

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

2 class views: Did U.S. win Cold War? Are workers doing OK?

PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO. 20 MAY 22, 2000

Farmers rally for justice in Washington

BY RICARDO ZUNIGA

WASHINGTON—"Today we made a small crack in the concrete. I won't stop there. I plan to follow it until there's a change," said Alvin Jarid, a Black farmer from North Carolina.

Jarid was one of 250 farmers and supporters who took part in a May 8 protest here by working farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Farmers from Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Jersey, and other states participated in the rally and demonstration, initiated by the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA). Participants included members of BFAA, the Family Farm Coalition, Food First, and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, among others.

Farmers who are Black have been protesting the aftermath of the government settlement of the *Pigford vs. Glickman* case. In 1997 more than 1,000 Black farmers initiated the class-action lawsuit, asking for \$3 billion in compensation for discriminatory practices by the USDA between 1983 and 1997.

They reached an out-of-court settlement in April 1999 that includes forgiveness of the plaintiffs' debts to the government, a one-time tax-free payment of \$50,000, and the option to forfeit the agreement and instead pursue an individual case before an arbitrator.

Some 18,000 farmers filed claims under the consent decree. The USDA has denied
Continued on Page 14

Norway: 86,000 workers settle strike

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON AND CATHARINA TIRSEN

OSLO, Norway—A one-week strike by 86,000 workers swept this country, with central demands by union members for higher wages and more vacation days winning broad support.

Workers returned to work May 9 following an agreement between the employers association NHO, and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO). The new contract, involving 17 unions, covers 300,000 workers employed by private companies, including basic industries in the country.

The workers had voted down the original contract by a 64 percent margin, setting off the strike May 3.

"I voted no because I am tired of hearing that the workers always should sacrifice and save money for the companies—even on work gloves," stated Roger Haugrud, who works as a repairman at the auto parts factory in Raufoss, 90 miles north of Oslo.

The increase of 0.75 Norwegian krone (1 krone= 11 U.S. cents) offered by the compa-
Continued on Page 12

Protesters demand: Navy out of Vieques

U.S. bombing resumes on Puerto Rican land

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

U.S. Navy warplanes resumed bombing practice on Vieques May 8, in a demonstrative show of force to try to intimidate those who have been fighting to get the U.S. military out of that Puerto Rican island. This action followed the U.S. government raid of Vieques four days earlier by 300 U.S. Marshals and FBI agents, backed up by 1,200 Marines, who detained and evicted more than 200 protesters encamped on Puerto Rican land used by the U.S. Navy as a bombing range.

The raid and the renewed war training, however, sparked a wave of protest actions throughout Puerto Rico and demonstrations in numerous U.S. cities, from New York to Los Angeles to Miami.

Fishermen in Vieques have denounced U.S. authorities for imposing a three-and-a-half-mile maritime restriction zone around the eastern coast. The Coast Guard is now seizing any ship that enters the zone. They have already detained dozens of fishing boats and are barring many fishermen from reaching their fishing traps.

Ismael Guadalupe, spokesperson for the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, reported that fishermen from the northern and southern coasts of Vieques met to plan a protest against this move that de-

Continued on Page 2



Militant/Brian Taylor

Protesters in New York on May 5 chanted, "The Navy must leave—with its bombs and machine guns!" Thousands demonstrated across Puerto Rico and in many U.S. cities.

Miners to rally May 17 for health fund

BY JAMES VINCENT

BENTLEYVILLE, Pennsylvania—The attack on lifetime health benefits for coal miners is not something off in the future. It is happening now.

Some hospitals, mostly in rural areas, are

sending bills directly to miners, using collection agencies, and taking miners to court. This comes on top of lawsuits—60 to date, and the list is growing—the coal bosses have filed against paying lifetime benefits.

The coal bosses scored another victory

recently when a federal district court in Pennsylvania ruled that the Berwind Corporation of Philadelphia is not responsible for paying retiree benefits. Prior to the decision, Berwind was obligated to pay \$295,000 in monthly premiums for more than 1,200 United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) retirees. Following the court ruling the company is only responsible for coverage of five workers.

These are examples of why the coal miners union is mobilizing thousands of miners and their supporters for a rally in Washington, D.C., May 17. The action will demand the U.S. government back up what tens of thousands of miners see as a commitment made by Washington to provide lifetime health care for UMWA retirees.

The union is holding events in coal mining regions to build the rally, and signing up busloads of miners determined to push back this assault on their rights. For many, the May 17 rally will not be the first time they have marched in defense of their rights and union in the nation's capital.

Miners believe that lifetime health care is a social right—a right that is a matter of human pride and dignity, and which directly affects all coal miner families and the larger coal mining community.

"Without this fund, I'm in the poorhouse," said UMWA retiree Robert Fabery at last year's "Save the Coal Act" meeting in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. The September meeting was attended by 2,000 miners.

The coal miners are fighting for passage of the Coal Accountability and Retired Employee Act for the 21st century, or CARE
Continued on Page 14

FROM PATHFINDER

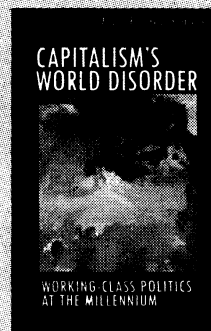
Capitalism's World Disorder

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM

Jack Barnes

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are the inevitable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action, and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish.

Special offer \$20 Regular price: \$23.95



Changing Face of U.S. Politics

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Jack Barnes

A handbook for the new generation coming into the factories, mines, and mills as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality of capitalism today. It shows how millions of working people, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions and other organizations, and all of society. Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

Protesters demand, 'Navy out of Vieques' as bombing resumes

Continued from front page

nies them their livelihood. They announced that if the Coast Guard does not lift this blockade, they will defy it with their vessels, taking public figures aboard as witnesses.

In another assertion of colonial power, the commander of the Roosevelt Roads U.S. naval base, Capt. James Stark, pressured U.S. authorities to suspend the license of a pilot for a small Puerto Rican commuter airline, supposedly for flying over the Navy's restricted zone. Rolando de Jesús, a pilot for Vieques Air Link, was on a routine flight to St. Croix, Virgin Islands, another U.S. colony. The owner of the air fleet complained that the Navy restriction would force the commuter planes to go 10 miles out of their way.

Protesters also reacted angrily to the two A-4 Skyhawk warplanes that each dropped six "nonexplosive" bombs on the eastern part of the island, which has been devastated by its use for target practice by the U.S. military. They reported that there were still several demonstrators on the range. Several of the protesters who remained after the mass evictions have been removed, but a few have eluded U.S. authorities so far.

'Navy imposed state of siege on us'

"The Navy is treating us as if we were a foreign army," said Guadalupe, "as if we were Serbs in Kosovo. They've imposed a state of siege on us and now they announce, as if it were nothing, that they are going to start bombing in areas where they know there are men and women. Their response to our demand for peace has been to come with more war."

The Clinton administration has insistently defended its crackdown on Vieques. U.S. attorney general Janet Reno—who also supervised the commando-style immigration cop raid on a home in Miami just days before the assault on the Puerto Rican island—portrayed it as a "peaceful" operation. Some of those evicted, however, reported that once the media was forced to turn off the TV cam-

eras, the FBI and U.S. marshals treated them with their typical roughness.

As the May 4 raid began, U.S. president William Clinton signed an executive order that sharply raises the penalty for trespass on U.S. military land—from a misdemeanor, which carries a six-month jail sentence, to a felony, which brings a 10-year jail term and a \$250,000 fine. The White House justified this move under a U.S. law that authorizes the president to issue such an order in wartime or during periods of national emergency.

Undeterred, a number of protesters have vowed to return.

Thousands protest in Puerto Rico

Meanwhile, thousands of people have engaged in demonstrations, picket lines, speakouts, and other protests around Puerto Rico. Within hours of the mass evictions in Vieques, hundreds of people gathered to demonstrate in San Juan outside Fort Buchanan, the new headquarters for the U.S. Army's Southern Command, reported *Militant* correspondent Ron Richards. The crowd rapidly grew as caravans of students from the University of Puerto Rico and Sacred Heart University joined, and swelled further at noontime when groups of telephone workers joined on their lunch hour.

At the same time, several hundred people in Vieques marched to where the Puerto Rican police have blocked access to the road in front of the U.S. Navy's Camp García. The police set up the barricade after U.S. cops removed demonstrators at the Peace and Justice Camp at the gates of the U.S. base.

Students shut down their university campuses that day in San Juan, Bayamón, Mayagüez, Ponce, and other cities. Demonstrations were held in front of several U.S. military facilities around the island.

Nearly 5,000 members of the electrical workers union, UTIER, held a four-hour strike to protest the U.S. government's crackdown on Vieques. In response, colonial governor Pedro Rosselló deployed the National Guard to "protect" electrical and



Militant/Nancy Cole

Some 200 demonstrators outside Navy Recruiting Center in downtown Philadelphia on May 5 demand the withdrawal of the U.S. Navy from Vieques, Puerto Rico.

water facilities, an action that was denounced by UTIER president José Valentín. Many UTIER members also joined a large demonstration in front of the Federal Building in Old San Juan.

In the United States, some 500 demonstrated in New York City; 200 in Philadelphia; 150 in Boston; 300 in Washington, D.C.; 125 in Orlando, Florida; and 100 in Jersey City, New Jersey. Protests were also held in Chicago; Los Angeles; Tucson, Arizona; Miami; Newark, New Jersey; and Hanover, New Hampshire. A protest also occurred at the U.S. consulate in Vancouver, British Columbia.

U.S. demonstrations

In New York, hundreds gathered at Times Square and marched to the United Nations. It was a mixed crowd of youth and workers of all ages. They chanted rhythmically, "Que se vaya la Marina con sus bombas y metralas" (The Navy must leave with its bombs and machine guns).

"I'm Puerto Rican and I feel these Americans are abusing my country," said John Cintrón, a student at Chelsea High School who took part in the march. "They arrested protesters in Vieques in 1979 and they served time, and now they're doing it again."

In Washington, D.C., demonstrators heard a message from Vieques fishermen's leader Carlos Zenón. Robert Rabin, a leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, addressed the protesters through a cellular phone hook-up. "A new stage is beginning in the struggle to remove the Navy from Vieques. The people have shown that our struggle is dignified and peaceful." He urged more public protests in the United States.

Demonstrators chanted "U.S. out of Vieques!" and "Rosselló, traitor, Vieques is not for sale." The chant referred to a deal struck between Rosselló and Clinton in January agreeing to a resumption of U.S. bombing practice in Vieques and a referendum in which Vieques residents would vote on whether the U.S. Navy would stay or leave the island by 2003. The deal includes

the promise of \$40 million to the islanders, an offer some Puerto Ricans have rejected as an effort to buy them off. Many of the protests throughout the United States were organized by new groups that have emerged in the course of last year's struggle to get the U.S. military out of Vieques and the fight to release Puerto Rican pro-independence political prisoners.

Ron Richards in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Elena Tate, a member of the Young Socialists in New York; Rachele Fruit in Miami; Mark Friedman in Los Angeles; Andy Buchanan in Newark, New Jersey; and Willie Cotton, a Young Socialists member in Tucson, Arizona, contributed to this article.

From Pathfinder

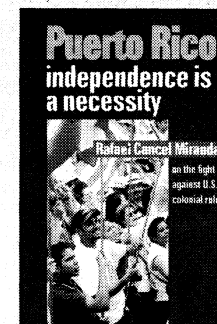
Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda

In two interviews, Cancel Miranda

— one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979 — speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the campaign needed to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners, the example of Cuba's socialist revolution, and the resurgence of the independence movement today. In English and Spanish. Booklet \$3

See page 12 for list of distributors



THE MILITANT

Support farmers' fight

From Brazil to Zimbabwe to Washington, working farmers are fighting to gain land and secure a living from it. To confront their wealthy exploiters they need to make common cause with wage workers in town and country. The 'Militant' champions and tells the truth about the struggles by farmers. Don't miss a single issue!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A15 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • Belgium, 500 BF • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,700 New Zealand, NZ\$15 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 64/No.20

Closing news date: May 11, 2000

Editor: MARTÍN KOPPEL

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

Editorial Staff: Hilda Cuzco, Greg McCartan, Brian Williams, and Maurice Williams.

Young Socialists column editor:

ELENA TATE

Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from July to August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

E-mail: TheMilitant@compuserve.com

The Militant website is: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80.

Asia: send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 4581 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2L4.

Britain, Ireland: £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. **Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East:** £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address.

France: Send FF420 for one-year subscription to Militant, Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U. **Belgium:** BF 2,400 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp.

Iceland: Send 5,800 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. **Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:** 550 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9.

New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Nova Scotia miners demand relief for mine closures

BY CHRIS REMPLE

SYDNEY, Nova Scotia—A federal mediator called off talks between the United Mine Workers and the Cape Breton Development Corp. (Devco) April 6, when the company refused to budge on issues of pensions and job guarantees. Devco is privatizing the last coal mine in nearby Cape Breton, and miners expect it to close.

The miners are demanding the government and Devco, the government corporation that has run the coal mines for the past few decades, provide an early retirement for miners with more than 20 years in the mines regardless of age and a guaranteed job for those with less than 20 years. The company originally refused to even discuss this with the miners. In December, miners occupied Devco headquarters and in January they walked out of the Prince mine, the last remaining mine in the area.

The three main pillars of the Cape Breton economy have been Sydney Steel, a mill that employed 3,000 at its height, the coal mines, and the cod fisheries. The steel mill is closing this month, the government plans to privatize the last mine by the end of the year, and the cod fisheries have been devastated by years of overfishing.

Over the past several weeks, students, parents, and teachers throughout the province held protests and marches against a provincial government move to enact a budget that would result in the loss of some 800 teaching jobs and many more nonteaching jobs in Nova Scotia schools. In addition to the jobs lost, the cuts would force schools to drop many programs and move to larger class sizes. Funding for health care and assistance to farmers was also slashed.

In December, miners from the union locals at the Prince mine, the wash plant, the coal piers, and the central stores occupied the Devco headquarters to draw attention to their fight. They followed this with a strike on the first day of work in January 2000. After seven days on strike, seven miners walked into the mine and occupied it. Their

action, including launching a hunger strike from within the mine, caught broad attention and won quick concessions from the Devco bosses.

The occupation and the presence of 500 miners on the surface, ready to defend their picket against 150 Royal Canadian Mounted Police, brought the strike to a swift victory. The government agreed to a joint planning committee with the authority to negotiate early retirement and job issues. As Terry Binder, 45, a 23-year veteran of the mines, explained, "We're not just stupid coal miners like they thought. When it came to it we shut it down. We wouldn't even have the talks now if we hadn't occupied the pit."

Fred Currie, 44, with 21 years in the mine, added, "Even the Mounties told Devco they weren't going in the mine to get the guys in there." Greg Tanner, a 47-year-old chain runner with 21 years service, pointed out, "They would never have found us." Binder, Currie, and Tanner were three of the seven who occupied the mine. In their first interview with the press since the occupation, the mine workers union members explained their fight and the impact it has had on other struggles in the area.

With the end of mediation, the issue of early retirement or jobs is in the hands of an arbitrator. But the miners are discussing what to do if the arbitrator's ruling goes against them. Binder said, "A lot of guys are disgruntled. They're saying we should have stayed."

'Pay for own unemployment'

The government and Devco have offered a severance package that can total as much as \$70,000 (US\$49,000). Binder explained, "You only get \$32,000 after taxes. And you lose your unemployment. They said we could buy medical coverage until 65 for \$10,000. But last week they told one guy it would cost him \$42,000 for medical. He'll end up owing \$10,000 after his severance."

"We would have to live off this money," Currie said. "The severance package is noth-

Auto workers in Canada maintain strike



Militant/Rosemary Ray

Around 200 members of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) who work at Toromont-Cat in Toronto are into the fourth week of their strike. Picket lines were beefed up in first week of May after company placed ads for heavy equipment mechanics. The plant sells and services Caterpillar earthmoving equipment.

The CAW members voted 95 percent against a contract offer that would reduce the warehouse workers' wages by 20 percent while increasing the mechanics' wages by 6 percent over three years. Warehouse workers would also have lost their cost-of-living adjustment. A welder who has worked at the plant for 11 years commented, "None of the skilled workers are falling for this divide-and-rule tactic. It's the warehouse workers they're after today, but down the road they'll come after the mechanics."

ing. You're paying for your own unemployment," Sullivan added.

The miners pointed out that the so-called early pension is not a pension for life. The Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) gives qualified miners \$22,900 (US\$15,400) a year until they reach 65, when their mine pension drops to \$405 (US\$283) a month.

To date, the union presidents from a coalition of the affected unions—the UMW, Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the International Association of Machinists (IAM)—have agreed to exclude miners with under 20 years service from inclusion in the

ERIP but to fight for jobs for them. The CAW, CUPE, and the IAM represent a small number of workers involved in transport, safety, and maintenance at the mine. Binder said in an interview, "Originally the package was for all in Devco to be dealt with on the pension. Now it's 20 years and up."

According to Stephen Drake, president of UMW District 26, the plan put forward by the unions includes \$170 million for about a 10-year project for miners under 50 with less than 20 years service to reclaim the land. "Devco is federally responsible for that," he said. "Eight thousand acres need remediation."

The miners who occupied the mine are proud of their action and how they carried it out. Currie explained, "We were in the pit a day before they knew we were there. We left two people behind to spread the word." Binder added, "Everything we did was voted on by all seven. We talked everything out and if there were differences we talked it out until we had agreement."

Miners responded with solidarity when teachers struck the University College of Cape Breton in March, Drake said, helping to get burn barrels set up and the fires going. "We notified our people of a demonstration of the university professors. We met with the student union president. We told him, if you want to help, take sides. Otherwise you will be ineffective. And we think you guys should side with the union," Drake said.

"They decided to do something that would get attention, which was to go in the administration office and lock the door. The next day we got a call from the student union adviser. He wanted us to help them out. We talked about occupying the office. And they shut down the administration. This was a direct result of the miners walkout."

'To be continued'

"We were told not to talk to the media when we came up [from the occupation]," Binder said. "So we made an agreement. We came to the conclusion not to talk. We decided later we would talk to someone. This is the first time."

Ending the interview, Jim Sullivan said, "Keep your bags packed." Fred Currie added, "Put 'To be continued' on the bottom of your article."

Chris Remple is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in western Pennsylvania. Frank Pickup of Dominion, Nova Scotia, and Nathan Cecckin of Toronto contributed to this article.

Debate heats up over Confederate battle flag

BY LAUREN HART

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—The South Carolina House of Representatives began debate May 9 on a proposal to stop flying the Confederate battle flag over the capitol dome. Right-wing politicians in the legislature had been trying to stall the measure. The flag was hoisted over the capitol in 1962 in defiance of the civil rights movement.

The proposal, approved by the state Senate April 13, would remove the banner of the slaveowners rebellion from its current spot, but place a similar flag at the Confederate Soldiers Monument on the statehouse

grounds, at a highly visible corner in downtown Columbia, South Carolina. Confederate battle flags that now hang in the House and Senate chambers would also come down. Governor James Hodges supports the legislation.

Many opponents of the flag, including most members of the South Carolina House of Representatives who are Black, say the measure doesn't go far enough because it will leave the racist symbol flying in a prominent location. The NAACP, which launched a tourism boycott of the state at the start of the year to demand the Confederate flag come down, says the proposed

move is not acceptable.

The protest campaign initiated by the NAACP has struck a deep chord among working people, especially those who are Black, in South Carolina and throughout the region. Some 50,000 people rallied in Columbia on Martin Luther King Day in January to demand that the flag come down and the state government recognize the civil rights leader's birthday as a holiday. That action and growing public pressure have convinced many within the ruling class in South Carolina that the flag should be moved.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) announced April 28 it will cancel South Carolina sporting events if the flag does not come down by August 11. Earlier in the month tennis player Serena Williams withdrew from a South Carolina tournament in honor of the protest.

Meanwhile, debate on the use of the Confederate flag is erupting in other states. In Virginia, NAACP leaders are demanding a meeting with Gov. Jim Gilmore to protest a Confederate Heritage Month proclamation he made earlier in April. They have threatened a possible boycott of the state over the issue.

In Mississippi, where the state flag includes the Confederate flag, the state Supreme Court had ruled against a case brought by the NAACP to remove the racist symbol, saying the flag violated no provisions of the Constitution. But later it ruled, based on a legal technicality, that Mississippi has not officially had a flag since 1906. Some legislators, a number of them Black, are now pushing for a redesign of the flag.

Governor Ronald Musgrove set up an advisory commission May 5 to come up with a new flag proposal by May 4, 2001. He also issued an executive order to continue using the current flag through the next year.

are provided no health insurance programs.

Ishihara's comments were calculated to evoke recollections of the devastating 1923 Tokyo earthquake, after which chauvinist forces spread rumors that Korean immigrants had poisoned their wells. This led to a massacre of 6,000 Koreans.

In March the Japanese government stated publicly that it would end discriminatory treatment of immigrants who refused to be fingerprinted for residency registration. The refusal to be fingerprinted forced them to stay in the country without legal status.

Tokyo introduced compulsory fingerprinting for immigrants in 1955. The new policy was adopted to comply with a resolution passed by Japan's parliament in May 1999. The move coincided with a report released by the Justice Ministry stating that the country's labor shortage required the government to implement measures allowing more immigrants to work in Japan. A recent UN report said Japan would need 609,000 immigrants over the next 50 years to maintain the country's workforce at its 1995 level.

Immigrant workers march in Tokyo

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Two hundred immigrant workers organized a May Day demonstration in Japan. They chanted, "We're not criminals!" and "Stop discrimination!" as they marched through downtown Tokyo.

It was one of the first public actions in defense of the rights of undocumented immigrants in Japan, a small but growing component of the working class in that country. The marchers protested the discrimination faced by noncitizens and smears against immigrants by Tokyo governor Shintaro Ishihara. The action was called by the Asian People's Friendship Society.

"Sangokujin and foreigners are repeating atrocious crimes," Ishihara declared at an event in April celebrating the 50th anniversary of Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force. "In the event of a major disaster it is possible that there may even be an uprising" by them.

Sangokujin is a pejorative term used against Korean and Chinese immigrants. These workers face systematic discrimination. They are unprotected by labor laws and

Youth in Sweden protest cop assault, arrests

The Young Socialists is an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the Young Socialists write to P.O. Box 33 Times Square Post Office, New York, NY 10108, or call (646) 263-8974, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY CLAUDIO BURGOS
AND BJÖRN TIRSEN

NORRKÖPING, Sweden—Some 150 people marched here April 22 in solidarity with 27 young people being held in custody by the police.

The youth were arrested March 18 after a brutal cop assault on a house they were occupying in Linköping. The young people had intended to occupy the abandoned building for 48 hours to press their demand for a public youth center. But eight hours after the occupation began, cops attacked the youth at 3:00 a.m. without any warning, according to participants.

The march went through the central parts of town and stopped at the police station, where the young people are still being held more than a month after the incident. At the station there was a speak-out that condemned the treatment of the young people by the cops. A choir sang and music was played, in order to raise the prisoners' morale. Youth came from Malmö, Jönköping, Linköping, Västerås, and Stockholm.

The Sweden Young Socialists also had a book table, which attracted a lot of interest. Three subscriptions to the *Militant* and six books and pamphlets were sold.

The police had a heavy presence and filmed the participants.

One of those in the protest had also taken part in the house occupation. She preferred not to give her name but told a story of the cop violence at the scene.

"When the police arrived, the occupiers went down from the roof of the building. Cops with dogs advanced at the same time as all the camera lights were switched off. The occupiers obeyed the cops' order to lie down on the ground. They shouted at them and kicked them," she said.

According to the youth activist, cops grabbed her arms and held her in such a way that she had difficulty breathing. A police

dog was allowed to attack, biting her in the ear. She further said that she wasn't taken to the hospital until after interrogation at the police station. Once there she was forced to undress in front of three male cops.

As the cops were arresting the youth, one remarked: "Times are different now, there is zero tolerance." The police have tried to establish the right to mass-arrest protesters for many years in Sweden.

Three of the original 30 arrested were released, two of them are minors and one is said to have confessed. The police attack was followed by a large campaign against left-wing activists. The media has reported that the occupants had "a large arsenal of weapons." The march was the first attempt to protest cop violence and to counter the pro-cop campaign in the bourgeois press.

Arizona YS: U.S. Navy stop bombing Vieques!

BY WILLIE COTTON

TUCSON, Arizona—The Young Socialists here assisted in organizing a May 1 rally to support the struggle to oust the U.S. Navy from Puerto Rico. Forty people joined a protest in response to the announcement that the U.S. government was sending in federal troops to remove the protesters from the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico. The demonstration occurred outside the federal building here. Protesters held signs with slogans such as "Independence for Puerto Rico" and "Not One More Bomb on Vieques!"

Alana Soler, a public administration student at the University of Arizona who is from San Juan, Puerto Rico, came after a day of classes to protest what the U.S. government is doing to the Puerto Rican people.



Militant/Betsy McDonald

May 1 rally in Tucson, Arizona, calls for withdrawal of U.S. Navy from Vieques, Puerto Rico. Signs read: "Free Puerto Rico" and "Vieques, I am with you."

"We can die for the U.S. but we don't matter," Soler explained. In her talk she advocated independence for the U.S. colony.

This action, which was organized in 48 hours, is the latest in a series of rapid response demonstrations in the Tucson area. On less than a week's notice, many here showed up to support the struggle against deportations and to open the U.S. borders. On April 26, a press conference was called by Derechos Humanos, an immigrant rights coalition, to demand government action against the vigilante-organizing campaign taking place in Douglas, Arizona, a U.S.-Mexico border town.

Under the guise of "Neighborhood Ranch Watch," Roger Barnett and other ranchers in the area have mailed a brochure across the country, inviting people to come to an already-hostile and increasingly militarized zone.

Their stated purpose is to "help keep trespassers from destroying private property" and to report "trespassing illegal aliens." They also demagogically urge others to become "part of the American Way team."

Participants protested this outright invitation to form hunting posses against workers and their families coming across the border in search of jobs.

'Militant' announces new editor, changes in staff

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The *Militant* has announced some staff changes to help take advantage of political opportunities today and strengthen the communist movement.

Editor Greg McCartan is taking on a new responsibility as organizer of the Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign Committee. The new editor is Martín Koppel. And Brian Taylor, on the *Militant* staff for the past four years, is heading to Alabama to help build the communist movement in that area.

McCartan, 42, who has been editor since January, will continue to serve on the *Militant* staff. The *Militant* will be the weekly voice of the soon-to-be-launched Socialist Workers presidential campaign, which will present a working-class alternative to the employers parties—Democrats, Republicans, Reform, and others. McCartan will coordinate the *Militant's* coverage of the socialist campaign and contribute to its coverage of the big political questions facing working people that the Socialist Workers

candidates and supporters will be explaining every week.

Koppel, 43, has been a staff writer for the *Militant* since 1991. In addition to writing on class-struggle developments in this country, he has been a *Militant* correspondent several times in Cuba as well as in Puerto Rico, Brazil, and Argentina. Before joining the staff, he worked in Chicago at a steel tube mill and other factories organized by the United Steelworkers of America.

Koppel continues as the editor of the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, a responsibility he has had since 1993, having also served in that capacity from 1984 to 1987.

Most of the articles in *Perspectiva Mundial* every month are translations of *Militant* articles. *Perspectiva Mundial* will draw increasingly on volunteers in New York and around the country to help write, edit, and lay out articles for the magazine, whose principal audience is the growing Spanish-speaking component of the working class in the United States.

Taylor, 26, is on his way to Birmingham to help build the communist movement there. He will join with other working-class fighters and youth to be part of the developing resistance by working people in the cities and rural areas of that region, and to help strengthen the presence of communist workers in factories and coal mines there.

Taylor has served on the staff since April 1996. He took part in and reported on December protests held in Washington, D.C., by farmers who are Black. He has covered a range of other political topics, including as a *Militant* correspondent in Puerto Rico, Canada, and Cuba—most recently as a participant in the 12th Congress of Latin American and Caribbean Students in Havana.

Like McCartan and Koppel, Taylor is a member of the SWP National Committee.

Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign \$80,000 Fund

City	Goal	Paid	%
Charlotte *	1,850	935	51%
Philadelphia	3,000	1,450	48%
Twin Cities	5,000	1,935	39%
Atlanta	3,100	1000	32%
Washington	3,300	950	29%
Seattle	6,000	1,125	19%
Des Moines	1,200	174	15%
Boston	3,750	525	14%
Detroit	3,000	300	10%
Birmingham	3,500	350	10%
Houston	5,000	490	10%
Chicago	7,000	670	10%
Cleveland	2,250	68	3%
Newark	4,000	100	3%
Upper Manhattan	2,000	10	1%
Fresno	300		0%
Brooklyn	2,800		0%
Camp Girardeau	565		0%
Chippewa Falls	500		0%
Fort Collins	250		0%
St. Louis	1,300		0%
Los Angeles	6,000		0%
Miami	2,500		0%
N.Y. Garment Dist.	4,000		0%
Pittsburgh	3,000		0%
San Francisco	3,500		0%
Allentown	1,000		0%
Other		250	
Total	79,665	9,397	12%
Goal	80,000		

North Carolina campaigners raise funds for socialist alternative

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—In North Carolina, supporters of the Socialist Workers national election campaign recently held a meeting in Charlotte to hear a report on plans to use the campaign to join in the working-class resistance and gain a wider hearing for the socialist alternative.

Part of this discussion was on raising funds for the \$80,000 Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign Fund. That evening socialist campaigners collected \$935 and raised pledges from \$1,200 to \$1,850. This puts North Carolina supporters at the top of the chart.

Lauren Hart reports in a note that the Charlotte meeting "generated ideas on a few other people to ask for contributions as well. This followed a discussion on how socialist workers are campaigning in defense of the Cuban revolution and in defense of the working class in the wake of the INS raid in Miami." She said the enthusiastic response at the meeting "will challenge us to reach

out for further contributors, in addition to collecting the rest of the current pledges. We plan to hold a special forum about the Socialist Workers campaign the weekend of June 3 to wrap up the fund drive."

This example in North Carolina can be followed in other areas to start collecting contributions and getting them in as soon as possible. Supporters in 12 areas that have taken goals have made no payments yet—a situation that needs immediate attention to turn around, especially since the fund drive ends June 4. To be on schedule they should be at 56 percent.

Contributions should be sent to: Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee, Box 14239, St. Paul, MN 55114.

THE MILITANT

on line

www.themilitant.com

Young Socialists Fund Drive March 15–June 1

City	Goal	Raised	%
Birmingham	450	225	50%
Detroit	550	189	34%
Seattle	350	120	34%
Miami	400	125	31%
Chicago	800	205	26%
Twin Cities	650	115	18%
New York	1,000	119	12%
Tucson	200	20	10%
Atlanta	300		0%
Cleveland	350		0%
Fresno	200		0%
Ft. Collins	75		0%
Los Angeles	450		0%
Newark	700		0%
Philadelphia	500		0%
Santa Cruz	250		0%
Valdosta	200		0%
Washington	200		0%
San Francisco		20	
Other		100	
TOTAL	\$7,625	\$1,238	16%

Campaigners launch plan for victory in subscription drive

BY GREG McCARTAN

Supporters of the campaign to expand the readership of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are building on the target week in the sales drive, making plans to make the goals in every city.

"A majority of areas," said subscription drive director Maurice Williams, "requested the campaign be extended for one week, through Memorial Day weekend, to continue to deepen their involvement with unionists involved in labor battles, farm protest actions, and other class-struggle activity." The drive now ends May 28, Williams said. All subscriptions received in the *Militant* business office by noon on Wednesday May 31 will be counted toward the final chart, which will be printed in the *Militant* the next day.

From reports around the country, getting out during the target week, and especially through using the past two issues of the *Militant*, a lot of politics has been put into the sales of the socialist press, and a real campaign spirit has been established in the drive.

"Socialist workers and Young Socialists are building and will join a range of impor-

tant actions in the coming weeks," Williams said. These include events like the May 11 National Day of Actions demanding Washington establish normal diplomatic relations with Cuba, let Elián González and his family go home to Cuba, and repeal of the Cuban Adjustment Act.

"Two teams to coal mining regions are planned prior to the May 17 mine workers march in Washington, and socialists in the unions are also building several rallies of Steelworkers in Houston and Ohio in the coming weeks," he said. "Sales on the job, by going door-to-door, and to strikers and workers and farmers at other actions also feature in plans sent in by a number of areas this week."

From Miami, Mary Ann Schmidt said their results from the target week "included eight *Militant* subscriptions and three to *PM*. Five of those subs were from a sales team to Plant City, Florida. A meat packer at the Lykes packing plant bought one of the subscriptions and the team sold 10 copies of the paper at the plant."

Schmidt said the majority of workers in the area, including those in the Black community, did not agree with the INS assault ordered by the Clinton administration. "This was a little different from our experience in Miami, where most people we talked to were influenced by the propaganda against 'the Cubans' and supported the government assault. We sold out all of our bundles—12 copies of the May issue of *PM*, 30 of the *PM* special edition, and 81 copies of the *Militant*."

Since the April 22 assault, socialist activists across the United States have begun to step up sales activities with street tables armed with Pathfinder titles as well as the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. They are taking the socialist press door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods where they live and work, and reaching out to broader regions for fighters and other workers who are becoming more receptive to revolutionary ideas.

"In the final weeks of the drive we want to step up our efforts to reach coal miners," wrote Candace Wagner, a supporter in eastern Pennsylvania confident of reaching their goals in the drive. "We have tentative meetings with a couple of miners we met through a strike last year."

Communist workers in Seattle are planning a regional sales team to Boise, Idaho, to meet farmers who will be participating in hearings conducted by the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture. The team will also participate in a rally in Spokane called by members of the United Steelworkers union locked out by Kaiser Aluminum, visit the picket line of Sunnyside carpenters, and talk to workers at the Boise-Cascade lumber mill plant, whose contract is expiring soon.

"We had a very good target week—sold out our bundle," said Chris Rayson, a rail worker in Seattle. "I sold a couple of subs to co-workers. I arranged to visit one of them on a Sunday evening. The other one was sold to an extra-board engineer who had bought the paper in the past. I've had a hard time catching up with him but when I saw him at the union meeting he paid for the sub there."

"Both of the co-workers initially supported the INS raid," said Rayson. "But one of them told me I convinced him that the assault was an attack on the working class. Since then we have begun a dialog discussing politics. He has e-mailed me an article from the *New York Times* that points out how Arabs are smeared as terrorists. Sometimes things seem to be going slow with selling subscriptions but we are making progress."

Chuck Guerra, from Detroit, writes that supporters there plan to "organize a team to visit some of the rubber and tire plants in our region and organize door-to-door teams and tables in working-class communities in Detroit two evenings a week." Guerra plans to join a team to a coal mining area during several days that he is off from work.

Mary Martin in Washington, D.C., says



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Militant supporter campaigns at April 30 immigrant rights rally in Dallas, Texas.

socialists there are confident they can meet their goals by the original target date by joining a number of protests in the nation's capital and "organizing a regional team to Richmond, Virginia, to hook up with the Overnite strikers there."

In Houston, Dave Ferguson writes that by the end of the month socialists there will "celebrate three victories: finding a new headquarters for the Socialist Workers Party and a new location of the Pathfinder bookstore,

getting the socialist candidates on the ballot in Texas, and making our sales drive goals!"

Subscription drive director Williams said, "With that kind of spirit and drive, we are confident that with a day-by-day effort we can have a victory in the drive—increasing the readership of the socialist press and introducing hundreds of people to socialism as *Militant* supporters join the ongoing resistance and struggles by working people today."

Special edition of *Perspectiva Mundial*

featuring editorials "INS assault in Miami strikes blow to the working class" and "U.S. out of Vieques!"

Order a bundle today!

Contact local distributor (see directory on page 12) or *Perspectiva Mundial*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014

Militant/PM Subscription Drive in the Unions

	Militant		PM		NI	
	Goal/Sold	%	Goal/Sold	%	Goal/Sold	%
UK						
TGWU	3 3	100%				
RMT	3 1	33%				
Total	6 4	67%				
Australia						
MUA	3 2	67%			1	
TCFUA	2	0%			1	
Total	5 2	40%			2	
U.S.						
USWA	40 23	58%	3 2		16 3	
IAM	45 21	47%	10 4		20 7	
UFCW	35 13	37%	20 12		15 6	
UTU	32 10	31%	3 2		10 3	
UAW	17 5	29%	3 1		9 2	
UNITE	35 8	23%	25 6		16 2	
Total	204 80	39%	64 27		86 23	
Canada						
UFCW	3 1	33%	1		4	
UNITE	4	0%	2 1		2	
Total	7 1	14%	3 1		6	

IAM—International Association of Machinists; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; RMT—National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TCFUA—Textile, Clothing, and Footwear Union of Australia; 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

Where we stand at end of week 6

	Mil	PM	NI
Week 7			
Week 6			

Militant/PM Subscription Drive March 25–May 21

Country	Militant			PM			NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
Sweden	12	10	83%	4	2		6	7
Australia	12	9	75%	1			5	2
New Zealand								
Christchurch	12	9	75%	1			3	2
Auckland	20	10	50%	1	1		3	
N.Z. total	32	19	59%	2	1		6	2
United States								
Cleveland	25	21	84%	8	2		5	3
Allentown	15	12	80%	2	1		5	
Atlanta	30	23	77%	10	7		12	8
Washington	30	23	77%	10	7		11	9
Los Angeles*	60	45	75%	40	32		30	21
Chippewa Falls*	25	18	72%	18	11		10	7
Charlotte	10	7	70%	3	1		5	2
St. Louis	15	10	67%	5	4		10	5
Twin Cities	35	23	66%	8	3		10	
Chicago	40	26	65%	15	7		15	13
Seattle	40	24	60%	12	4		12	2
Tucson	5	3	60%	2			2	2
Des Moines	30	17	57%	15	10		10	4
Philadelphia	35	19	54%	10	10		15	8
Birmingham	45	23	51%	5	3		15	3
Cape Girardeau	12	6	50%	4			4	
Miami	40	20	50%	15	10		20	11
Newark	65	32	49%	25	21		25	9
Pittsburgh	25	11	44%	2	1		8	
Detroit	45	19	42%	8	2		15	
San Francisco	50	21	42%	20	8		25	4
Fort Collins	12	5	42%	1	1		4	1
Boston	35	13	37%	10	3		15	6
Houston	35	10	29%	15	7		12	6
Upper Manhattan	55	14	25%	20	10		20	7
N.Y. Garment Dist	60	7	12%	20	10		20	10
Brooklyn	55	5	9%	10	2		25	
Fresno	12	1	8%	8			6	
Other		1						
U.S. total	941	459	49%	321	177		366	141
Canada								
Toronto	25	13	52%	6	4		20	13
Vancouver	25	9	36%	5	2		12	11
Montreal	16	0	0%	6	1		15	6
Canada total	66	22	33%	17	7		47	30
France	4	1	25%	4			20	12
Iceland	5	1	20%	1			5	1
United Kingdom								
London	40	9	23%	8	4		20	10
Manchester	24	3	13%	2	1		12	1
UK total	64	12	19%	10	5		32	11
Int'l totals	1136	533	48%	360	192		487	206
Goal/Should be	1100	825	75%	300	225		450	338
*raised goal								

U.S. rulers maneuver to pressure China

Politicians debate trade bill, argue over course to undermine workers state

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

How U.S. imperialism can pursue its long-term goal of overturning the Chinese revolution and recapturing a potentially vast market is the subject of sharp disputes in the U.S. ruling class.

With what weapons and how rapidly to arm Taiwan; the character of trade relations between the United States and China; and in what way to proceed with an antimissile system aimed at giving Washington a nuclear first-strike capability are questions being debated among wings of capitalist rulers in the United States and their representatives in government.

The China trade bill will come up for a vote in the U.S. Congress at the end of May. Approval in the Senate is seen as assured. The vote will likely be much closer in the House of Representatives. The measure is based on a trade deal concluded last year between representatives of Washington and Beijing. Opponents of the bill object to its removal of the yearly Congressional review of the terms of Chinese-U.S. trade.

An arms deal concluded between Washington and Taipei in mid-April has also become an object of controversy among U.S. politicians.

Party lines have become blurred as representatives of both the Democratic and Republican parties have lined up on opposite sides of these debates. All of them exhibit an attitude of hostility to the Chinese revolution, which overturned capitalist property relations and semifeudal conditions in the countryside, and put an end to imperialist subjugation of the country, including direct occupations by foreign troops.

Since the revolution in 1949, China has successfully sought to unify the country, including the return of Hong Kong from the United Kingdom and of Macao from Portugal. Taiwan is the remaining piece torn from the country with the blessing of imperialism. It is becoming an increasingly weighty flash-point in U.S.-China relations.

Taiwan is best understood as a beachhead for imperialist interests, and has been used that way since the exploiters' defeat in the Chinese revolution. Until 1971, Washington and the other imperialist powers refused to recognize the Beijing government. Taipei occupied China's seat in the United Nations, for example.

Shift in Washington's policy

Washington's policy shifted, however, in the early 1970s to that of "détente," which flowed partly from the U.S. rulers' attempts to isolate and strangle the Vietnamese revolution. The U.S. government turned toward seeking diplomatic deals with the Stalinist bureaucracy, which misled the revolution from the beginning, limiting the social progress of working people with methods marked by extreme brutality and arbitrariness. Beijing willingly cooperated.

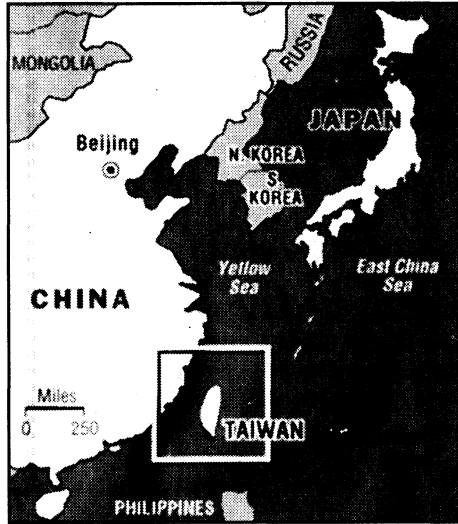
The unholy alliance of imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy has become more brittle, however, as the imperialists seek to find openings to drive back the revolution. The military pressure and encirclement that Washington is preparing today start not with an elaborate blueprint, but with pragmatic responses to its failure to date to reinstitute capitalism through trade and "reforms."

Washington has formally agreed to what is known as the "one China" policy, meaning the unification of China and Taiwan by "peaceful" means. But the capitalist class in Taiwan has continued to get stronger, both economically with an expanding economy, and militarily, with decades of preferential treatment by Washington. However, without the power of imperialism standing behind it, an "independent" Taiwan would be a note in a history book. The Clinton administration's backing of the Taiwanese regime and its aggressive pursuit of Chinese markets are designed to step up pressure on the workers state.

U.S. president William Clinton has been arguing hard for the trade legislation. Under the trade agreement signed in November of last year, Beijing agreed to reduce tariffs on imported goods from 22.1 percent to 17 percent, and down to 15 percent in the case of U.S. farm goods. Tariffs on imported automobiles would be slashed from 100 percent to 25 percent over six years.

"Last fall...the United States signed the agreement to bring China into the WTO

[World Trade Organization] on terms that will open its market to American products and investments," said Clinton in a March 8 speech at the School of Advanced International Studies of John Hopkins University. "Economically this agreement is the equivalent of a one-way street. It requires China to open its markets—with a fifth of the world's population, potentially the biggest markets in the world—to both our products and services in unprecedented new ways.



All we do is to agree to maintain the present access which China enjoys....

"We'll get valuable new safeguards against any surges of imports from China," the U.S. president crowed. "We're already preparing for the largest enforcement effort ever given for a trade agreement."

Clinton warned of competition from Japan and the most powerful Western European imperialist powers, saying that a vote against the bill "will cost America jobs as

our competitors in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere capture Chinese markets that we otherwise would have served." Beijing has been engaged in negotiations with various European governments over the conditions of their support for China's entry into the WTO.

Consistent with rulers' approach

Clinton stressed the continuity of his administration's policy with the approach of the U.S. rulers over the last three decades. The trade deal "is about more than our economic interests; it is clearly in our larger national interest," he said, speaking for the capitalist ruling class. "It represents the most significant opportunity that we have had to create positive change in China since the 1970s, when President Nixon first went there, and later in the decade when President Carter normalized relations."

The U.S. president implied that the trade agreement and the legislation will assist the capitalists in their goal of ending the social and economic relations that flowed from the revolution and the expropriation of the capitalists. "By joining the WTO," he said, "China is not simply agreeing to import more of our products; it is agreeing to import one of democracy's most cherished values: economic freedom...."

"Will it be the next great capitalist tiger, with the biggest market in the world, or the world's last great communist dragon and a threat to stability in Asia?" he asked.

A number of prominent businesspeople have backed the bill, including the chief executive officers of nearly 200 computer and electronics firms such as Microsoft, Lucent Technologies, and Xerox. Clinton claims the backing of the governors of 40 of the 50 U.S. states. The Business Roundtable, a major business group, has budgeted a \$4 million advertising campaign to win votes for the bill. The industrial and agribusiness

giants Caterpillar and Archer Daniels Midland, as well as Gen. Colin Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have declared their support.

These capitalist interests are tempted by the siren song of China's potentially vast market, and by the fact that the Chinese economy continues to grow at the rate of around 7 percent a year. The underpinnings of the growth are basic industrialization and modernization—above all, a massive movement of labor from the countryside to the towns and cities.

On April 19 the House Democratic leader, Richard Gephardt, announced that he will oppose the bill. Gephardt's decision, while consistent with his record, symbolized the divisions the issue is prompting among Congressional politicians. The bill has found more backing among Republican members of the House of Representatives than among the Democrats. According to the *New York Times*, the fate of the bill rests with 40 undecided Democratic Party representatives.

In explaining his stand, Gephardt poses as a friend of "human rights and religious liberties" in China, in the words of the *Times*, and says he opposes permanent normal trade relations between the two countries. In the yearly review of these relations that Congress presently conducts, many politicians seize on the violations of democratic rights by the Stalinist regime based in Beijing as a pretext to attack the workers state.

Gephardt at one stage proposed a body to oversee trade with China "with the authority to mandate sanctions if China failed to live up to its trade obligations or to international labor standards," the *New York Times* reported. The proposal was rejected by the Clinton administration.

A compromise proposal by another Democratic Party politician for a commis-

Continued on Page 11

Rightist Buchanan speaks at Teamster rally

BY STU SINGER

WASHINGTON—Teamsters union officials organized an American nationalist demonstration against China here April 12. The speakers platform featured rightist politician Patrick Buchanan, social democratic Congressman Bernard Sanders, and Teamsters president James Hoffa.

The crowd of 3,000, wearing Teamsters hats and jackets, was drawn overwhelmingly from international and local union officials and staffers. Participants carried union-printed signs with photos of repression in China. There were no handmade signs.

The demonstration was to demand the U.S. government not allow China membership into the World Trade Organization or permanent "favored nation" trade status. There was no mention of any struggles by Teamsters or other unionists in the United States or around the world today.

The speakers included five members of Congress; Stephen Yokich, the president of the United Auto Workers union; Harry Wu, who had been in prison in China; and one worker, a woman from a Mr. Coffee factory in Cleveland who said jobs in her Teamsters-organized plant are threatened by a company-owned plant in Mexico.

The rally was part of a week of actions that continued the reactionary themes put forward in the anti-World Trade Organization protests in Seattle last December. Members of the "Buchanan Brigades," a reactionary nucleus of street gangs that is at the core of Buchanan's incipient fascist movement, were involved in the protests here.

Congressman Sanders from Vermont was introduced as an independent member of Congress. "This rally is about who controls the United States of America," he said. With anti-big-business rhetoric, Sanders said that for too long the "millionaires and the big corporate interests have been telling Capitol Hill what to do. Today we're going to begin the process to change that. The CEOs of the large corporations, who today make 400 times what their workers make, are in favor of free trade with China. They are flooding Capitol Hill with money telling them to sell out American workers."

Patrick Buchanan, who is seeking to build a fascist movement and is currently running for the Reform Party nomination for president, spoke following Sanders. Wearing a



Militant/Stu Singer

Patrick Buchanan speaks April 12. On far left is Teamsters president James Hoffa, on far right is Bernard Sanders, "independent" congressman from Vermont. Among others on the stage were United Auto Workers president Stephen Yokich, Democratic congressman David Bonior from Michigan, and Harry Wu, former prisoner in China.

Teamsters union jacket, Buchanan easily picked up on Sanders's themes to advance his ultrarightist political views. "We've got Republicans and Democrats and Reform Party members [here], and you just heard from an American socialist, Bernie Sanders," Buchanan said.

Anticapitalist speeches and national socialism have marked many fascist movements, such as that of Adolf Hitler in Germany in the 1920s and early 1930s. Many liberals and union officials, as well as "socialists" who operate in an "American" framework, can get drawn into Buchanan's reactionary trap.

'Put America first'

Buchanan said what "unites us all" is "the belief that citizens of the United States are citizens first before they are consumers. That there are values higher than money. And that the economic security of American families and the economic independence of the American nation comes ahead of the stock options of the Fortune 500." He added, "We put America first. We are deindustrializing

our country because of this trade policy that both parties are responsible for."

Numerous times in his speech Buchanan praised Teamsters president Hoffa for opposing the North American Free Trade Agreement. "Mexico has become the source of the narcotics and drugs that are poisoning the hearts and minds of American children. We've got illegal immigration," he said, pushing his anti-immigrant, America First perspective.

After claiming the Chinese government is "stealing our technology to build missiles to threaten the United States," Buchanan pledged if elected to make Hoffa his trade negotiator in place of Charlene Barshefsky.

Hoffa told the rally, "Like Pat Buchanan, let me sit down. I'll negotiate a contract and we can be proud of that. We're going to put words in there like human rights, like labor rights. The big-business boys put money before principle. China has never lived up to any agreement they have signed."

Stu Singer is a member of the United Transportation Union.

Zimbabwe farmers discuss crisis facing toilers on the land

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

MUSENGEZI, Zimbabwe—En route to this rural area about 100 miles west of Harare, dodging pythons and mambas slithering across the sun-warmed tarmac as the southern hemisphere winter descends, a traveler passes long stretches that make up only a small corner of one commercial farm.

About 6 million of Zimbabwe's 12.5 million people are landless peasants eking out a living on poor agricultural land, while about 4,000 white commercial farmers control 27 million acres of the most arable, fertile soils—and much of the nation's wealth.

The land question has been at the center of the class struggle in this country for more than a century, including in the 20 years since Zimbabweans ended white-minority rule in what was then Rhodesia.

In 1980, the British government—the colonial power—in concert with the capitalist landholders, forced the parties that led the armed liberation struggle to agree to key concessions in what became known as the Lancaster House agreement.

Chiefly, the new government of Zimbabwe was prohibited from nationalizing commercial farms. London and Harare have since been in a tug of war over funds from the United Kingdom pledged to the Zimbabwean government to purchase such farms. London has withheld much of the money to pressure Harare to do its bidding. While some of the most onerous provisions of the Lancaster House deal fell away in 1990, the government has failed to carry out a radical land reform.

"Less than 15 percent of Zimbabwe's land held by large-scale commercial farmers had been redistributed by 1990 to about six percent of the rural population (65,000 families)," according to the 1998 booklet *The Land Acquisition Process in Zimbabwe*. "The concrete result of the 1990s policy has been less than 50,000 hectares (123,500 acres) acquired and 2,000 families settled each year so far."

This situation highlights the extent to which Zimbabwe is still trapped within the web of financial and capitalist market relations through which the system of imperialism transfers massive wealth from the vast majority of oppressed countries into the coffers of the super-wealthy minorities in a handful of great powers.

In typically cryptic language, a World Bank report on Zimbabwe says the country, "has been experiencing an economic and social crisis induced by dropping prices for its key export products, uncertainty about domestic policies, high inflation and jittery markets." Low economic growth is a "result of poor performance in agriculture and mining." It notes the Zimbabwean dollar has

depreciated by 90 percent since the end of 1997 and inflation hit 64 percent last year.

Imperialist powers and capitalist concerns in South Africa stepped up their pressure on the Mugabe government this past week, demanding he put an end to the farm occupations organized by government supporters.

The *Financial Times* reported that at the end of a visit to Zimbabwe, Kevin Wakeford, chief executive of the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB), condemned the government for its actions. "The moment you prostitute the rule of law and allow property rights to be ignored is the moment normal business instruments are withdrawn," Wakeford said. "It really makes it very, very difficult for us to conduct normal business." Zimbabwe is South Africa's largest trading partner in Africa. SACOB backed the racist white minority regime in South Africa, which, like its partner in Rhodesia, stripped blacks of their land and rights over the course of decades.

The *Times* reports that the crisis in Zimbabwe has "prompted the withdrawal of credit lines and export credit guarantees for trade with Zimbabwe. Insurers are also refusing to provide further cover for goods in transit inside the country."

In an article titled, "Besieged Mugabe Turns From Reconciliation to Rage," *Washington Post* journalist Jon Jeter writes Mugabe "has done nothing but rage as mobs of landless peasants and black veterans from the war against white-minority rule have set fire to the country's cash crops and murdered farmers and farm workers, political dissidents and even a police officer, pushing what was once southern Africa's most promising democracy to the edge of chaos."

The rapidity with which Zimbabwe has gone from "Southern Africa's most promising democracy to the edge of chaos" does worry the imperialists, and they are working to stabilize the situation in their own interests.

Working farmers in this rural area outside of the capital here present a more complex picture on the ways in which workers, peasants, and small farmers are organizing to confront the economic and social crisis.

Black farmers face monopolies

Johannes Chikarate, 30, is chairperson of the Musengezi District Cooperative Union, which groups six farms run as cooperatives by small-scale black farmers. Nationwide, there are about 25,000 cooperative farmers. "Our cooperatives are on state land," he said. "We are pushing to have title deeds, or even a 99-year lease, which we still do not have. Most cooperatives cannot borrow without these. We just have a piece of paper that says we can occupy the land."

The 667 Musengezi farmers grow maize, baby corn, cotton, beans, and groundnuts, and also raise cattle.

Four of the farms have surpassed subsistence level and are making annual surpluses. The one farm for which accurate accounting has been done for 1999 posted a surplus of Z\$170,000—about US\$4,475. With the surplus, "they have started developing housing for the members," said Chikarate. "They were staying in dugouts and huts. Now they are building brick houses."

Chikarate said the farmers received no aid from the government, including for seed and fertilizer, but by pooling their resources, farmers could do better. For example, the cooperative union will pay 60 percent of the outlay for tillage, seed and other inputs, and farmers pay the balance at the end of the season.

Like working farmers in North America and Europe, the Musengezi farmers are subject to the ups and downs of the capitalist market. "The maize price last year was Z\$4,200 (US\$110) per ton. The return on the dollar invested was good. But we had a lot of problems with cotton, which is very labor intensive. Inputs, most of which are imported, have risen 40 percent but the price paid of Z\$14.50 a kilogram (about 18 cents a pound) has stayed the same."

The chief buyer of cotton—and the entity which sets the price the farmers are



Militant/T.J. Figueroa

Albert Vingwe, chairperson of the Organization of Collective Cooperatives in Zimbabwe, examines maize crop on Kumuka Kwavatema farm.

paid—is Cargill, the giant U.S. agricultural merchant.

The imperialist powers' demands for economic "reform," expressed through agencies such as the International Monetary Fund, also have an impact on farmers' livelihoods.

"In the first 10 years of independence we did not pay a cent for primary school education," said Chikarate. However, when the Zimbabwean government began implementing an IMF-dictated belt-tightening program in 1990, peasants felt the pinch. "Parents are now required to pay school fees of Z\$300, which is very difficult. We have a school here for grades 1-7 attended by about 560 children, but the nearest secondary school is 10 kilometers (about 6 miles) from here on a dirt road. Most of the kids run there and back."

Fighting off an occupation

Kumuka Kwavatema is one of the six farms in the Musengezi cooperative union. In the Shona language, it means "the rising of the black people." The 407-acre farm was started by seven veterans of the liberation war along with some peasants and young people in the early 1980s. Today it has 47 farmer members, nine of whom are women.

Kumuka Kwavatema was occupied twice by area villagers just prior to the nationwide occupations of white-owned commercial farms that began with the support of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government at the end of February.

Chikarate put the blame on one faction of the ZANU-PF leadership in Mashonaland West province. "The people who were pushing for the invasion were looking at the infrastructure to add to their own farms," he said, identifying the driving force behind the move as the provincial governor.

"It was the ZANU-PF headman who took the initiative for the invasion," said Jameson Zizi, 34, farmer and vice-chairperson of the Kumuka Kwavatema cooperative. "They came first in December, about 200-300 people from a nearby village. They were not ex-combatants. They said some of us should leave this area because we were not from here. It was almost a tribalist thing." After consultation with other elements of the government, he said, the villagers were pushed off the land by officials.

"But they came again in February, 200-300 people again. They said we must leave. We fired two shots into the air with our .303 rifle and about 75 percent of them left. In the morning all 47 of us gathered for a meeting along with some of our neighbors who came to help. That's when they attacked us."

"We had to fight to defend our land," said farmer Vivian Mazorodze, who described how she wielded an ax and a knobkerrie in the battle. "They did not want talks, so fighting was the only solution. We fought like hungry lions."

"We managed to drive them out," said Zizi.

While not directly part of the current land occupations led by the official war veterans association, the battle they described gives an indication of how ZANU-PF officials play on massive land hunger to advance their own interests.

Said Zizi of the current occupations: "It's not the right process of getting land 20 years after independence. The government has to get the land and resettle the people. Inva-

sions by hungry peasants wouldn't come to this."

He did not see the opposition Movement for Democratic Change as offering an alternative to the policies of the government. "MDC is a party with no future," he said. "I have not heard anything that could see black people progressing through them."

'Land is power'

Albert Vingwe, chairperson of the Organization of Collective Cooperatives in Zimbabwe, said that a real land reform and redistribution are vital to boosting the national economy by allowing the peasantry to draw the wealth from the land. "Land is power," he said. "If you give title to a person they can be free."

In the mid-1970s, at age 15, Vingwe, the son of peasants in eastern Zimbabwe, crossed the Mozambican border and joined the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), the military wing of what was then ZANU. After training, he was assigned to a combat unit within Zimbabwe assigned to ferret out the Rhodesian regime's "Selous Scouts"—army units that were dressed up to look like guerrilla units. At independence in 1980, he became a lieutenant in the Zimbabwean army.

In the early 1980s, longstanding factional struggles escalated between President Robert Mugabe's ZANU and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), then led by Joshua Nkomo. Saying that ZAPU was planning a coup, Mugabe sent troops into southwestern Zimbabwe, known as Matabeleland, ZAPU's support base and home to most of the country's Ndebele speakers. Most Zimbabweans speak Shona. Vingwe's unit was among those sent.

"A big fight took place. The army started shelling the city of Bulawayo with mortars, shelling defenseless people. I didn't like it. I immediately resigned. The army ended up slaughtering Ndebeles," he said, putting the figures in the thousands.

He and 21 other liberation war veterans pooled their demobilization allowances and bought the 300 acres on which they now farm south of Harare. The number of agricultural cooperatives nationwide eventually grew to 110, but 55 were repossessed by the government for being unproductive.

Describing the challenges faced by small farmers, Vingwe said that "commercial farms apply professional production and planning methods. Many of the cooperatives are on former commercial farms but are doing subsistence farming. Farmers had no access to credit and finance. Training was not adequate and co-ops are the last to receive inputs. Exports are done through middlemen."

The national cooperatives association helps peasants cut across these conditions by pooling resources and making expertise available.

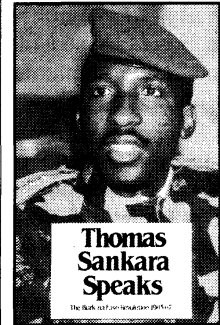
"On state-owned land the government was supposed to provide grants for machinery and infrastructure. That didn't happen. Now they are levying a tax on us." Moreover, he said, "nobody wants to invest in land that is not titled."

Vingwe said that of the land reform that has taken place in the past decade, a number of government officials have benefited while the vast majority have not. He called this "naked robbery."

"For our farmers to feed the nation they need a real resettlement program," he said.

for further reading from Pathfinder

Thomas Sankara Speaks The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-87



Peasants and workers in the West African country of Burkina Faso established a popular revolutionary government and began to combat the hunger, illiteracy, and economic backwardness imposed by imperialist domination. Thomas Sankara, who led that struggle, explains the example set for all of Africa. \$18.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Two conflicting class views: Did U.S. win the computers made capitalism stable? Are wor

BY STEVE CLARK

For several weeks, the *Militant* has been campaigning around the political axis of the headline of the editorial in our May 8 issue, a headline that captured what has been the paper's course for more than 40 years: "In defense of the Cuban revolution, in defense of the working class!"

A large number of letters—many supportive, some critical—arrived in response to that editorial and the front-page banner headline in the same issue: "INS assault in Miami strikes blow to the working class." For two weeks in a row, the editor set aside a full page for letters discussing the April 22 SWAT-style assault in Miami, the fight for Elián González's immediate return to Cuba, and unconditional defense of Cuba's sovereignty. An article in last week's issue joined the question on a number of these matters.

When events of this scope pose issues so sharply, debates around them usually register more fundamental questions of political orientation and strategy. Differing assessments of the outcome of the Cold War between U.S. imperialism and the Soviet Union and other workers states; the stability of the U.S. capitalist system; the conditions under which growing numbers of toilers live and work; shifts in the combativity and political attitudes of layers of workers and farmers; confidence in the proletariat's ability, its future, and its very character—all these and more come up for debate.

At such times, it's useful not only for communists but for all class-conscious working people to review our political foundations and take stock of the implications for how we organize effectively and act together. Ultimately these clashes in evaluation and implied course of conduct reflect the sharply conflicting interests of differ-



Workers from Cienfuegos, Cuba, at national trade union congress in Havana, April 1996. Banner reads "Yes we can!" As Cuban working people have shown, it is far from inevitable that capitalist reaction will defeat the toilers. The exploiters must first try to fight their way through hundreds of millions of working people like those in Cuba as here and elsewhere.

ent classes.

Recently an article posted to an Internet "Marxism List" by José G. Pérez was forwarded to the *Militant*. Raising a number of these questions, Pérez disagrees with the headline and editorial in the May 8 issue and says his aim is to offer "some suggestions as to what's led the [Socialist Workers Party] leadership to this position."

'Reality distortion field'

Pérez's answer, in a nutshell, is that the Socialist Workers Party today has "an orientation to what one might call the 'Buchananite proletariat.'" SWP members

"are cocooned within a reality distortion field," he writes, because of the party's view that

the United States is going through a profound economic and social crisis, which is giving rise to rightist bonapartist figures that are trying to develop embryonic fascist movements....

[T]his crisis is due in large part, or has been significantly aggravated by, the defeat of U.S. imperialism in the cold war. The SWP believes the U.S. lost the cold war because of the continuing existence of what most people would call "socialist" regimes in Eastern Europe (including East Germany) and the breakup of the Stalinist bureaucratic castes who misruled those countries and exercised a negative influence over the world workers movement until a decade ago. In the *Militant*'s view, it would take bloody counterrevolutions to re-establish capitalism....

Now, just as under the impact of the crisis of the 20s and 30s, a layer of the masses were driven in despair towards fascist demagogues, so, too, is that happening today in the United States....

To bolster that view, Pérez says, SWP leaders "point to things like Jesse Venturaism and Buchananism as proof." Pérez puts forward a counter view:

The truth is the U.S. government and political institutions are quite stable as things stand. The labor movement is quiescent, as it has been really since the late 1940s, and especially markedly so since the late 70s. The imperialists have been able to maintain a basically stable standard of living for much of the working class, and significantly improve it for the more petty-bourgeoisified layers, thanks to their super-exploitation of the third world and—I believe—to the lucky break of a technological revolution that's led to significant advances in labor productivity, the fruits of which the capitalists have pocketed almost to the last penny.

"There are hints that a new wave of radicalization might be starting to develop," Pérez says, "but if so it is a great distance away still from being a mass phenomenon. "In the broad, historic scheme of things," he concludes, "the news from the U.S. today is that all is quiet, as it was yesterday, and the day before."

Several useful handbooks

Pérez's summary of the social and economic analysis and political line of the Socialist Workers Party is inaccurate. His views, with this or that minor variant, are ones that most radical opponents of the communist movement hold. He does, however,

hit on some important strategic issues that are worth pursuing.

Because if "the news from the U.S. today is that all is quiet...as it has been really since the late 1940s"—and with prospects for change still "a great distance away"—then the implications for the workers and farmers of the world are sobering.

Not least among these implications is that the dangers facing the Cuban revolution: surely mounting apace. Its relative strength vis-à-vis Washington must be declining.

Pérez claims that the Socialist Workers Party looks at the world through apocalyptic eyeglasses. He speaks of the party's "analysis of an extreme economic and political crisis in the United States"; its "perception that the [U.S.] ruling class is on jack-booted thug rampage" today; and its nonstop projection of "a major working class explosion" ever since the mid-1970s. His political astigmatism distorts any resemblance to the party's true positions.

The world view offered as an alternative to that of the SWP does have one advantage: it doesn't require immersion in the resistance of workers and farmers wherever it leads, the ability to listen and learn, or the effort to absorb and use the strategic lessons of 150 years of communist activity.

Anyone can pick up the same melange of impressions and prejudices from CNN news and talk shows or from Internet chat rooms. The USA won the Cold War. Computers have revolutionized the economy. Workers and farmers are doing pretty well. The radicalization we occasionally see has nothing to do with the lives, jobs, and struggles of working people. Labor is generally quiescent. There is a Buchananite layer of the working class but not of former radicals or feeling liberals. And the communists are not only isolated but harrassed. Those are hardly remarkable views in bourgeois public opinion today.

But any worker, farmer, or young person interested in a communist outlook on today's world can find out for themselves by picking up and reading SWP resolutions as well as articles and reports by party leaders. This written material, printed in books and magazines that are widely circulated, registers and reflects decades of activity and thought by worker-bosheviks and other dedicated fighters.

A central example is *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. It is a collection of reports and resolutions from 1974 through 1991 that recount, as Barnes's 1994 introduction explained, the SWP's efforts over that period "to organize the big majority of its members and leaders to get jobs in industry and to be active members of the industrial unions."

It's also useful to point to the last five issues of the magazine *New Internationalist*, whose contributing editors described it in 1991 as "the best single guide to the programmatic foundations and political trajectory" of the Socialist Workers Party and its sister communist organizations in several countries.

The most recent issue prints two programmatic documents discussed and adopted by the party's 1990 convention: "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by Jack Barnes, and "The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today" by Mary-Alice Waters.

In addition, the party's views on the place and weight of the Cuban revolution in the line of march of the proletariat worldwide can be found not only in the pages of *New Internationalist* but also in political introductions to 10 Pathfinder books containing writings and speeches of Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and other leaders of the Cuban revolution and Communist Party.

Sea change in proletarian politics

Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes was published a little more than year ago. Its opening chapter is based on talk at the close of a Los Angeles conference jointly sponsored by the SWP and Young Socialists, and later adopted by the

New International no. 11

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War by Jack Barnes and The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today by Mary-Alice Waters. Two programmatic documents of the Socialist Workers Party. \$14.00

Capitalism's World Disorder:

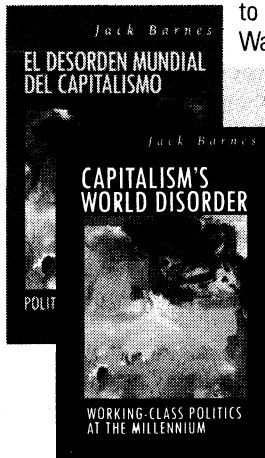
Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

Jack Barnes ■ \$23.95 Special offer: \$20. Also available in Spanish and French.

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58

Ernesto Che Guevara

His firsthand account of the military campaigns and political events that culminated in the January 1959 popular insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship in Cuba. Guevara explains how the struggle transformed the men and women of the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro. And how these combatants forged a political leadership capable of guiding millions of workers and peasants to open the socialist revolution in the Americas. Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. \$23.95



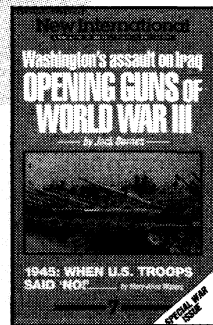
New International no. 7

Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq by Jack Barnes ■ 1945: When U.S. Troops said "No!" by Mary-Alice Waters ■ Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War by Samad Sharif \$12.00

The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara

Guevara's day-by-day chronicle of the 1966-67 guerrilla campaign in Bolivia, a painstaking effort to forge a continent-wide revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. \$21.95

An edition of Che Guevara's *Bolivian Diary* is also available in Spanish



Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism

Carlos Tablada

Quoting extensively from Guevara's writings and speeches on building socialism, this book presents the interrelationship of the market, economic planning, material incentives, and voluntary work; and why profit and other capitalist categories cannot be yardsticks for measuring progress in the transition to socialism. Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. Also available in Spanish and French. \$17.95

New International no. 4

The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States

by Jack Barnes

The Crisis Facing Working Farmers by Doug Jenness ■ Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba, two speeches by Fidel Castro \$9.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write: **Pathfinder** 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150.

Cold War? Have workers doing OK?

party's April 1999 convention in San Francisco. Barnes's closing talk followed extensive combined discussion sessions on two presentations earlier in the conference, one on world politics and the other on the Cuban revolution.

In the Los Angeles summary, Barnes described a sea change in working-class politics in the United States and other imperialist and semicolonial countries. That shift in the mass psychology of working people "had begun by the opening of last year—early 1997, at the latest," he said.

What's new about this situation is not that the United States is on the verge of "a major working-class explosion," as Pérez pretends communists must believe—or that "here is an unbroken rise of labor and farmer battles, let alone victories.

What's new is that proletarian resistance is on the increase, and that out of these fights—not only those that win, but also those that lose or draw—there are more workers today who keep reaching out for other working people in struggle. They want to get to know each other and join in each



Militant/Patrick O'Neill

No human being is illegal," reads sign carried in New York May Day march. Several thousand immigrants "rescued May 1," as a Spanish-language daily put it.

other's battles. And they are open to broader political perspectives, including those that demonstrate the clarity and class conviction of the ideas presented by communist workers and youth.

In early 2000 alone

Just in the opening months of the year 2000 alone in the United States there have been successful strikes and mass demonstrations by janitors and building workers in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, and elsewhere. Dockworkers in South Carolina have pushed back union-busting in the face of police assaults on their pickets. Members of the United Mine Workers, after years of being pushed back, have organized protest meetings in coalfields across the country and are lining up buses for a national May 17 mobilization in Washington, D.C., to defend lifetime health benefits. United Steelworkers members are continuing their strikes against Titan Tire in Iowa and Mississippi; against Ormet Aluminum in Ohio; and are battling lockouts by Kaiser Aluminum in Washington State, Louisiana, and Ohio; by AK Steel in Ohio; and by GS Industries in Minnesota. Teamsters are waging a strike and organizing drive against Overnite Transportation Co.

More than 8,000 unionized engineers and technical workers at Boeing in Washington State struck and beat back a concession contract. Some 1,500 workers, many involved in labor struggles across the state, demonstrated in Frankfort, Kentucky, against cuts in workers compensation benefits and for collective bargaining rights for public employees. Wal-Mart butchers and meat department workers in open-shop Texas are winning national attention for their drive to win union recognition as members of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

Construction workers in New York—often carrying a 15-foot-tall, inflatable rubber rat that New York workers love to see—have continued mobilizing throughout the city against nonunion contractors.

The shift in working-class politics is being registered in much more than union battles, as well. Some 45,000 people, including students and unionists, rallied in Florida on March 7 to defend affirmative action for Blacks and women. In New York City, several thousand immigrant workers, the majority of them Mexicans, "rescued the first of May"—as the headline in the Spanish-language *El Diario/La Prensa* put it—demanding amnesty for all undocumented workers; in mid-February the AFL-CIO executive council backed the call for amnesty, reversing the federation's long-standing opposition to granting legal residence to workers without papers.

Three thousand farmers participated in a "Rally for Rural America" in Washington, D.C., to demand relief from record-low prices for their crops and livestock and sharply declining farm income. Hundreds marched more than 120 miles from Charleston to Columbia, South Carolina, the state capital, in early April demanding removal of the Confederate battle flag from the statehouse—following up on an outpouring of 50,000 in Columbia on Martin Luther King Day in January.

In New York City some 10,000 joined a funeral procession to protest the racist police murder of Patrick Dorismond, breaking through metal barricades and sending the cops running. And 85,000 marched in Puerto Rico in late February demanding "U.S. Navy out of Vieques!"—a prelude to the protests across the island and across the United States today condemning the forcible removal of protesters from the bombing range last week and the renewal of Yankee military target practice.

For class-conscious unionists, farmers, and other working people, as well as for revolutionary-minded youth and students attracted to the proletarian spirit and perspectives, the opportunities to extend solidarity and join in united struggles are plentiful and growing. Openings to discuss and exchange a wide range of experiences and ideas are expanding.

But you have to be interested. You have to be hungry for a good fight. You have to work at reading, seriously and thoroughly, about the ideas you are discussing with fellow workers. You have to want discipline to be effective.

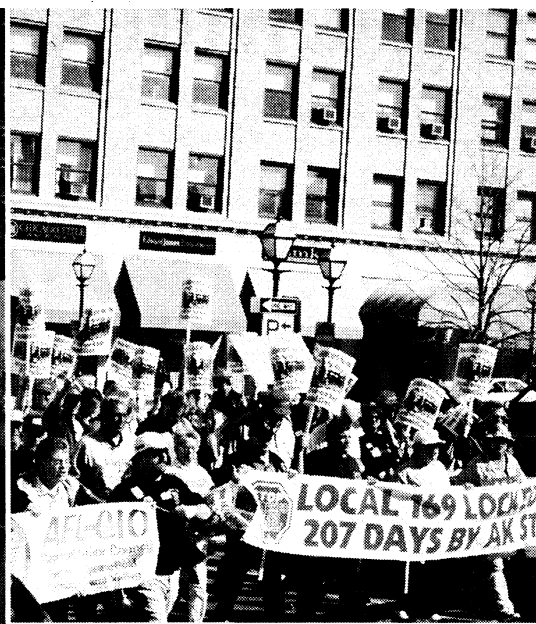
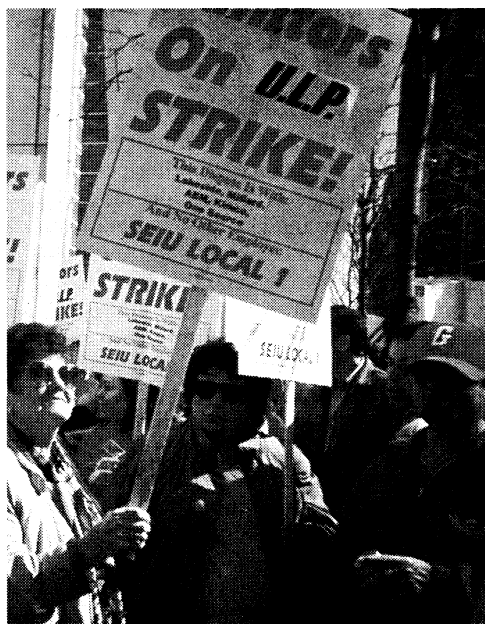
U.S. imperialism lost Cold War

At the opening of the 1990s, in the wake of the collapse of regimes that claimed to be Communist across Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, the Socialist Workers Party made the observation that U.S. imperialism had lost the Cold War. Contrary to the hopes and expectations of Washington and other imperialist powers, the SWP pointed out, the working class in those countries had not been defeated by the collapsing bureaucratic castes.

"The imperialist rulers face an enormous problem in attempting to reestablish the capitalist system in the former Soviet Union and other workers states," Barnes said in an April 1993 talk published in *Capitalism's World Disorder*. "There is no capitalist class in these states, and it takes a long time for historic classes to be created. It takes a long time for a bourgeoisie to consolidate ownership of banking, industrial, and landed capital, and for bourgeois values, legal systems, and money and credit networks to become dominant, let alone stable."

The working class in those degenerated workers states remains an intractable obstacle to reimposing stable capitalist relations, one that will have to be confronted by the exploiters in class battles—in hot wars. Southeastern Europe has given bloody testimony to the accuracy of this prognosis.

In the early 1990s, when the SWP first presented this position, virtually every other voice—both in the bourgeoisie and among petty-bourgeois currents in the workers movement—held the view it was self-evi-



Militant photos: left, Leah Finger; right, Salm Kolis

Worker and farmer resistance is on the increase today. Win, lose, or draw, more workers involved in union and social struggles "keep reaching out for other working people in struggle." Left: janitors march in Chicago April 26 to demand health benefits and raises. Right: Steelworkers and supporters at March 25 solidarity rally of 4,000 in Mansfield, Ohio. Action strengthened fight by 620 workers at AK Steel, locked out more than seven months ago.

dent that capitalism was being reestablished.

No longer. Take, for example, a typical analysis by finance capital, this one by the Wall Street investment firm Goldman Sachs. In an assessment released to the financial press last August, on the first anniversary of the Russian government's default on international debt payments, the Wall Street analyst wrote: "The scale of the task facing the country has been made universally apparent. The euphoria of Russia rejoining the Western world [i.e., capitalism] is now a distant memory and with it has gone the hope that the rebuilding of this country will be anything but a tough, laborious, and above all long, task—in some quarters even that it will ever be achieved."

International finance capital has voted with its dollars. While roughly \$140 billion in capital has poured out of Russia since 1993—and is still doing so at a pace of \$1-\$2 billion per month—total private foreign direct investment over that same period was only \$10 billion and loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund came to \$25 billion.

Production has been cut in half in Russia since the beginning of the 1990s. The official poverty rate has shot up from 2 percent to almost 50 percent. Life expectancy for Russian men has fallen from 64 years to 58.

What about East Germany? The imperialist rulers of Germany are still seeking ways to postpone the battle with the working class there, too. But their competition with other imperialist capitals sets the framework and limits of that postponement. The German rulers have poured some \$800 billion into the eastern region since the Berlin Wall tumbled a decade ago, with the big bulk going not to capital spending but to pensions, jobless benefits, and make-work schemes to avert social upheaval.

Unemployment in eastern Germany at the turn of the millennium stood at 18 percent by official government figures—and has been creeping upward since then, even as joblessness in Germany as a whole fell below 10 percent in April for the first time in four years.

Technological revolution?

In the days of deepest world capitalist stagnation in the 1980s, massive capital investment in the workers states was among the most favored nostrums the bourgeoisie hoped could fuel the takeoff of a new historic wave of expansion. With those illusions dashed, many propagandists for the propertied classes began talking in the 1990s of "a new economy" brought about by a "revolution in technology."

Barnes addressed this argument in the New Year's 1995 talk printed in *Capitalism's World Disorder*. A substantial percentage of what the big business press trumpets as an investment boom in the 1990s is accounted for by computerization that goes to replace more and more rapidly obsolete hardware and software, he pointed out.

"The money that is going into new equipment goes largely into ways to make us work faster to produce more with fewer coworkers," Barnes said. "That does not expand productive capacity, however. It intensifies speedup and extends the workweek"—ask any miner, meat cutter, or other industrial worker to confirm that statement five years later! "But that alone does not

create the basis for the rising profit rates and capital accumulation that marked the post-World War II capitalist boom until it began running out of steam by the early 1970s."

Instead, Barnes pointed out, "the world's propertied families have been fighting among themselves more and more to use credit to corner a bigger cut of the surplus value they collectively squeeze from working people. They have been blowing up great balloons of debt." Over the past decade, however, "first one balloon, then another, and then yet another begins to deflate. And they have no way of knowing which balloon will go next until they start hearing the 'whoosh,' and by then it is often too late."

Or, as U.S. imperialism's top banker, Alan Greenspan, put it last October: "History tells us that sharp reversals in confidence occur abruptly, most often with little advance notice."

The now nearly 110-month capitalist upturn has been marked by economic growth rates that are among the slowest for an expansion in the 20th century. The share of fixed capital investment in national income has fallen below the average of all previous upturns in the history of modern U.S. capitalism. Employment growth has been the most sluggish since the early 1960s.

Meanwhile, the total value of transactions in various forms of paper values has jumped from around 5 times the U.S. gross domestic product in the mid-1960s to around 80 times today.

What about the supposedly "significant advances in labor productivity"? First, productivity over the past decade compares unfavorably with the previous 30 years. And a June 1999 study by Robert Gordon of the National Bureau of Economic Research concluded that, "There has been no productivity growth acceleration in the 99 percent of the economy located outside the sector which manufactures computer hardware." Instead, "when computers are stripped out of the durable manufacturing sector, there has been a further productivity slowdown in durable manufacturing in 1995-99 as compared to 1972-95, and no acceleration at all in nondurable manufacturing." And the 1972-95 period itself marked a historic productivity slowdown.

Conditions, hours, wages

This slow pace of capitalist growth, and the bosses' brutal (and only marginally successful) drive to reverse their sagging profit rates, has had devastating consequences for the hours, wages, and job conditions of working people. But those outside the working class are less and less even conscious of these assaults.

Dangers to life and limb are mounting in virtually every plant, mine, and mill across the United States, as the bosses ratchet up the intensification of labor. The workday and workweek are being stretched out

In fact, far from maintaining "a basically stable standard of living for much of the working class," the U.S. employing class has driven down real wages by between 15-20 percent since 1973. Even the modest increase in 1997-98 has been reversed, as real earnings fell again from March 1999 to March 2000. Since 1980, the usurious credit

Continued on page 10

Who won Cold War? Are workers doing OK?

Continued from page 9

card and other personal debts of hard-pressed workers and layers of the middle class have increased from 68 percent of disposable income to nearly 100 percent today. To the extent household income has barely kept its head above water, the explanation is the increase in multi-wage families and the historic increase in the numbers of women in the labor force.

As for the worst-off layers of working people, the Clinton years have been even more calamitous. The official federal poverty rate has not once dropped below 12 percent after 1982, as it had in every previous upturn in the business cycle in the United States.

Clinton's August 1996 bill to "end welfare as we know it" eliminated the federally financed Aid to Families with Dependent Children adopted as part of the Social Se-



Militant/Doug Jenness

Part of March 20-21 Rally for Rural America in Washington, which drew 3,000 people. Working farmers are demanding relief from record-low prices for their produce and a plunge in farm income. Farm protests are part of shift toward more militancy among working people.

curity Act in the 1930s, affecting millions previously covered by the program. Although accurate figures are hard to come by, welfare rights groups estimate that between 30 and 40 percent of those being forced off the rolls have no other source of income—even the paltry workfare or other subminimum wage jobs many others have no choice but to accept.

What's more, the Clinton welfare act cuts recipients off *altogether* after five years—a deadline now looming fewer than 15 months away. Even if U.S. capitalism has not fallen into recession by that time—something Las Vegas bookmakers are not likely to give odds on—the consequences will underline why Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has referred to that provision of the Clinton Act as walking off the "five-year cliff."

'Buchananite proletariat'

When we hear about the stable or improving living standards of "much of the working class," a view typical among better-off professional layers (and much of the trade union officialdom as well), that is a clue that the phrase "Buchananite proletariat" encompasses quite a broad spectrum. "Them!"

Pérez takes as proof of the SWP's orien-

tation to such a layer—whatever it may be—the statement in the May 8 *Militant* editorial that "if the only voice working people and worse-off layers of the middle classes hear speaking out against such indignities [as brutal federal police assaults, farm foreclosures, and regressive taxation with complex codes to benefit the rich] are those of reaction, if no angry and determined working-class voice is heard pointing a class-struggle way forward, then the radical siren song of fascist demagogues will gain an ever more receptive ear."

Like so many of his class, Pérez cavalierly dismisses this judgment. So be it. As they say at Starbucks, it's a free country.

But the unions, farmers movements, and organizations of the oppressed in the United States would place themselves in deadly peril were they to follow that lead, instead of the class-struggle line of march of the communist movement.

One need not go back to the 1920s and 1930s in Europe to confirm what the consequences would be. The more recent example of Chile in the early 1970s is closer to home for many of us. The political default of the social democratic, Stalinist, and centrist parties handed over leadership of growing layers of the middle classes, as well as sections of the working class, to the fascist-minded forces led by Pinochet's officer corps. The women's "march of the empty pots" spelled the impending doom of the Allende regime and the coming horror for the toilers.

Rightist 'culture war'

Shortly after the April 22 Miami assault organized by Clinton and Reno, Buchanan's "Internet Bri-

gade" (which we're supposed to ignore, while referring to layers of working people as "Buchananite") opened its home page with a reactionary cartoon. The cartoon depicted a mock movie poster with a sexist caricature of Janet Reno as Rambo, letting loose with a clip, and the words: "Fighting for Marxism: No man, no law, no court ruling can stop her" (see elsewhere on this page).

On one level, the cartoon bore testimony to the statement by Barnes in a November 1992 talk in *Capitalism's World Disorder* that "the assaults on the rights and basic humanity of women" by Buchanan and other ultrarightists "are so strident and vulgar that they sometimes seem irrational. But they are not." To the contrary, as part of their "culture war," these voices of capitalist reaction are going after "the economic, social, and political gains women have won in the last half century."

And the "Fighting for Marxism" reference should serve as a reminder that, as the class struggle heats up, fascist groups will shift their bead from Establishment figures in the bourgeoisie to the fighting vanguard of the working-class movement.

But the key caption—"Coming Soon, to a Neighborhood Near You"—was aimed at

a much broader audience than the woman-hating and anticommunist cadre of the ultraright. It targeted the tens of millions of working people and sections of the middle class—men and women; urban and rural; native-born and immigrant; Black, white, and otherwise—who know from the murderous record of federal, state, and local cop agencies that the prognosis is accurate, and will become more so.

What the leadership of the fascist cadres don't say is that as class polarization accelerates, government commandos will be joined—and at a late stage increasingly pushed aside—by the extralegal deputies and fighting units of reaction.

Barnes's New Year's 1995 talk in Los Angeles was in part a celebration of the recent publication of *New International* no. 10, which featured the twin articles "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" and "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution."

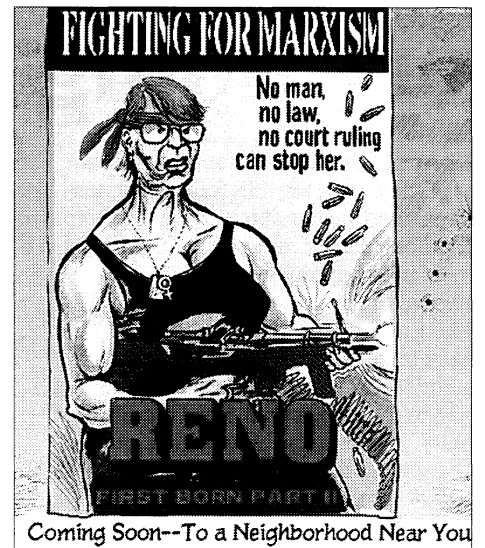
"Fascism and war is the logic of the march of finance capital," Barnes explained to participants in the Los Angeles gathering. "That is what imperialism has inflicted on humanity twice before in this century, and that is where capitalism is heading once again."

Barnes then called attention to the article on the Cuban revolution in *NI* no. 10. "Because as Cuban working people have shown," he said, "what is far from inevitable is that the outcome of the workings of capitalism will be triumphant fascism and a third world war. Along the road to such an unthinkable catastrophe, the ruling capitalist families all over the world must try to fight their way through hundreds of millions of working people like us and like those in Cuba."

The U.S. proletariat in its vast majority will not become "Buchananite." But its capacity to triumph in the streets over those who do will be determined by what those in the working-class vanguard do *now*, in the course of day-to-day activity, to develop and strengthen habits of discipline, proletarian functioning, and communist political clarity.



Finally, at the opening of his article, Pérez says that "the SWP, like the gusano mafia, the right wing talk show hosts, the bourgeois civil libertarians, the Republican politicians, and the editors of the *New York Times*, is campaigning against what the lead sentence of the *Militant's* lead article calls 'a brutal



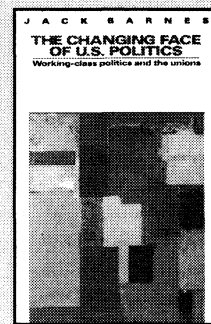
Above cartoon appears on website of "Internet Brigade," supporters of ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan. Sexist caricature of Janet Reno illustrates rightists' vulgar contempt for the basic humanity of women. But the caption "Coming Soon, to a Neighborhood Near You" is aimed not just at woman-haters but at a broader audience among millions in the working class and sections of the middle class who know the murderous record of cop agencies.

attack on democratic rights."

This method of "argument" has a name in the history of the modern revolutionary workers movement—the *politics of amalgam*. And it has consequences too—the justification of unconscionable slander and goon violence against those "objectively in the camp" of whoever it may be, whether the Nazis a half century ago or the "gusano mafia" today.

That's another reason why the May 8 *Militant* editorial was correct in emphasizing that the stakes in opposing the INS assault in Miami "is a working-class line of march in defense of democratic rights and political space won by working people in the United States through two revolutions and numberless bloody battles in the streets."

What's more, as the editorial states, "It is along that road that the Cuban Revolution, the first dictatorship of the proletariat in our hemisphere, will be effectively defended as well."



The Changing Face of U.S. Politics Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

BY JACK BARNES

Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95

Background to 'The Changing Face of U.S. Politics' and 'U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War'

JACK BARNES, JOEL BRITTON, AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

Reports and resolutions of the Socialist Workers Party on trade union policy, proletarian leadership versus clique functioning, the poison of race baiting in the workers movement, and the membership norms of the revolutionary party. \$7.00

New International no. 10

Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War BY JACK BARNES ■ What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold ■ Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution BY MARY-ALICE WATERS ■ The Curve of Capitalist Development BY LEON TROTSKY \$14.00

To Speak the Truth

Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End

FIDEL CASTRO AND CHE GUEVARA

In historic speeches before the United Nations and UN bodies, Guevara and Castro address the workers of the world, explaining why the U.S. government so hates the example set by the socialist revolution in Cuba and why Washington's effort to destroy it will fail. INTRODUCTION BY MARY-ALICE WATERS. \$16.95

New International no. 8

Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism

The Politics of Economics: Che Guevara and Marxist Continuity BY STEVE CLARK and JACK BARNES ■ Che's Contribution to the Cuban Economy BY CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ ■ On the Concept of Value and the Meaning of Socialist Planning TWO ARTICLES BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA \$10.00

In Defense of Socialism

Four Speeches on the 30th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution

Not only is economic and social progress possible without the dog-eat-dog competition of capitalism, Castro argues, but socialism remains the only way forward for humanity. Also discusses Cuba's role in the struggle against the apartheid regime in southern Africa. INTRODUCTION BY MARY-ALICE WATERS. \$13.95

New International no. 6

The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop BY STEVE

CLARK ■ Washington's 50-year Domestic Contra Op-

eration BY LARRY SEIGLE ■ Land, Labor, and the Cana-

dian Revolution BY MICHEL DUGRE ■ Renewal or Death:

Cuba's Rectification Process, TWO SPEECHES BY FIDEL CASTRO

\$10.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write:

Pathfinder

410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150.

U.S. farmers attend convention in Cuba

BY JAMES HARRIS

ATLANTA—At the invitation of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) of Cuba, a delegation of seven working farmers and two activists who oppose U.S. policy toward Cuba will attend ANAP's ninth national congress May 15-17. They will stay for several days afterward to visit the countryside and other parts of the Caribbean island. The Atlanta Network on Cuba is organizing the trip.

In the invitation, ANAP general secretary Orlando Lugo Fonte states, "This has been a period of intense work during which the small farmers associated with ANAP and the organization itself have had to fight under difficult conditions and with serious material limitations in order to move our social project forward.

"Along this road we have had successes and failures, errors and gains, and that is exactly what we propose to examine and debate in the center of our highest and most

authoritative structure of our organization, its National Congress."

Lugo Fonte added, "ANAP would appreciate it very much if you, friends that during these years have shared our realities, efforts and hopes, would participate in this important event together with us."

The invitation from ANAP is a result of a successful "Farmer to Farmer" trip in February by six farmers and two members of the Atlanta Network on Cuba, which organized the visit. Since then, they have been speaking on university campuses and to other farmers and their organizations on what they learned about the Cuban revolution. Through meetings with farmers they recruited the second group that will now see the Cuban revolution for themselves.

This delegation, like the one in February, is made up of rural producers fighting to keep their land and continue farming. It includes farmers from the Midwest, Northeast and South.

U.S. rulers maneuver to pressure China

Continued from Page 6

sion to "review human rights, labor policies and development of the rule of law in China" is reportedly helping to swing votes the way of the trade bill, according to the same *Times* article. The successful passage of a bill opening up trade for U.S. corporations with African and Caribbean countries is being touted as a favorable sign for the China bill.

The trade agreement between Washington and Beijing drew criticism last year from corporations in the textile industry, who fear competition from the products of China's mills and factories. The officials of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees make common cause with the capitalists on this issue.

Other top officials in the AFL-CIO have also taken a strident stand against the bill. This is consistent with their economic nationalist policies, and with their long-standing opposition to the Chinese revolution. To defend that position among union fighters today, they claim to be concerned about the low wages and sweatshop conditions many workers in China face.

At a demonstration in Washington, D.C., during the meeting of the International Monetary Fund in mid-April, officials of the Teamsters union gave rightist politician Patrick Buchanan a platform to attack the proposed bill.

Arms deal includes advanced missiles

On April 17, in the midst of this debate, the Clinton administration agreed to sell the Taiwanese armed forces a long-range radar system and upgraded versions of three missiles. Taipei routinely buys U.S.-manufactured arms, but in the context of increased tensions between Taipei and Beijing the arms deal has aroused controversy. Washington had considered selling Taiwan its most advanced ship-based antimissile system, the Aegis destroyers, but decided against that this time around.

"The package on the whole is quite robust, with first-class air-to-air missiles and anti-ship missiles," said Undersecretary of Defense Walter Slocombe, dubbed "the Pentagon's point man on [Taiwan's] nettlesome arms request" in the *Washington Post*.

China has few long-range ballistic missiles, and those it does have are extremely inaccurate. It is reportedly deploying more short-range missiles along its coast, as well as building up its fleet of warplanes.

The arms deal fit the conclusions of a new Pentagon report, which claims Taiwan is facing threats of an attack from China. According to the April 1 *International Herald Tribune*, "The report points out 'a host of problems' with the military's ability to defend against airplanes, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles, said a Clinton administration official familiar with it." Taiwan's naval chief, Admiral Lee Jye, chimed in, saying that "antimissile defense and air defense is our highest priority."

The "Pave Paws" radar system to be sold to Taipei is "geared to the threat which we expect to be up a few years out" in China, said a Pentagon official. The radar system is not a passive, defensive mechanism, however. Its range will reach thousands of miles into mainland China.

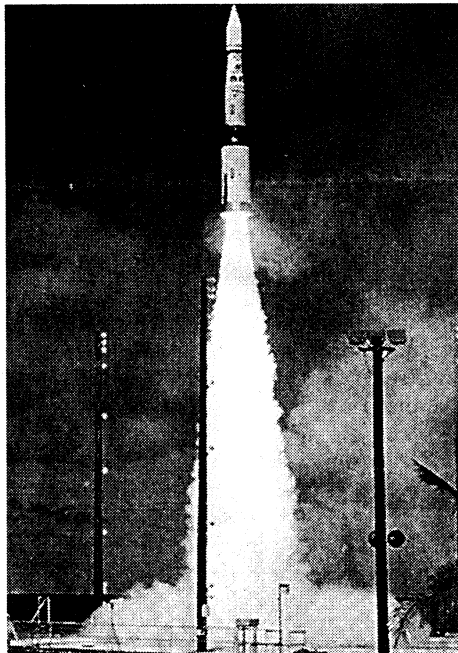
"If I were the Chinese, I'd have to assume that the Taiwan radar was connected to the American missile defense network," said one scientist. The system referred to is being developed by Washington to provide U.S. imperialism with a first-strike nuclear capability, by erecting a shield against enemy nuclear missiles. The system has fared unevenly in initial tests, leading to calls in the *New York Times* and among other ruling-class voices for a delay in implementation until the kinks are ironed out.

The Pentagon's approval of the arms package only enraged Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms, who attacks the Clinton government from the right. "I am extremely disappointed to learn that the Pentagon has apparently succumbed to pressure from the State Department and the White House to sacrifice Taiwan's security in order to appease the dictators in Beijing," he said. "If the Pentagon will not stand up for Taiwan, then it is clear Congress will have to take action."

Helms pledged to seek passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, which aims to greatly strengthen military ties between Washington and Taipei. However, the chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, Admi-

ral Dennis Blair, is on record as saying that the act doesn't allow him to do "anything more than is possible now, and it throws an unwelcome spotlight on the relationship," according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Helms and other critics of the deal oppose the Clinton administration's decision to hold off the sale of four Aegis warships. These ships cost over a billion dollars each, and are equipped with up-to-the-minute



Missile carries TRW interceptor—component in missile 'defense' of U.S. rulers

missile-tracking and radar systems.

Joining the critics of the package, the *Wall Street Journal's* editors claimed that "China is developing a blue-water navy that will be able to blockade Taiwan's ports" and missiles that "could be used to wipe out the island's airfields unless missile defense is upgraded." The *Journal* called for a commitment to sell Taiwan the "latest Patriot missile...when introduced," and for "providing the tools of antisubmarine warfare."

Broadening their attack, Helms and the Senate Republican leader Trent Lott de-

clared April 21 their opposition to Clinton's advocacy of a "limited" antimissile defense system and his attempts to force Moscow to renegotiate the terms of the antiballistic missile treaty. The treaty bans antimissile defense systems. Moscow has refused to modify it to date, stating its straightforward disbelief of Washington's official rationale that the systems will be used to defend against attack from "rogue nations."

"The senators...favor a full, robust defense system against missiles, and many of them prefer to scrap the treaty altogether," reported the April 22 *New York Times*. The Republican nominee in this year's presidential elections, Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, said "he would deploy an antiballistic missile system 'at the earliest possible date,'" continued the article.

In their analysis of Taiwan's military shortcomings, the Pentagon's experts claim "it is necessary to maintain the cross-strait military balance, ensuring that neither [China nor Taiwan] is able to impose its will on the other," states a *Washington Post* article.

Washington's military purpose

The Clinton administration strikes a similar pose, calling for "dialogue" between Taipei and Beijing. But the diplomatic language masks the intent of Washington's policy: to shore up Taiwan's military prowess, and to prepare to bring its own naval, air, and nuclear power into play if tension turns to confrontation. Washington is not moving along the reckless lines proposed by Helms and others, however. The U.S. rulers have learned to respect the determination of Beijing to reunify the country, having seen Macao and Hong Kong reincorporated in just the last several years.

Relations with China were a key issue in Taiwan's recent presidential elections. The current president and candidate of the Nationalist Party (KMT), which has dominated politics in the island since its defeat in the Chinese civil war in 1949, was left trailing in third place. Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party came in first with 39 percent of the vote. Since winning the election, Chen has retreated from his party's

calls for independence from China.

Supporters of the KMT rioted outside party headquarters and called for the expulsion of the incumbent party leader, Lee Teng-hui. The events helped to highlight class divisions in Taiwan, which has long been touted as an economic "tiger" in Asia. The fight against racist discrimination faced by the indigenous majority, who have endured KMT rule for decades, has started to surface in politics there. KMT troops imposed their authority in the postwar years through the most brutal methods. A *New York Times* article recalled the "Feb. 28 incident of 1947 [before the triumph of the revolution], when Nationalist troops massacred countless thousands of protesting Taiwanese."

The bureaucrats in Beijing have no alternative to present to the Chinese masses other than appeals for more imperialist investment, with all the social horrors it entails. In his March 8 speech at Johns Hopkins University, Clinton described some of the huge obstacles that remain in the way of imperialism today—and hinted at the far more formidable obstacle of the Chinese working class.

"Over the last 20 years, China has made great progress in building a new economy," he claimed, but "only about a third of the economy is private enterprise. Nearly 60 percent of the investment, and 80 percent of all business lending, still goes toward state-owned" enterprises, he said.

The leaders of China "face a dilemma," said Clinton. "They realize that if they open China's markets to global competition, they risk unleashing forces beyond their control: temporary unemployment, social unrest, and greater demands for freedom."

The U.S. rulers fear those forces as much as the bureaucracy in Beijing does. They are probing for economic openings and rearming their client regime in Taipei in the midst of national and class contradictions that are bound to deepen in the coming years. They will unwittingly find themselves confronting the workers and peasants of China, who have already made a mighty anticapitalist revolution.

'In Cuba you are able to stay on the farm'

BY TED LEONARD

MONTPELIER, Vermont—"They had the revolution to motivate them," explained Georgia farmer Willie Head, the featured speaker at a meeting here on April 19.

He was responding to a question from Dexter Randall, a dairy farmer who had asked how prices for Cuban farm products could be held by the government and producers at a stable level.

In New England the price of milk is set by the U.S. government under a program known as the "Northeast dairy compact." In the last couple of years dairy farmers in this region have seen their income from milk sales drop 40 percent.

Head had joined five other farmers in a fact-finding tour of Cuba during February. They were hosted there by the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba.

The meeting, entitled "Report Back from Farmers' Trip to Cuba," was attended by 30 people, including five farmers. It was co-chaired by Jean Lathrop, an activist in the Vermont Cuba Committee, and Ron Morrisette, cochair of the Vermont Rural Organization and a retired dairy farmer.

In his presentation Head referred to a discussion earlier that evening with a woman farmer, who had explained that her grandson could be the ninth generation of farmers in her family. "If your family was in Cuba you would not have to worry whether your grandson would be able to farm," he told her. "In Cuba, as long as you work the land you are able to stay on the farm."

Head also spoke about his own experiences. The first couple of years after he bought land in the early 1980s, he was able to get loans for operating costs from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). From the mid-1980s on, however, he was consistently denied loans.

In the 1990s he joined the fight of farmers who are Black in suing the USDA for discrimination—a class-action suit involving thousands of farmers. The court ruled last year that they had been discriminated against and awarded them a settlement. Since then the farmers have been fighting

to make the USDA carry out that decision.

The Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA), which has been leading this fight, has called an action at the USDA office in Washington on May 8. Head invited everyone to join the protest. The day before that, he explained, farmers and supporters going to Washington are planning to hold a protest on the farm of a woman farmer in New Jersey who has been fighting foreclosure. "We are fighting for all small farmers," he said.

The following day Head also visited two

young vegetable farmers who operate the Food Project, which provides fresh vegetables to Roxbury, a Black community in Boston. Later, Head spoke at Roxbury Community College (RCC) in Boston. Some 70 people attended the event, which was sponsored by the July 26 Coalition, the RCC Caribbean Focus Program, and the Community Church of Boston.

Ted Leonard is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Textile and Industrial Employees.

Farmer in Florida speaks about example of revolutionary Cuba

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT

PLANT CITY, Florida—"Just think what a workers and farmers government could do in this country. We could rationalize the use of the land and production, we could end the scourge of famine forever. In Ethiopia 10-15 million people are at risk. This is not famine, it's profit famine." Florida farmer Karl Butts was speaking on his recent trip to revolutionary Cuba and its example for working people worldwide.

Butts spoke to seven small farmers and others at the public library here and at a meeting at Florida State University in Gainesville. He was part of a farmers delegation in February hosted by the Association of Small Farmers of Cuba (ANAP).

Farmers at the meeting discussed the problems they face as small producers. Butts explained the role of a mass farmers organization like ANAP, which has 250,000 members. "These Cuban farmers have a way to raise concerns and ideas because the decision-making affects them," he said.

One farmer said she has been unable to grow anything on her land for a decade. Her soil was destroyed by a Dupont agricultural product, which has since been recalled. After 10 years of fighting Dupont in the courts, she said, "I don't think we've got to the point of having a revolution in this country. I know

people who have lost their hog farms in Iowa and now they're driving trucks. It's going to have to get a lot worse."

Another participant suggested, as a solution to the problems facing farmers, selling directly to consumers. Butts replied, "That is not the answer ultimately. Farmers borrow off the land. The system of rents and mortgages casts a shadow of foreclosure over land. Debt is driven by the system. Farmers are not small businessmen. They are exploited independent producers."

A local strawberry farmer expressed concern about Brazilian imports. Michael Martinez, a Young Socialists member from Miami, joined the discussion stating, "We shouldn't see the Nicaraguan farmer or any farmer as the enemy. It's the big corporations that are the enemy."

To questions about environmental issues in Cuba, Butts said, "They're going to use good science and judge each chemical. Cuba has an integrated approach of sustainability including environmental, social, and economic considerations." He explained how farmers in this country are pressured to over-fertilize because they are caught in the price-cost squeeze and are under tremendous pressure to produce or face going under.

Rachele Fruit contributed to this article.

Workers in Norway strike, score gains

Continued from front page
nies in the original contract, was "too little for three years," said Erik Fossum, a worker at Tiedemanns tobacco factory in Oslo where 73 percent rejected the original pact.

'If we don't do it now, then when?'

Jorid Andreassen was picketing May 8 outside the Freja chocolate factory in Oslo where she has worked for 36 years. She thought the pay was too little and the length of the contract too long. "They want us to shut up for three years for so little money," she said. "We did not press our demands when there was a crisis, but if we don't do it now, when should we do it?"

At Freja, 81 percent of the workers rejected the original contract. "Here there has not been a strike since 1961," said Bente Løvaas. She and Andreassen discussed the demand for a fifth week of vacation. In the original contract offer three of the days would not be implemented until 2002.

"In my opinion the hourly rise of 0.75 kroner is completely unacceptable, almost an insult," said Jan Olav Treholt, who works with maintenance at the draught beer department at Ringnes brewery in Oslo. Treholt said he opposed the bosses' demand in the original contract that employers be allowed to impose flexible hours according to their production needs.

He and Terje Brånek explained how workers at Ringnes successfully resisted an attempt by the company there to impose these hours two years ago. "Such schedules

will mean no overtime pay and no extra pay for evenings until 10:00 p.m. You are supposed to be at the employers' disposal when more production is needed," he said. "They are cutting down all the way to the bone, loading all the extra work onto the backs of those who remain," Jan Olav explained. "If this goes on, the normal workweek will get a punch in the face."

"We accepted very low local pay raises for several years because the company said they would not lay off as many people if we did. So we got little pay but the company laid off anyway," said Terje.

At Ringnes, 94 percent of the workers voted against the original contract.

The brewery workers explained that friends and family were very supportive of the strike. "We have to stick together in this. For example, when the hotel and restaurant workers union asked for help, 60 of us decided to march down to two of the hotels," Brånek explained.

Terje Johansen, a worker at Hotel Bristol in central Oslo, was at the picket line there when the brewery workers arrived May 5. "It was great to see them come, at 6:00 in the morning, with flags and banners," he explained. Management at this and another hotel had kept them open with unorganized workers, mainly room cleaners who work on a temporary basis. "The brewery workers went on to the other hotel, Hotel Slottsparken, to show solidarity there too. I am ready to help anyone who needs it after getting such solidarity!" stated Johansen.

The auto parts factory in Raufoss employs 2,100 production workers and is the biggest industry in a rural area 90 miles north of Oslo. This factory has a big market share of auto parts in Sweden and Germany.

Production at Saab's main auto plant in Trollhättan, Sweden, stopped May 8-9 due to lack of parts from a struck factory in Norweig. If the strike had continued, thousands of workers assembling cars and trucks in Sweden, and tens of thousands in Germany, would have eventually been sent home as well.

To put pressure on the strikers, the employers in Sweden and Germany threatened to stop buying auto parts from the factory in Raufoss. "That is what they said when we struck in 1996 too, but actually production here increased after the strike," said Roger Haugsrud, picketing outside the Raufoss main gate.

Other workers at Raufass proudly told these reporters that the Metal Workers Union in Sweden and IG Metall in Germany had promised to block the use of parts from other factories during the strike.

The tentative contract, signed May 9, runs for two years. The hourly wage increase will be 1.50 krone for the first year and 1 krone for the second, as opposed to 0.75 and zero respectively in the original contract. Workers with 87 percent of the average pay and

less will get 2 kroner extra the first year and 1.50 extra the second. The workers will get two more vacation days in 2001 and two days in 2002, as opposed to one and three in the contract that was voted down. There is no change in the clause on flexible hours.

'We have shown it was right to strike'

"In a way I am disappointed, but in many ways it is a victory," explained Løvaas outside the Freja chocolate factory as she came to work on May 9. "We have shown it was right to strike and the new contract is better. We have made other gains too. There has been so much activity and enthusiasm during the strike. That is maybe even more important than the contract itself."

The proposed contract has been recommended for a yes vote by officials of all 17 unions, as opposed to the original contract, which was rejected by leaders of four of the unions. Workers will vote on the new contract before May 25.

The public workers unions are now in negotiations for a new national contract and can strike starting May 26. Expectations are rising as the strike forced the employers in the private sector to make some concessions.

Carl-Erik Isacson and Catharina Tirsén are members of the Metal Workers Union in Södertälje and Stockholm, respectively.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Twenty-Five Years After the Vietnam War: Lessons for Anti-War Fighters Today. Speakers to be announced. Fri., May 19, 7:30 p.m. 230 Auburn Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 577-7976.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Participants Speak Out: The Fight to Unionize the Mushroom Industry. Speakers: Antonio Gutiérrez, a leader of the organizing drive at Vlasic; Luis Tlaseca, coordinator of Committee to Support Farm Workers (CATA) in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania; Muna El-Shakhs, CATA staff, Glassboro, New Jersey. Fri., May 19, 7:30 p.m. 711 E. Passyunk Ave. Donation: \$5. (215) 627-1237.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Behind the Land Crisis in Zimbabwe. Speaker:

Bob Aiken, Communist League and member Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia. Fri., May 19, 7:00 p.m. 176 Redfern. Donation: \$4. Tel (02) 9690-1533.

BRITAIN

London

Imperialism; Hands off Sierra Leone, Hands off Africa. Speaker: Alan Harris, Communist League. Fri., May 19, 7:00 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 020-7928-7993.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Oppose the Waitara Police Shooting! Report Back by 'Militant' Team from a Visit to Waitara. Sat., May 20, 7:00 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road, Donation: \$3 Tel: (9) 379-3075

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 020-7928-7993. E-mail: 101515.2702@compuserve.com

Manchester: Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 0161-839-1766. E-mail: 106462.327@compuserve.com

CANADA

Montreal: 4581 Saint-Denis. Postal code: H2J 2L4. Tel: (514) 284-7369. E-mail: 104614.2606@compuserve.com

Toronto: 851 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M3. Tel: (416) 533-4324. E-mail: milpathtoronto@cs.com

Vancouver: 4321 Fraser. Postal code: V5V 4G4. Tel: (604) 872-8343. E-mail: 103430.1552@compuserve.com

FRANCE

Paris: Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. E-mail: 73504.442@compuserve.com

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klapparstig 26. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milph@mmmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075. E-mail: 100035.3205@compuserve.com

Christchurch: Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Postal address: P.O. Box 13-969. Tel: (3) 365-6055. E-mail: 100250.1511@compuserve.com

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: 100416.2362@compuserve.com

CALENDAR

NEW JERSEY

Collingswood

Beef and Beer Benefit for Overnite Organizing and Legal Fund. Sat., May 20, 1:00 p.m. Teamsters Local 676 Union Hall, Rt. 130. Donation: \$25.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Puerto Rican Resistance Weekend! Picket for Vieques. Fri. May 19, 5:00 p.m., 26 Federal Plaza.

"Albizu Lives in the Puerto Rican Resistance." Speakers: Pedro Aponte, author; Ismael Guadalupe, leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques; Rafael Cancel Miranda, leader of the Puerto Rican independence struggle; Luis, Sosa, Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico. Sat., May 20, 5:00 p.m. Hunter College, Rm 615 West Bldg..

Bronx

Freedom Mass for the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners. Sun., May 21, 12:00 p.m. Resurrection Church, 790 Elton Ave. (Elton & 158th St.) For more information on activities call: (718) 409-3595; (718) 601-4751; (212) 677-0619.

OHIO

Heath

Rally to Support Locked-Out Kaiser Aluminum Workers in USWA Local 341, Newark, Ohio, and Striking Molding Technologies Workers in USWA Local 341-05, Hebron and Newark, Ohio. Sat., May 20, 12:00 noon. State Rte. 79, Heath, Ohio. For more information: (740) 928-4494.

TEXAS

Houston

Rally to Support Locked-Out Kaiser Aluminum Workers. Gather at Crown Plaza Hotel, 2222 West Loop S., for march to Maxxam Inc. headquarters, 5847 San Felipe. Tues., May 23, 3:00 p.m. For more information, call: (713) 960-9660.

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the Militant, Perspectiva Mundial, New International, Nouvelle Internationale, Nueva Internacional and Ny International.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 2232 Magnolia Ave. Zip 35205. Tel: (205) 323-3079. E-mail: 73712.3561@compuserve.com

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. E-mail: 74642.326@compuserve.com
San Francisco: 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255, 285-5323. E-mail: 75604.556@compuserve.com

FLORIDA: Miami: 4582 N.E. 2nd Ave. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 573-3355. E-mail: 103171.1674@compuserve.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 230 Auburn Ave. N.E. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-7976. E-mail: atlpathfinder@cs.com

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Zip: 60622. Tel: (773) 342-1780. E-mail: 104077.511@compuserve.com

IOWA: Des Moines: 3720 6th Ave. Zip: 50313. Tel: (515) 288-2970. E-mail: 104107.1412@compuserve.com

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 683 Washington St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 702. Zip: 02124. Tel: (617) 282-2254. E-mail: 103426.3430@compuserve.com

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 7414 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-0100. E-mail: 104127.3505@compuserve.com

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 1569 Sherburne Ave. W. St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: TC6446325@cs.com

MISSOURI: St. Louis: Box 19166, 2910 Meramec Street. Zip 63118. Tel: (314) 924-2500. E-mail: MilPath167@cs.com

'CUBA IN TODAY'S WORLD'

Meetings in New Zealand for Cuban Consul General Maria Luisa Fernandez

Sponsored by Cuba Friendship Societies

Auckland Wed., May 17
1:00 p.m. Auckland University, Arts 1 Building, Room 215 (Corner Symonds Street and Grafton Road)
6:00 p.m. Fund-raising dinner, \$10.00.
7:00 p.m. Public Meeting, Rationalist House, 64 Symonds Street. Tel: (9) 525-5412 or (9) 373-7999 ext. 7917

Hamilton Thurs., May 18

Noon Waikato University
Tel: (7) 856-2889

Wellington Fri., May 19

1:00 p.m. Victoria University, Meeting Room 1, Student Union Building. Tel: (4) 384-8120

Christchurch Mon. May 22

3:00 p.m. Canterbury University, Ilam Road.

7:30 p.m. Public Meeting, Trade Union Centre, 199 Armagh Street (1st Floor.) Tel: (3) 377-3934

Donations to help cover tour costs can be sent to NZ-Cuba Friendship Society, P.O. Box 6716, Auckland

Child care, the American Way—“SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—The state has relocated more than 100 children to cut costs, The Utah Division of Child and Family Services says a 1.1 million shortfall is forcing the move of children from high-cost



Harry Ring

treatment centers to less expensive foster homes. Adoptive parents have also been asked to consider giving up monthly subsidies.”—News item.

The march of capitalist civilization—Ann Marie Degree, 38, suffers brain damage and has spent half her life in mental institutions. Now she faces jail. The Riverside County, California, prosecutor is charging her with stealing some candy and a soda from a hospital gift shop. Reportedly, a nurse spotted the loot, and sheriff's deputies who serve as hospital security guards were called in. Degree allegedly tried to grab one of the cop's guns from its holster. Felony charges have been filed.

The Golden Years—Vile conditions in nursing homes for the elderly have sparked so many damage suits that major insurance companies are now refusing to cover them. In Florida, a major carrier has cancelled the policies of at

least 39 homes.

...to continue—United Kingdom officials said they're probing nursing homes for mentally ill seniors, owned by Alchemy, a venture capitalist group. This is the outfit taking over the Rover from BMW, for which it has been described as the White Knight. A staff worker at one nursing home said: "Infection control is nonexistent. The whole place is dirty. The food is appalling, and unsuitable for special diets. Morale has collapsed and the place is falling apart rapidly."

C'mon doc, give a guess—Researchers report that New York heart patients in need of bypass surgery who have "managed care" insurance rather than other kinds of coverage, are assigned to hospitals

with known higher death rates. A perplexed researcher asked: "Why are the companies choosing the hospitals that are the worse?" Perish the thought, but could it be they're a tad cheaper?

Sucking blood is hard work—Bank of America shareholders are having conniptions because Hugh McColl, the bank's top dog, drew \$3.75 million in wages and bonuses last year even as the bank chain's profits declined. It was also noted, in passing, that 19,000 BoA employees were fired last year. (Economy?).

Obviously they're motivated—The New York state comptroller estimates the current backlog of civil rights complaints—jobs, housing, public accommodations, etc.—

will take six years to clear up—provided no new ones are filed.

First it was elevator music—500 major office buildings will feature 10-inch computer screens in their elevators. Stock market reports, news, weather, etc. Take the express to the 30th floor and get an in-depth report on cyberspace stocks..

Taking care of business—The Supreme Court threw out an award won by the widow of a man killed at a Norfolk Southern Railroad grade level crossing. Most of these crossings are financed by the federal government. Therefore, the top court ruled, the railroads are not responsible for what's installed. Two judges dissented, declaring the ruling "defies common sense." Which is true, if you don't own a railroad.

Growing internationalization of the working class

The excerpt below is taken from "The Vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan's 'Culture War': What the 1992 Elections Revealed," a talk presented on Nov. 7, 1992, four days after the presidential elections in the United States, at a Militant Labor Forum in New York City. The entire talk appears in the pages of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, copyright © 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the Militant.

BY JACK BARNES

[An important] fact is the growing internationalization of the working class. It is not just that the industrial and urban working class is growing qualitatively larger and

all they want about massive roundups and deportations, and even about firing on unarmed workers trying to cross into the United States. Other Republican and Democratic politicians can make their slightly more genteel-sounding proposals. But nothing will stop the swelling immigration into the United States and other imperialist countries. In fact, the anti-immigrant rhetoric in the mouths of these politicians is not even primarily intended to stop the immigration. The central aim is to keep the level of fear and intimidation high enough so that the level of wages and working conditions can be kept low.

'No such thing as an American job'

How do class-struggle-minded workers answer the trade union bureaucrats' demagogic cry that NAFTA will result in losing "American jobs" to Mexico? There is only one answer: There is no such thing as an "American job" or a "Mexican job," only workers' jobs.

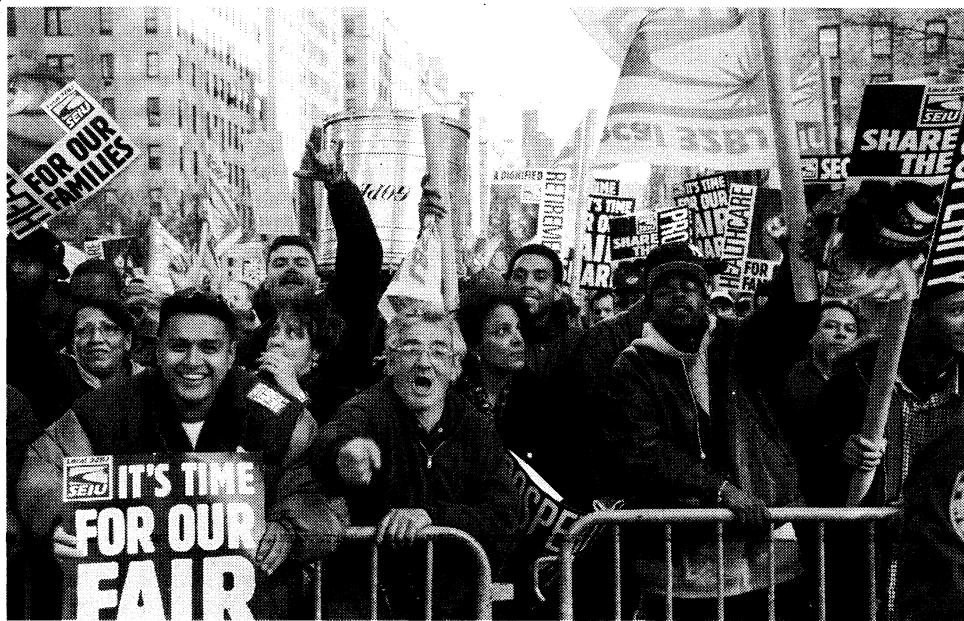
Workers in the United States have to get together with workers in Mexico and with workers in other countries and organize ourselves to defend our interests as a class, as part of the vast toiling majority of humanity. We must not support policies that strengthen our common class enemy. If workers give any other answer, the bureaucrats and the liberals and the reactionaries will win the argument. If workers give any *national* answer, our exploiters will only strengthen their power over all those who work for a living.

Class-conscious workers oppose NAFTA, as we oppose all economic and military pacts entered into by the imperialist government at home with other capitalist regimes. But we do so from an internationalist standpoint, rejecting any notion of common interests with the employing class in bolstering their competitiveness against their rivals or helping them reinforce the pariah status and superexploitation of immigrant workers. The only "we" we recognize is that of working people and our allies in the United States, Canada, and Mexico—and the rest of the Americas and the world. Not "we" Americans, "we" English-speakers, "we" the white race, or anything else that chains us to the class that grows wealthy off the exploitation of our labor and that of our toiling brothers and sisters the world over.

The capitalist rulers in Europe cannot turn back the tide of immigration either. The German government can put people in box-cars and send them back to Romania. (The *Militant* should print the photos of those trains!) But that is not going to reverse the growing numbers of immigrants in Germany—the workers from Turkey, from Yugoslavia, from elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe, and from other corners of the world. The German rulers have not even begun the battle to defeat the working class, west and east, and the immigrants are a growing part of that class who bring new experiences and give new power to struggles by workers throughout Germany.

The objective possibilities today to bring the weight of an international class to bear on unfolding fights are greater than at any other time in history, and nothing will reverse this trend.

1. In 1993 some 900,000 permanent resi-



Militant/Brian Taylor

Janitors in New York rally April 12 for decent contract. The integration of immigrants into the workforce has strengthened the working class in the United States.

dents of Japan were estimated to be of non-Japanese origin. Of these, 80 percent are Korean, with the majority of the rest from the Philippines, Thailand, China, or other Asian countries.

In face of mounting opposition to its racist,

anti-immigrant practices, Tokyo in 1993 ended its long-standing policy of requiring that Koreans living in Japan be fingerprinted; they must still carry an "Alien Registration Card" at all times.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

May 23, 1975

NEWYORK—Chanting "Hell no, SEEK won't go" and "They say cutback, we say fight back," 3,000 students picketed in front of Gracie Mansion on May 8.

The demonstration was the culmination of more than a week of protests against the city's proposed \$6.6 million cut in the SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) program of the City University of New York. Since the city funds are matched by the state, the cutbacks would really amount to \$13.2 million.

The SEEK program provides tutoring, remedial study, and financial aid for 11,000 Black, Puerto Rican, and Asian students on twenty-two campuses in the CUNY system. SEEK is an essential part of CUNY's open admissions policy.

The planned cuts would have the effect of cutting off thousands of students who can only attend school because of the SEEK program. This rollback is aimed directly at minority students, who comprised less than 4 percent of the students at CUNY before the establishment of SEEK in 1969.

The cuts in SEEK following on the heels of earlier cutbacks in the CUNY system, are a part of a continuing effort by Democratic Mayor Abraham Beame to balance the city's budget at the expense of city services and education.

At Hunter College, 700 students rallied the week before, demanding that the cuts not be implemented.

Students from more than a dozen campuses came to the demonstration in chartered buses or former feeder marches from their campuses.

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

May 22, 1950

Several months ago the Secretariat of the Stalinist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions expelled from the WFTU Executive Committee Djuro Salaj, Chairman of the Yugoslav Trade Union Federation. Salaj had been elected to the Executive Committee at the last world congress of the WFTU, that is, prior to Stalin's unleashing of his "cold war" against Yugoslavia.

The tactics employed by the Kremlin against Yugoslavia bear a striking resemblance to those followed by the American imperialists against the Stalinists themselves.

The expulsion of Djuro Salaj—or the "severance of relations," as it was diplomatically worded—came as a component part of Stalin's campaign to isolate the Yugoslavs by driving them out of all international bodies or their affiliates under the Kremlin's thumb.

Time and again the Yugoslav unions have vainly protested against Salaj's expulsion, requesting a reversal of the decision. Finally, at a conference of the Yugoslav unions in Belgrade last month, the delegates unanimously adopted a memorandum.

It points out that the expulsion of Salaj, which actually means the expulsion of the Yugoslav federation itself, was an act of usurpation by the WFTU Secretariat.

"Only the workers of Yugoslavia and not the secretariat of the WFTU are qualified to elect their leadership and to decide on who shall represent the Yugoslav Trade Union Federation," it states.

Like the employment of women, this immigration is being forced by economic necessity, by the laws of motion of capital itself. It is being forced by the dispossession of rural toilers throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East. It is being accelerated by the worsening economic and social conditions of the majority of peasants and workers in these countries, by the "successes" of the "market miracle" in the semicolonial world.

The Patrick Buchanans can talk all they want about building trenches and walls along the border with Mexico. They can talk

May Day: reborn in the USA

The new stirrings in the working class in the United States were evident in actions organized in many cities across the country this May 1. Also visible that day was the fact that immigrant workers are strengthening the working class. Thousands brought their traditions of struggle in celebrating an international *workers' day*.

Thousands of workers marched in New York; Chicago; Dallas; Detroit; Toledo, Ohio; Portland, Oregon; and other cities. They raised demands to defend immigrant rights, for a general amnesty to gain the right to legal residence for all immigrants in the United States, for an eight-hour day, and to be treated with respect on the job and in society at large. Giant May Day marches were held this year in Cuba, Brazil, and South Africa, among other countries.

May Day has its origins in a mass mobilization of workers on May 1, 1886, demanding the working day be limited to eight hours. The center of the actions was Chicago, where the movement was led by immigrant workers from Europe. In *Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years*, Farrell Dobbs writes that on that day "the deadline set for inauguration of the eight-hour day, a gigantic strike wave developed. From coast to coast workers downed their tools, established picket lines, and held mass demonstrations. Then, in Chicago, Illinois—where outstanding labor solidarity was manifested—the capitalists launched a savage counteroffensive."

On May 4 the police used the excuse of a small bomb explosion to shoot at a massive rally, killing many. The capitalists launched a witch-hunt against strike leaders, especially anarchist workers. In a frame-up trial, eight were convicted for the bombing and five sentenced to be hanged. The others were given long prison terms.

In 1889, at the founding of the Second International, delegates decided "to organize, for 1 May, a great interna-

tional demonstration, organized in such a way that on the same day the workers in all lands and cities will simultaneously demand from the powers-that-be a limitation of the working day to eight hours," declared a resolution." Trade unions in the United States had called for mass demonstrations a year earlier to be held on May 1, an action also discussed by the French and Belgium trade union movement.

The success was beyond the delegates' expectations. In subsequent years, the U.S. labor officialdom, anxious to distance itself from any class-struggle course, dropped May Day as a celebration and instituted Labor Day in September as a tamer "American" substitute that it hoped the employers would find less objectionable.

The *Militant* welcomes the return to the United States of the combative tradition of May Day. The day provides an opportunity for workers to join in a framework of proletarian internationalism, breaking the narrow political bounds usually imposed by the bosses and the trade union officialdom.

May Day was founded in struggle and in the blood of workers in the streets at the hands of the state's repressive forces. In 1886 workers were united across union jurisdictions and political tendencies for common action. It is a tradition that has remained, keeping actions and demonstrations open to all.

As the capitalist economic crisis deepens, May Day will more and more become a day of common action by workers and farmers across national boundaries in our own interests. It is a good sign that workers in the United States now have a chance—thanks to the initiatives of brothers and sisters who hail from Latin America and other countries—to retake that day and an internationalist consciousness needed to effectively battle the employing class.

Defend Miranda rights

The labor movement and all democratic-minded people need to protest the latest attack on fundamental rights codified in the landmark Miranda ruling and the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination. In the current moves to gut the Miranda decision, a right won by working people more than three decades ago, the U.S. rulers are pressing to bolster the cops' ability to use coerced confessions of an arrested person without informing them of their rights.

The 1966 Miranda ruling requires police to inform any person they detain of their right to remain silent and to consult a lawyer. The U.S. Supreme Court is currently reviewing an appeal of the overturning of a federal court's decision that a confession by Charles Dickerson to being a driver in a 1997 bank heist should be thrown out because the cops had not given him the Miranda warnings before interrogating him.

In their anticipation of future confrontations with labor, the government of the employers has been chipping away at democratic rights. Their target is first and foremost working people who stand up to the employers and their government. They hope to cripple and ultimately defeat any working-class leadership that arises out of fu-

ture struggles.

The assault on Miranda rights is part of an array of moves carried out by the Clinton administration over the past decade that strengthen the repressive powers of the state. These include the stepped-up use of the death penalty, limits on appeal rights, putting more workers behind bars, and placing more cops on the streets.

The employing class is pressing to turn back the clock to the days when cops were able to snatch people off the streets and jail them for several days while they coerced them to obtain "voluntary" confessions. Many of their victims were Black workers with few resources to defend themselves in a legal system already rigged against them. The Miranda rights were won in the context of the massive civil rights battles of the 1950s and '60s.

The Clinton administration's unleashing of a SWAT-style assault by the immigration cops on a home in Miami was another calculated move to undermine these fundamental rights.

From miners fighting to defend health-care benefits to demonstrators demanding the U.S. Navy get out of Vieques, Puerto Rico—all have a stake in defending Miranda rights.

Farmers rally for justice in Washington

Continued from front page

the claims of more than 40 percent of the farmers applying for \$50,000. Some have faced harassment by banks and the FBI, among other obstacles.

"Now we're being investigated by the FBI for 'false claims,'" said BFSA president Gary Grant, addressing the rally across the street from the USDA building. "We're sick of waiting for our payment. They continue to break promises, first '40 acres and a mule,' all the way up to this."

Anurhdu Mittal of Food First and California Democratic Congresswoman Maxine Waters also spoke.

Farmers in the audience talked about the experiences they have gone through in this fight. North Carolina farmer Yarborough Williams told the *Militant*, "We need a million-farmer march. It would be great to have a million farmers in Washington come and shut down the streets."

Dairy farmers from Wisconsin participated in the demonstration, as did women farmers from New Jersey. Randy Jasper of Wisconsin said, "It doesn't matter if you're Black, white, or whatever. We're all farmers fighting together."

Anna Marie Codario, Marie Visconti, Gladys Williams, and Mary Ordille were among the farmers attending the rally. They had been part of a group of 60 farmers, unionists, and supporters at a successful rally in New Jersey to save Codario's farm the day before. William Miller of Georgia commented, "We need to get others involved. Commodity prices are the lowest they've been in years for all farmers." He urged others to build and join upcoming farmers' actions.

With supporters chanting "No justice, no peace, no farmers, no food" and other slogans, 13 farmers were arrested as they tried to enter the USDA building to meet with Agriculture Secretary Daniel Glickman while report-

ers and others watched the police put plastic handcuffs on their wrists. The 13 were released soon after and all attended a planning meeting at the end of the actions.

The same day, Democratic congress-people, led by the Congressional Black Caucus, ensured the defeat of a resolution in the House of Representatives urging the U.S. government to speed up settlement payments to Black farmers.

Opponents of the nonbinding resolution, mostly allies of the Clinton administration, justified their vote by arguing that the measure's sponsor, Republican Congressman Jay Dickey of Arkansas, was not a real friend of farmers and was only trying to gain political favor among them.

Eddie Slaughter, BFSA's national vice president, condemned the move to defeat the bill. In a phone interview, Slaughter said the measure, which he and other farmers supported, was aimed at encouraging the government "to pay Black farmers in an expeditious manner, and to say that no taxes should be paid on any funds received since it was the government's actions that led to the lawsuit in the first place."

"There is no way you can say that just because the people who sponsored this are Republican, you have to play partisan politics with my best interests," Slaughter said. Rather, they should have done "what is right, just, and fair." The farm leader objected to the Congressional Black Caucus stance that they defeated the measure because the bill's sponsors were using Black farmers. "I would like to speak for myself and represent my own interests. Anyone who goes against my interests and that of other farmers I consider my enemy," he said.

John Staggs from Philadelphia contributed to this article.

Miners rally to defend benefits

Continued from front page

21—legislation that would immediately transfer \$172 million in Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund interest money to the UMWA's Combined Benefit Fund (CBF).

The CBF, the largest union fund, provides health-care benefits to almost 70,000 UMWA retirees and their dependents. Some 40,000 retirees from Pennsylvania and West Virginia rely on the fund, which is running an annual deficit of \$50 million. The retired miners affected by the shortfall are in 18 states and as far west as Wyoming.

In 1946, following a nationwide coal miners strike, the UMWA was promised lifetime health care for its membership by the federal government, which at that time had seized the mines. This commitment was then codified in subsequent contracts between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), the coal bosses' collective bargaining agent.

Counteroffensive by the bosses

Over the past 25 years, the coal bosses, with the help of the courts, have been on an offensive to sharply cut back miners' health care. This was one of the main issues in the 111-day nationwide UMWA strike in 1977-78, the most important labor battle in decades. It was the issue that provoked an 11-month strike by 1,900 Pittston miners in 1989, who fought off the company's attempt to deny medical benefits to its retired union members.

Over the course of the strike, another 40,000 UMWA miners walked out for up to six weeks in support of this fight. More than 50,000 people from across the country and around the world visited Camp Solidarity, the union's strike center in southwest Virginia.

Since then many of the unfolding fights, as well as recent UMWA strikes—the four-month-long strike by Freeman United Coal Co. in 1998, and the strikes at Jeddo Coal Co. in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, and the Deserado mine in Rangeley, Colorado, in 1999—have centered around the issue of health care and pensions.

The big-business press in coal mining communities has been running front-page articles publicizing the rally, including listing the union's phone number to call for bus reservations. The lead headline in the May 3 edition of the *Observer-Reporter*, in Pennsylvania, was "UMW digs in for benefits fight, plans 'critical' rally." The Harrisburg, Illinois, *Daily Register* ran a front-page article, "Miners to head to Washington." The reporter noted a "massive effort is under way in Southern Illinois organizing a caravan of UMWA miners and retirees to make the Washington, D.C., trip for the rally in support of the legislation."

Retirees leading effort

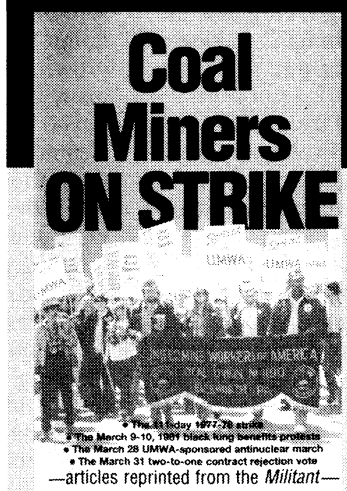
Retired union miners have been in the front ranks of those building the rally—especially in reaching out to UMWA members working in the coal mines—and explaining that the existence of the union is at stake. A week before the rally, the union reports that some 70 buses are filled from southwest Pennsylvania alone, and that it may need to rent more.

Support for the miners' fight is also pouring in from coal communities across the country. For example, borough councils in Homer City and Masontown, Pennsylvania, passed resolutions backing the miners' demands. "Masontown is a mining community with both retired and active members, and I believe every municipality should get out there and support the health care of miners and keep their promise," said Masontown council president Joseph Volansky. The Illinois General Assembly passed a resolution in support of the Coal Act in its spring session.

PATHFINDER

COAL MINERS ON STRIKE

Articles on the 111-day 1977-78 strike, the 1981 strike and contract rejection vote, the United Mine Workers of America and the fight against nuclear power, the fight for health benefits and compensation to Black Lung victims, and more. \$5.00



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

• The March 9-10, 1981 black lung benefits protests
 • The March 28 UMWA-sponsored antinuclear march
 • The March 31 two-to-ten contract rejection vote
 —articles reprinted from the *Militant*—

Illinois farmers oppose new prison

BY LISA ROTTACH

HOPKINS PARK, Illinois—B.Y.O.T. (Bring Your Own Tractor). That is the call for a Memorial Day rally against a proposed 1,800-bed women's prison in Pembroke Township, an overwhelmingly Black community 60 miles south of Chicago.

San Diego janitors approve contract

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES—After waging a one-month strike, 275 janitors in San Diego, organized by Service Employees International Union Local 2028 approved a new contract.

Boosted by the Los Angeles janitors' walkout, the San Diego workers organized demonstrations, and some held a 10-day fast. The janitors earned about \$7 an hour; the new contract will give them increases of 50 cents for the first year and 40 cents for the second. In the third year the companies would contribute \$171 a month to health insurance, providing service both in Mexico and the United States.

Hunger striker Ignacio Quiñones said, "This shows that when workers are united, no force is more powerful."

Meanwhile, hundreds of government-paid home-care workers marched through downtown Los Angeles demanding an hourly raise of \$1.25 and health insurance. Currently the 72,000 home-care workers earn \$6.25 an hour in a program funded by the federal, state and county governments. They organized into SEIU Local 43B last year after a 20-year organizing drive.

Mark Friedman is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

Pembroke Advocates for Truth (PAT), an organization that actively opposes the construction of the prison, is organizing the Rural Life/Anti-Prison rally. Many of its members are farmers who are opposed to the facility being built on land bordering their farms.

Some PAT members have been under attack because of their organized opposition to the prison. For example, Pamela Basu, a farmer and PAT member, was recently fired from her job as village treasurer.

"The reason [board president] David Leggett gave was that I wasn't getting along with the finance committee and the latest audit was late," Basu explains. "I'm not responsible for audits, and besides, the last audit was OK. So I really think it was my opposition to the prison."

Basu cited a Jan. 12, 2000, letter to the village board from Tom Perry, the wealthy real estate developer who orchestrated the Hopkins Park application for the prison.

In the letter, Perry threatened to break relations with the village unless Basu was reprimanded and fired, "if she is not of a mind to stop criticism of the project goals and myself."

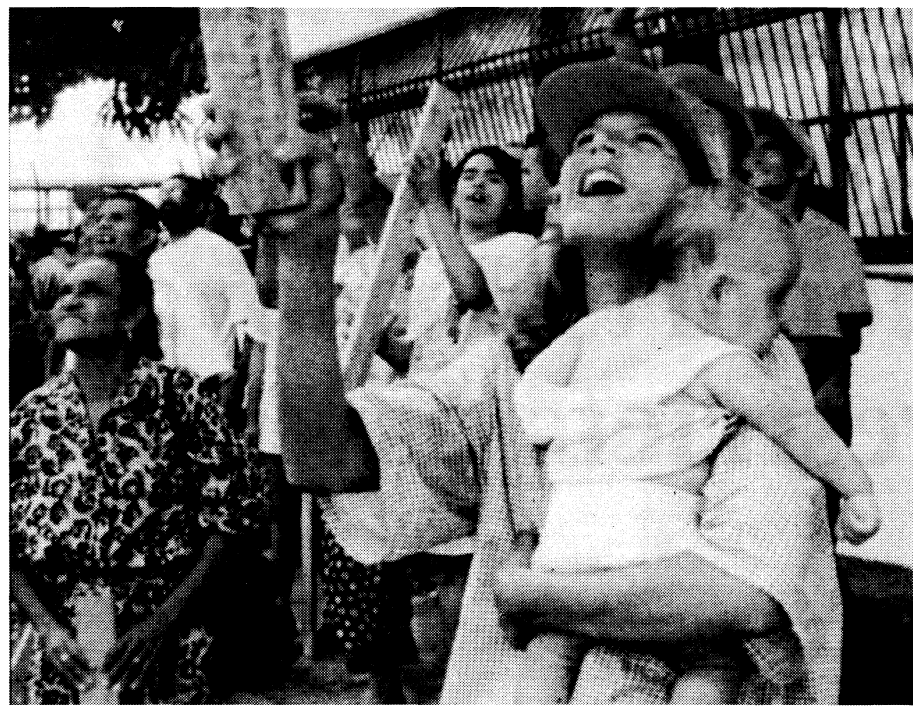
Basu and other PAT members remain outspoken in their opposition to the prison, believing it to be an affront to African-Americans and a threat to their livelihoods as organic farmers.

They demand that town meetings to discuss the prison project be accessible to all residents. Recent meetings have not complied with the Illinois open-meetings act, they say.

Basu and fellow PAT member Mark Anthony, a farmer and schoolteacher, filed a suit against the village board, its president, and the Pembroke Township board, alleging breaches of the state's open-meetings act. These include lack of access to minutes and failure to give the required 48-hour public notice of meetings and agendas.

In late March police confiscated Anthony's video camera and yanked the cord of Basu's video camera from the wall as they taped a

Landless workers mobilize in Brazil



Landless workers protest at headquarters of the Agrarian Reform Institute in Brasilia, capital of Brazil. Tens of thousands organized by the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) took part in actions beginning in late April, occupying government buildings in 22 of 26 states. Security forces attacked protesters, killing one and injuring 200 others in the state of Paraná.

The rural workers called for land reform and for financial assistance to small farmers. Among those who protested were many who have won titles to land from the government—often through actions organized by the MST—and who need financial credits to develop their farms. "We will be back soon and in force," said Jose Rainha, a leader of the MST, after the protests had ended. Among Brazil's 167 million people, 3 percent own 66 percent of the land.

village meeting. This too violates the open-meetings act, which states, "Any person may record the proceedings at meetings required to be open by the act by tape, film, or any other means."

They were able to push the board back on this violation, although the board had restricted them to tape from the farthest corner of the room, where audio pickup is nearly impossible.

Three police officers are now stationed at town meetings. "Police have no business at board meetings. They're there to intimidate

us," said Basu.

Basu and Anthony recently won a court injunction against the Village of Hopkins Park for these violations. Future meetings are to be public, with timely notification of the date and agenda, and can be videotaped.

For further information on the Rural Life/Anti-prison rally, contact PAT at (815)-944-6933.

Lisa Rottach is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Chicago.

LETTERS

Poultry workers seek union

Around 50 students at North Georgia College in Dahlonega heard three unionists tell of their struggle to win union recognition in Albany, Kentucky. Martin Ingram, Jennifer Decker, and Michael Hatcher have all been fired from the Cagle-Keystone poultry plant in Albany, and visited this campus to tell of the current struggle to get United Food and Commercial Workers Local 227 recognized by the bosses at Cagle-Keystone.

The plant opened in October 1998 and currently has around 1,000 workers, with enormous turnover due to the bad work conditions.

Ingram said, "Since June 1999, when the union organization drive began, 42 workers have been fired and 61 suspended. The line speed is 140 birds per minute, which leads to many injuries, and can cause you to lose your sense of equilibrium."

Decker told of workers getting fired when they reported injuries.

Hatcher explained that \$20 per week comes out of workers' paychecks to help pay off the loan to build the plant. "Starting pay is \$7.25 per hour," he said. "There are 300 Latino workers in the plant who the company tries to pit against the others," he added.

A crisis fund has been set up to help those who have been fired. Contributions can be sent to UFCW Local 227, 7902 Old Minors Lane, Louisville, KY 40219. The e-mail address is ufcw227@aol.com.

Dan Fein
Atlanta, Georgia

Farmers targeted too

Does the scenario culminating in the chilling predawn INS raid on the home of the Miami relatives of

Elián González have relevance to U.S. working farmers?

U.S. farmers, like the Miami Cubans, are used as scapegoats. Farmers are singled out for the consequences of free market competition driving individual management decisions to maximize production in hopes of hitting a high market.

So the farmer ends up being blamed for environmental destruction, pesticide residues in the food supply, wanton use of chemicals, farm worker abuse, and pure greed.

Nothing is said about the exploitation of working farmers by the giant monopolistic food processing and merchandising interests, the agrochemical and seed conglomerates, banks and insurance companies, rent-gouging landlords, as well as the callous land speculators. This is the milieu of the independent producers' price-cost squeeze leading to rising debt and ever-threatening ruin.

Also like the Miami Cubans and other scapegoated groups, farmers are often characterized as irrationally militant and potentially dangerous. Farmers' organizations focusing on social injustices are labeled as unrealistic or motivated by greed.

All these tendencies degrade working farmers' public image, providing enforcement officials ammunition for violating their human and constitutional rights. It helps them justify massive displays of force to "maintain the rule of law" while brutally victimizing members of the targeted group.

So if farmers are silent on this widely publicized military-style assault on a Miami working family's home, they aid the government's ability continue to use these same tactics against them when they decide to fight for fair treatment,

against foreclosure, and/or subsequent ejection from their farms.

Karl Butts
Plant City, Florida

Stalin admirer advocates 'Bomb Little Havana'

I would like to congratulate the *Militant* on your excellent coverage and editorial with regards to the INS raid on the González household in Miami.

I have been able to get out on sales teams with this issue of the *Militant* and have gotten a very interesting response. Overall, many workers I talked to appreciated the coverage, saying that their gut reaction was similar to the line of the *Militant*: there is something extremely unsettling about seeing the INS and federal marshals bust into someone's house and remove an individual before sunrise. Several Vieques activists also saw the connection between the two raids, and had a strong reaction against both.

One individual I spoke to, however, a fellow student at Hunter College, had a very different response. His opinion was that, not only was he glad to see the INS bust up "those gusanos" house, the U.S. government should have gone further and dropped an atomic bomb on Little Havana. He also said that he considers himself a communist, though one who sympathizes more with Josef Stalin. We're doing another sales table at Hunter tomorrow.

Elena Tate
New York, New York

Des Moines racist killing

Vigils have been occurring every Sunday night at the Polk County Courthouse in Des Moines to demand justice for Charles Lovelady,

a young Black man strangled to death at Graffiti's nightclub February 16 after being told to leave for not adhering to the club's dress code.

Although the death was ruled a homicide, neither of the two bouncers involved have spent a day in jail. A grand jury indicted the two men for involuntary manslaughter, a misdemeanor charge that carries a maximum of two years in prison.

On May 5, attorneys for the defendants succeeded in convincing a judge to postpone the June trial to October, saying they did not have enough time to prepare their case. William Kutmus, attorney for the owners of the nightclub, said the new date would give the city time to cool off.

At the April 30 vigil it was announced that lawyers for the bouncers would ask for a change in venue because of the publicity generated in the case.

Speaking to a crowd of 60 protesters, Pam Williams said, "It doesn't matter whether they move the trial to Davenport in the east or Spencer in the west of the state. We will be there."

Citizens for Justice announced it will continue the Sunday night vigils and is planning a series of fund-raising activities leading up to the annual Juneteenth holiday where the case will be highlighted.

Edwin Fruit,
Des Moines, Iowa

Invaluable tool

I just got back from vacation and found that I have not yet received the *Militant* issues dated May 1 or May 8. Fortunately, the website is easy to use, and we were able to access the excellent editorials and discussion about the INS raid in

Miami. These are invaluable tools in this important discussion.

I had to work Easter weekend, and then found a massive approval rating for the raid by my co-workers at an aircraft maintenance facility, who almost unanimously supported the return of Elián to his father and to Cuba. And this blurred into support for "take charge" Reno, amnesia over the role of the government in setting up this entire situation and, for some, hostility to Cuban-Americans as a whole. By the middle of the week, just before I left, some conscious rightist co-workers had leaped into the discussion with references to how this sort of raid might happen in communist countries, but isn't "what this country stands for." Which several co-workers from the Caribbean found laughable, though they made a one-time exception in still approving this raid.

The *Militant* is providing what we need in negotiating this minefield.

Kathleen Denny
Oakland, California

[Note from editor: We are correcting the problem with your subscription and sending you the missing issues. Thank you for calling our attention to it. We hope any readers with problems receiving the paper will let us know so we can work on it.]

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

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Australian gov't deports Kosovars, restricts asylum

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia—Tens of thousands of Albanian refugees who fled Kosova a year ago have been forced to return there in recent weeks and months. Deportations by the Australian government have paralleled similar actions by other imperialist governments, particularly in Germany and Switzerland.

By early April some 3,500 of the 4,000 Kosovars in Australia had agreed to return "voluntarily." The push to remove them came when immigration minister Philip Ruddock made a unilateral determination that conditions in Kosova were no longer unsafe. The Kosovars fled their homeland in the midst of pogrom-like attacks by special police units, rightist militias, and others loyal to the Belgrade regime of Slobodan Milosevic, as well as a massive bombing campaign by the imperialist powers.

Following the "voluntary" departures from Australia, the government then used the move as a bludgeon against claims by those remaining. They were portrayed by Ruddock as asking for special treatment. "I'm satisfied that they have no claims that would single them out over and above any other Kosovo Albanian for persecution," he said April 9. Some of those who finally agreed to leave are from Presheva, which is now part of southern Serbia.

Kosovars organize protests

Some 100 Kosovars living at the Bandiana Safe Haven, a converted army base near Albury-Wodonga, carried out an organized protest and hunger strike April 9–10.

On behalf of all those remaining, 81 refugees at the Bandiana camp also appealed to the High Court against Ruddock's deportation order. Their appeal was rejected April 10. At that point the refugees became "unlawful non-citizens" and Bandiana was transformed into a temporary detention center watched by some 20 security guards. A small solidarity protest organized by local residents gathered at the fence that evening.

Government threats were wrapped in blandishments. Those who refused to cooperate with its order to leave were threatened with "an appropriate level of force" by immigration department official Philip Mayne. At the same time Ruddock threatened the 81 with having to pay the costs of their ongoing detention if they didn't agree to leave. But he also cynically held out the possibility that those who did cooperate would be permitted, once back in Kosova, to apply for visas to return.

About 30 refugees, including some who had been living and working outside the camps, escaped or went into hiding to avoid deportation in the days that followed. Immigration cops searched homes of Albanians in Sydney. Catherine Ordway, a spokeswoman for the Albanian Association of New South Wales, condemned the searches. "They have taken out search warrants and gone into the Albanian community and searched people's houses, under beds and in wardrobes. It is outrageous."

At least two teenagers attempted suicide, but Ruddock was dismissive, calling them "an attempt to pressure him," according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

At least 21 Kosovars who continued to defy the order to leave were flown to the remote Port Hedland Immigration Detention Center in Western Australia April 15–16, where they will await forced deportation. A handful of others have had their visas temporarily extended for health reasons.

The actions taken against Albanian Kosovar refugees are part of the brutality and coarseness that has increasingly marked Canberra's policies toward refugees and unlawful immigrants for nearly a decade.

Over the last 10 years only 7.94 percent of applicants gained asylum first off. In the same period, just over 100,000 people were taken in, either through the government's resettlement program for refugees living overseas or through granting asylum to refugees applying after arriving in Australia.

In May 1999, Parliament enacted amendments to the immigration law, which granted Kosovars fleeing the carnage at home a new "temporary safe haven" visa. However, in doing so, the Kosovars were legally precluded from applying for asylum or permanent residence as "refugees."

'Humanitarian' Canberra, East Timor

With the precedent set, this new category was also used to temporarily airlift East Timorese to Darwin in September 1999, who faced imminent danger to their lives from rightist militias controlled by the Indonesian military command at the time.

Both moves were designed to portray Canberra as a "humanitarian" power. But its recent actions in forcing Kosovars to return give the lie to that image. In fact, all aspects of temporary safe haven visas are in the hands of the minister of immigration, who is empowered to act unilaterally and arbitrarily. Those granted this status also lose their right to due process in the courts, as in the case of the 81 Kosovars.

In October 1999 the government introduced a three-year temporary visa for those found to be refugees but who entered the country "illegally."

They have no right to reenter Australia if they leave, cannot apply to have family members join them, and only receive extremely limited government resettlement assistance. Refugees who enter Australia "legally," for example with a tourist visa, and then apply for refugee status are still eligible for permanent residency.

In December 1999, with the backing of the Australian Labor Party, Canberra enacted further amendments to its immigration laws, permitting the boarding of boats in international waters in search of "illegal" entrants being transported by people smugglers. It enshrines the concept of the "safe third country," where, if a person claiming refugee status in Australia has resided in a third country for at least seven days, the immigration minister can send them there, based on his arbitrary determination that the third country has procedures that the potential refugee can use to apply for asylum.

These draconian actions come on top of other moves. Today, there are nearly 4,000 people in mandatory detention in six immigration centers. Two of these were opened in 1999 to deal with a near doubling of detainees since 1996. Some 2,800 undocumented asylum seekers arrived by sea in the second half of 1999, giving rise to an ongoing campaign in the big-business media against "boat people" and "queue jumpers."

Mandatory detention of immigrants and refugees arriving in the country without proper papers, with few exceptions, was introduced by the Labor government in 1992. Other moves have included:

August 1996: introduction of measures including penalizing an asylum applicant for failing to lodge all evidence at the time of application and removing the requirement that applicants should be interviewed; withdrawal of financial support administered by the Red Cross once an applicant is rejected initially.

July 1997: withdrawal of permission to work and denying access to Medicare, the national health program, to anyone who doesn't apply for refugee status within 45 days of arrival.

May 1998: burden of proof reversed, re-

Students join Ecuador May Day march



Militant/Hilda Cuzco
Students join May Day march of 50,000 in Quito, Ecuador. Peasants, unionists, and youth protested regime's austerity cutbacks and "dollarization" of currency.

quiring all visa applicants to show they are of good character; requirement that any character cases heard by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal be decided within 45 days or the applicant automatically loses.

July 1998: asylum seekers become ineligible for Legal Aid; removal of permission to work for those asylum seekers requesting ministerial intervention on humanitarian grounds.

December 1998: If they make repeated requests for ministerial intervention on humanitarian grounds, asylum seekers lose eligibility for a bridging visa, which keeps their status lawful pending the outcome of an application.

1999: legislation passed removing the power of the government's own Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) to initiate contact with immigration detainees to advise them of their right to seek asylum.

Conditions facing those in immigration detention centers are "abominable," according to the HREOC. Reports surfaced in February 2000 that detainees in the new immigration detention center at Curtin Air Base had sewn their mouths shut to protest their conditions.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

6,000 in New York demand justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal

BY AMY HUSK

NEW YORK—Supporters of the fight to prevent the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal filled the Theater at Madison Square Garden here May 7. Six thousand people attended the event, some coming by bus or car from Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and other East Coast cities. The crowd was overwhelmingly young.

Among the speakers were former New York mayor David Dinkins, Leonard Weinglass, lead lawyer for Abu-Jamal, Pam Africa of MOVE in Philadelphia, and actors Ossie Davis and Ed Asner. A group of youth marched on stage at one point, chanting and carrying banners calling for freedom for Abu-Jamal.

Some of them recounted fights at Antioch College in Ohio and Evergreen College in Washington State where students chose Mumia Abu-Jamal as their commencement speaker.

A large group of opponents of the U.S. Navy's bombing on Vieques, Puerto Rico, was present. They carried a colorful banner and handed out leaflets for a series of actions called "Puerto Rican Resistance Week-end," planned here May 19–21.

Across the street, a group of 70 off-duty New York cops and supporters counterprotested.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up and convicted in 1982 of killing a Philadelphia police officer and sentenced to death. Cops who testified at his trial concocted a phony "confession" and a key witness who testified against him has since stated that she lied as a result of police coercion.

His supporters contend he did not get a fair trial and Abu-Jamal has asked for a new trial. Pennsylvania authorities were moving to execute him in 1995 but, thanks to international public pressure, he won an indefinite stay of execution 10 days before his scheduled death.

Abu-Jamal's attorneys have presented written arguments to federal district judge William Yohn for a new trial. Oral arguments will be heard soon in Philadelphia and supporters of Abu-Jamal's fight for justice are urged to be in the courtroom that day.

A Western Regional Mobilization in support of Abu-Jamal will be held in San Francisco May 13. The same day, Mothers Against Police Terror are holding a demonstration in Philadelphia.