

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

New pamphlet: producing revolutionary books

— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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U.S. troops, bombers out of the Mideast!

Fighters against Washington's brutality and its wars should not pause for one moment in campaigning to explain to fellow workers, students, and others the nature of imperialism and organizing opposition to its

EDITORIAL

military assaults. The recent agreement imposed on Baghdad, far from establishing peace, advances the next steps in the U.S. rulers' attempt to legitimize their use of enormous firepower in the Arab-Persian Gulf region and elsewhere. The "deal" puts a military strike on a hair trigger, providing conditions for Washington to trample on Iraqi sovereignty and spark provocations that the Clinton administration will use to justify taking unilateral military action.

"The Opening Guns of World War III:
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Right: Militant/Nell Wheeler
Top, U.S. military presence will remain in Mideast. Right, more than 200 people in Newark, New Jersey, protest U.S. aggression against the Iraqi people February 21.



'Peace' deal sets hair trigger for war

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Washington has emerged with a finer hair trigger to unilaterally use its massive arsenal as a result of the February 23 deal negotiated between United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan and the Iraqi government. While the agreement has averted a U.S. military strike for now, it in no way decreases the likelihood for another slaughter against the Iraqi people.

The world's dominant imperialist power has used its war preparations in the Persian Gulf to deal blows to its rivals in Europe and take further steps toward their ultimate aim of overthrowing the workers states in Europe — primarily Russia — with military force and reestablishing the system of wage slavery there. The U.S. rulers seek to unleash their enormous military might to com-

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N.Y. event celebrates 100 years of struggle against Yankee imperialism

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEW YORK — The theme of "100 Years of Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism: Af-

rica, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines" drew a crowd of nearly 200 students and others here February 19. A range of student

groups and political organizations sponsored the meeting, which was held at City College of New York (CCNY).

Rafael Cancel Miranda, a well-known leader of the fight for Puerto Rico's independence and former political prisoner, traveled from the island to address the youthful audience, which included many Puerto Rican students. The meeting also featured Félix Wilson, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. Other speakers included Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, Rossand Fabunan of the Makabayan-Philippine Forum, and Rosemary Mealy, WBAI radio journalist and author of *Fidel and Malcolm X: Memories of a Meeting*.

Saulo Colón Zavala, a member of the Puerto Rico Collective, one of the sponsoring student organizations, chaired the event and spoke on behalf of that group. He noted that since Washington declared war on Spain in 1898 and made Puerto Rico its own colony, the U.S. government has used the island as a springboard for military interventions against other nations, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Today, Colón added, "the war against Iraq is the continuation of these imperialist policies."

Other sponsors of the meeting included Areito, CCNY Coalition, PODER, ROOTS, Graduate Student Council, Unión de Jóvenes Dominicanos, Black Studies De-

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Caterpillar workers vote down contract

BY FRANK FORRESTAL
AND CAPPY KIDD

EAST PEORIA, Illinois — "Rejecting the contract sends a clear message to Cat and other companies that we are not defeated," said Tom Smith, a member of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 974. "Now the ball's in Cat's court."

A few hours after the voting, UAW Local 974 president Jim Clingan, who had urged his members to vote for the contract, announced that the agreement had been rejected by 61 percent of the union's membership. He was answered with thunderous cheers, applause, and chants of "We are Union!" from the 100 or so members who had gathered at the East Peoria union hall.

Caterpillar Inc., the world's largest maker of construction equipment, employs some 13,000 UAW workers in four states. Workers there have been without a contract since 1991. Failure to reach an agreement led to two strikes — a 163-day walkout in 1992 and a strike that began in June 1994. Union officials decided to end that strike after 17 months, even though the rank and file soundly rejected the company's offer at the time. Union members were told to go back to work. It has taken more than two years for formal negotiations to resume. The ratification contract vote was one of the most

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Florida sugar workers walk out

BY ANGEL LARISCY
AND KAY SEDAM

CLEWISTON, Florida — About 100 striking members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 57 spanned three blocks of the main street of this town February 22 as they rallied outside the headquarters of U.S. Sugar Corp. Members of the union and their families enthusiastically waved picket signs amid the honks of passing cars and trucks showing their support.

Two blocks away, dozens of IAM members picketed outside the gates of the U.S. Sugar plant, which they were striking for the first time in 24 years.

At midnight on February 19 more than 900 members of the IAM walked out at the two organized plants of U.S. Sugar Corp. in Clewiston and Pahokee, Florida. U.S. Sugar, based in Clewiston, is Florida's largest sugar company. Last summer U.S. Sugar and United Sugars Corp., based in Minnesota, formed a sales agreement that resulted in controlling about 25 percent of the U.S. market for refined sugar. Florida leads the nation in sugar cane production.

As the *Militant* went to press, the strikers narrowly approved a new contract and returned to work.

U.S. Sugar owns 165,000 acres of sugar cane fields along the southern shore of Lake Okeechobee in the center of the state. The harvesting is done by nonunion agricultural workers, most of whom are immigrants. The two struck mills grind sugar cane, which is then boiled and separated into raw sugar and

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Read, study, and sell

Opening Guns of World War III Washington's Assault on Iraq

Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New Internationalist* no. 7. Available in English, French, Spanish, and Swedish. \$12.00

U.S. Hands Off the Mideast!

Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations

Fidel Castro, Ricardo Alarcón

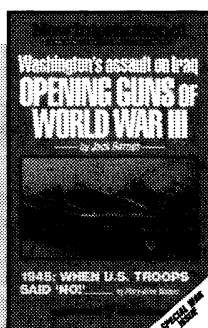
The case against Washington's 1990-91 embargo and war against Iraq, as presented by the Cuban government at the United Nations. Available in English and Spanish. \$10.95 See special offer on page 7.

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

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

Jack Barnes

Shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. Available in English, French, and Spanish. \$19.95 See special offer on page 7.



Tens of thousands in Croatia demand jobs, better conditions

Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched toward the main square in Zagreb, Croatia, February 20, protesting unemployment and deteriorating living conditions. Croatian cops blocked their entry into the city's main plaza, but 10,000 protesters refused to disperse and regrouped at another square for a rally later that day. Unemployment in Croatia is at 18.4 percent by government figures. Other estimates put the jobless rate closer to 23 percent, with another 112,000 others working but not being paid regularly, in a population of just 4.6 million. Croatian president Franjo Tudjman pledged to create 50,000 jobs in 1997, but instead tens of thousands of workers were fired.

EU presses Poland for 'reforms'

The Polish government has pledged to draft a "restructuring and privatization" plan for the steel industry, according to European Union (EU) external affairs commissioner Hans van den Broek. EU officials are pressing Warsaw to lift tariffs on steel imports, as one condition for bringing Poland into EU membership. The Polish government had promised to drop the tariffs by the end of this year, but now wants to extend protections until 2000.

Warsaw also plans to sell off Petrochemia Plock, the country's largest oil refinery, and CPN, the state-owned gasoline distributor, by the end of this year. Plock has a productive capacity of 13 million tons per year, and CPN owns some 1,400 gas stations. Together, the companies are worth more than \$1 billion.

Rome tightens immigration rules

The Italian government tightened its immigration laws February 19, using the pretext of a large influx of Kurdish refugees fleeing the imminent bombing of Iraq. Previous laws gave immigrants a two-week grace period to leave the country on their own after being expelled; the new legislation calls for cops to escort deportees to the border. Those who appeal expulsion will be locked up for 10 days, until their trial. "Those who don't have a right to stay will be rejected even more firmly," crowed Interior Minister Giorgio Napolitano.



Tens of thousands of protesters confronted cops in Zagreb, Croatia, February 20.

Swiss perfume workers strike

Workers at Givaudan-Roure's main plant in Geneva struck for two days beginning February 15, demanding a 2 percent wage increase. According to the *Financial Times*, about 700 workers — half the workforce — walked out. This was enough to hamper production both days, at what is one of the world's top two perfume suppliers. On February 17 the workers narrowly voted to end the strike, but left open the possibility to go out again if the demands are not met.

German company cuts 4,000 jobs

Philip Holzmann, Germany's largest construction company is "restructuring" — that is, cutting 4,000 jobs by year's end. This includes shutting down its operations in France and Thailand, where the currency crisis has precluded making any profit, as well as terminating 3,000 workers in Germany. The German construction boss already faced economic trouble when the post-reunification construction boom ground to a halt, as it became clear capitalism would not be easily restored in eastern Germany. In 1997

Holzmann applied its special reserves capital to cover \$449 million in losses from restructuring its French and Thai operations and paying compensation for layoffs. In 1996 Holzmann employed 52,000 workers. By 1998, they project to have 36,000.

Palestinians: U.S. get out of Iraq

More than 800 Palestinians, most of them high school age and younger, marched in Dura, West Bank, February 19 denouncing Washington's plans to bomb Iraq. The Palestinian Authority declared that demonstrations against U.S. war moves were illegal, but that policy has been ignored. "Why do the Iraqi people have to pay the price for Clinton's affairs?" read one sign. Israeli troops fired live ammunition, rubber bullets, and tear gas to disperse the crowd, in what Associated Press writer Nasser Shiyoukhi described as, "the tensest confrontation" since the antiwar protests began. Two Palestinians were injured by rubber-coated bullets, and six others were overcome by the tear gas. Some protesters blocked the main road to Dura with boulders and pelted Israeli troops and settlers with stones.

In Egypt about 100 protesters met at the U.S. embassy in Cairo with an Iraqi flag in hand, chanting, "Arab blood is not cheap!" in opposition to military strikes. "If there is an attack, the people here will be boiling," warned protester Omar Azzam. Riot cops prevented them from entering the building.

ANC presses affirmative action

"Our end is a society of no discrimination and this is the means to get there," said Lisa Seftel, chief director of labor relations in the South African labor department. She was explaining why the African National Congress-led government moved February 20 to push ahead on several affirmative action laws. Two new laws are aimed at forcing employers to hire blacks and other oppressed nationalities who were denied equal

rights to jobs for decades under the former apartheid state. They apply to businesses with more than 50 workers and to government institutions. Opposition groups like the majority-white Democratic Party claim the new laws will result in "skilled whites" losing jobs, thus hurting the economy. The National Party, the former ruling party under apartheid, claimed the laws were a black version of apartheid. South African president Nelson Mandela responded to these charges. "We shall build a real South Africa, not the parody evoked by those who hanker for an artificial life of privilege."

Meat war shifts to Australia

Government officials in Europe and the United States have said they will ban meat imports from Australia, citing new inspection regulations adopted by Canberra. The Australian government is planning to give each meat-producing company authorization to check its own product before export — a shift from the current government-run inspections procedure. European Union officials said February 17 that they would reject meat produced under Project 2, as the looser regulations are called. U.S. trade officials did the same in early February. The Australian meat industry has annual exports of more than \$1.6 billion.

Factory explosion releases toxins

Hundreds of families had to evacuate their homes in Natalia, Texas, after an explosion at a National Foam Co. factory February 19. The fire was caused by a hot pallet of foam that exploded, triggering a series of explosions and igniting the building. A cloud of black smoke rose over the building and the small South Texas town. Some of the base chemicals of the foam are extremely toxic in concentrated form. About 40,000 pounds of toluene-2, 4-diisocyanate and 30,000 pounds of diphenylmethane diisocyanate, which both produce deadly cyanide-based gases, were crammed into the same area.

NY court: 'Megan's Law' stays

The New York State Court of Appeals ruled February 19 that "Megan's Law" — an undemocratic law that allows state officials to publicize the names and addresses of alleged sex offenders upon their release from prison — is not an additional punishment and therefore should not be overturned. The decision was against the appeal by two people in Suffolk County who faced this rule following their release from prison, after serving time on sex offender charges. Judge Joseph Bellacosa struck down their appeal under criminal law; a civil lawsuit is still possible. All but three U.S. states — Kentucky, Nebraska, and New Mexico — have adopted some form of sexual offender registration law, based on a New Jersey law enacted in 1994. There have also been many challenges to these measures across the country. None have resulted in the laws being tossed, but some have been modified.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

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Socialists from United States, Canada discuss politics with Cuban students

BY JOSHUA CARROLL
AND MARIA ISABEL LE BLANC

GUINA DE MELENA, Cuba — "Given the economic reality of our country," explained Carelis Díaz, "we have taken responsibility for work that used to be done by someone else. Now we, the students, organize to clean the school, paint the facilities, and we have had to learn how to do repairs." As a result, she said, "when we see a student mistreating the facilities, it's different; we remind him or her of who is responsible and who is going to be fixing things if they are broken."

Carelis is a senior at the Batalla de Ayacucho secondary school, where supporters of Pathfinder Press had been invited to bring a display of books and meet with students on February 13. Batalla de Ayacucho is a type of boarding school that is a cornerstone of the Cuban educational system. In addition to their normal curriculum, studying to become teachers, its 436 students work for three to four hours a day in a nearby cooperative farm cultivating crops. The co-op in turn supplies the school with food for the students' meals.

These reporters and Francisco Picado came to Batalla de Ayacucho, located some 13 miles southwest of Havana, at the invitation of Rafael Iglesias, a mathematics teacher here. He was eager to have the students talk with revolutionary workers and youth from the United States and Canada. Iglesias explained that "students would benefit more from two hours" of this sort of discussion, "than they would from 20 courses in philosophy."

Iglesias is a communist whose teaching credentials go back to when he volunteered at age 11 for the massive literacy campaign of 1961, when 100,000 young Cubans took to the fields, mountains, and working-class neighborhoods in every corner of their island to teach all those who wanted to learn to read and write. That campaign began to wipe out illiteracy in a matter of months. Iglesias later joined the newly formed Revolutionary Armed Forces. He became a political instructor and teacher, responsibilities he carried out until he was 19. He then went to school in Havana, where he graduated as a teacher in mathematics.

On the way to the school we had seen some brand new houses, and asked Iglesias who owned them. He explained that "some private farmers in the area are doing really well selling produce for dollars," and that some people call farmers in Guina de Melena "los ricos" (the wealthy ones).

Iglesias also pointed out the entrance to the "Los Perros" farm. As a leader of the Union of Young Communists, he headed the contingent that nationalized that farm on the outskirts of Havana in 1968. "The young people you are about to meet," he said, "I am convinced they can be every bit as revolutionary as the generations that preceded them."

Francisco Picado, a former garment

worker in New York and Miami who is a reporter for *Perspectiva Mundial*, kicked off two discussion sessions attended by a total of some 80 students. Picado talked about the work of communists in the factories, the trade unions, and among the youth in the United States, and pointed to a number of books that, along with participation in a range of social struggles, were essential to carrying out communist work. Copies of Spanish-language editions of *The Communist Manifesto*, *Opening Guns of World War III*, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics, February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X, and other titles were circulated as examples of the books used in this effort. The students eagerly looked over copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* as well.

"The main task facing communists today," Picado explained, "is to confront the impending criminal assault against Iraq by telling the truth about imperialism and campaigning to win youth and workers to the fight to do away with all imperialist regimes, beginning with the United States." He stressed that the opportunities to build communist parties that can eventually lead millions to follow the example of the Cuban revolution are greater today than they have been for decades.

Questions about capitalist society

In the lively discussion that followed, the students had many questions that went to the heart of the crisis of the capitalist system and its consequences for working people.

"What is the United States trying to do in Iraq?" asked one.

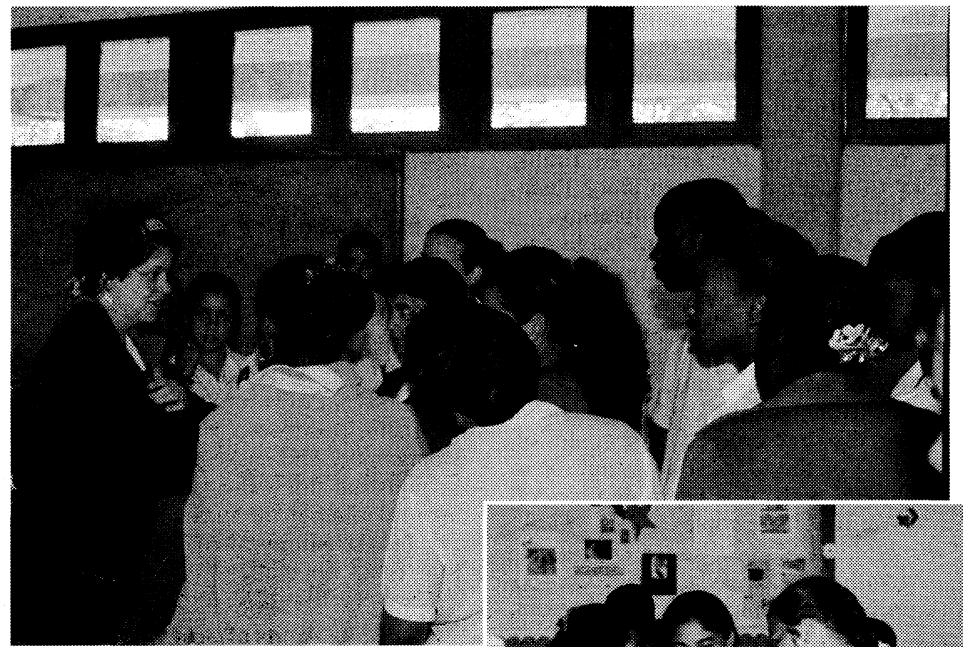
"What is the reason for racism in the United States? Why are there so many divisions?" another wanted to know.

"What is the situation with the francophones and the anglophones in Canada?" asked a young woman, aware that Maria Isabel Le Blanc, one of the visitors, was a worker from Quebec.

Students were also interested in discussing the role of the Young Socialists in building revolutionary youth organizations today in the United States and Canada.

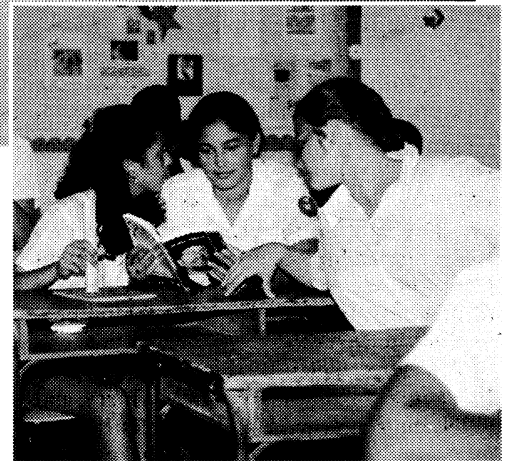
Although the great majority of students clearly enjoyed the discussion of working-class politics and the opportunity to ask questions about life in the imperialist countries, that was not true for everyone. One student took issue with Pathfinder's publishing of speeches by Fidel Castro. "I can understand your wanting to publish the speeches of [Ernesto] Che Guevara," he said, "99 percent of Cubans like him too. But why would you want to publish Fidel Castro for people to read?"

While some students expressed disagreement with the questioner, Picado thanked the student for raising this because it allowed him to clarify what he thought. "I share the views of the editors at Pathfinder Press on this," he said. "I think Che Guevara was



Militant photos by Joshua Carroll (top)
Maria Isabel Le Blanc (right)

Top: Maria Isabel Le Blanc (at left), a leader of the Young Socialists in Canada, discusses politics with students at Batalla de Ayacucho secondary school. Right: Cuban students read *The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X.



correct when he pointed to Fidel as his teacher. Che became a communist through his combat experience in the Rebel Army and his participation in the July 26 Movement, under the leadership of Fidel." Picado told the class, to this student's further dissatisfaction and the smiles and approval of others, that Pathfinder plans to publish two new volumes of speeches by Fidel Castro.

Another student asked, "I have heard that all workers in the United States can have their own houses and cars and everything they need. Is that true?"

"No," said Picado, "and it is less and less true with each passing day. What you are talking about is called the 'American Dream.' It was true for a layer in the working class in the decades that followed World War II, when Wall Street completely dominated the world economy and the crumbs that fell from the bosses' table were more plentiful. But those days were over a quarter century ago, and since then the bosses and their government have been driving down wages, working conditions, and the overall standard of living of us all."

"Most workers in the United States do not come close to making the kind of wages that would enable them to buy a house of their own," Picado explained. He pointed to the fact that in the United States, many young workers, including layers of working-class Blacks and immigrants, spend what little money they have to buy sports shoes, designer jeans, or a CD player. "But," he continued, "most of these same young people have nothing to look forward to but an unemployment line, an uncertain, low-paying job, being drafted for a war, or the bullet of a racist, anti-working-class cop."

Discussion of Pope's visit

"What do you think about the Pope's recent visit to Cuba?" the visitors asked the Cuban students.

Most students expressed approval and enthusiasm for the visit. One explained that when the Pope visited, "we became the center of the world for a few days."

"Everything was right, we showed everyone we could welcome him the right way," said another young woman.

When asked what they thought about what the Pope had to say, Ligia Lara, the president of the local chapter of Student Federation of Middle Level Schools (FEEM), said, "It was very nice; he spoke of peace and fraternity, and spoke against the [U.S.] blockade." None of the students who voiced opinions were aware of, or ascribed any weight to, the fact that the Pope had spoken out against women's right to choose abortion and contraception.

As the formal part of the meeting ended, students crowded around each of the Pathfinder books that were circulating, and applauded the announcement that several of the titles would be donated to the school li-

HELP FUND 'MILITANT' REPORTING TRIPS TO CUBA, CAIRO

The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* travel fund helps cover the expenses of the reporting team at the Havana Book Fair. The fund will also finance a trip by correspondents to a meeting next month in Cairo, Egypt, which will assess the World Festival of Youth and Students that took place in Cuba last year and discuss building an anti-imperialist international youth movement.

More than \$8,000 has been collected toward \$13,000 pledged at a regional socialist conference held January 24 - 25 in Seattle. We encourage our readers to send in contributions, and urge those who made pledges to send payment right away. To help make these trips possible send your check to: The Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

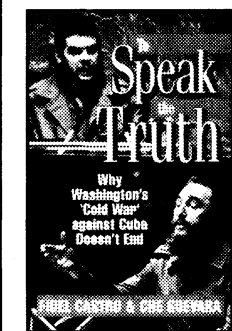


Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas (Pombo), addresses youth from around the world at 1997 World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana, Cuba.

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Stores order books on Iraq, Black rights

BY SARA LOBMAN

Pathfinder supporters in several areas are taking advantage of the increased political discussion in the wake of Washington's moves toward war on Iraq, as well as the new Pathfinder title *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, by Frank Kofsky to increase efforts to place Pathfinder titles in bookstores and libraries.

"Enclosed is an order \$189 of books and pamphlets from a store that has ordered several Pathfinder titles in the past," Rick Young reports from Chicago. "We recently visited them to show them the new book by Kofsky and titles on the Middle East."

In addition to four copies of *John Coltrane*, the store ordered three copies of issue no. 7 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* with "The Opening Guns of World War III," three copies of *U.S. Hands of the Mideast! Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations* by Fidel Castro and Ricardo Alarcón, and two copies of the new booklet *Celebrating the Homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's Reinforcement Brigade to Cuba*.

A supporter in Vancouver reports that after an initially chilly reception from a book buyer who said his store didn't order locally, she walked away with an order for two copies each of *John Coltrane* and *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'*, and one copy each of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Bolivian Diary* and *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*. "His whole demeanor changes when I showed him the catalog and the Coltrane book," she commented.

A team of supporters in Washington, D.C., just won a new account from a combination video and bookstore. The first order for 40 books included *New Internationalist* no. 7, *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, and *The Communist Manifesto*.

BY RICH STUART

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Pathfinder supporters here in the last week of January made sales calls to 25 campus and community bookstores and libraries, as well as the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

The sales effort included visits in Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Huntsville, Auburn, Montgomery, and Tuskegee. Birmingham is an industrial city with a large steel industry and coal mines in the surrounding area. The city and the entire state of Alabama have a large Black population.

The very first visit to a shopping mall bookstore in Tuscaloosa netted an order for 20 books. The store staff told the Pathfinder representatives that people had come into the store asking for *The Communist Manifesto*. They ordered five copies. This store also stocked up for Black History Month, ordering Pathfinder's newest title *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* by Frank Kofsky. The order also included the upcoming title by Kofsky *Black Music, White Business*, as well as books by Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela.

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, a museum of the civil rights movement of the

January Sales of Pathfinder Books to Non-Pathfinder Outlets						
JANUARY						
CITY/COUNTRY	GOALS	SOLD	%	DEC	NOV	OCT
UNITED STATES						
ATLANTA	32	152	475%	204	239	59
BOSTON	50	179	358%	231	9	54
CHICAGO	60	124	207%	69	76	2
WASHINGTON, D.C.	42	74	176%	48	124	12
PHILADELPHIA	55	90	164%	158	39	0
MIAMI	42	66	157%	17	108	3
NEW YORK	190	294	155%	354	7	59
SEATTLE	60	81	135%	21	5	36
PITTSBURGH	49	64	131%	24	0	0
LOS ANGELES	95	107	113%	148	61	190
CLEVELAND	40	31	78%	18	134	0
SAN FRANCISCO	74	54	73%	195	256	25
BIRMINGHAM	50	34	68%	40	5	1
DES MOINES	35	20	57%	574	163	0
HOUSTON	32	18	56%	8	1	9
NEWARK	133	39	29%	156	1	0
TWIN CITIES	67	4	6%	23	16	22
DETROIT	60	1	2%	0	28	0
U.S. TOTAL	1166	1432	123%	2084	1272	345
CANADA						
TORONTO	60	144	240%	13	24	0
MONTREAL	41	11	27%	7	3	12
VANCOUVER	35	2	6%	25	16	10
CANADA TOTAL	136	157	115%	45	43	22

1950s and 1960s, ordered titles on the Black struggle for the museum bookstore. The museum and bookstore are visited daily by people from around the world. In addition to several books by Malcolm X, they ordered *Fighting Racism in World War II* by C.L.R. James and *Blacks in America's Wars* by Robert Mullen.

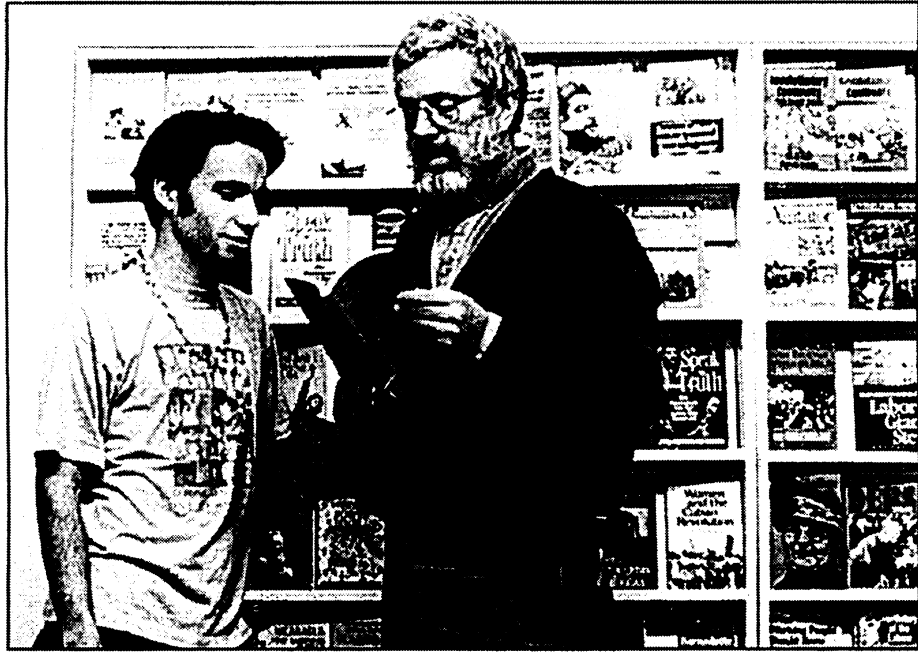
A Birmingham university bookstore ordered 12 different titles, many of them on Cuba. The sales trip coincided with the Pope's visit to Cuba. The book buyer there told the Pathfinder representatives that a professor had recently come into the store asking for books on Cuba. The store had none. The book buyer

plans to send the professor the Pathfinder catalog, which includes four pages of books on the Cuban revolution.

Among the titles this campus store ordered were *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* and *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Never Ends* by Fidel Castro and Guevara, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes, and *New Internationalist* no. 7.

Eight Alabama Pathfinder supporters joined in the effort, teaming with a representative of Pathfinder in New York. Several supporters here took days off from work to participate.

From the pages of *The Voice*, printed by the Journalism Department of Langara College in Vancouver, British Columbia, Jan. 22, 1998



Lukas Drake and Steve Penner discuss politics at the Pathfinder Bookstore.

Store forum for debate

By GWEN YIP

The Pathfinder Bookstore on Main Street is not just any bookstore. The books it sells were written by workers and are about groups who have been oppressed and exploited.

"The reason for this bookstore is so we can reach out politically, not to sell books," said Lukas Drake, a volunteer at the bookstore and a member of the Young Socialists.

Some of the books include *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58*; *The Communist Manifesto*; and *Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution*. Volunteer Steve Penner said many of the books are about countries that have had successful revolutions or revolutions from which people can learn.

The bookstore supports the rights of workers, blacks, women, and other groups and it supports people getting jobs they would not have traditionally had. It also supports helping Quebec separate, because, according to Penner, the province has the right to determine its own relationship with the rest of the country.

Drake said the books are good for educating people. The bookstore gives him a chance to meet people and to talk about politics.

The Young Socialists and the Commu-

nist League are two organizations that often use books from the store. They often look for support and information about their own struggles.

"The Young Socialists and the Communist League really depend on this bookstore," Penner said.

Penner said there has been some controversy about the bookstore, although not as serious as in American cities. He said there have been physical attacks, such as spray painting and breaking windows, on the Pathfinder bookstores in the U.S.

People come into the Vancouver store to debate issues, but Penner said that is welcome.

"We welcome opposing views," he said. "That is part of people being conscious and clear about reaching our goals."

Drake said some debating results in people changing their views.

"It's not uncommon for people to have certain views, but through political discussions, they realize socialism is for the people," he said.

The Pathfinder Bookstore has been open since 1989. There are currently more than 30 Pathfinder stores in seven countries around the world. There are three in Canada.

Abortion fight continues

'Remain vigilant,' says rights activist

Speaker addresses issue of abortion on the 25th anniversary of the 1973 *Roe vs Wade* decision.

By GWEN YIP

Canadian women have come a long way in the fight to inform people about birth control and abortion since the landmark 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision. But actions still need to be taken to ensure women are equal.

That's the view of Mary Ellen Marus, who spoke last week at the Militant Labor Forum.

Marus began her fight for the right to abortion in 1970 while in university.

There was no birth control or sex education on campuses at the time.

When she interviewed a high school girl who had been through a botched abortion, Marus realized the importance of setting up information organizations.

She played a part in the creation of the Birth Control Information Centre at Queen's University.

In the following years, Marus, a member of the socialist movement, took part in protests involving hundreds of thousands of people demanding that abortion be legalized.

A parade of cars, called the Abortion Caravan, travelled from Vancouver to Ottawa, educating people about abortion.

In 1980, there were debates at a Toronto abortion clinic between people who were pro-choice and pro-life.

Marus said when protestors tried to

shut the clinic down, feminists set up picket lines, working to keep it open.

In 1988 the Supreme Court legalized abortion in Canada. However, abortion was illegal from 1969 to 1988 unless it was performed by a physician in hospital.

"This gain we have won is not secure," Marus said.

"We need to remain vigilant to keep abortion accessible to all, to keep the right for abortion real," she said.

Marus said she understands that some people do not agree with abortion.

However, everyone has the right to choose whether or not to agree with abortion. That, she said, is the meaning of pro-choice.

Marus also spoke about women's liberation.

"In order for women to be truly liberated, we need to revolutionize society," she said.

Marus spoke about the exploitation and oppression of women in the workforce.

She said in today's society, women are taught to be mothers and wives, and not individual, thinking women.

She also said that in a capitalist society, there is no equality.

"We need to fight for socialism, where everybody is equal," she said.

Jacob Gavin, a member of the Young Socialists, agreed with Marus.

"I think that the fight for women's liberation is a very important one," he said.

Gavin thought it was important that Marus pointed out women's oppression is tied to capitalism and a class society.



Nicole Andersen photo

This was one of several books on display at the meeting.

Caterpillar workers snap up 'Militant'

The stories below are highlights of the third week of the campaign to sell copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with *New Internationalist* no. 7 and *Celebrating the Homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's Reinforcement Brigade to Cuba*.

EAST PEORIA, Illinois — Supporters of the *Militant* from Chicago; Des Moines, Iowa; and Minneapolis, St. Paul, sold nearly 80 copies of the paper in central Illinois February 21 – 22. We kicked off the weekend selling 12 copies outside Caterpillar factories in East Peoria and Mossville. Sales continued into the evening as we sold 14 papers in a working-class community and near a local college campus.

During the contract vote a team of

ers, a few students from Bradley University and some high school students stopped by to talk about the U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf. Two students are members of the Islamic Student Association and are planning a demonstration to protest the war moves.

Some 25 members of UAW local 786 at Caterpillar in York, Pennsylvania, bought the *Militant* February 22 outside



Militant photos: Left: Janet Roth Top: Jim Garrison
Left, sales at February 6 annual march for Maori rights in Waitangi, New Zealand. Top, a member of UAW Local 974 checks out the *Militant* before entering contract vote meeting February 22 in East Peoria, Illinois.

Militant supporters went to Decatur and sold six copies of the paper to Caterpillar workers. In Peoria, 45 papers were sold before and after the union meeting.

"U.S. hands off Iraq" was one of the main signs on our literature table. Several unionists who walked by made pro-war comments like, "Bomb him"; "nuke 'em"; "we should have finished him off"; and "don't you know what anthrax is?"

Mack Street, a UAW member from Local 974, said he disagreed with the war moves because his son was part of Desert Storm in 1990 – 91. Another Caterpillar worker in Decatur said he "didn't agree with the headline on Iraq," but bought the paper anyway because it took up union issues. Paul Miller, a United Auto Workers member who has read the *Militant* before, wanted to talk about Cuba. "I have a friend from Canada who's been to Cuba and says it's not the way it's portrayed in the media here," he said. He bought a paper.

Along with sales to Caterpillar work-

Dallastown High School, where their contract vote was held. Before sales we stopped for coffee at a fast food place. An "illegally terminated" Cat worker who joined us explained why he would not vote for the contract. "Since I was in Vietnam, I've learned that the media lies. And they always take the company's side." He picked up a *Militant*, saying, "I may not always agree with you, but you say it like it is."

Sarah Katz and Bob Miller

SYDNEY, Australia — The high points of this week included selling two *Militants* at the Port Botany wharves, where we have established a regular sale in response to a fight by dock workers in the Maritime Union of Australia against a union-busting drive that is being championed by the government. We've also sold 17 *Militants* on the job in the Amalgamated Manufacturing Workers, leaving seven to get in the last week to reach our goal. At a protest of more than 1,000 February 21, which began at the Australian Defence Offices and marched to the U.S. consulate, we sold 10 *Militants* and three pamphlets.

Bob Aiken

MINNEAPOLIS — Supporters of the *Militant* sold 25 copies of the paper to workers at Honeywell plants in the area during and after their 14-day strike, which pushed back some of the company's concession demands. We sold 17 copies of the *Militant* to striking Teamsters at the picket lines, rallies, and union meetings. Since the contract was narrowly approved, we have fielded two teams to Honeywell plant gates and have sold eight more copies.

A worker with 14 years in the Golden Valley heating controls plant saw the team selling and walked back from the parking lot to talk with them and buy a paper. "I personally won't volunteer for any overtime now and I wouldn't recommend getting a job here to any of my friends after what the company did to us," he told the team.

Jeff Jones

DETROIT — Two supporters of the *Militant* went to Selfridge Air National Guard base near Mt. Clemens, Michigan, February 14 and sold six copies to military personnel and their families. We wore placards which showed our opposition to the U.S. war moves, with slogans like "U.S. Hands Off Iraq." A number of those who paused to talk said they definitely were going to be sent to Iraq. Some expressed enthusiasm for

Campaigning against imperialism and war									
February 1 – March 1 ♦ Target percentage for third week = 75%									
	Militant		NI 7		Dual %	PM		Che	
	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA	135	105	5	0	39%	6	3	20	8
CANADA									
Toronto	360	288	15	13	83%	8	3	40	10
Vancouver	200	136	12	7	63%	8	4	20	9
Montreal	140	68	20	7	42%	16	6	20	7
Canada total	700	492	47	27	64%	32	13	80	26
ICELAND	30	22	2	2	87%			4	2
NEW ZEALAND									
Christchurch	45	45	3	3	100%			12	10
Auckland	100	99	5	2	70%		1	20	6
NZ total	145	144	8	5	81%			32	16
SWEDEN	92	61	8	4	58%	10	2	8	6
UNITED KINGDOM									
Manchester	160	127	10	7	75%			20	12
London	180	177	25	11	71%			40	20
UK total	340	304	35	18	70%			60	32
UNITED STATES									
Des Moines	200	194	12	8	82%	20	16	17	5
New York	500	415	50	35	77%	40	60	100	37
Boston	220	227	25	12	76%		10	25	9
Philadelphia	200	158	10	7	75%	10	3	25	7
Los Angeles	345	240	25	18	71%	20	32	30	20
Birmingham, AL	140	113	10	6	70%	15	3	8	6
San Francisco	240	157	20	15	70%	30	2	40	17
Twin Cities, MN	220	171	20	10	64%	20	6	30	9
Miami	200	122	25	14	59%	30	9	30	9
Washington, DC	160	139	10	3	58%	12	4	20	6
Newark, NJ	320	272	40	11	56%	80	11	30	7
Seattle	150	108	15	6	56%	5		25	3
Atlanta	240	150	20	8	51%	20	14	30	7
Cleveland	160	119	8	2	50%	8	4	20	8
Chicago	400	313	25	5	49%	40	32	50	11
Pittsburgh	120	66	13	5	47%	3	0	10	3
Detroit	140	100	10	1	41%	5	3	25	9
Houston	140	91	15	2	39%	20	3	15	3
U.S. total	4095	3155	353	168	62%	378	212	530	176
In the Unions									
AUSTRALIA									
AMWU	24	5	3		10%			4	
CANADA									
CAW	8	4	1	1	75%			1	
USWA	44	28	12	6	57%	6	3	8	
IAM	36	29	5	1	50%			3	
UNITE	8		1		0%			1	
Canada total	96	61	19	8	53%	6	3	13	0
NEW ZEALAND									
MWU	10	10	1	0	50%			2	1
EU	20	12	2	0	30%			2	0
SFWU	4	2			25%				
NZ total	34	24	3	0	35%			4	1
UNITED KINGDOM									
TGWU	28	22	5	2	59%			5	1
AEEU	20	13	4	1	45%			4	
RMT	16	4	3	1	29%			4	
UK total	64	39	12	4	47%			13	1
UNITED STATES									
OCAW	88	40	14	10	58%			16	3
IAM	160	81	35	19	52%	20	4	40	6
UFCW	28	13	7	4	52%	12	17	6	3
UAW	200	97	20	9	47%	7	6	30	8
UTU*	200	58	40	23	43%			20	2
UNITE	34	24	13	2	43%	22	19	16	7
USWA	175	73	40	9	32%	15	7	25	3
U.S. total	885	386	169	76	44%	76	53	153	32
* combined Militant and PM goal									
Cities are ranked by the average percentage of <i>Militants</i> and <i>New Internationals</i> sold									

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

bombing that country, but most did not. One man saw our signs and the newspaper headlines, and had his car window rolled down with \$1.50 ready.

Marty Ressler

NEW YORK — Ellie García, an assistant conductor at Amtrak and member of the United Transportation Union, reported that communist workers there have sold eight *New Internationalist* no. 7 out of a goal of four and 15 *Militant* copies out of a goal of 20. "One thing that helped was relating to a fight of track workers more than a month earlier.

We sold at least three copies of *NI* no. 7 in the fall as part of talking to track workers who were demanding a contract." García and Ruth Robinett, another communist worker there, teamed up to visit a track worker who had bought the *Militant* twice. As other workers passed through the break room area, debates broke out over Iraq. One declared, "You don't belong here," and prevented any discussion for nearly 10 minutes. When he left, an even bigger civil discussion resumed. "After an hour, the worker we came to visit, still unsure of his position on the war drive, bought a third paper," said García.

Campus events and classes help build YS

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY NICK PELL

BOSTON — Young Socialists here took advantage of a week-long break from school to step up campaigning against imperialism and war. We set up tables of revolutionary books on campuses and spoke at area universities.

On February 18, leading up to a large teach-in at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), YS members went up to Bowdoin College in southern Maine. This reporter and Elena Tate spoke at a meeting against U.S. war moves, sponsored by the African-American House. Ten students showed up for a wide-ranging discussion. One student was particularly interested in the Iranian revolution of 1979. Two others bought copies of the *Militant*.

After the meeting two students met with YS members to discuss future common activity. They plan to bring themselves and others to a rally against U.S. aggression toward Iraq in Boston March 1.

On February 21 the YS participated in an all-day teach-in at MIT opposing U.S. war moves on Iraq. More than 350 students and others from the University of Massachusetts, Boston University, Boston College, Northeastern, Wellesley, MIT, University of Maine, Harvard, Brandeis, and other campuses participated in the event, which included a plenary session and two rounds of workshops. A panel of six people spoke at the plenary, including Howard Zinn, a retired professor from Boston University and Elena Tate from the Young Socialists.

Several speakers focused on the effects of international sanctions on the people of Iraq. Tate took up the question of sanctions in the context of explaining the role of U.S. imperialism and in defending the sovereignty of Iraq against U.S. war plans.

"We must be clear," Tate explained. "The U.S. government represents ... the interests of the tiny minority of people who own the majority of the world's resources and wealth. They are going to war for oil, for control of the Middle East, and to really show the world who, exactly, is in charge."

The Young Socialists sponsored an open house after the event that youth interested in the communist movement participated in.

The week of activities included setting up YS tables featuring books by revolutionaries and the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at Boston University, Bowdoin College, and other places. Supporters of the *Militant* sold a total of 130 single copies of the paper over the course of the week.



BY CARLOS HERNÁNDEZ

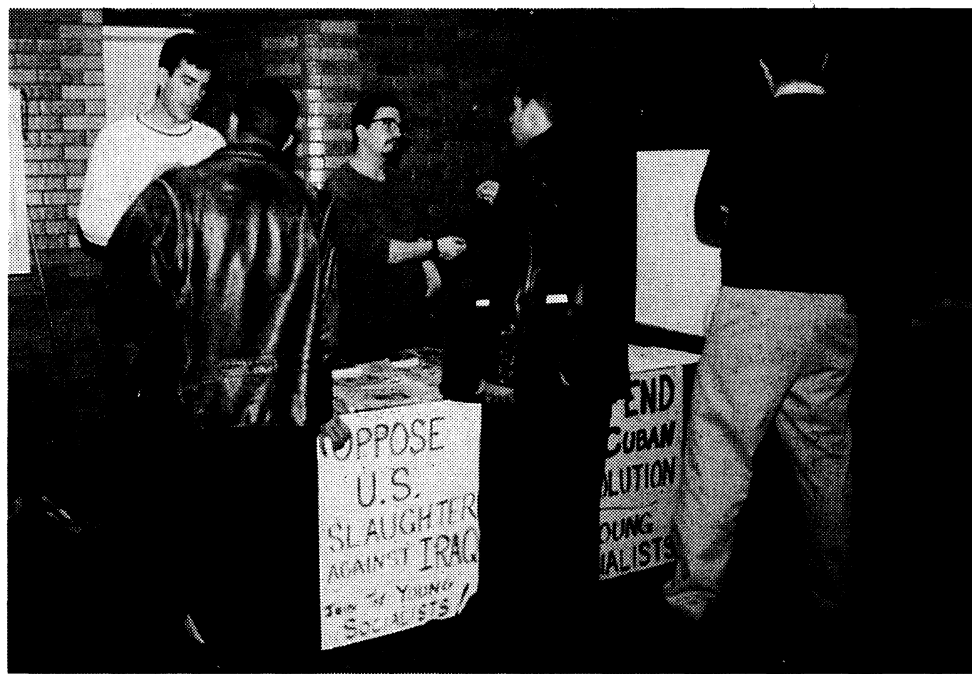
LOS ANGELES — The Young Socialists here has organized two class series for the month of February. One of the classes focuses on the current U.S. war drive against Iraq, using *New International* no. 7, which features "Opening Guns of World War III." The second one has been organized around

Black History Month and has included discussions on the legacy of Malcolm X and *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self Determination* published by Pathfinder Press. In addition, YS members have been active in selling the *Militant* and campaigning against imperialism and war.

The first class was held on February 18 and will go through March 4. The latest class came one day after an antiwar protest of 250 people in front of the Westwood Federal Building. Nestor Bazúa, a railroad worker who served in the military during the Persian Gulf War, came to the class. An intern from KPFK radio also attended and interviewed everyone after the meeting for a news broadcast on opposition to the war drive against Iraq.

Along with a Militant Labor Forum on Malcolm X, the YS is holding classes on the vanguard role of the Black struggle today. Heather Martin, a Young Socialists member, and Harry Ring, a lifelong communist who interviewed Malcolm X in the 1960s, spoke live on a local radio station, KSPC, for a hour and a half tribute to Malcolm X. This included discussion about opposition to Washington's war drive and how this relates to Malcolm X's internationalist perspective.

Young Socialists have been an integral



Militant/Naomi Craine

Young Socialists table was a lively spot for political discussion among revolutionary-minded youth who attended the February 19 event celebrating 100 years of struggle against imperialism at the City College of New York.

part in the sales of the *Militant* in working-class communities, plant gates, antiwar picket lines and events, and to Marines at Camp Pendleton about to be deployed to the Persian Gulf. There have been a variety of responses, many of which indicate the deepening polarization in the working class.

Many of the GI's stationed at Camp Pendleton expressed little enthusiasm about the prospect for war. Some had discussions

with YS members about the role of the Cuban revolution today. Two Marines were eager to read president Fidel Castro's welcoming speech to Pope John Paul II during his recent visit to Cuba.

As part of its campaigning, the Young Socialists is also building a student and youth conference in opposition to Washington's war moves at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

Sugar mill workers strike in Florida

Continued from front page
molasses.

The company's contract offer demanded that the union accept a paltry 5 percent pay increase over three years; continue the two-tier wage system that was implemented in 1995; cut work hours for heavy equipment operators; as well as cut guaranteed work hours over all. The union overwhelmingly rejected the offer and went on strike.

James, 23-year-old Chicano who asked that his last name not be printed, was hired three years ago, one month after the two-tier wage structure went into effect. He started as a laborer at \$6.56 an hour when weeks before the starting wage was \$9.32. "I don't think it's fair for two people to work side by side and one gets less than the other," he commented. This worker also expressed his opinion that the company would like to fire some of the older workers and hire new people at the lower wage.

One of the issues striking workers consider important is fighting for a guaranteed income over the year. They work massive amounts of overtime for half the year, then are laid off until the next harvest season. During the five months of the cane harvest, the mills run seven days a week, 24-hours-a-day. What the company has proposed is cutting the harvest season workweek by two hours each year of the contract. By the end of the contract guaranteed work hours will be cut from 56 per week to 50, while producing the same amount of product.

Jack Brown works as a back hoe operator and has a total of 36 years with U.S. Sugar. He noted that in the past 10 years the company has doubled its production. "We just want them to stop taking away," Brown explained as he voiced his opposition to the company's proposal to begin forcing heavy equipment drivers to clock in and out when

they reach the field instead of when they leave the plant. "They also use the two-tier to try to get us divided among ourselves," he commented. Bailey Walker, a 58-year-old Black worker, said, "This time they didn't give us enough to live with." Walker, who has 26 years in the plant, added, "We have to get something for those who come after us. The company keeps pushing and pushing. Now they want us to pay more for our insurance too."

U.S. Sugar also owns a nonunion mill in nearby Belle Glade, which they say they might use to process cane during the strike. The company has threatened to hire replacement workers if the strike continues. "We've begun lining up ways to get replacement workers and are going to move in that direction very shortly," said Robert Buker, senior vice president of corporate affairs. "If they were to do this it would have grave safety implications," remarked Randy Jarvis, a shop steward in the mill. "They can barely run the mill safely with workers who know what they are doing," he continued. "If the company were to start up the mill

with uncertified workers the boilers could blow up. Not only would that be devastating for the workers but would effect all the people in the area." Several years ago one worker was killed when a boiler blew up.

The union and the company went back to the bargaining table February 22. Other unionists, such as members of the Communication Workers of America from West Palm Beach, have come to the picket line to show solidarity with the strike.

"The town has been very supportive of our strike. Grocery stores have contributed food and beverages," reported Jarvis.

Workers say they are not sure how long the strike will last but they are prepared to fight. James thought the strike was important because, "The fastest way of getting nowhere is doing nothing."

The *Miami Herald* reported that Lee County sheriff deputies were sent February 23 to protect scabs from entering the plant.

Kay Sedam is a member of the United Transportation Union. Bill Kalman, also a member of the UTU, contributed to this article.

Protests condemn attempt to restore death penalty in Iowa

BY SIMONE BERG

DES MOINES, Iowa — More than 75 people turned out in freezing temperatures to demonstrate against reinstating the death penalty here February 4.

After the protest, there was a public hearing on the death penalty in the chambers of the Iowa House of Representatives. Over 70 people signed up to speak, with the overwhelming majority voicing opposition to capital punishment.

The speakers included Laurel Eckhouse, a young activist and leader of Students against the Death Penalty, who pointed to the 23 people who were exonerated after their executions; Attorney General Tom Miller; Dubuque Archbishop Jerome Hanus; and Ben Stone, the executive director of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union.

In part as a result of the public hearing, proponents of the death penalty dropped their attempts to get it reinstated in the state legislature this year. Governor Terry Branstad has had a long-standing proposal to introduce the death penalty for some cases.

The bill has failed completely in the last three years. Capital punishment was repealed 33 years ago in Iowa, and replaced

with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Socialist Workers candidate for governor Thomas Alter, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1149 and a meatpacker in Perry, Iowa, announced his campaign at the public hearing.

Alter explained, "The attempt to reinstate the death penalty is a part of a broader attack on workers and farmers at home and abroad." After hearing him speak, one of the young people there signed up to help Alter campaign.

There have been other protests against the death penalty as well. About 30 students from area high schools demonstrated on February 3, marching inside the capitol rotunda with signs.

A contingent of the youth had handmade T-shirts that they had worn to their high school because the school administration had stopped them from putting up leaflets to publicize the day's event.

An interfaith prayer meeting against the death penalty took place February 8, and about 25 people turned out to a demonstration called by Students against the Death Penalty on February 14.

New!

YS button

U.S. Hands Off Iraq!
Troops Out of the
Mideast!

Young Socialists/Juventud Socialista

Buttons are 75¢ each from YS
National Office (see address
above). Include \$3 for shipping
with each order.

YS T-shirts!

Two shirts to choose from.

1. Equal Rights for Immigrants,
stop the deportations, open the
borders. Demands in both English
and Spanish.

2. Stop Police Brutality.

Sizes include medium, large, and x-large.
Available from the YS national office. 1 - 4
t-shirts, \$15 each; bulk orders of five or
more, \$10 each. Shipping costs included.

New booklet centers on production and distribution of revolutionary literature

Publishing books needed to build communist movement is Pathfinder's goal

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The *Militant* has just announced the publication of a new booklet that will be off the press March 1. It is a compilation of articles from the socialist newsweekly and other material on the centrality of the production and circulation of revolutionary literature in building the communist movement.

The booklet begins with the talk by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, at a conference on Political and Social Publishing held in Havana, Cuba, February 2-3. The gathering was sponsored by Casa Editora Abril, the publishing house of the Union of Young Communists.

"As a publishing house, our direct line of continuity goes back to the earliest publication of speeches and writings by Lenin in the United States on the eve of 1917," says Waters at the opening of her talk.

"Following the victorious insurrection of the workers, peasants, and soldiers of the tsarist empire, revolutionary-minded working people the world over sought to emulate the example of the first worker-bolsheviks. By 1919 a regroupment of left-wing socialists, members of the Industrial Workers of the World, and others had come together to found something truly new — the communist movement in the United States, whose explicit goal was to emulate the Bolsheviks.

"Through many and varied channels they began to publish the periodicals, pamphlets, and books that for the first time in the 20th century brought to the working class in our hemisphere a communist perspective that drew on the toilers' initial experience of taking power, defending it, and using it worldwide."

For more than 80 years, Waters says, Pathfinder and its predecessors have had one and only one objective: "to publish and distribute as widely as possible the books, pamphlets, and magazines that are necessary to advance the construction of a communist party in the United States — an objective that is inseparable from the building of a communist movement internationally."

Militant readers respond

The conference where Waters gave this presentation was one of the events surrounding the Eighth International Book Fair in Havana, which Waters covered as part of a team of *Militant* reporters. Pathfinder Distribution in London organized a stand at the fair, staffed by an international team of volunteers from Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

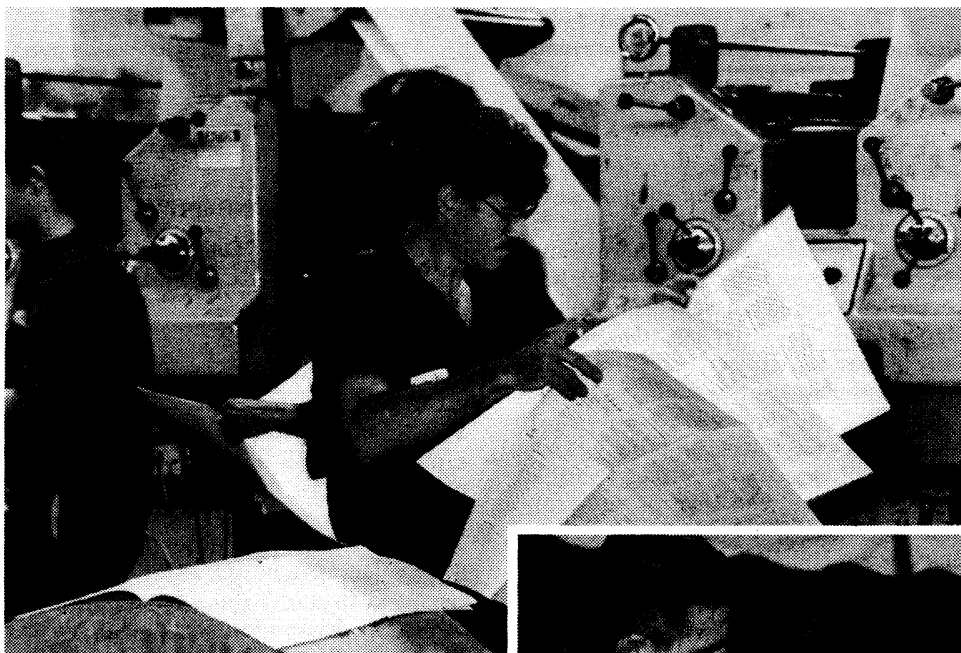
Meetings celebrating the publication of books on display at the Havana book fair — a major cultural and political affair in the Cuban capital organized every two years — were an important feature of the February 4-10 event. The first section of this booklet concludes with the talk by Waters at the book launch of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'* by Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas (Pombo) published by Pathfinder Press in 1997.

The publication of Waters's talk on Pathfinder struck a chord among many *Militant* readers. Robin Maisel, a long-time supporter from California, sent in \$200 in mid-February for a rush order of 200 copies of the February "International Socialist Review" supplement to the *Militant* featuring that presentation. "I would like to do a mailing to supporters and others in southern California as a fund raiser," Maisel wrote.

Following up on his idea, the *Militant* editors decided to reproduce the talk by Waters along with the related materials in this booklet. Maisel's initiative builds on an offer he made earlier of volunteering his time, experience, and organizing efforts to help raise funds for the publication of a similar booklet, "Celebrating the homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's reinforcement brigade to Cuba: Articles from the *Militant* newspaper on the 30th anniversary of the combat waged in Bolivia by Che and his comrades" (see ad on this page).

Organization of labor in shop

The second part of the booklet consists of a number of articles on steps to revolutionize the organization of labor in the print



Militant/Eric Simpson (above); Linda Joyce (right) Running the web press at Pathfinder's print shop (above). Transforming organization of labor in shop will make it possible to keep in print — in short runs and at sharply lower costs — the 350 titles in the publisher's backlist. The goal is to maintain a pipeline of revolutionary literature flowing to working people around the world who need them to fight more effectively. Purchasing Pathfinder books at Claridad festival, San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 1997 (right).

shop that produces Pathfinder books. This transformation is necessary to keep the 350 titles in the publisher's backlist in print for use by working people and youth who need them to be more effective fighters.

The goal is to decrease substantially the turnaround time of book production — while reducing the size of the print shop and hours of labor — and doing so in a way that maintains and improves the high standards of quality for which Pathfinder has become known.

"For us, the care with which we edit and prepare every single book or pamphlet we produce is the most important test of our publishing efforts," Waters told participants in the Havana conference.

"We consider this to be a class question. If it is to prepare itself to be the ruling class, the working class must have access to truth, to culture, to clearly presented, accurate information. Their own history and continuity must be made accessible to new generations of fighters as they enter the struggle.... The working class must learn to be exacting in the standards of quality it demands in all things. That is part of our self-respect and self-confidence. Those who belong to the class that produces everything know better than anyone when work is done with quality and when it is shoddy and unworthy of their efforts."

The perspective of keeping a pipeline of revolutionary literature flowing was central to a round of four regional socialist conferences held across North America — in Chicago, Birmingham, Toronto, and Seattle — between October 1997 and the end of January of this year. The featured speakers at each of these gatherings were Waters and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) national secretary Jack Barnes.

The articles in the second section of the new booklet explain not only the revolution in Pathfinder's print shop now under way but the political foundation on which it is based. As the main talks at these conferences outlined, there is growing evidence that the political retreat of the working class in North America, Europe, and most other imperialist countries has bottomed out; that the socialist revolution in Cuba has been strengthened in the last years and its communist leadership is playing an important role in regrouping revolutionary forces in the world as the worst of the post-1990 economic crisis Cubans call Special Period is conquered; and that a small but steady number of youth are being won to the working-class vanguard and are shouldering greater leadership responsibilities in the communist movement. Under such conditions, strengthening the

up meeting halls and safeguard their functioning, to plan more effective public forums where the voice of militant labor can be heard in each city every week, and to function in a more disciplined and collective manner.

SWP branches are also organizing meetings of party active supporters, who — together with literally hundreds of other party partisans — are pitching in to help build the communist movement with greater enthusiasm and determination and in larger numbers than most members of the movement have ever seen. Their activities include staffing Pathfinder bookstores, fundraising, translating forum flyers into Spanish or French, and other tasks that free up party members to do more plant-gate sales, to organize regular political and propaganda work on campuses and in Black and other working-class communities, to travel to reach out to political and union struggles in the region, and to pay more attention to recruitment.

These openings for the communist movement to recruit have encouraged the steps now under way to transform the production of revolutionary books and pamphlets in Pathfinder's print shop. Print-shop workers are making the rounds of other printing plants in the Northeast to get familiar with modern computer-to-plate equipment that will make

it possible to bypass labor-intensive production processes — film processing, film stripping, and plate burning — by going direct from electronic files of finished manuscripts to metal or polyester printing plates, drastically cutting labor time and costs in all shop departments.

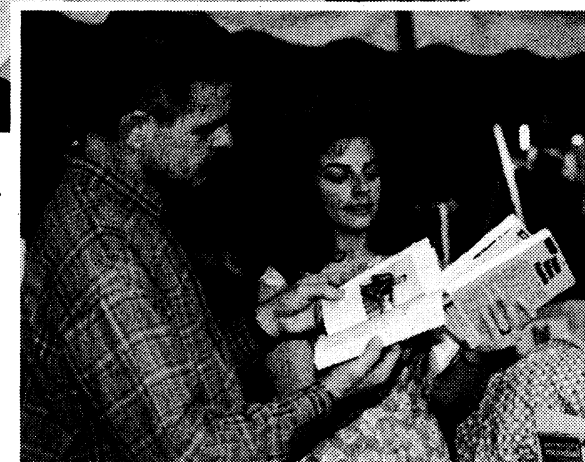
Shop workers are within a couple of weeks of making a proposal on the kind of equipment to be purchased and of submitting reconstruction plans necessary for the machinery's installation, which will involve other volunteers. As this work progresses, the *Militant* will launch a capital fund to raise the funds necessary to make this acquisition a reality.

Volunteer efforts

Supporters and friends of the communist movement have responded to an appeal during the Seattle conference to set the pace in this effort by organizing to produce digital manuscripts of books ready for printing plates.

Volunteers in the San Francisco Bay Area have taken on the responsibility to be the organizing center for this worldwide effort to scan and proof Pathfinder books and then turn those electronic files into final page layouts using desktop publishing. The new

Continued on Page 14



ingrained habits of responsibility and disciplined functioning of the party take on even greater importance.

To respond to these new political openings, SWP and Young Socialists members in industrial unions are holding a round of national meetings to discuss how to campaign more effectively among their co-workers and other unionists. Socialist workers in the United Auto Workers, for example, are holding such a meeting in Chicago February 28-March 1. Among other points, SWP members in the UAW will discuss the rejection by fellow unionists at Caterpillar of a contract proposal just a week earlier (see front-page article). And they will discuss the kinds of habits of disciplined functioning that make it possible for a workers party to respond effectively to openings such as these.

Branches, active supporters

Coming out of the round of regional conferences, the articles in Part II of the booklet point out, party branches have begun taking steps to expand and regularize sales of communist literature at factory gates, to join strike picket lines and maintain links with workers once the walkout ends, to organize their forces and political reach in a variety of plants and unions in each city, to clean

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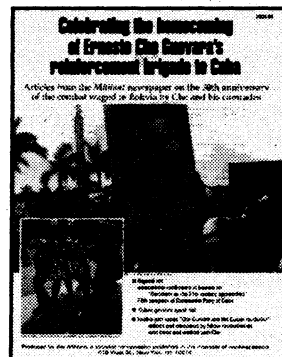
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UN deal sets stage for further use of U.S. military force

Continued from front page
pensate for what they can't achieve through economic weight alone.

"The United States, because of our position in the world, is called upon to bring its power to bear when it is important to do so," said President William Clinton at his February 23 news conference on the UN deal with Iraq. "Once again we have seen that diplomacy must be backed by strength and resolve."

Echoing Clinton, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright told an audience of 200 students at Tennessee State University, "We are the only superpower and, as a result of that, we have many responsibilities and privileges. We stand tall, and therefore we can see further into the future." During this meeting the secretary of state explained that the "long-term goal of American foreign policy and international policy" was to bring everybody into the group "of countries who understand the rules and ... follow them — the rules of the international system." She said Iraq "falls into the rogue state group." Washington must "try to isolate the rogues and then try to reform them so that they can be part of" a stable imperialist system.

"I feel very secure as a diplomat, because I know that I have the American military force behind me, the finest force in the world," Albright boasted. "Threat of the use of force sometimes helps diplomacy. And all those troops out there in the Gulf are sending a very strong message to Saddam that if he doesn't obey ... we are coming."

Albright spoke later that day at the University of South Carolina and the day before, February 18, she had participated in a televised "international town hall meeting" on Iraq at Ohio State University where she was heckled by opponents of Washington's war moves.

The secretary of state has been touring the country to drum up support for military action against Iraq. In a TV interview hours before her talk in Tennessee, she repeated what has been the theme of the Clinton administration since the president's second inaugural: "If we have to use force, it is because we are America; we are the indispensable nation."

UN deal dictated by Washington

Nearly a week before he left for Baghdad, the UN secretary general met with Albright, who stipulated the "red lines" or Washington's dictates for his mission to

"mount one last diplomatic effort" the *New York Times* reported February 25. Backed by the massive U.S. armada in the Arab-Persian Gulf, Annan wrested a written agreement from the Iraqi government that allows the UN weapons "inspectors" to have "immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access" throughout the country. Baghdad received nothing in return except acknowledgment that "lifting of sanctions is obviously of paramount importance to the people and government of Iraq."

Annan openly gave credit to Washington's war threats for bringing about the "peace" agreement. Sitting at a joint news conference with Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz in Baghdad, the UN secretary general bluntly stated, "You can do a lot with diplomacy, but of course you can do a lot more with diplomacy backed by firmness and force." Upon his return to the United Nations offices in New York, Annan praised Clinton and British prime minister Anthony Blair as "perfect UN peacekeepers" who knew that "the best way to use force is to show it in order not to use it."

But Washington remains poised to use military force. If the Iraqi government balks on the deal, the U.S. military "would have the unilateral right to respond at a time, place, and manner of our own choosing," Clinton declared February 23. White House officials have reiterated that point since.

Blair chimed in, "We are not going to get mucked about in two or three months' time."

Two days before the agreement was reached, Washington had advised all U.S. citizens to leave Iraq as soon as possible. "Due to these ongoing tensions," the State Department warned February 21, "all United States citizens are strongly urged to avoid all travel to Iraq, and those already in Iraq are advised to depart as soon as possible." A UN official announced February 25 that some 80 UN staff personnel who left Baghdad to escape an impending U.S. bombing raid would return to the country the next day.

Despite the UN accord Clinton said, "I have ordered our military to remain in the Persian Gulf. Our soldiers, our ships, [and] our planes will stay there in force until we are satisfied." He said the U.S. war machine would remain at a "high level of preparation in the Gulf."

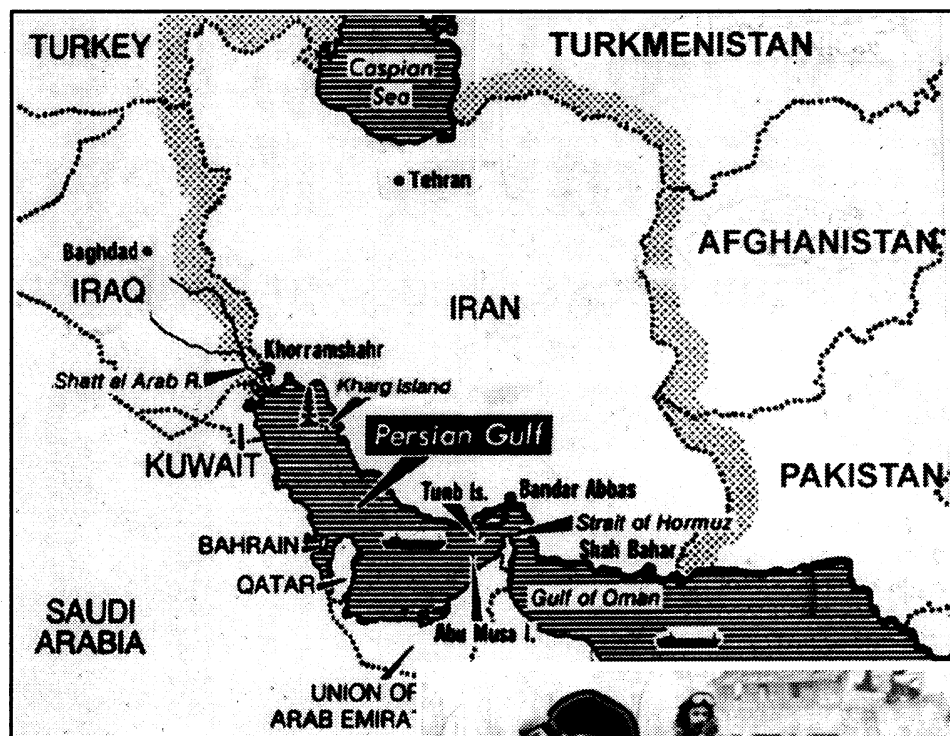
The U.S. military force has expanded to nearly 35,000 troops, 30 warships, and 450 warplanes in the Persian Gulf region. And in fact Washington is continuing its buildup. On February 25 an additional 200 U.S. Marines arrived in Kuwait, where they will be based on land. London is keeping an aircraft carrier and other forces in the region as well.

"We have to be willing to be committed to the use of force if [the agreement] doesn't stick," stated Donald Snider, a former director of the White House National Security Council who teaches at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He urged Congress to allocate more funds to the military, adding, "This one is not over by a long shot."

The Clinton administration has come under fire from some Republicans for not pressing hard enough to overthrowing the Iraqi government. Senate majority leader Trent Lott, who has called for setting up a puppet regime in Iraq, opposes the UN deal. "The secretary general is calling the shots," he declared February 25. "The United States is not."

A February 25 article in the *Wall Street Journal* headlined "It's not too late to topple Saddam," demanded Washington establish an opposition that would "over time" set up a "provisional government inside Iraq." The article suggested providing direct military assistance including "close-air support to ensure the opposition of local military superiority." The next day the *New York Times* reported that "the Central Intelligence Agency has drafted plans for a major program of sabotage and subversion" against the Iraqi government.

Republican Senator Arlen Specter insisted that "one way or another we're going



Washington's war preparations are aimed not only against working people of Iraq, but at laying the ground for assault on the workers states in Russia and other former Soviet Republics. At right, U.S. troops in Brcko, Bosnia, form part of NATO occupation force, which has same ultimate goal.



to have to topple Saddam Hussein." He said the CIA plan could help "bring Saddam Hussein to his knees."

Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan repeated his nationalist demagoguery in a column published February 25 under the headline, "Next Time, Send in the French."

"Saddam is a UN problem now, not ours," Buchanan said, referring to the Iraqi president. "Every nation involved in the Gulf crisis, except our own, looked out for its own interests first."

War moves aimed at Russia

The U.S. rulers have used their military deployment in the Arab-Persian Gulf as part of preparing the regimes in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic — prospective new NATO member states — for future military confrontations with Russia and other workers states of the Soviet Union. Founded in 1949, the U.S.-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was designed to exert maximum economic and military pressure on the Soviet Union, codify Washington's dominance in Europe, and push back the struggles of workers farmers around the world.

The proposed NATO expansion would put U.S. troops right on Poland's border with the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belarus, as well as the Russian enclave next to the Baltic port of Kaliningrad.

"Gulf crisis may help NATO candidates" headlined an article in the February 24 *Wall Street Journal*. The article asserts that Clinton's war move "has handed Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic an opportunity to display their allegiances just weeks before the U.S. Senate votes on admitting them to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

Poland's deputy foreign minister Radek Sikorski had announced his government was ready to send 216 soldiers to Persian Gulf. "We certainly want to be an exporter of stability," he declared.

Yeltsin commented approvingly on the agreement signed in Baghdad February 23, stating that if Washington launched an attack in the Persian Gulf, it "would not end with Iraq [but] involve a much greater territory and significantly more countries."

The Russian president and other Moscow officials made several statements along these lines during the previous weeks. At a joint news conference with William Cohen, the U.S. war secretary, Russian defense minister Gen. Igor Sergeev had pointedly asked, "Does the uncompromising and tough stand of the United States on the issue of Iraq help to strengthen stability and security in the world?"

Other prominent political figures in Russia, including Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov and ultrarightist politician Aleksandr Zirinovsky have adopted a more strident opposition to U.S. war moves against Iraq.

Washington has also begun establishing a military presence in the Central Asian workers states, which contain huge oil de-

posits. The three Caspian republics — Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan — possess more than 100 billion barrels of oil, the world's third-largest reserves after the Persian Gulf and Siberia. Last September 500 GIs from the 82nd Airborne Division participated in a week-long joint exercise in Kazakhstan with soldiers from Russia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic.

U.S. deals blow to imperialist rivals

Washington has dealt a blow to its imperialist rivals in Europe through this process, primarily Paris, which had opposed intervention against Iraq. "We've made clear, and the French and Russians accept, that they won't be able to hold back military action," said a Clinton administration official right after the agreement was signed.

At a NATO meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels in December, Albright declared that a war against Iraq and destroying weapons of "rogue states" should become the new "unifying threat" that joins imperialists in Europe and United States in the so-called post-Cold War era. She asserted that the NATO war machine must extend its geographic reach beyond Europe and become "a force for peace from the Middle East to Central Africa."

Washington military preparations has fueled tensions among its competitors. "European allies balk at expanded role for NATO" was the headline of a February 22 article in the *Washington Post* reporting that officials in Paris and other "European allies" said the imperialist military alliance would become "little more than a multinational military machine to assert global U.S. interests" if it launches assaults beyond the European continent.

A group of U.S. senators traveled to Munich, Germany, for a defense seminar in early February to press support for Washington's onslaught against Iraq. Senator John Warner warned, "Make no mistake: There is a direct relationship between decisions taken on Iraq in the next weeks and the future of U.S. support for NATO."

Expressing outraged at this "blackmail," one European ambassador asserted, "Whatever happens in Iraq, blind support for every policy dictated by Washington cannot be the basis of this alliance."

Meatpackers study 'New International'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Des Moines, IA — Iowa packing-house workers are participating in a class series called "Oppose Washington's war on Iraq!" Three workers at the IBP plant in Perry, Iowa, attended the class on February 22, at the Pathfinder Bookstore. That same afternoon in Marshalltown, Iowa, 50 miles from Des Moines, five workers from the Swift meatpacking plant there met at a restaurant to begin the same class. All were members of the amalgamated Local 1149 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, which organizes the Swift plant in Marshalltown and the IBP plant in Perry.

Three workers bought *Nueva Internacional* no. 1 to read the article by Jack Barnes entitled "The Working-Class Campaign against Imperialism and War." The class in Des Moines, attended by a total of 5 people, was in English. The Marshalltown class was held in Spanish, with the help of a little English-Spanish translation.

Maggie Trowe is a member of the UFCW Local 1149.

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U.S. war moves protested

BY DOUG JENNESS

MINNEAPOLIS — William Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, was greeted by more than 100 angry pickets when he spoke at the University of Minnesota February 20. As they rallied outside the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute on campus, protesters' chants against U.S. threats to bomb Iraq echoed through the breakfast gathering Richardson was addressing. Several speakers referred to the protests a few days earlier in Columbus, Ohio, where three prominent figures in the Clinton administration were targeted by angry protests.

After a half hour or so the protesters were permitted to enter the meeting area to ask questions. At one point Richardson, attempting to paint the Clinton administration's stance as moral, said that food and medicines enter Iraq within the framework of the economic sanctions. In response, dozens of protesters chanted, "Shame! Shame! Shame!"

Richardson was unable to complete his speech before his departure as shouting and chanting continued.

The previous afternoon a demonstration at the federal building in downtown Minneapolis drew over 200 protesters. Called by the Iraqi Peace Action Coalition, an ad hoc formation that includes a couple of dozen organizations, the action was the third such protest since the third week of January.



BY JOSHUA CARROLL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "They tried to use us as a pep rally for their war, but we wouldn't let them," said Amber Decker, a 21-year-old student who had attended the "town hall meeting" at Ohio State University. Decker was at a demonstration of 2,000 against U.S. war plans at the White House February 22. She was one of a dozen young women from Ohio State at the demonstration. They had come to Washington to attend a Women of Color and Allies Summit sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW), and decided to attend the rally when it was announced in one of the workshops there. One of the women carried a hand-lettered sign that read, "We were at your town meeting at Ohio State; you wanted our opinion. We say: NO WAR!"

Decker explained that when she had gone to the Ohio State meeting she had not yet made up her mind about U.S. plans to bomb Iraq, but that when she saw how the press and the Clinton administration "tried to use it and manipulate it to serve their own interests," she decided that she was opposed to the planned war. "They said they wanted the opinion of the 'heartland,' but they didn't like our opinion, so they tried to turn it into something else."

Kristen Bolzenius, also a student at Ohio state, explained that after the "town hall" meeting, the university administration, some members of the faculty, and other students tried to convince those who had opposed the

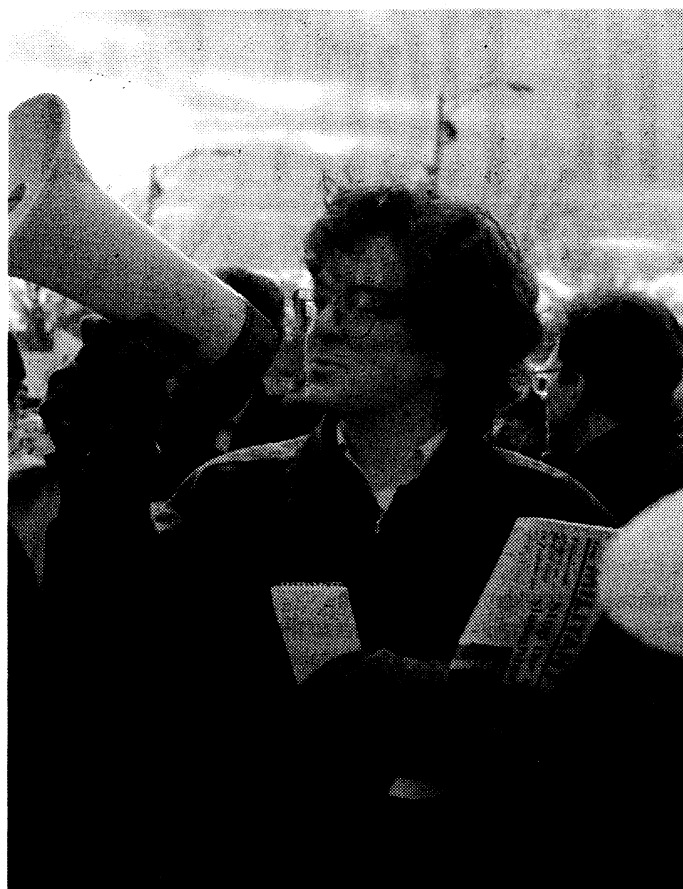
war that "we had let down our country." She said that being at the demonstration and meeting people who applauded them for standing up to Clinton's war advisors gave them more confidence.



BY AARON ARMSTRONG

More than 200 people demonstrated at the Newark Federal Building February 21 to protest the Clinton administration's latest war moves. The action was initiated by the Islamic Students Organization at Rutgers University in Newark and the Young Socialists, and sponsored by other Islamic, Filipino, and Pakistani student groups.

Mutaz Szahref, the first speaker at the event, spoke about the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children who have died as a result of the brutal United Nations sanctions in place since the 1990-91 Gulf war. The Iraqi people, he said, should not be made to pay for the actions of



Militant/Nell Wheeler
Socialist Workers candidate Melissa Harris speaks at protest in Newark against Washington's war moves on Iraq.

the Saddam Hussein government.

Melissa Harris, the Socialist Workers candidate for the Newark city council, put forward a different view. "What is at stake is the sovereignty of Iraq," she argued. "The U.S. government has no right to intervene."

Imperialist attacks on Iraq are part of preparing for war against workers state in Russia

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"There is the growing danger posed by rogue states with dangerous weapons. There are still questions about the future of Russia," declared Secretary of State Madeleine Albright February 24, addressing the Senate Foreign relations committee on the expansion of NATO.

Her statement highlights the reality that Washington's war moves in the Arab-Persian Gulf are not simply a drive to bring the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq to its knees. Along with the U.S.-led occupation of Bosnia and Washington's drive to expand the NATO military alliance eastward, they are a step by the U.S. rulers to put themselves in a position to directly confront the workers states, particularly in Russia, and attempt to restore capitalist rule there through military force.

The world political resolution adopted by the Socialist Workers Party convention in June 1990 explained that Washington had lost the "Cold War." This was the term used to describe the strategic military course forced upon U.S. imperialism and its allies in the face of the limitations imposed by the international balance of class forces following World War II. Washington was immediately blocked from pursuing its goal of turning the U.S. military machine to the task of restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as well as stemming the Chinese revolution, by the refusal of the GIs in 1945 to go back to war. U.S. imperialism was also pushed back by the Korean people in its attempt to overturn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the early 1950s. By the latter half of that decade, the Soviet Union's development of nuclear weapons convinced the imperialists that the risks of massive destruction not only of capitalist Europe but also the United States were too great to consider a direct assault against the Soviet and Eastern European workers states.

The imperialists viewed the Cold War as an unavoidable interlude, during which they hoped the workers states would become sufficiently weakened by Stalinist demoralization of the working class to make possible their destruction. But despite all the horrors meted out to working people in the name of "socialism" by the former Stalinist regimes, workers were not so badly defeated by the bureaucratic castes in these countries that they have simply been ready to acquiesce to, let alone internalize, all the culture, values, and attitudes that are necessary for the

expansion of capitalist relations.

"The crumbling of the Warsaw Pact military alliance under these conditions sharply accelerates the disintegration of the reactionary NATO military alliance, which was already under growing strains from intensifying interimperialist competition and shifting alignments among the rival capitalist nations," the 1990 resolution said. But the U.S. rulers "will continue to use their overall nuclear and conventional military dominance to exercise political power within the imperialist system greater than their economic might would otherwise allow."

The article "The Opening Guns of World War III," based on talks by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes immediately following the U.S.-led slaughter in Iraq in 1991, explained that the Gulf War was "the first war since the close of World War II that grew primarily out of the intensified competition and accelerating instability of the crises-ridden old imperialist world order." It exacerbated all social and political conflicts, and guaranteed Washington would never again be able to force together the same kind of "coalition" to advance the aims of U.S. capital. Washington's imperialist rivals, especially in Paris, Bonn, and Tokyo, became more determined to not be put in the position of having to support a war that will benefit their U.S. rival at their expense.

Built on bones of Yugoslavia

Since 1991, the U.S. rulers have continued the course of using their military superiority to press an advantage against their rivals, while getting into position to launch an attack on the workers states. The clearest example is in Yugoslavia.

As the Stalinist apparatus that had dominated Yugoslavia began to disintegrate at the start of the 1990s, members of the petty-bourgeois layer that ruled that country organized along nationalist lines, scrambled to grab territory and resources for themselves to maintain or augment their privileged way of life. Bonn, Paris, and other imperialist governments in Europe gave support to different warring parties, fueling the slaughter. Washington adopted a "let it bleed" attitude for a while, gradually bringing to bear arms shipments and sporadic air power to increase their leverage in the conflict and block the aims of their European rivals.

After undermining each attempt by its capitalist rivals to impose a resolution in their interests under the aegis of the Euro-

pean Union or United Nations, the Clinton administration stepped in to impose a "peace accord" signed on a U.S. military base in Dayton, Ohio, at the end of 1995. That accord — bearing the name of a Midwestern U.S. city — spelled out the partition of the Yugoslav republic of Bosnia and its occupation by tens of thousands of NATO troops, with Washington in the dominant role — the first imperialist attempt to use direct military force to crush working-class resistance in one of the workers states in Europe and push through the restoration of capitalism. Washington and its NATO allies/rivals have still not achieved this aim, despite years of war and two years of direct occupation of Yugoslavia. Last December, Clinton announced that U.S. troops would stay in Bosnia indefinitely. In recent months they have stepped up military operations in the name of capturing "war criminals."

Drive to push NATO boundary east

The imperialist intervention in Bosnia served as a springboard for Washington's drive to expand NATO eastward, repositioning U.S. troops and possibly nuclear weapons up to the border of the former Soviet Union. "The bottom line is that Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are already behaving as loyal allies," Albright told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, arguing for approval of the treaty bringing these regimes into NATO. In addition to joining Washington's war plans in the Gulf, she said, "When we asked them to put their soldiers in harm's way in Bosnia they did not hesitate. When we asked Hungary to open its bases to American troops, so they could deploy safely to Bosnia, it did not hesitate."

"NATO is a military alliance, not a social club," Albright added.

Russian officials correctly see this as directly aimed against Moscow. Last May Boris Yeltsin, in response to Washington's drive to expand the NATO military alliance declared, "Since Krushchev's Cuban crisis, there hasn't been such a sharp issue in relations between Russia and the United States, which concerns Russia's interests to the degree that everyone should think about it, Americans and Europeans."

In October 1962, U.S. president John Kennedy imposed a naval blockade on Cuba and brought the world to the brink of nuclear war with the Soviet Union over Havana's acquisition of missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

During the recent U.S. military buildup in the Arab-Persian Gulf, Yeltsin twice warned that Washington could "run into a world war" through its military actions.

For most workers, the only imperialist wars they've known have been aimed at the subjugation of semicolonial nations. But the 1990-91 assault on Iraq and the U.S.-led occupation of Bosnia will more and more be the pattern of imperialist wars in the coming years. This was among the questions socialist workers and youth discussed at a series of regional socialist educational conferences held in Chicago, Birmingham, Toronto, and Seattle between October 1997 and January 1998. SWP national secretary Barnes gave one of the main presentations at each of these conferences.

Speaking in Toronto, Barnes pointed out that this period is the first time since the 1930s that the economic crises bred by capitalism are coming home to the imperialist countries. An economic collapse is especially looming in Europe, where the capitalist economies are relatively weaker and the rulers have been so far incapable of driving down wages and living conditions to the same extent as those in the United States.

As part of the preparations for the wars it is driven to launch against working people around the world, intertwined with attacks on workers at home, the rulers in every imperialist country need to convince working people to put the interests of "the nation" first. Working people need to reject all forms of economic nationalism, Barnes said. That was the point of the main banner at the conferences, which read, "Ask not what you can do for 'your country.' Ask what you can do for your class."

In New International no. 10

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Jack Barnes

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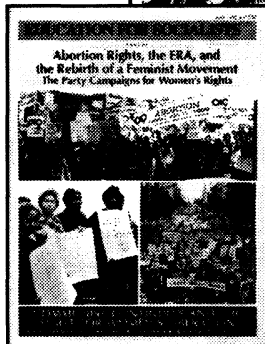
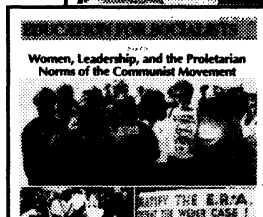
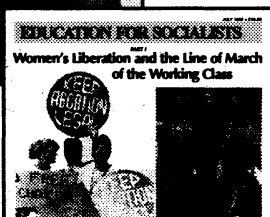
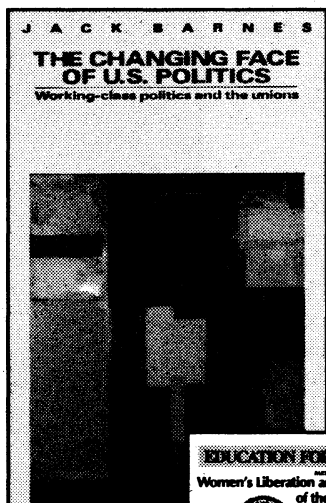
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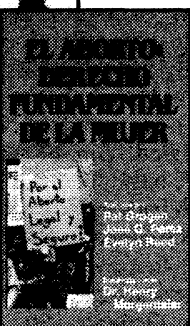
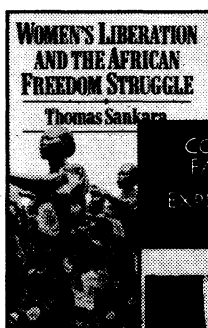
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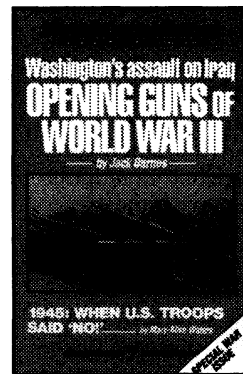


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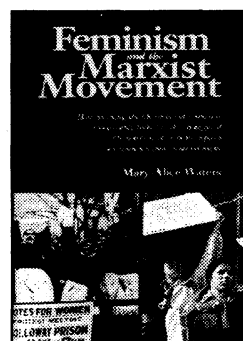
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Women's History Month special for members of the Pathfinder Readers Club

CCNY event draws youth looking to fight imperialism and war

Continued from front page

partment, Casa de las Américas, Young Socialists, Bronx ProLibertad, and Comité Nacional Puertorriqueño 98. Colón recognized Luis Miranda, director of Casa de las Américas, in the audience. Silvio Torres, head of the Institute of Dominican Studies at CCNY, welcomed people to the event.

Fight to free Puerto Rican prisoners

Colón underscored the importance of the campaign to free 14 Puerto Rican independence fighters who are in U.S. prisons. He urged those present to build and join a March 27 protest in Washington, D.C., and one on July 25 at the United Nations, which will demand the freeing of the Puerto Rican fighters.

Félix Wilson explained that the war of 1898 was actually the Spanish-Cuban-American War, and that after the defeat of the Spanish colonialists, the invading U.S. forces snatched victory away from Cuba's plebeian liberation army, known as the *mambises*, whom they blocked from entering the city of Santiago de Cuba.

Today, Wilson said, the rulers of the United States "can't forgive us for the fact we made a revolution and came to power in 1959," winning freedom from U.S. domination. He highlighted some of the revolutionary gains the Cuban people have made, despite the current economic crisis and Washington's efforts to strangle Cuba through an embargo. Wilson added that one of the most important strengths of the revolution is the number of Cubans who have volunteered to aid other nations, particularly the 300,000 Cubans who served in Angola and were decisive in defeating the South African apartheid army's invasion in 1988.

Rossand Fabunan outlined the Filipino people's struggle for independence — first from Spain, then from the United States, and now from U.S. imperialist domination. Rosemari Mealy talked about the political and economic changes that the Cuban revolution made possible. She urged support for a bill in Congress that would exempt food and medicine from the U.S. embargo as one of the actions that can be taken to oppose U.S. policy toward Cuba. Commenting on the Pope's recent visit to Cuba, she said the welcome extended to him by the Cuban government and people showed that "building socialism is not contradictory with the practice of religion."

Mary-Alice Waters, who had recently returned from a *Militant* reporting trip to Cuba, began her remarks by quoting Cuban leader Fidel Castro when he addressed the United

Nations General Assembly on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in 1979. I come here to warn, said Castro, "that if we do not peacefully and wisely solve and eliminate the present injustices and inequalities, the future will be apocalyptic."

"That's a good place to begin tonight," Waters said, "as Washington is marching working people in the United States and the rest of the world into a war, that is not *our* war, against the people of Iraq."

Iraq, NATO: initial shots of WWII

What is happening today, Waters noted, is directly linked to what happened 100 years ago when Washington launched the first war of the imperialist epoch.

She quoted U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright's arrogant declaration the day before, that the United States, "the greatest country in the world," is merely playing its role as "the indispensable nation" to make the world safe for "those people around the world who follow the rules."

"This war is not about weapons proliferation or United Nations Security Council decisions," Waters noted. "Nor is it primarily about teaching the Iraqi rulers a lesson. It has much more to do with the conditions that are being prepared for the coming confrontation with the former Soviet Union, with Russia above all. With the working people of the former Soviet Union. With the expansion of NATO and the goal — through this assault on Iraq — of integrating Poland, especially, and the Czech Republic more deeply as military components of NATO in preparation for the confrontation with Russia."

If the Gulf War of 1990-91 registered the opening guns of World War III, and the imperialist military intervention in Bosnia over the last several years marked the second round, "the third round is being prepared for Iraq today. And one thing we can be sure of, it will not be the last," she emphasized. "There will be further rounds as their imperialist system pushes them inexorably toward the next inter-imperialist slaughter on a world scale, unless we are capable of stopping them" as the class struggle heats up. "And that is the challenge before us."

The 20th century has been the epoch of imperialism, Waters said. But "it has also been the century of revolution — starting with the two great Russian revolutions of 1917, all the way through to Cuba and the opening of the socialist revolution in our hemisphere."

Waters noted that "the example of the Cuban revolution points the way forward" in

Militant Labor forums held on Iraq

BY MAGGIE PUCCI

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Well over 50 people packed the Militant Labor Forum here February 21 to hear Socialist Workers Party leader Ma'mud Shirvani speak on "U.S. Hands Off Iraq: The weakening of the Clinton administration and the shortening war fuse." Shirvani has traveled extensively in the Caspian Sea region.

Many of those in attendance were socialist workers who are members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM). The Machinists were meeting as a national unit to discuss imperialism's march toward fascism and war, and how to carry out a working-class campaign against the pending U.S. war against Iraq among their co-workers.

Several students had made the trip here from Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina, to attend a march and rally at the White House earlier in the day protesting U.S. war threats against Iraq, and to attend the forum. Participants also came to the forum after meeting members of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party at the Women of Color and Their Allies Summit organized by the National Organization for Women.

Other youth came after getting a flyer at the march and rally by some 2,000 people at the White House. Shirvani opened his talk

by reminding the audience that that day was the 33rd anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. Shirvani pointed to Malcolm's internationalism and anti-imperialist stance as an example people should look to today. Working people and youth should demand "U.S. Hands Off Iraq" because Iraq is a sovereign country; the future of the country must be determined by the people of Iraq and not the U.S. military, Shirvani stated.

The same evening, some 70 people turned out for a Militant Labor Forum in St. Paul, Minnesota, where *Militant* editor Naomi Craine spoke on similar themes. Among them were a number of students from the area, activists in opposing the U.S. war moves and in protesting police brutality, longtime supporters of the communist movement, and socialist workers active in the United Steelworkers of America who were meeting in town that weekend.

Two young women said they heard about the forum from an anti-police brutality activist, and another from a friend who got a leaflet at a protest calling for U.S. hands off Iraq. Another said he got a leaflet himself at that protest, and remembered hearing a Socialist Workers candidate speak a couple years earlier.

Jenny Benton in St. Paul contributed to this article.



Militant photos: Naomi Craine
Nearly 200 people attended event at City College of New York February 19 to celebrate anti-imperialist struggle. Above, left to right, panelists: Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Che Guevara's Bolivian Diary*; Félix Wilson, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section; and Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda. Right, youth asks question about Cuba.



the fight to free Puerto Rico from colonial rule. But the road taken by Cuban workers and farmers, she continued, "is every bit as important for working people here inside the United States, within the body of the imperialist power itself."

Waters pointed to the responsibility of those inside the United States, working together with those struggling for national independence and socialism around the world, to lead a fight against imperialism. She underscored this point with a quote from Che Guevara's call to revolutionaries around the world in his 1967 "Message to the Tricontinental." "Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism," Che said, as he called for unity against "the great enemy of the human race: the United States of North America."

Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda, who spent 28 years in U.S. prisons, one of the longest-held political prisoners in the Western hemisphere until his release in 1979, closed the evening program with a scathing indictment of Washington's wars abroad, from Nicaragua at the turn of the century to Panama in 1989. "In 1898 the imperialists invaded Puerto Rico and saved us from ourselves — because they always come to save you from yourself," he said to laughter and applause.

The head of the invading force, Gen. Nelson Miles, "who supposedly brought us democracy and freedom, was also the one who was responsible for the massacre of Native Americans at Wounded Knee" in 1890, Cancel Miranda pointed out.

He added that the U.S. imperialist rulers "have always used Puerto Rican youth as cannon fodder in their wars, to fight and die for them. They used our youth in Korea against the Koreans, and in Vietnam against the Vietnamese."

In 1949, when he was just out of high school, Cancel Miranda said, "they put me in jail for refusing to go kill Koreans." Later, in 1954, he was arrested as part of a group

of Puerto Rican independence fighters who carried out an armed attack on U.S. Congress to help bring world attention to Puerto Rico's situation. "The first time they gave me two years in prison because I refused to shoot. The second time, they gave me 80 years in prison for shooting. I guess it depends who you shoot at," he said.

'Cuba is a real democracy'

"They commit crimes in the name of democracy. But imperialism is not a democracy. It's Cuba where there is a real democracy," the Puerto Rican leader stated. Pointing to Cuban representative Wilson, Cancel Miranda said, "Do you want to see a free man? He is a free man!"

Asked by a Puerto Rican student from Hostos College during the discussion period what advice he had for young people, Cancel Miranda said, "Think for yourself. Don't just accept everything older people tell you."

"And never let them make you ashamed of being a Puerto Rican. Never let them take your dignity, your Puerto Rican-ness away from you," he added to applause and shouts of approval.

"This country is controlled by a 1 percent minority that exploits the majority," he explained. U.S. officials like Madeleine Albright speak for that minority when they say that Washington will unleash force against those who don't "follow the rules," Cancel Miranda said, echoing the point made by Waters.

"There are people here in the audience who identify with our struggle. But to those who don't know what I'm talking about, my message to you is: find out. Otherwise you'll pay a high price for being ignorant. Because you have to find out the truth about yourself." Drawing applause, Cancel Miranda said, "I'm looking for people who want to fight. If I came all the way from warm Puerto Rico to speak here in cold New York, it's for that. And if there's even one of you here who wants to fight, it was worth it."

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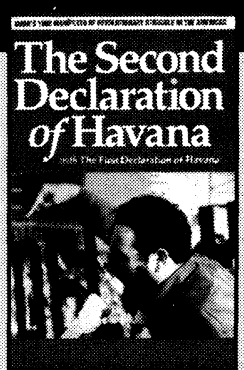
Leon Trotsky

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Auto workers reject Caterpillar contract

Continued from front page

closely watched union votes in years.

Ten days prior to the February 21 – 22 vote, UAW officials voted at a downtown meeting in Chicago to accept the company's contract offer after months of negotiations. Wayne Zimmerman, vice president of Caterpillar, said "This agreement is in the best interest of all our employees."

Richard Shoemaker, vice president of the UAW, said the agreement was better than the one presented to the membership in 1995. "We are pleased with this agreement," said Shoemaker. "We are confident it will be ratified by our members."

But that is not what happened. The East Peoria local, with 7,000 members, rejected the contract by 63 percent. UAW Local 751 in Decatur, Illinois, defeated it by 92 percent, and Local 2096 in Pontiac, Illinois voted it down by 61 percent. The contract was approved by 82 percent in Aurora, Illinois, and by 84 percent in Memphis, Tennessee; with smaller margins at locals in Denver, Colorado; and York, Pennsylvania.

Workers campaign for 'no' vote

In the period leading up to the vote, reporters for the big-business press wrote as if the UAW rank and file were defeated, and it was just a matter of taking a vote to end the dispute.

Once word got out about what was contained in the tentative contract, however, rank-and-file workers began to organize others to vote "No." In the Peoria area much of this work was organized by the "blue shirts," also known as the "Tactical Response Team." This group of workers includes several "illegally terminated" unionists.

"No" buttons and flyers against the tentative agreement were distributed at plant gates and inside the plants. These materials were also widely distributed at the Cat plants in Decatur and Pontiac. One of the flyers handed out was a letter by Terry Orndorff, Chairman of UAW Local 786 in York and the only local union president who voted against the agreement. Orndorff said he did "not recommend the proposal to anyone."

The return of only 110 out of the 160 union workers fired during the past six and a half years, the dropping of more than 400 unfair labor practice charges, and amnesty for all line crossers were the key issues that determined the outcome of the vote. These issues were dubbed by Caterpillar and UAW officials, and echoed in the press, as "emotional issues."

But most UAW Cat workers saw it differently. These were fundamental issues of principle involving human solidarity and dignity. They flowed from the head and the heart.

The contract calls for giving jobs back to at least 110 fired workers, with the company reserving the right to arbitrate the cases of

up to 50 others. There are an additional 13 workers who filed their own unfair labor charges with the National Labor Relations Board.

"The main issue is the illegally terminated, not wages or pensions. This has been the issue from the very beginning," said David Schmidgall, a retired UAW member who worked for Caterpillar for 31 years. "We're not going to sell 50 workers down the river."

Schmidgall echoed the widespread sentiment that all of the fired workers should get their jobs back. "It's wrong that the line crossers get amnesty and the illegally terminated don't," he said. "We can't tolerate Cat pitting man against man." An estimated 4,000, crossed the picket lines during the 17-month strike in 1994 – 95.

Solidarity, rights are central issues

UAW Local 751 member Charlie Holt, who works at the Caterpillar plant in Decatur, said he was against the contract because voting for it meant dropping the NLRB cases, which "stem from Caterpillar's attempt to take away our rights inside the plants.... Workers were fired or suspended for activities in support of the union. Caterpillar was telling us we couldn't wear buttons or union related T-shirts. They would refuse us union representation on the shop floor, which they are still doing today."

Refusal to grant union representation — after the company forced a worker to work 14 hours — led to a 30-hour walkout last November at Caterpillar's Mossville plant. The labor protest ended when the company backed off and allowed union representation when asked for.

In a phone interview after the vote, Holt



Militant/Jim Garrison

UAW Local 974 members discuss contract before meeting in East Peoria February 22

confirmed press reports that UAW Local 751 was ready to strike after learning that the tentative contract included dropping all the unfair labor charges.

Other parts of the six-year contract drew fire as well. The contract contained a so-called job security provision that secured jobs by name only. This meant that the more than 4,000 UAW members who will be eligible for retirement over the next few years could be replaced by nonunion workers.

One of the workers who will soon retire is Isom Weems, a member of Local 2096 in Pontiac. "The contract is bad in every respect. The by-name job security would weaken the union to the point of breaking it," said Weems. "They tried to blackmail us with the pension proposal. But we need to look at a contract that the younger generation can live with." The contract would have increased monthly pension benefits, going from \$1,800 to \$2,300 by 2004. The contract also contained wage increases of 2 – 4 percent depending on the labor grade.

The wage and pension provisions were improvements from the 1995 offer. The contract also contained a two-tier wage for new hires, starting at 70 percent, which is now common in most UAW contracts.

Local 974 member Roger Lynch, fired six months ago for alleged comments to a co-worker, said prior to the vote that he wouldn't support the contract, even if an agreement would mean getting his job back. Many other fired workers expressed the same view. Lynch said he would vote against the contract because he doesn't want to pay 30 percent of the cost of his medical bills if he chooses not to be treated at the company's preferred provider.

Caterpillar's attempt to impose new work rules — known as flex time — in the contract was another bone of contention. "Some people are already forced into flex-time schedules," said Kenny Whetstone, a member of UAW Local 974. "They work three twelve-hour shifts, one four-hour day, get

Continued on Page 14

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Speak-out Against the Death Penalty. Speakers: Dr. Peggy Kidwell, co-chair L.A. Death Penalty Focus; Elizabeth Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party, member of International Association of Machinists. Fri., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

ILLINOIS

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"Portrait of Teresa." A Cuban film about women and the Cuban revolution. Discussion to

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From Iraq to th Caspian Sea Region: The Crisis of Imperialism in the Middle East. Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Sat., March 14, 7:30 p.m. Both events will be held at 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. (at Division on CTA Blue Line). Donation: \$4. March 14 Dinner: \$6. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

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From Iraq to the Caspian Sea Region: The Crisis of Imperialism in the Middle East. Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Sat., March 7, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:30 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 380. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$6. Tel: (713) 847-0704.

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NEW YORK

New York

International Women's Day Program. Speakers include: Lourdes Vázquez, author; and a representative of the Federation of Cuban Women. Video: "Parallel Histories" by Marta Bautiz. Sat., March 7, 7:00 p.m. Sponsored by Casa de las Américas. Suggested donation: \$5. Food served. For more information, call: (212) 675-2584.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Support the Black Farmers Class Action Law Suit. Join Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association (BFAA) in support of their suit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for decades of racist discrimination in denying loans and driving Black farmers off the land. Meet Thurs., March 5 at 9:00 a.m. in front of the federal courthouse at 3rd St. and Constitution Ave., N.W. The hearing begins at 10:00 a.m. For more information, contact Gary Grant at (919) 826-3017.

We tossed all night — A new defense fund was authorized by William and Hillary Clinton to help raise the \$3.2 million they owe their lawyers. The head trustee of the



Harry Ring

fund warned that if big money doesn't come in, "this couple will leave the White House impoverished."

Bleak Blair — Anthony Blair, the United Kingdom's Labour Party prime minister, said it would be two "tough" and "frustrating" years before there would be any visible benefits from his government's cutbacks of social entitlements. Not to mention the political fallout of serving as running dog in U.S. imperialism's dirty war against Iraq.

White citizens? — Thousands of immigrant workers and tourists in Israel were told not to join the long lines waiting for gas masks being issued, assertedly, in the event of an Iraqi attack. Due to a shortage, the masks are being distributed

only to Israeli citizens.

'Sick,' as in 'sick society' — In Johnson City, Tennessee, a school psychologist and her husband, a minister, were indicted for child abuse. On a cold rainy night they put their adopted son, 13, out naked as a punishment. He was found the next morning in a neighbor's barn, trembling with cold, and clad only in a choir robe he took from his father's nearby church.

It was pretty malodorous — The Holocaust Memorial Museum has fired the director who refused to take Palestine's Yasser Arafat on the VIP tour expended to visiting

dignitaries.

They got squeezed? — "Besieged" officials at Nicholas High in Fullerton, California, modified their ban on hugging and other on-campus displays of affection. "Some" hugs and even "high fives" are now OK. But they drew a line in the sand. Declared an administrator: "This is a place of business. Sometimes it's appropriate to hug ... [but] making out in the bushes, that's not appropriate."

'How I spent my holiday' — A U.S. bounty hunter is offering British vacationers the chance to spend their holiday pursuing and arresting

bail jumpers (\$1,480 a week and no share of the bounty paid by bail bondsmen). Recruits will be given black uniforms, bulletproof vests, and a pistol. "When you kick in the door," he observed, "you never know what's going to happen."

...nor does the victim — In the Los Angeles area, two bounty hunters acting to seize an alleged bail jumper, shot a bystander through the chest, leaving him in critical condition. Police took the targeted man into custody, but released the bounty hunters after brief questioning. They said it was an accident, "not a criminal act."

Malcolm X and the fight against imperialism

The following selection is excerpted from an interview printed in *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. The interview was given to Jack Barnes and Barry Sheppard, leaders of the Young Socialist Alliance, on Jan. 18, 1965. Malcolm X read and approved the final text, which appeared in the March-April 1965 issue of the *Young Socialist*. It is copyright © 1965 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: How do you view the role of the U.S. in the Congo?

MALCOLM X: As criminal. Probably there is no better example of criminal activity against an oppressed people than the role the U.S. has been playing in the Congo, through her ties with Tshombe and the mer-

the Black struggle for freedom?

MALCOLM X: Whites who are sincere don't accomplish anything by joining Negro organizations and making them integrated. Whites who are sincere should organize among themselves and figure out some strategy to break down the prejudice that exists in white communities. This is where they can function more intelligently and more effectively, in the white community itself, and this has never been done.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What part in the world revolution are youth playing, and what lessons may this have for American youth?

MALCOLM X: If you've studied the captives being caught by the American soldiers in South Vietnam, you'll find that these guerrillas are young people. Some of them are just children and some haven't yet reached their teens. Most are teenagers. It is the teenagers abroad, all over the world, who are actually involving themselves in the struggle to eliminate oppression and exploitation. In the Congo, the refugees point out that many of the Congolese revolutionaries are children. In fact, when they shoot captive revolutionaries, they shoot all the way down to seven years old — that's been reported in the press. Because the revolutionaries are children, young people. In these countries the young people are the ones who most quickly identify with the struggle and the necessity to eliminate the evil conditions that exist. And here in this country, it has been my own observation that when you get into a conversation on racism and discrimination and segregation, you will find young people are more incensed over it — they feel more filled with an urge to eliminate it.

I think young people here can find a powerful example in the young *simbas* [lions] in the Congo and the young fighters in South Vietnam.

Another point: as the dark-skinned nations of this earth become independent, as they develop and become stronger, that means that time is on the side of the American Negro. At this point the American Negro is still hospitable and friendly and forgiving. But if he is continually tricked and deceived and so on, and if there is still no solution to his problems, he will become completely disillusioned, disenchanted, and disassociate himself from the interest of America and its society. Many have done that already.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What is your opinion of the worldwide struggle now going on between capitalism and socialism?

BOOK OF THE WEEK

cenaries. You can't overlook the fact that Tshombe gets his money from the U.S. The money he uses to hire these mercenaries — these paid killers imported from South Africa — comes from the United States. The pilots that fly these planes have been trained by the U.S. The bombs themselves that are blowing apart the bodies of women and children come from the U.S. So I can only view the role of the United States in the Congo as a criminal role. And I think the seeds she is sowing in the Congo she will have to harvest. The chickens that she has turned loose over there have got to come home to roost.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What about the U.S. role in South Vietnam?

MALCOLM X: The same thing. It shows the real ignorance of those who control the American power structure. If France, with all types of heavy arms, as deeply entrenched as she was in what then was called Indochina, couldn't stay there, I don't see how anybody in their right mind can think the U.S. can get in there — it's impossible. So it shows her ignorance, her blindness, her lack of foresight and hindsight; and her complete defeat in South Vietnam is only a matter of time....

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What contribution can youth, especially students, who are disgusted with racism in this society, make to

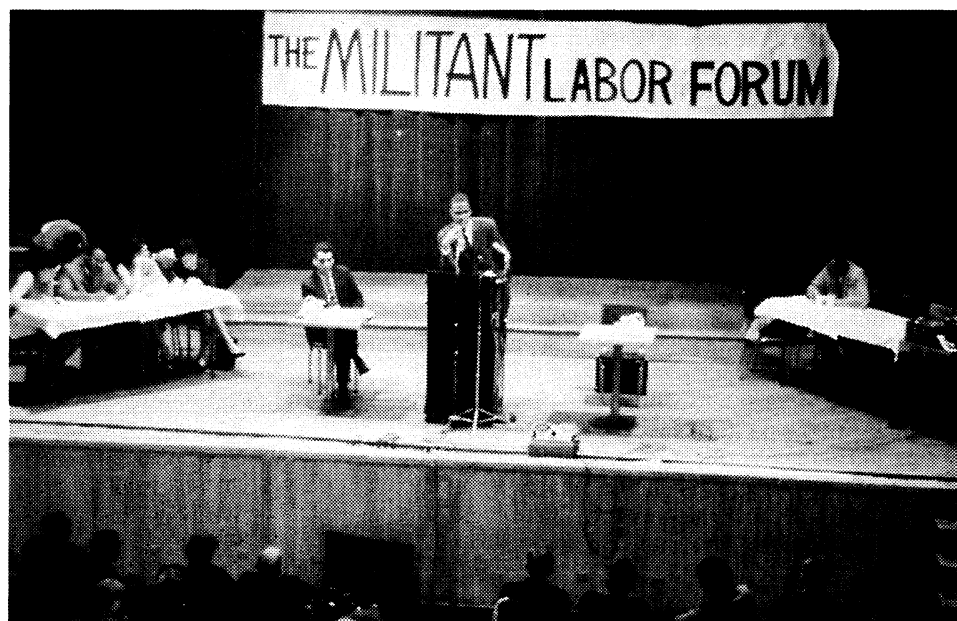


Photo: Robert Parent

Malcolm X at Militant Labor Forum in New York, April 1964.

MALCOLM X: It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it's more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody's blood whether they were strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless. As the nations of the world free themselves, then capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It's only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.

pletely.

1 Congo declared its independence from Belgian colonial rule in June 1960 and Patrice Lumumba, who had led the liberation struggle, headed the first independent Congolese government. He was deposed by U.S.-backed rival Moise Tshombe as Washington led an intervention force under the United Nations flag in late 1960. Lumumba was murdered by the Tshombe's forces in January 1961. Tshombe, installed as prime minister in 1964, crushed a revolt in eastern Congo by Lumumba's followers. Washington later admitted that U.S. planes flown by U.S. pilots had taken part in the operation

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



March 9, 1973

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Two hundred people participated in a White House picket line and joint national steering committee meeting of the National Peace action Coalition (NPAC) and the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC) here today. The antiwar activists from 48 cities in 18 states came to express their determination to remain in the streets demanding a total end to U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia.

A spirited picket line of about 150 circled in front of the White House for about two hours. Two days before the Paris conference to "guarantee the peace" in Vietnam, the demonstrators listed the many ways in which the U.S. remains in Southeast Asia to back up regimes acceptable to Washington: 10,000 civilian advisers in Vietnam, economic and military aid to the Thieu regime, air bases in Thailand, the Seventh Fleet off the coast of Vietnam. Each example was followed with the chant of "Out Now!"

Fran Froehle, who drove 19 hours to get to Washington from Minneapolis, seemed to sum up the feeling of most of the demonstrators. "I don't believe the U.S. is really getting out," she said. "The U.S. is still deeply involved in Vietnam, and we need to keep on having actions like this and educational work."

Abe Bloom and Chuck Petrin were elected as additional national co-coordinators of NPAC. The meeting also sent a telegram to the striking Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, solidarizing with them as

victims of war-caused cutbacks in funds for decent education.



March 8, 1948

LOS ANGELES — The long struggle of California farm laborers to achieve organization is being renewed in the heroic strike in Kern County at the Di Giorgio farm corporation, a 20,000-acre fruit ranch. A 19½ mile picket line has been maintained for five months, since last Oct. 1 by 1,100 members of the APL National Farm Laborers Union Local 218 and 125 truck drivers of AFL Teamsters Local 87.

In addition to the solidarity and fighting spirit of the strikers, has been the aid and assistance given by the AFL, which has brought the help of the city workers to the farm workers. This help reached a high point on Feb. 6 when the AFL brought a Friendship Train of its own to the strikers, a caravan of some 250 cars and trucks bearing 1,000 AFL members \$20,000 worth of food and \$6,000 in cash.

The landowners know what is at stake. The example of successful struggle being waged at the Di Giorgio ranch through the unity of the farm and city workers opens the gates to organization of some 350,000 California agricultural workers.

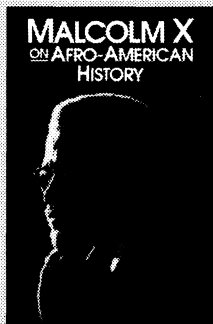
Some were drawn into the city during the war and afterwards returned to the fields. Most had no previous trade union experience. A few did, however, and they play an important part in the union.

From Pathfinder

Malcolm X Talks to Young People

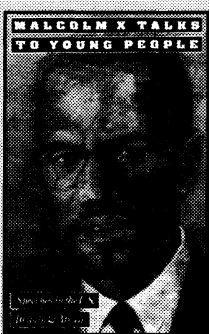
"I for one will join in with anyone, I don't care what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this earth" — Malcolm X, Britain, December 1964.

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U.S. troops out of the Mideast!

Continued from front page

Washington's Assault on Iraq," featured in *New International* no. 7, describes the reality of imperialism in the aftermath of the 1990-91 Gulf War — a world marked by mounting economic crisis, social instability, intensified political conflicts, and deepening struggles for self-determination.

"Washington's war in the Gulf is not, as the U.S. rulers pretend, the harbinger of a new world order based on peaceful solutions to strife among states," the article explains. The slaughter could accurately be described as the prelude to World War III. "That is the inexorable historic logic of imperialism in its decline — the class logic that will culminate in world war if the capitalists prevail in the decisive struggles that are ahead...."

"As the political consequences of Washington's military 'victory' in the Gulf continue to unfold, we need to recognize that this is not primarily a *postwar* period, but a *prewar* period," the article stated. It pointed out that the 1990-91 "slaughter in the Gulf is the first in a number of conflicts and wars that will be initiated by the U.S. rulers in the 1990s, and the opening of a new stage of accelerating imperialist preparations — at home and abroad — for those wars." That remains true today.

The U.S. war moves are not aimed only at Iraq, but primarily they are moves to prepare imperialism for its coming confrontation with Russia and the other workers states in the region. That's why U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright commends the regimes in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, who are "already behaving as loyal allies."

The tasks of vanguard workers and farmers is to take advantage of the political space to explain these developments and get books like *New International* no. 7 into the hands of fighters. This is the best way to answer imperialism's lies and war pressures. Take every opportunity to build public meetings and forums to talk about

politics, such as the recent meeting at the City College of New York that discussed the theme of "100 Years of Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism: Africa, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines." That event highlighted the revolutionary example of the Cuban people and their intransigent resistance to the colossus to the north. It also displayed the indomitable spirit of the Puerto Rican independence fighters against the Yankee colonizers.

Socialist workers and Young Socialists around the world campaigned in February to get the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International* no. 7, and the booklet *Celebrating the homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's reinforcement brigade to Cuba* into the hands of workers, young fighters, and others. In March they will launch a drive to sell new subscriptions to the two periodicals and copies of the *New International* as they continue to campaign against imperialism.

The working class is the biggest obstacle to the imperialists' march toward fascism and World War III, upon whom the wealthy rulers would have to inflict a worldwide decisive defeat to reverse the decline of their decaying system. These battles remain ahead. The vote by the Caterpillar workers rejecting a recent contract proposal is new confirmation that the retreat by the working class internationally has halted. Toilers around the world are mounting resistance to attacks by the wealthy class on their living standards in Indonesia, Greece, Brazil, and elsewhere.

We urge our readers to join us in the effort to sell the socialist press and Pathfinder books and pamphlets, build meetings to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the struggle against the Yankee imperialist colossus, as well as protest actions that demand:

U.S. and other imperialist troops out of the Middle East!
Defend Iraqi sovereignty!
Weapons "inspectors" out of Iraq!
End the sanctions now!

Support Quebec independence

Strikers on picket lines, young people who are challenging Ottawa's support for Washington's attacks on Iraq, immigrant rights activists, and all supporters of democratic rights should celebrate the failure of the federal government's Supreme Court initiative against Quebec. Every one of these forces should stand shoulder to shoulder with the Quebecois protesting the federal government's efforts to deny Quebec its right to self-determination.

On February 20 the Canadian Supreme Court concluded hearings on a "reference" from the federal government asking the court to declare any "unilateral" declaration of Quebec's independence "illegal." But Ottawa came out the loser. With imperial arrogance the Canadian government sought to intimidate the Quebecois. Instead, the legislative gymnastics became an impetus for the largest nationalist rally since 1995.

Implicit in the court challenge is the threat by Ottawa to use force to maintain "law and order" against Quebec's rebelliousness. The Supreme Court initiative is a direct challenge to the right of the 6 million Quebecois — the vast majority of Quebec's population of 7 million — to decide their own affairs as an oppressed nation without interference from Ottawa. The Quebecois have waged a decades-long struggle to overcome discrimination — based on their language, which is French — on the job, in education, and in the availability of social services.

In face of the Quebecois' determination to turn their backs on the Maple Leaf flag, Canada's capitalist rulers are more divided than ever at the very moment that their patriotic national unity campaign aims to drum up support for Canada's participation in any imperialist war on Iraq. Ottawa's attempts to use more aggressive tactics against sovereignty have not created greater acceptance of federal supremacy in Quebec. Furthermore, many federal forces outside Quebec fear the maneuver will boomerang as it did in the 1995 Quebec sovereignty referendum, when Ottawa's threats and blackmail resulted in federal political defeat.

Rather than bemoaning Ottawa's plight, the Canadian Labor Congress should be championing Quebec's march toward independence. The struggle of the Quebecois against national oppression strengthens the struggle of all working people against imperialist war, the austerity drive of the employing class and their governments, and the fight to defend democratic rights.

Fighting to forge this working-class unity leads to the struggle to replace capitalist political power in Ottawa with a government of workers and farmers. It is only under such a government that Quebecois, Native people, and others who suffer national oppression in Canada's prison house of nations will be truly free to exercise their right to determine their own future.

Booklet on Pathfinder Press

Continued from Page 7

booklet reprints a letter by Ruth Cheney, organizer of a steering committee of four that leads this project from San Francisco. The letter lays out the guidelines for the work, which include demonstrating ability to sustain Pathfinder's exacting standards in order to qualify for full participation. These volunteers — some of them active supporters of the SWP, others not — work directly with the Bay Area organizers. No member of the SWP, Young Socialists, or their sister organizations in other countries is directly involved in the digitization work, which frees them up for political activity in the trade unions, working-class communities, and movements of social protest.

The effort to revolutionize the way communist literature is produced is built on the course presented in the 1991 report by Waters, "Extending the arsenal of communist propaganda and reconquering the apparatus through revolutionary centralism." This report, adopted by the SWP convention that year, concludes the booklet.

The report explains the character and purpose of Pathfinder's print shop. "The shop's reason for being is to take the production workload off the leadership committees and the writing staffs of the Political Committee departments, staffs that are built around writing and edit-

ing political material under deadline," Waters notes. "The comrades assigned to the print shop provide labor power for the production work generated by the entire world movement.... Working in the shop is plain hard labor. As many of the party's cadres as possible volunteer for three years — sometimes a little more, sometimes a little less, but roughly three years — to work hard, to provide the labor power that the party needs to expand the arsenal of communist propaganda.... It's not political work — that is, it's not setting political line or implementing a party campaign; it's producing the arsenal for the campaign. Unlike the *Militant* or Pathfinder staff, you're not held accountable for political line and clarity of presentation.

"The shop can only be built on the labor of communists, of 100-percent conscious, communist cadres," Waters continues. "But comrades don't get a political life working ten hours a day, five days a week in the shop.... That's why the shop schedule has to be organized in such a way that comrades have a political life through their branches. The normal workday and normal workweek has to make it possible for comrades to do that." The current reorganization of labor in the print shop outlined in the booklet is aimed at addressing exactly this challenge and many others presented by Waters in the 1991 report.

Caterpillar workers reject contract

Continued from Page 12

two days off and then right back again. So at least one weekend a month, they're working a weekend without overtime pay."

At the beginning of UAW Local 974's ratification meeting, officials invited the press in to take pictures. The army of photographers and TV camera crews ignited a chorus of boos, setting the stage for what turned out to be a loud and raucous meeting. As the union tops tried to convince union members to vote for the contract, UAW members inside reported that many booed and hissed. Others walked out early, wanting only to cast their vote. Union hats, shirts, and crumpled-up contract summaries were thrown on the stage. A few workers walked into the winter air bare-chested.

Later, on Peoria TV, Clingan said he "couldn't get the message across to his members and that many will regret how they voted."

Weems described the Pontiac ratification meeting in a similar way. "A lot of turmoil," he said.

Refusal to surrender

UAW member Bruce Iden said the fight for a fair contract was simply a war he wasn't ready to yield on just yet. "You can't go and have a war and have the generals surrender after they built up the steam," Iden said. "I'm still a soldier, but we lost our generals."

UAW members in Decatur overwhelmingly rejected the contract. Out of 1,200 eligible voters, 1,006 UAW members voted "No." Decatur, a city of 84,000, became a center of union resistance in 1994 when striking UAW members at Caterpillar were reinforced by a strike by rubber workers at Bridgestone-Firestone and the fight by locked-out workers at A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co. Many rallies and solidarity activities took place involving these unions and others.

UAW 974 members reported that officials from UAW Local 145 in Aurora tried to prevent them from handing out "Vote No" literature at Local 145's February 21 ratification meeting. After some tussle back and forth, they were allowed to stay. Paul Mantzke, president of Local 145 in Aurora, said the contract passed there because "we have always had a good, smart membership that puts its trust in their leaders.... We did our job here."

At a press conference the day after the ratification vote rejecting the contract, Caterpillar's chief negotiator, Wayne Zimmerman, said the company is open to resuming negotiations, although he did not say when.

After being in the red in the early 1990s, Caterpillar has had five consecutive years of record profits. A factor in Caterpillar's attempt to get a contract is the six-year pact recently agreed to by its rival, John Deere, and the UAW. Deere was able to win concessions from the union, including a two-tier wage agreement. Some aspects of the rejected Caterpillar contract are patterned on that agreement.

Another major question is Caterpillar's need to replace thousands of retiring workers, many of whom were hired in the 1950s and '60s. Without a contract, Caterpillar cannot hire new workers on the terms the company wants.

The company also wants to get out from under the hundreds of unfair labor practice cases filed against it. "Many of the early rulings have been in favor of the union, signaling a potentially long and costly period of litigation for the company," reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

Many UAW workers assessed that they came out of this vote stronger. "We sent both Cat and the union leadership a strong message," said J.R. Chance, a 44-year-old welder. "When they offer that much money and people still stay behind the terminated workers, it makes a statement," said Chance, who was fired on Feb. 8, 1995, for hand-billing during the strike.

Upon returning to work the first day after the vote, John Backes, a member of UAW Local 974, said, "It's just another normal day... but everyone is smiling from ear to ear."

Cappy Kidd is a member of the UAW in Chicago. Danny Booher contributed to this article.

Puerto Rican independence fighter welcomed on release

BY PETE SEIDMAN

PHILADELPHIA — A jubilant crowd of 80 people welcomed freed Puerto Rican political prisoner Antonio Camacho at a rally here February 14. Camacho had just been released on parole from the Federal Penitentiary at White Deer, Pennsylvania, after serving 10 years of a 15-year sentence.

Camacho was arrested in Puerto Rico by U.S. cops on March 21, 1986. He was one of 15 fighters for Puerto Rican independence convicted in connection to the 1982 robbery of \$7 million from Wells Fargo in Hartford, Connecticut. Most of them were arrested during massive FBI sweep in Puerto Rico on Aug. 30, 1985. Since then, a growing number of individuals and organizations have joined the call for their release.

Entering the meeting hall to chants of "¡Camacho, seguro, a los yanquis dales duro!" (Camacho, for sure, hit the Yankees hard!), the freed independence fighter called for continuing the struggle to win freedom

for Puerto Rico. "I've been absent for 10 years," he said, "but it's been 10 years of preparation and education for the struggle."

The rally, held at the ASPIRA center in the Puerto Rican community in North Philadelphia, was sponsored by the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War. Speakers included National Committee leader Luis Sanabria; Carlos Santos, an Episcopal priest; poet Julia López; and Connie Allen, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the First Congressional District.

Sanabria introduced Camacho's family as well as a delegation of supporters from New York and another delegation that would be escorting Camacho to Puerto Rico the next day. He also read a support message from a group of three Puerto Rican political prisoners in Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary.

Sanabria called for building a national march on Washington on July 25 in support of Puerto Rican self-determination. He an-

nounced that well-known independence fighter Lolita Lebrón would be speaking at a rally here in April to build the march.

Allen said she was honored to be among those welcoming Camacho back to the struggle outside prison walls and offered the socialist campaign's vigorous support to the fight to win the release of all the remaining Puerto Rican political prisoners. Allen pointed to the pressing need to explain the truth about the U.S. moves to war against Iraq. Opposing imperialism and its wars today, she said, is the task for those celebrating the anniversary of 100 years of struggle against U.S. imperialism in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.



Militant/Nancy Cole
Political prisoner Antonio Camacho speaks at a February 14 rally celebrating his release from a U.S. prison.

Who are the Puerto Rican political prisoners?

BY HILDA CUZCO

There are 14 Puerto Rican political activists who are incarcerated in prisons across the United States for participating in the struggle for the independence of their country. Their sentences run up to 105 years.

Among the 14 independence fighters, Juan Segarra Palmer is the last of the "Hartford 15" defendants who were arrested during a raid by more than 200 FBI agents on

August 30, 1985, in Puerto Rico. They were charged with being members of the Macheteros, a proindependence organization, and of conspiring to rob a Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1983.

The other 13 activists were arrested in Chicago between 1980 and 1985. They were accused of membership in the Armed Front for National Liberation and with sedition.

The prisoners, nine men and five women,

are kept separated and in maximum security. No communications are allowed among the inmates, and correspondence is restricted to their immediate relatives only. They are kept in prisons far away from their homes, while prison authorities severely limit visits of close relatives. The prison officials have coerced the inmates into physical searches while naked. They receive little medical treatment or some are forced into unauthorized surgeries.

An international campaign to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners has won support for their immediate release through speak-outs, teach-ins, letters, petitions, and phone calls to the U.S. government officials. Prominent figures such as South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu as well as Latino members of the U.S. Congress have written letters urging Washington to release the independence fighters. The Puerto Rican Federation of Labor and numerous religious, civic, and cultural organizations in Puerto Rico and the United States have endorsed the campaign.

The jailed independence fighters include:

Alejandrina Torres at Pembroke Station, Danbury, Connecticut. She is scheduled to be discharged in 2004.

Elizama Escobar is incarcerated at FCI El Reno, El Reno, Oklahoma. Arrested in 1980, Escobar served a state sentence of eight years before a federal court sentenced him to 60 years.

Oscar López Rivera is jailed in Marion, Illinois. He was arrested in 1981 and is serving a 70-year sentence.

Alicia Rodríguez was arrested in 1980

and sentenced to 35 years in a state prison, plus 55 additional years in a federal prison. She is imprisoned at FCT Dublin, Dublin, California.

Dylcia Pagán, sentenced to 55 years, is scheduled to be released in 2013. She is imprisoned at FCT Dublin, Dublin, California.

Ida Luz Rodríguez was sentenced to 75 years. Her release date is 2014. She is imprisoned at FCT Dublin, Dublin, California.

Carmen Valentín is scheduled for release in 2043. She is imprisoned at FCT Dublin, Dublin, California.

Edwin Cortés, who was sentenced in 1983 to 35 years, is doing time at USP Terre Haute, Terre Haute, Indiana.

Luis Rosa at USP Leavenworth, Leavenworth, Kansas, was sentenced to 30 years in a state prison and also faces a 75-year federal term.

Carlos Alberto Torres was sentenced to 70 years at FCI Oxford, Oxford, Wisconsin.

Juan Segarra Palmer, FCI Marianna, Navajo Unit, Marianna, Florida. A political prisoner since 1986 serving a 60-year sentence.

Adolfo Matos, USP Lompoc, Lompoc, California. Serving a sentence of 70 years, Matos was a state prisoner for eight years.

Alberto Rodríguez, USP Lewisburg, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Arrested in 1983 and imprisoned on a 35-year sentence.

Ricardo Jiménez, USP Lewisburg, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Sentenced to 90 years with release due in 2036.

Puerto Rico: U.S. Colony in the Caribbean
José G. Pérez \$2.50

from Pathfinder

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LETTERS

Concessions at Northwest

I have been a flight attendant for 31 years. A friend of mine retired from United Airlines last year at age 55 with pay of \$1,700 a month. If I were to retire at that age, mine would be \$490 a month. Thirty-four years is a long time to work for a large company and leave basically with nothing.

Our union along with the others gave three very long years of concessions to "supposedly" save Northwest from a certain fate of bankruptcy. Because of these concessions, the company is in a very good financial state (over \$1.2 billion in cash in the bank). Northwest and the other carriers have made massive profits while the workers have given tremendous concessions. Flight attendants at AA [American Airlines] and Alaska for example fought back and won!!

It is really an insult to us all that Northwest is not willing to negotiate in a fair way. Morale right now is very low. It has been 10 years since we have had a pay increase. In closing, I want every union mem-

ber to be aware of how far below industry standard we truly are — especially in retirement.

C.W.
Los Angeles, California

Free Irish activists

In the summer of 1997, the United States government promised Sinn Féin that the remaining Irish political prisoners in the USA would be released and that all deportation proceedings against Irish political refugees would be ended. Sometime in December of 1997, the White House decided to reject the clemency appeal of Richard Johnson, an Irish republican political prisoner. In California, three Irish political refugees, Terry Kirby, Pol Brennan, and Kevin Barry Artt, are being held in federal prison, awaiting deportation hearings. In Cleveland Ohio, another political refugee, Noel Cassidy, will face deportation proceedings this summer. The three prisoners in California, Terry Kirby, Pol Brennan and Kevin Barry Artt, were republican prisoners of war, who escaped from

Long Kesh detention camp in 1983. After their escape, they immigrated to the United States, got jobs, married, had children, and became part of the U.S. working class, like millions of other workers from around the world. These three anti-imperialist fighters remained supporters of the freedom struggle in Ireland and made speeches, raised funds, and went to demonstrations. They engaged in legal political activity. It is because of their political activity that they have been singled out for persecution by the federal government.

Richard Johnson is an Irish-American supporter of the Irish freedom struggle who was simply framed up by the FBI on charges of holding contraband for foreign insurgents.

We would like to ask other *Militant* readers to come to the support of our fellow anti-imperialist fighters imprisoned in the United States. First of all these political prisoners need solidarity, contact with fighters on the outside of the walls. We urge you to write to one or more of

these political hostages of U.S. imperialism.

The addresses : Terrence Kirby #885 33 -011; Pol Brennan # 875 71 -011; Kevin Barry Artt #330 20 -198 — Federal Detention Center, 5675 8th. Street, Camp Parks, Dublin, California 94568.

Richard Johnson #17422 - 038 UA56 — Box 1000 White Deer, Pa. 17887.

Also, Irish Northern Aid is calling for letters of protest to President William Clinton requesting that he release all Irish political prisoners and end deportation proceedings against political refugees.

Roy Inglee
Wilmington, Delaware

'Go to the socialists'

I am interested in your newspaper. The *Militant* is a socialist paper, I believe. I am Albanian. My country now is socialist. So I thought this would be the best way to educate myself. "If you want to learn socialism, go to the socialist."

A prisoner
Fishkill, New York

Add me to mailing list

I'm writing to request that you add me to your mailing list. I'm an inmate at Angola, Louisiana, (Louisiana State Penitentiary) and I ran across your ad in the *Prison Life* magazine. I automatically became interested!

A prisoner
Angola, Louisiana

What can I do to help?

I want to receive your newspaper. Myself and two friends are planning to found a socialist commune when we get out. I want to educate the masses and open their eyes to the truth. What can I do to help the socialist movement?

A prisoner
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas

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

Thousands protest Sinn Fein ouster from Ireland talks

BY ANN FIANDER
AND DEBRA JACOBS

MANCHESTER, England — Thousands of people marched to City Hall in Belfast February 22 to protest the expulsion of Sinn Fein from negotiations on the future of Ireland. Two days earlier, the British and Irish governments had announced the expulsion of Sinn Fein, the leading party fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland, from the talks for three weeks, until March 9. Others took part in protest rallies and meetings across Northern Ireland that weekend.

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams responded to this decision saying, "The process by which this decision was reached lacked any notion of natural justice. At the stroke of a pen this decision attempts to silence the voices of 175,000 people who voted for our party nationally," both north and south of the line dividing Ireland that was imposed by London in 1921.

"The anger at the British Government's

indictment of Sinn Fein is palpable, particularly in nationalist areas of the north, and is evident throughout Ireland," Adams continued. "I appeal to everyone to channel their anger and frustration at today's decision into peaceful and disciplined protest. It is our democratic right to protest. Now is the time for people to exercise this right."

As a pretext to suspend Sinn Fein from the negotiations, British secretary of state for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam cited assertions by Ronald Flanagan, head of the pro-British Royal Ulster Constabulary, that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was responsible for the killings of two men. Neither Flanagan nor Mowlam have offered evidence for their claims.

Since Sinn Fein's expulsion, two bombs have exploded in Northern Ireland, which British authorities have attempted to blame on the IRA. In response, the IRA issued a statement saying, "We reiterate that the complete cessation of military operations, which



Demonstrators block road to Derry, Northern Ireland, February 18 protesting the expulsion of Sinn Fein — the leading organization fighting to get British occupation forces out that region — from negotiations on the future of Ireland.

began at midday on Sunday, July 20 last year, remains intact."

David Trimble, leader of the pro-British Ulster Unionist Party, complained that the three-week expulsion of Sinn Fein was too brief. David Adams of the loyalist Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) made similar comments.

The UDP was earlier forced to withdraw

from the talks for a month after admitting a death squad associated with it was responsible for killing several Catholics in January. The RUC and British authorities had ignored these murders for weeks.

Debra Jacobs is a member of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers.

Government probe against Quebec rights backfires

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO — The week-long federal Supreme Court hearing on whether Quebec has the legal right to secede from Canada "unilaterally" concluded February 20 with the federal government emerging as the political loser. Ottawa initiated the hearing with the aim of intimidating sovereignist sentiment in Quebec by moving to declare independence illegal.

Instead, this attack created a broad consensus in Quebec among a wide range of political forces in favor of Quebec's right to decide its own future and was the impetus for the largest nationalist rally in Quebec since the 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty.

The Quebecois form a nation in Canada oppressed on the basis of their language, French. They represent more than 80 percent of the population of the province of Quebec.

La Presse, the major French-language and federalist daily in Montreal, called the federal government's initiative a "fiasco." Federalist forces across the country came out of it in disarray.

At the beginning of the hearings, 1,000 people rallied in Ottawa in support of Quebecois rights. Workplaces, hot line shows, and coffee shops in Quebec buzzed with near-unanimous condemnation of the federal government's stand. Polls taken throughout the week indicated that a solid majority of those living in Quebec think it is solely up to them to decide their future, despite Ottawa's threats of dire consequences.

On the evening of February 20 an overflow crowd of 4,000 people packed the Montreal convention center celebrating Ottawa's failure and demanding Quebec be given the right to decide its own future. The rally was called by the Party Quebecois (PQ), which forms the Quebec government.

All political parties with representatives in the Quebec legislature and nearly all of the media publicly opposed the use of the courts to thwart Quebec's right to decide its future. Representatives of the Quebec government refused to appear before the court. The Montreal English-language daily *The Gazette* and the Equality Party, which has no deputies in the legislature, raised the lone voices in Quebec in favor of Ottawa's case. The Equality Party says it is for "English rights," which in fact means for preserving privileges for English-speakers.

The federal Liberal Party has now an-

nounced it will take an active part in the upcoming Quebec provincial elections, a move widely seen as a sign of irreconcilable tensions between the Quebec Liberal Party, which opposed Ottawa's court case, and the federal Liberals.

Federalist forces across the country were also disunited around Ottawa's move. A *Toronto Star* column called the federal court lawyer's performance "scatterbrained" and "a good reflection of the confusion ... over how to handle the threat of Quebec secession." The *Globe and Mail*, Canada's national daily, moaned that there was "too much wrong and too much risky" in this court reference and that "the Supreme Court should find a way to put it off."

Federal lawyer Yves Fortier argued that Ottawa had never conceded "that there is a right to secede.... Quite the contrary, the government of Canada maintains that there is no such right." He said that nonetheless Ottawa would not keep Quebec in Canada against its clearly expressed will. But, as a

Toronto Star columnist pointed out, "The government has not renounced the use of force under other conditions." And it reserves to itself the right to determine whether Quebec's will has been "clearly expressed."

Only two provincial governments, those of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, made submissions to the court.

The Canadian Labor Congress (CLC), the largest trade union federation in Canada, complained, "This legal action takes us away from finding a solution and into emotionally charged territory." This is consistent with the CLC's long-standing silence and inaction in face of Ottawa's assaults on Quebecois rights despite the fact that several major CLC affiliates adopted resolutions in the 1970s supporting Quebec's right to self-determination.

In Quebec thousands of municipal workers took part in job actions in the week before the Supreme Court hearing to protest wage cuts imposed by the PQ government. After all-night negotiations, in the middle

of the hearings, Quebec union tops and the government announced an agreement to cut wages, averting governmental legislation imposing the cuts. Gérald Larose, head of the National Confederation of Trade Unions (CSN) in Quebec joined Prime Minister Lucien Bouchard at the sovereignist rally on February 20.

The Grand Council of the Crees was one of several Native groups to appear before the court. Offering thinly veiled cover for federal use of force against Quebec, their lawyer said if a secessionist government tried to take control of aboriginal territory, Ottawa would have a legal obligation to stop it. "The Crees merely ask that they not be taken out of Canada against their will."

The Native peoples are oppressed throughout Canada, with the federal government in the forefront of enforcing their second-class status.

Katy LeRougetel is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338.

Paper strikers 'more determined than ever'

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN
AND BRIAN HAUKE

CROFTON, British Columbia — "We're more determined than ever to fight the company," said Norm McKenzie, as he walked the picket line with Mike Lundahl and Stu McKinnon. The three strikers are members of Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC) Local 2 at Fletcher Challenge's Crofton Pulp and Paper Mill. "The Industrial Inquiry Commission (IIC) report will mean the loss of 200 jobs at Crofton and hundreds more across British Columbia," added McKinnon.

McKenzie is a pipefitter with 25 years at Fletcher Challenge. McKinnon is a millwright, and Ludahl has been an operator for 15 years at the Crofton operation.

The strikers were commenting on the February 9 recommendations from IIC mediators Vince Ready and Colin Taylor, who were appointed by the New Democratic Party (NDP) provincial government. The NDP is a social democratic labor party with organizational ties to the unions.

By February 19 the 2,400 pulp and paper workers striking at three different Fletcher Challenge mills across the province had voted down the recommendations, with nearly 94 percent opposed. Two-thirds of the

strikers are members of the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP); the others belong to the PPWC. The strike is entering its eighth month, making it the longest walkout in the history of the paper and pulp industry in this province.

The Crofton mill employs 850 workers, 700 of whom are members of the PPWC Local 2 and work in the pulp operation. The others are CEP Local 1132 members who work in the paper operation. The report recommends separate application of the collective agreement to each operation.

The IIC report recommended adoption of a six-year agreement and granted the company demands of "full flexibility" and 365-day-a-year operation in exchange for a \$3,000 signing bonus.

Strikers on the picket line explained that full flexibility would give the company the right to assign workers to any job, undermining safety and job security. Contracting would be allowed in the skilled trades.

The IIC report also recommends wage increases of just 1 percent the first year and 2 percent each of the five following years. Company pension contributions would be cut by 3.6 percent.

"The report ignored virtually all submissions by the unions on the key issues of the dispute," said McKenzie. "This report is a

mirror image of what the company wants. It's total garbage," added McKinnon.

"What happens in this strike will set a precedent for the entire pulp and paper industry in B.C., affecting 12,000 workers. We are fighting for something important when we get so much support from workers across Canada and from around the world, including New Zealand," where Fletcher Challenge is based. "This fight is important not just for pulp and paper workers but for all workers," McKinnon said.

Ludahl explained that two supervisors have already been killed during the strike at Crofton. "They were doing unsafe work," he said. "These are the supervisors that had often tried to get me to do unsafe work, which I refused to do. This industry is dangerous."

Fletcher Challenge rejected the IIC report and announced February 20 that it was on the verge of buying a paper mill outside of British Columbia.

"This company was going to do this anyway. They're out to get rid of the union," stated McKinnon.

Ned Dmytryshyn is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 764. Brian Hauke is a member of the Canadian Auto Workers Local 3014.