality and corruption of the capitalist state. Cops rarely go to jail for brutalizing Blacks, Latinos, immigrants, or working people as a whole. It's only a problem for them if there is working-class resistance to their violence.

That's why the labor movement should champion protests against cop brutality and demand all the guilty cops be jailed. Fighters against police abuse should join the struggle of workers on the picket lines, such as the Newport News shipyard strikers in Virginia.

When working people stand up for our own self-worth as human beings, pressure can be brought to bear to jail cops who brutalize us. More street actions need to be organized to demand all the police who participated in the assault on Abner Louima go to jail.

Cubans: no return to debt slavery

Continued from Page 7

feud between members of a former capitalist landowning family from Cuba, now living in the United States, over which branch of the family has rights to three large sugar mills and plantations in Havana province that were expropriated by working people in Cuba four decades ago. These individuals have been spurred on by the 1996 Helms-Burton law, which tightens the U.S. embargo of Cuba and declares its aim of protecting those with claims on property confiscated by Cuba's workers and farmers after 1959.

While such posturing by the former exploiters is grotesque, Alarcón noted, it is a reminder of what the Cuban people successfully fought to end once and for all. Today, as in 1959, they are waging a life-and-death struggle. There are only two roads, he stated, "either Cuba will continue to be independent and governed by workers and peasants, or the country will again be under the rule of foreign powers and those seeking a return to the 'good life' of exploi-

tation" of the toiling majority.

Alarcón said the imperialist rulers in the United States and elsewhere thought the crumbling of the regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe would mean the collapse of the Cuban revolution and the reimposition of capitalism. But they were mistaken.

"The socialist camp disappeared a decade ago. At that time, certain sections of international capital believed they had won the Cold War," he stated. As a result, U.S. foreign policy has become more aggressive. "But we have had 40 years of struggle for socialism in Cuba, and we are still here."

"We are in a world today where the fight against capitalism, sometimes called neoliberalism, will be a difficult one. But in that struggle, Cubans will be able to fulfill our duty," Alarcón declared.

"Cuba belongs to its workers and peasants, and it will remain so."

Sell 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

Continued from Page 5

by Yugoslav immigrants from Bosnia. Another worker told us that there were 2,000 Yugoslavs in the Waterloo area. A local community paper has articles in Spanish, English, and Serbo-Croatian.

In Tama, Iowa, we learned that there had been a small protest against the local police being deputized with deportation powers. We met a woman whose Mexican-born husband had been deported in January. "It's terrible," one woman said. "Some days people just disappear or don't show up to work. We just come here to work; we haven't committed any crime."

Participants in the nine-day team have included packinghouse workers and other industrial workers in the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists.



BY LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON — Among those participating in the May 17-19 conference and rallies of the Kaiser Steelworkers and environmentalists (see article on page 3) was Dick Geyer, from USWA Local 12014 in Birmingham, Alabama. He sold two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and three *Militant* subscriptions at the events.

Geyer reported, "After the main session of the conference on Tuesday, I sat down in the lobby and began talking with a worker from the Kaiser local in Tacoma. I showed him the *Militant* with the article on Kaiser. Then he looked at the pictures of the factories that were bombed in Yugoslavia. Looking on the front cover he saw the ad for the special offer of the *Militant* sub and the book for just \$30 and got it. His wife joined him at the end and was very interested too." The two have been part of a team of Kaiser workers based in Los Angeles in recent weeks

speaking to union locals and Kaiser customers about their fight.

At the march and rally Tuesday afternoon, Geyer sold a *Militant* subscription to a young teacher who was wearing a T-shirt of the Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara. He got the sub because he really liked the Yugoslavia coverage. Later that night at a public forum, a carpenter who heard the Kaiser workers speak at his local's meeting also bought a sub.

Ellen Haywood, a Steelworker from Pittsburg, California, participated in the discussion at a workshop on protectionism and free trade. She pointed to her T-shirt that displays the picture of a co-worker killed recently in that mill and said, "How can we join with these same bosses to fight for their trade policies? They are our enemies. We can't be drawn into these campaigns, which drag us into nationalism, a grave threat to labor." The workshop leaders had referred to several books to read, and Haywood recommended *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Several workshop participants continued the discussion after the workshop and one bought the book.

"A Kaiser worker, who is also a new reader of the *Militant*, helped organize members of USWA Local 5702 in Gramercy, Louisiana, to get to the Avondale shipyard workers rally in New Orleans in April," added Tony Dutrow. "He has visited workers at plants that are customers of Kaiser Aluminum, including in Kentucky and Virginia. When we were on the bus heading back to Gramercy, we talked about how valuable a book like *Capitalism's World Disorder* is to workers that are meeting other workers involved in struggle. During the last day of events in Houston, I reminded him about the book and he bought it. We made plans to talk about the book and their fight as soon as I can get back to Gramercy."

N.Y. cop brutality

Continued from front page

week of the trial of Volpe and four other cops who are charged in the beating of Abner Louima and Patrick Antoine, the torture of Louima, and the attempt to cover up these crimes. Volpe maintained his innocence until it became clear he could not get off. Four other cops testified they had seen Volpe take Louima into the bathroom, or heard him brag about his deeds afterward.

Volpe was jailed upon pleading guilty and will be sentenced at some point during the summer. His lawyers say they expect him to be sentenced to at least 30 years in prison; the charges against him carry a maximum penalty of life. "The rest of them should be in jail," declared Louima's cousin Samuel Nicolas following Volpe's plea.

The assault on Louima sparked outrage among workers in this city. Demonstrations of 7,000 and 15,000 people — most but not all of them Haitian — took place in August 1997, demanding the cops involved be fired and prosecuted.

The victory registered with Volpe's confession is also a direct result of the mobilizations earlier this year in which thousands of people demanded justice the killing of Amadou Diallo. These actions forced the indictment of the four cops who shot Diallo, a young worker from Guinea, on charges of second-degree murder. It occurs on the heels of another victory against police brutality, the conviction of New York cop Richard Molloy of second-degree manslaughter in the killing of Irish immigrant Heslin Phelan in 1996. Molloy was sentenced May 12 to 4-12 years in prison.

The trial of the cops who brutalized Louima also occurs in the context of deepening revelations about police targeting of Blacks and Latinos for harassment in New Jersey, which have caused a crisis for the state government there.

The trial of officers Charles Schwartz, Thomas Bruder, Thomas Wiese, and police sergeant Michael Bellomo is continuing. Schwartz is accused of holding Louima down as Volpe assaulted him. Bruder and Wiese are charged with beating Louima before he was taken to the police station, and Bellomo is charged with covering up this brutality.

Police assault at nightclub

Early in the trial, Louima's own testimony riveted people in the court and workers throughout the city. Louima described in graphic detail what was done to him on the night in question by Volpe, Schwartz, Bruder, and Wiese.

The incident began when police attacked people coming out of the Rendez-Vous Palace nightclub in Brooklyn, after two patrons got in a scuffle. Louima, who was not involved in the initial fight, protested the cop abuse. He was grabbed, struck by Volpe and other cops, and taken to the 70th precinct.

Patrick Antoine, who was simply walking by, was also attacked by the cops and arrested. He testified to seeing Volpe put Louima, who was half-naked and moaning in pain, in a holding cell at the police station that night.

The cops initially accused both Louima and Antoine of assaulting them, then dropped the charges.

Prior to Louima's testimony, some stories in the bourgeois media had attempted to portray him as the criminal, playing up alleged discrepancies in his account. Leading the charge was Volpe's attorney, Marvyn Kornberg. In his opening statement before the jury, Kornberg claimed Louima's injuries were "not consistent with a nonconsensual insertion of an object into his rectum," and implied they were the result of consensual sex. Kornberg also accused Louima of being motivated for financial gain, pointing to Louima's pending civil suit against the city.

During the cross-examination of Louima by Kornberg and the attorneys representing the other cops, they sought to play up Louima's retraction of his earlier claim that the cops who beat him had said, "It's Giuliani time," referring to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

However, despite badgering and not being allowed to even answer questions by Kornberg without being interrupted, the basic story that Louima told of the night he was beaten and tortured never wavered.

When asked by the judge why he did this to Louima, Volpe responded that he mistakenly thought that it was Louima who knocked him to the ground in the course of the police assault on the nightclub patrons. That was the "crime" for which Louima was beaten twice on the way to the police station and eventually tortured.

Hearings on cop brutality

Giuliani is now trying to refurbish the image of the police department, claiming the cops' testimony against Volpe "destroys the myth of the so-called blue wall of silence."

One place the mayor sought to put forward this line was at a one-day hearing by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which took place May 26 as the trial of the remaining cops charged in Louima's case resumed. The civil rights commission was asked to hold hearings in the city by Democratic Party liberals as a way of defusing the mobilizations by working people demanding justice for Diallo.

Relatives of police brutality victims and others who spoke at the hearing roundly denounced the mayor's claim that the "blue wall of silence" had crumbled. Iris Baez, of the Anthony Baez Foundation and Parents Against Police Brutality, was one of them. "The cop who murdered my son, Francis Livoti, had a history of brutality and yet he was allowed to remain a police officer," she told the commission. "This was true because all the other cops covered for him. And at his [Livoti's] trial in state court, the judge said that there was a nest of perjury involving all the lies told by the cops covering for him. Yet those officers have had nothing done to them and they remain to this day New York City police officers."

Auto workers fight lockout in Kentucky

BY JACK WILLEY
AND PATTIE THOMPSON

HENDERSON, Kentucky — Several hundred members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2036 are entering their 15th month of a lockout by Accuride Corp. here. On Feb. 20, 1998, union members voted 371-9 to go on strike against a contract that would gut basic union rights at the plant. The factory produces wheels and rims for Peterbilt, Ford, General Motors, Mack, Navistar, and other truck companies.

The company refused to budge, offering exactly the same contract one month later. When the local voted to return to work unconditionally under the previous contract, the company responded with a lockout.

"The main issue of the strike was company attempts to break our union," explained Jody Smith at the union hall May 11, echoing what other workers staffing the picket line emphasized.

Accuride's demands essentially would mean going from a closed shop where all workers join the union to an open shop; deny workers the right to see their union steward during work hours, including during a dispute with a boss, unless the boss gave them permission; and eliminating dues check off, where the company automatically takes union dues out of workers' checks. The contract would be six years long instead of previous two- and three-year durations.

The proposed contract also included contracting all maintenance and janitorial jobs out to largely nonunion companies, job combinations that Accuride stated would eliminate 110 jobs, and giving the company

the powers to decide the medical plan for retirees.

Since the strike and lockout, Accuride has pushed forward in its attempts to break the union. The company brought in more than 100 scabs through a strike-breaking hiring agency, Worldwide Labor, based in Mississippi. Accuride also hired the notorious Vance Security, whose thugs are stationed at the plant and some bosses' homes. The company claims the plant is running at full capacity using management and replacement workers.

On the picket line May 10, several unionists recounted their experiences of being blacklisted from getting hired at other factories in the area. "If you want to work, you better not put down Accuride as your last employer on an application. Some places have told me to my face they refuse to hire us," said one picketer. Several other big companies in Henderson are nonunion and pay lower wages.

Six months into the lockout, the company offered an even worse contract, which union members voted overwhelmingly to not even take a vote on, seeing it as an insult.

Up until last November unionists held monthly marches from their union hall to the plant. "You would see a mile of people all the way down the highway," Smith said.

The union has filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board requesting the board rule the lockout is illegal. "The last time there were negotiations between the union and the company was in February, at our urging. Nothing came of it. Right now were waiting for the

Protesters defend a woman's right to choose abortion in Australia



Militant/Linda Harris

On May 15, 50 supporters of the right to choose abortion held a spirited counter-protest outside the Salisbury Road clinic located in a residential suburb of Sydney, Australia. The protest was initiated by residents who approached the Women's Abortion Action Campaign after putting up with a year of monthly actions in front of their homes organized by an anti-abortion group called Helpers of God's Precious Infants. Chanting and singing, and supported by the honking of many cars passing by, the pro-choice demonstrators outlasted the right-wing group. After the picket all who participated decided to hold monthly counterprotests.

NLRB ruling," said Michelle Bland.

The picket lines remain staffed every day around the clock.

Pattie Thompson is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1474 in Chicago.

Anger grows over police brutality in St. Louis

BY JOHN SARGE

ST. LOUIS — Chanting "The human rights problem in the world today, is right here in the U.S.A" and "Hey, hey, ho, ho, killer cops have got to go," 25 people picketed the South Patrol Division of the St. Louis police May 8.

The protest came one day after Julius Thurman, a 19-year-old Black man, was buried. Thurman died April 26 in police custody. An autopsy showed that he died of a massive skull fracture from a blow to the back of the head. The police claim that Thurman, along with two others, was attempting to burglarize a pawn shop when they grabbed him. One of the two people accused of the same crime told the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* that he saw the cops arrest and stomp on Thurman. Then one officer hit him repeatedly with a heavy flashlight.

In a press conference the day of the fu-

neral, Virginia Thurman, Julius's mother, protested the cops' actions. "Who asked those two [cops] to be God, judge, and jury?" she demanded.

The funeral became a protest of the cop killing. Community figures spoke out against police brutality. Prince Carter, a spokesperson for Citizens Against Police Brutality whose nephew was killed by cops three years ago, called the killing "a modern-day lynching." The funeral procession went out of its way to drive past the St. Louis City Hall, the police headquarters, and the St. Louis circuit attorney's office.

In a break with past practice, this case went through a preliminary court hearing, which is public, instead of a closed door grand jury. The two cops, Robert Dodson and Stephan Capkovic, have been charged with second degree murder. And the picket line of 25 had film crews from all the local

television news departments, and coverage by a major news radio station.

The protest was one of a weekly series of actions called by Citizens Against Police Brutality. Carter explained the South Patrol Division is targeted because the last two police killings were carried out by cops from this station and at least two women have charged other cops with harassment. He reported that on April 2, Jerome Ruffin, a 22-year-old Black man, was killed by cops for "drinking beer and running." Carter told the press that in his opinion the quick action in the Thurman case was an attempt to "sweep the Ruffin case under the rug."

Kimberly Browning-Hoffman, a young office worker who is Black, came to protest her treatment at the hands of the St. Louis police. On April 8 she was harassed and then arrested while waiting for her baby-sitter. Two cops took her identification, then an-

nounced that she was going to jail for non-payment of a parking ticket. While trying to see into the police car so she could identify the cops she "was pushed onto the trunk by the male officer and the female officer handcuffed me while my baby was in the back seat of the car." She said the two cops then called for back up and "two paddy wagons and four or five cop cars responded."

Police also threatened her while in a cell at the South Patrol Division, Browning-Hoffman said. They refused to give her husband any information when he got there and referred to him as "my babies' daddy, like we weren't even married."

The protests are planned for 3:00 p.m. every Saturday in front of the South Patrol Division on Sublett Avenue.

John Sarge is a member of the United Auto Workers in Detroit.

LETTERS

Cuba's baseball victory

I would like to underscore one of the points raised in the fine article on Cuba's baseball victory. World-renowned third-baseman Omar Linares explained to the media why Cuban baseball stars like himself do not defect: "My decision is very simple. I was born there. That's where I was raised. That's where the revolution gave me an opportunity to study and turn into a professional in my sport."

In the same pregame discussion with the media, right fielder Luis Ulacio explained how the United States blockaded Cuban ball players. Ulacio stated that he would like to play in the major leagues, but, "The main thing is to have the opportunity to remain and live in Cuba. I feel that we should not be forced to defect to play in the major leagues."

"If we ever made it to the major leagues in the U.S., payment would be very difficult because of the embargo," Ulacio continued. "If they give us the opportunity to play, I don't think the Treasury Department would allow the money to reach us."

Unlike athletes from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, or other coun-

tries, Cuban athletes must defect not only to receive money, but to travel to the U.S. in order to play. (In the same interview, Ulacio raises the possibility of playing for free. A famous athlete playing sports for fun? An insane idea, under capitalism, but quite reasonable for a Cuban.)

A discerning sports fan might have been able to piece together the real picture. Cubans who stay in Cuba — athletes and nonathletes, 11 million strong — are responding with an integrity they learn in a revolutionary society. They are not victims of coercion or brainwashing.

This was further proven by the six who overslept and missed their plane to Cuba. No Cuban cop force came checking on them, banging on their doors, making threats about their families back in Cuba, etc. But the U.S. was very concerned about it. The INS detained the six sleepyheads, grilled them, insulted them, and finally let them go home.

And those who leave, like Livan Hernández? His interviews, which are full of self-serving distortions and lies, contain a few glimpses of the truth, like the time he cried about how bad things were in Cuba — he had to ride a bicycle to ball games. Working-class sports

fans are familiar with this type of whining from overpaid stars. Why shouldn't athletes have jobs and ride bikes?

David Salner
Frederick, Maryland

Airport workers speak out

The Los Angeles Militant Labor Forum recently hosted a panel of airport workers involved in organizing efforts.

José Moráles, an activist in Service Employees International Union, explained that 600 of the 800 workers at Argenbright Inc., (baggage handlers, security and wheel chair attendants) had signed union cards to bring in the SEIU but the company was firing and intimidating them. Conditions of workers at the airport are very bad — some make only \$5.75 per hour while the airlines are making billions. Moráles reviewed the protests at LAX to win a union and the readiness of Argenbright workers to strike if necessary.

Arnold Iniguez is a ramp worker at Continental and actively participating in the efforts to bring in the International Association of Machinists. He told the audience that

5,000 of the 8,000 eligible workers have signed cards for the IAM, but the National Mediation Board just ruled in favor of the company to include office workers in those eligible to vote. The IAM did not campaign among these workers, but "I am confident that we have the support to win."

César Guerrero, a Hudson General worker, and Laura Anderson, who works at United, both IAM members, reported on their trip to London to support the striking Skycheffs workers. Guerrero said, "We collected notes of solidarity from Skycheffs and United workers in L.A. to bring to London. The trip opened my eyes to how workers can confront obstacles between the company and union. I met many confident women workers and immigrants — we need this same confidence."

Mark Friedman
Los Angeles, California

Keep subscription coming

Thanks for the renewal reminder letter I received today. We just renewed the subscription.

I want to take this occasion to highly praise the *Militant* for the

central role it has played in politically clarifying the issues around the current murderous NATO war against Yugoslavia. Of special merit and usefulness are the facts presented by the reporting team.

I have closely followed U.S. television reports, including the occasional presentations through C-SPAN of official Yugoslav television. The contrast between the *Militant's* coverage and that of the so-called free press in the U.S. is stunning!

Also, there is just no substitute for the views and opinions of Yugoslav working people which come out of the last issues. It is inspiring to know about the resistance by working people, students, and others to the nationalists.

Please keep the subscription coming.

J.K.
Seattle, Washington

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

UN plans intervention force on eve of East Timor independence vote

Indonesia government backs death squads opposed to self-determination

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY AND BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia — A United Nations intervention force in East Timor, announced as comprising 600 civilians and up to 300 police, is being put together by the Australian government and other imperialist powers to monitor a “popular consultation” on autonomy there August 8. As this unfolds, the Indonesian authorities in East Timor have unleashed rightist militias in a bloody counteroffensive against the independence struggle.

Since the resignation of General Suharto as Indonesian president in May 1998, thousands of East Timorese students, workers, and farmers have seized new political space to fight against the Indonesian occupation of their country. One of the largest mobilizations took place February 16 when 50,000 people participated in a funeral procession protesting the murder of an East Timorese youth by the Indonesian police.

The Indonesian regime invaded East Timor in 1975, after Portugal's brutal 450-year colonial rule there collapsed, to block the emergence of an independent country. Indonesia's rulers and their imperialist backers, particularly in Washington and Canberra, feared that an independent East Timor would inspire national struggles throughout Southeast Asia.

Since the fall of Suharto, as a deepening social and economic crisis sweeps Indonesia, Australia's capitalist rulers and other imperialist powers have concluded that the impact of the unbroken East Timorese national struggle can only be contained through conceding a vote on autonomy or independence.

A UN-sponsored agreement was signed in New York May 5 between the governments of Indonesia and Portugal, which has never formally ended its claims to colonial rule of the territory. It allows for the United Nations to prepare for an independent East Timor if this wins a majority in the August 8 ballot. It stipulates, however, that the Indonesian military and police remain responsible for security.

Pro-Indonesian death squads

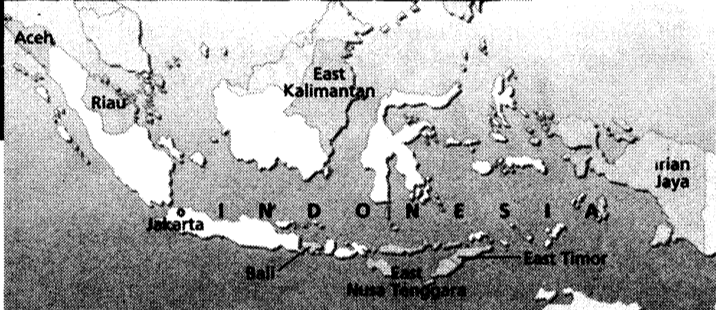
Tensions have mounted in East Timor since Indonesian president B.J. Habibie unexpectedly announced January 27 that the East Timorese could have independence if they rejected a proposal for limited autonomy. Over April 5-6 as many as 62 people were murdered by the pro-Indonesian death squads, with the open backing of ABRI, the Indonesian military that maintains up to 20,000 troops in East Timor. The massacre took place inside the Catholic church grounds in Liquica, 25 miles west of the capital, Dili.

On April 17 the pro-Indonesian death squads killed scores of people in Dili. Some 1,500 armed paramilitary thugs crisscrossed the deserted city streets in trucks throughout the afternoon, targeting houses of known independence activists, trashing a newspaper office, and the office of a human rights group, burning some buildings and beating up their occupants. In the Dili district of Becora, proindependence fighters set up barricades to guard against the rightists.

The pro-Indonesian militias, led by a narrow layer who have benefited from the Indonesian occupation, have continued to escalate their reign of terror, holding a series of rallies in favor of integration with Indonesia. Although the Indonesian authorities have blocked reporters and aid workers from traveling outside of Dili, there are widespread reports of villagers being attacked by the rightist militias. Australian Channel 9 news crews were able to film what they reported May 9 as up to 10,000 people herded into a concentration camp at Liquica run by



Above, students from Irian Jaya — also known as West Papua — outside UN building in Jakarta, Indonesia, calling for independence. Rulers fear independence for East Timor will spur other struggles for self-determination.



the militias and the Indonesian police. When Indonesian troops first went into East Timor in 1975, the initial pretext was to “restore order” after clashes between independence fighters and annexationist pro-Jakarta groupings.

Actions demand independence

Proindependence students and youth in Dili have shown their continued willingness to carry out public protests, despite the repression. A rally of 1,000 took place at the University of East Timor in Dili May 7 — the largest of four successive days of actions. And on May 9 hundreds of proindependence youth built barricades and faced off the militias after a student, Eugeneo Antonio Fatima, was murdered in Dili's Mercado Lama market.

Earlier, as news of the Liquica massacre broke, Xanana Gusmao, leader of the proindependence coalition, the National Council for Timorese Resistance (CNRT), issued an April 5 statement from house arrest in Jakarta. “I now wish to inform the international community that the situation has reached an intolerable limit in East Timor,” he declared. “Therefore, I am compelled to authorize the Falintil guerrillas to undertake all necessary action in defense of the population of East Timor against the unprovoked and murderous attacks of armed civilian groups and ABRI.”

Falintil has been waging an armed struggle against the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. The April 12 *Jakarta Post* reported that “hundreds of prointegration supporters in East Timor on Sunday [April 11] were attacked by CNRT rebels as they were on their way to attend a mass gathering,” 125 miles south of Dili. In subsequent days the *Jakarta Post* reported several skirmishes between Falintil and the Indonesian police and military, including an attack on the jail in Bacau, 70 miles east of Dili.

In April hundreds of East Timorese students in the Central Java capital of Semarang began leaving for East Timor in order to be able to participate in the UN-sponsored direct ballot on autonomy. About 150 East Timorese students on the Yogyakarta campus of Gadjah Mada University rallied April

12 in support of the call by Xanana Gusmao for proindependence groups to defend themselves against armed rightist militias.

A CNRT press release issued on April 6 stated, “Gusmao called for the immediate deployment of a UN peace mission in the territory as proof of the international community's commitment to contribute to and implement a peaceful solution in East Timor.”

Imperialist goal: maintain domination

While giving lip service, today, to the right of the East Timorese to self-determination, the goals of the imperialist powers are to maintain as stable a government as possible in Jakarta in order to protect the billions they have invested in Indonesia, and to maintain repayments on Jakarta's increasing foreign debt. These were also their goals in backing both the bloody 1965 coup that brought Suharto to power, and Indonesia's 1975 invasion of East Timor.

The U.S. State Department described Gusmao's call for the East Timorese to defend themselves from the pro-Indonesian militias a “dangerous and troubling development” — views that were echoed by a spokesperson from Japanese prime minister Keizo Obuchi's office. Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer, in his initial response to reports of the Liquica massacre, blamed the violence on both independence fighters and the ABRI-backed death squads, stating that “neither side are saints.”

Both the Australian Labor Party, currently in opposition, and the Liberal-National Coalition government support the use of Australian troops as a key part of UN intervention. The Labor Party is campaigning for rapid deployment while the Australian government's stance is that without the agreement of the Indonesian government UN “peacekeepers” can only be sent in if the East Timorese reject autonomy in favor of independence.

In the meantime, the Australian military is preparing a rapid deployment force to be based in Darwin, Australia, 300 miles from East Timor. A high-speed catamaran capable of carrying 500 troops to Dili in less than a day has been commissioned.

The deepening crisis in East Timor and across Indonesia itself is the biggest foreign policy crisis facing Australia's capitalist rulers. They built up close military ties with the 30-year Suharto dictatorship and have extensive economic interests in Indonesia, especially in mining. Development of oil and gas fields in the Timor Sea, the first of which came into production at the end of 1998, was one of the main reasons for Canberra's 1979 recognition of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor.

Big sections of Indonesia's rulers continue to fear that granting East Timor its independence will fuel the disintegration of Indonesia as struggles by other oppressed nationalities in Aceh, Kalimantan, and West Papua (Irian Jaya) intensify.

Many bourgeois opposition leaders oppose independence for East Timor, including Megawati Sukarnoputri, one of the frontrunners in the presidential elections that

follow the parliamentary elections of June 7. Military officers who have economic stakes in maintaining East Timor as part of Indonesia are also opposed. Habibie's stance. Many commentators are pointing to divisions in Habibie's cabinet on the question.

The Australian rulers face a stark dilemma in trying to defuse the East Timorese national struggle

while retaining their good relations with the Indonesian government. Duncan Campbell, a former Australian diplomat, commented in the April 29 *Australian*, “East Timorese independence would come as a sustainable jolt, but sustained insurrection could be the undoing of eastern Indonesia, the creation of enormous new responsibilities for Australia, and the onset of persistent tensions with a humiliated and resentful Jakarta.”

Concerned over the instability that the renewed repression in East Timor might set in motion, Australian prime minister John Howard called an emergency summit with Habibie in Bali April 27. Faced with Jakarta's adamant that its forces must remain in control in East Timor up to and during the ballot, Howard expressed confidence that the Indonesian army would keep the militias in check.

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Two programmatic documents of the Socialist Workers Party:

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War by Jack Barnes and The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today by Mary-Alice Waters * Socialism: A Viable Option by José Ramón Balaguer * Young Socialists Manifesto \$14.00



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