

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Cuban youth leaders speak to farmers and students in Iowa

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Shipyard strikers in Virginia appeal for solidarity

BY MARY MARTIN

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia—Nearly 9,000 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) have stepped up efforts to win support for their strike against Newport News Shipbuilding Corp. at the same time the company threatens substantial layoffs.

In an effort to weaken the strike, the company announced on April 15 possible layoffs as part of a deal to cut costs for its biggest customer, the U.S. Navy. This announcement followed the scuttling of a proposed buyout of the yard by its biggest competitor, General Dynamics Corp. According to press reports, the Defense Department blocked the buyout deal on the grounds the merger would undermine competitive bidding on Naval contracts.

A "memorandum of understanding" signed April 20 by the Navy and Newport News Shipbuilding commits the yard to big reductions of overhead, labor, and materials costs. In a related move, Federal authorities approved the merger of Newport News Shipbuilding and the Avondale Industries shipyard in New Orleans. Combining the two shipyards under one company would give Newport News the ability to build all but one of the ships the Navy uses and more effectively compete with General Dynamics.

The day before the layoff announcement, nearly 6,000 USWA members attended a special union meeting at Hampton University Convocation Center here on April 14 to discuss measures to strengthen the support for and organization of their strike.

Union officials announced they would issue a weekly strike bulletin to union members, and organize an April 21 rally on the

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In antiunion move, judge fines American Airlines pilots

BY MEGAN ARNEY

In a dangerous precedent for the whole labor movement that directly attacks the right of workers to strike, a federal judge ordered the Allied Pilots Association (APA) to pay American Airlines nearly \$46 million for defying his February 10 back-to-work order.

Many members of the APA, which represents 9,200 pilots at American, took part in a sick-out last February that lasted 10 days and severely crippled the country's second-largest airline. They were protesting the company's attempt to introduce a two-tier structure by paying pilots at Reno Air, a small airline American bought in December, less than American pilots. They also demanded that those American pilots who are upgraded to captain's jobs because of the addition of Reno planes and flights be immediately paid the higher wages corresponding to their new positions. The company has insisted the higher pay scale be instituted over the course of the 18 months it will take

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Working class is target of U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS AND BOBBIS MISAILIDIS

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia — Bomb explosions and anti-aircraft volleys can be heard and seen in the sky around this city between 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. every morning as the brutal U.S.-led NATO air raids enter their fifth week.

In the early morning hours of April 18 and 19, the main blasts came from about 20 miles east, in Pancevo, an industrial center of 120,000 in southern Vojvodina, near Belgrade's suburbs. The oil refinery there,

EYEWITNESS REPORT

the largest in Yugoslavia and among the biggest in the Balkans, was completely destroyed after being hit for the sixth and seventh time. NATO planes also bombed two other plants nearby that produce nitrogen, fertilizers, and other chemicals. Thick clouds of black smoke could be seen on the horizon east and south of Belgrade. Winds blew some of the toxic smoke over the country's capital.

Residents of Pancevo were told by authorities to breathe through towels dipped in a solution of water and baking soda to filter the chemicals in the air.

"About 10,000 people escaped Pancevo for other areas to avoid the poisonous gases," said Novica Radojcin, pointing out that only those who had cars and access to gasoline, which is scarce now, could leave. Radojcin is a member of the metal workers union in Pancevo. He worked in the UTVA aircraft manufacturing plant, which was bombed during the first four days of the NATO assault. "The

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Top: Militant/Carole Lesnick
Left, chemical factory in Pancevo, near Belgrade, destroyed by U.S.-led NATO bombing. "The imperialist attack has nothing to do with military targets or 'protecting' Albanians," said Novica Radojcin, a member of the metal workers union in Pancevo. Above, Young Socialists joined protest against U.S. assault in Los Angeles, April 17, with signs demanding independence for Kosova.

U.S. naval bombing 'accident' in Vieques, Puerto Rico, kills resident

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — David Sanes, a resident of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, was killed April 19 when two U.S. Navy warplanes on a training mission for the U.S. bombing campaign against Yugoslavia dropped 500-pound bombs on a lookout post there. Four other Vieques residents, three civilians and one sailor, were injured.

A U.S. Navy spokesman, Robert Nelson, called Sanes's death an "an unfortunate accident." He said it happened when two F/A-18 Hornet jets took off from the USS John F. Kennedy aircraft carrier to carry out a bombing practice run and missed their target by three miles. Sanes, 35, was working as a security guard for a company that has contracts with the U.S. Navy.

The same night of the bombing, 200 angry protesters in Vieques demonstrated at the entrance to the U.S. Navy's Camp Garcia. The next day 300 people picketed in front of City Hall to demand that the Navy leave. They chanted "Stop the bombing" and "How many more viequeses must die?" Protesters also demanded the mayor of Vieques release the names of the four wounded. U.S. military authorities did not release their names for more than a day.

The Association of Fishermen in Vieques organized a protest by two dozen fishermen who took their boats to the area where Sanes was killed. They laid wreaths and placed an eight-foot cross there in his memory.

In San Juan, a protest demanding the U.S. military get out of Vieques was held in front of Ft. Buchanan.

"Kosovo has reached Vieques," declared Robert Rabin a member of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques.

"The U.S. Navy says it was an 'accident' and says they're sorry, just like they said it was an 'accident' and said they were sorry when they dropped bombs on people in Kosovo," said Ricardo Jordán, another activist from the committee. "The U.S. military lies about their bombing in Vieques, so how can we believe what they say about the war in Kosovo?" he asked.

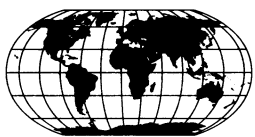
Vieques is a small island east of the main island of Puerto Rico with a population of 9,500. The U.S. Navy has occupied two-thirds of the island since World War II. The bombing range on Vieques is a part of the U.S. military facility on the eastern tip of Puerto Rico that includes the Roosevelt Roads Naval Station, offshore firing ranges, submarine practice areas, and communica-

tions towers in the rain forest of El Yunque. It is the only place in the world where ships, aircraft, and submarines can all fire live ammunition in the same general area. The facility is also used by other governments that pay the U.S. Navy for "services."

Fishermen and others have organized protests against the U.S. Navy in Vieques for decades, standing up to harassment from the military and even the FBI. There have also been protests against U.S. Navy plans to build a giant radar on Vieques and on the main island. Many residents have complained about higher-than-normal rates of cancer among people on Vieques.

In face of the widespread anger throughout Puerto Rico, colonial government officials have felt compelled to criticize the U.S. military's use of Vieques for target practice. In a letter to U.S. president William Clinton, Gov. Pedro Rosselló requested the immediate halting of United States and allied activities that entail the use of weaponry anywhere in the Vieques area.

Carlos Romero Barceló, the nonvoting member of the U.S. Congress from Puerto Rico, also issued a complaint. Rosselló and Romero Barceló are leaders of the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP).



Sinn Fein rejects London's 'decommissioning' ultimatum

The British and Irish governments announced a proposal April 1 that would establish the Northern Ireland Executive, effectively beginning the devolution of British rule in the occupied northern six counties of Ireland. Under this "Hillsborough Declaration," however, the Executive would be implemented only on condition that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) — which has observed a ceasefire since July 1997 — put some of its arms "beyond use." All parties that sign onto the declaration must also agree that so-called weapons decommissioning is "an obligation." Sinn Fein, the party leading the fight for a united Ireland free from British rule, rejected London and Dublin's proposal, as did the Women's Coalition and a party loyal to British rule, the Progressive Unionists. Within two weeks, British prime minister Anthony Blair and Irish prime minister Bartholomew Ahern had to drop their scheme.

Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, Martin McGuinness, said on BBC radio, "The history of republicanism and the demeanor of republicanism from time immemorial clearly shows that they are not going to bend the knee to the demands of elements of the British military establishment, or Unionism." London has been seeking ways to stall on implementing the April 1998 "Good Friday Agreement," which was signed by the British and Irish governments, as well as all the major parties in Northern Ireland. That agreement codified gains made in the fight to rid Northern Ireland of London's rule and called for the creation of bodies such as the Northern Ireland Executive.

Munich cops arrest protesters

Twenty-one people were arrested in Munich April 11 while protesting an appearance by German defense minister Rudolf Scharping. After entering the beer tent where Scharping was to speak, several protesters put on T-shirts marked with slogans such as "No to the German war of aggression," and "War-makers to jail." The protest was organized by several peace groups, as well as by youth from Scharping's own Social Democratic Party. Police intervened aggressively, despite objections from those gathered to

hear Scharping. The arrested youth may be charged with violating a ban on uniforms for wearing the T-shirts.

Romania gov't plans big layoffs

The Romanian government plans to lay off 100,000 workers in coming months as part of an agreement with the World Bank to privatize, restructure, or close government companies. More than half of all Romanian workers are employed by state enterprises. The government seeks to sell off at least 250 small- and medium-sized companies by June, and another 500 after that, to win further credits from the World Bank. Large companies like Sidex steel works, a tractor and truck factory in Brasov, and an aluminum plant in Slatina are also on the auction block.

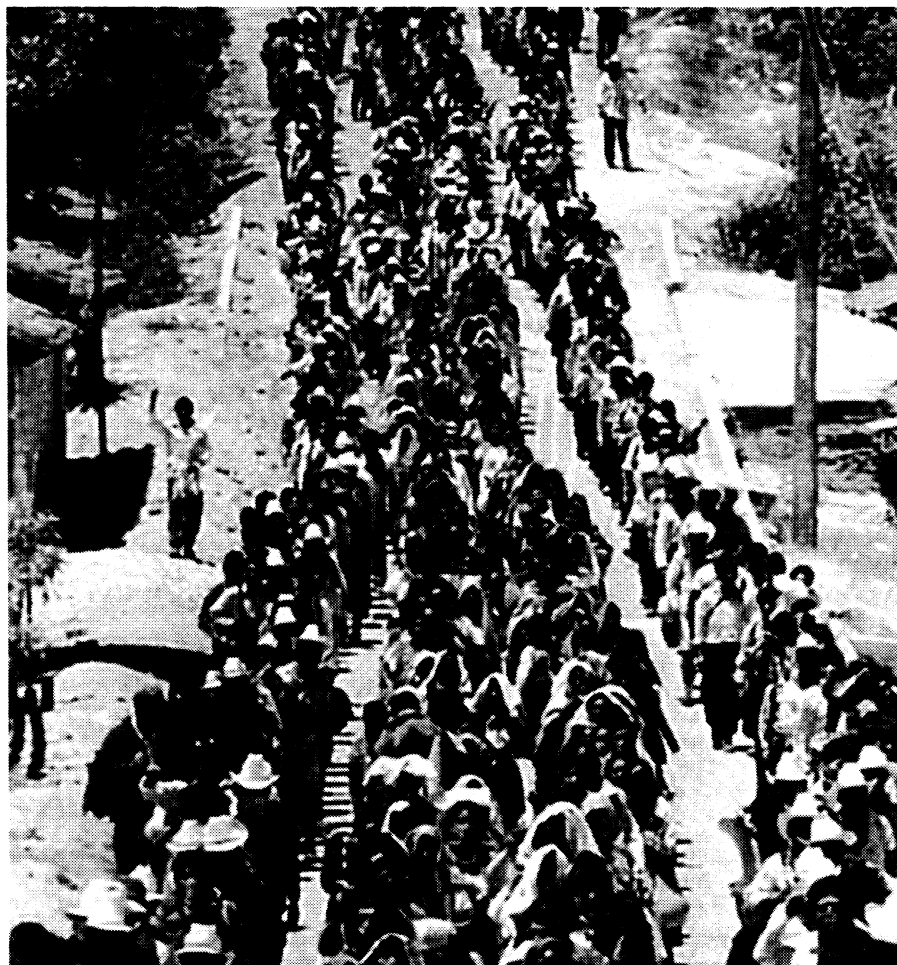
Basque patriot is killed in Spain

José Luis Geresta was killed in Spain March 19. Geresta was shot in the head and had scratches on his face and hands. A gun was allegedly found near his body. Spanish cops, who had accused Geresta of membership in the armed independence group Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA), claim he may have committed suicide. His family reject this possibility. Herri Batasuna, the leading political party fighting for a Basque homeland in the region straddling Spain and France, sent out a statement shortly after the killing. Part of it read: "In Herri Batasuna's view, there is no doubt that it is an action of 'dirty war,' a killing executed by the State apparatuses." It points out several Basque militants who died and were said by cops to have committed suicide, including Xabier Kalparsoro, who allegedly fell from a window while being held at a police station, and Josu Zabala, who was found dead in 1997 after disappearing for several days.

Israeli settlers take W. Bank land

Since last October Zionist settlers from Israel have built at least a dozen new settlements on land that had belonged to Palestinian people, and they are planning to build more. Taking over territory and cutting off Palestinian villages from one another has been one of the methods backed by Tel Aviv to minimize any land that would be won by Palestinian people through so-called peace

Mexican peasants retake town hall



Three hundred Mexican state cops rolled into San Andrés Larrainzar, a village in Chiapas, Mexico, April 7 and took over the town hall, which was guarded by two Zapatista cadre. The next day more than 1,000 unarmed angry peasants marched into the town and retook the hall. Mexican police in full riot gear offered no resistance and withdrew from the scene. Several hundred peasants remained to guard the town.

agreements. "We have to take control of as much land as we can now," settler Elhanan Ariel told the Associated Press. "All of these new settlements are illegal," said Didi Remez, coordinator of the anti-settler group in Israel called Peace Now. According to a U.S.-brokered "peace" deal with Tel Aviv and the Palestinian Authority, no new settlements could be built. The Israeli government, seeking to loophole the accord, argues that they are not new settlements but expansions on existing settlements. Palestinians charge Tel Aviv with sabotaging the agreement.

Students in Nicaragua demand budget increase in education

Demanding that at least 6 percent of the federal budget be allocated to universities, about 1,000 students protested April 14 in front of Nicaragua's congress building. Under the same demands, another 80 students armed with grenade launchers and explosives broke into the Foreign Ministry that same day and occupied the building for an hour. That group dispersed after meeting with Nicaraguan foreign minister Eduardo

Montealegre.

Maryland cop kills Black man

Sean Thiekle, a Montgomery, Maryland, cop, claims he accidentally killed Junious Roberts with a semiautomatic 9 mm Beretta bullet to the back. Thiekle said he thought Roberts, who was Black, might be driving a stolen car. After car-chasing Roberts and ending up at a McDonald's, Thiekle alleges he approached the car calling for Roberts to get out — Beretta pistol in hand. Roberts put his hands up. The cop said he was trying to pull Roberts out of the car when the gun went off. "I don't see how a gun can accidentally go off unless you pull the trigger," said Thomas Lewis, Robert's half brother. He questioned why the cop had his gun drawn in the first place. This was the second killing by the cops in a two-week period. In both cases unarmed Blacks were gunned down by white cops.

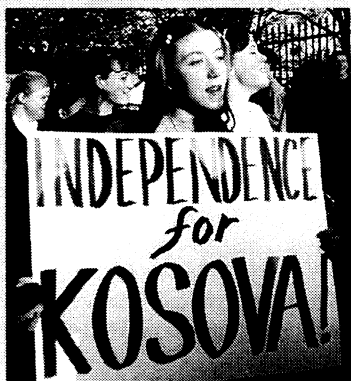
— BRIAN TAYLOR AND MEGAN ARNEY

Robert Dees contributed to this column.

THE MILITANT

Find out the truth about Yugoslavia!

This issue of the 'Militant' features the first eyewitness reports from our reporting team in Macedonia and Yugoslavia. Their reports — including interviews with workers and farmers of different nationalities in the Balkans — help cut through the lies and misinformation dished up daily in the big-business media. Don't miss a single issue!



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Iowa: Cuban youth speak to farmers, youth

BY RAY PARSONS
AND MAGGIE TROWE

DES MOINES — Cuban youth leaders Luis Ernesto Morejón and Itamys García Villar spoke to packinghouse workers, farmers, and some 200 students during their visit to Iowa April 11-13.

The visit was part of a U.S. tour organized by the Committee on Cuban Youth and Education based in Los Angeles. Morejón, 23, is a professor and general secretary of the Foreign Language School of the Enrique José Varona Teacher Training Institute. García, 27, is a doctor of veterinary medicine. The two are members of the Union of Young Communists.

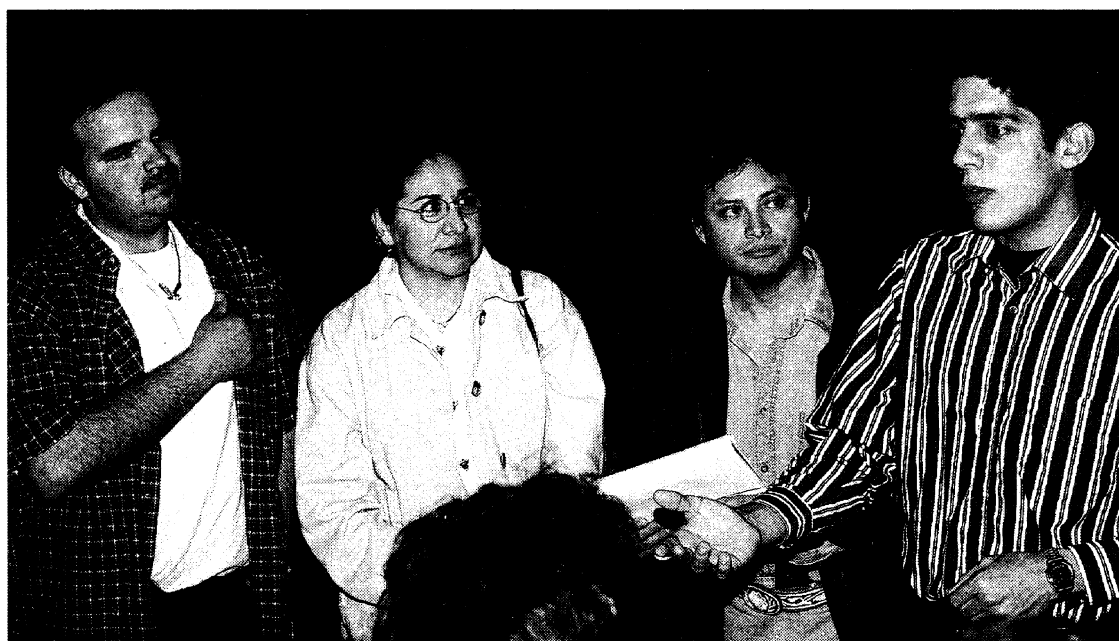
When Morejón and García arrived at the Des Moines airport they were greeted by members of the Iowa Committee on Cuban Youth and Education, which organized the visit. Keys to the city offered by Mayor Preston Daniels were presented to the Cuban youth by Professor Mack Shelley. Three television stations covered their arrival.

Morejón, García, and tour supporters then headed for the countryside northeast of Des Moines to visit the hog farm of Larry Ginter and his mother Alice, who hosted a reception for the Cuban youth.

Ginter invited two rural workers, former farmers from nearby State Center, to join the group that also included students and several packinghouse workers.

Morejón and García gave short presentations on farmers and farming in Cuba. "Sixty percent of the land in Cuba is in the hands of farmers," Morejón said. "Before the revolution most was in the hands of the wealthy. The United Fruit Company owned much of the fertile land. When that land was taken by the revolution, it was put in the hands of the peasants."

"Even before the revolution triumphed in 1959 they had the first peasant conference in free territory in the Sierra Maestra Mountains," Morejón said, where the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro had



Cuban youth leader Luis Morejón (right) speaks to workers at April 13 Iowa State University meeting

Militant/Tim Mailhot

initiated agrarian reform. He added that the National Association of Small Farmers will be holding a 40th anniversary convention in May this year, which farmers from around the world will be invited to observe.

García pointed to how Cubans are turning around the crisis they faced as a result of the U.S.-imposed embargo and the end of aid and preferential trade from the Soviet Union and the east European countries. "One of the big problems in the early 1990s," she said, "was that the seed bank was depleted because food was so scarce. Now we are building it back up." She added that Cuban researchers have developed a mixture of high-quality grass and legumes to replace previously imported animal feed.

Larry Ginter spoke out against the U.S. embargo against Cuba. "Some of us would like to trade our farm products for your medical products," he said, referring to the high quality, inexpensive medicines produced in Cuba.

Ginter described the crisis working farm-

ers like himself face in the United States. "Our goal is land reform to maintain the farmer on the land. Right now, because of low prices, farmers are being driven off the land. We are kind of losing the battle right now, but as things develop we think we can make gains," he said. "We need cross-border alliances and to understand we have a common fight. It's the power struggle between the poor people—the workers and farmers—against the rich. That's what it's really about."

Discussion with packinghouse workers

After the farm visit the Cuban youth went to another reception at the home of Ramona Chávez in nearby Marshalltown. Chávez is a packinghouse worker at the Swift cut-and-kill pork plant in Marshalltown. She is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1149, and a leader of the Ad Hoc Committee for Human Rights, which organized two recent protests against attacks on immigrants.

Nine UFCW members attended the recep-

tion, along with several young people who are active in the immigrant rights committee and students and a professor from Iowa State University (ISU) in Ames. A lively discussion took place with the Cuban youth, with time out for a meal of posole, a traditional Mexican pork and corn soup.

Chávez welcomed the youth and described the problems immigrant workers in Marshalltown and other U.S. cities face. She reported that city officials recently announced plans to deputize local police with certain powers of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In response, a number of Swift workers and others formed the Ad Hoc Committee to mobilize attendance at a City Council hearing in March. "We had the idea that we had to do something," she said. "We filled and overflowed the hall as the meeting proceeded. So the mayor and the chief of police announced that they wouldn't be making any changes [in the police powers] after all because they didn't have enough money." Buoyed by this victory, the workers went on to organize a protest at the town square where the Marshall County Courthouse is located.

Chávez also described the day-to-day struggles of workers in the packing plant and the resistance they are putting up to increasing line speed, problems getting released to go the bathroom, and other challenges. "I think what is happening in the plant is part of the changing consciousness going on in the masses of working people," she said.

Another worker, describing an example of racism against Mexican-born workers in Marshalltown, said that many local doctors refuse to take Mexican families as new patients. "When I moved here I asked for a doctor. It took me two years to get one."

Morejón told the workers, "The more we learn about the situation in the United States, the more we understand the Cuban revolution and the importance of it." He pointed to

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Leader of landless peasants from Brazil tours Georgia

BY MIKE ITALIE

ATLANTA — Augusto Olsson, a leader of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil, met with farmers, unionists, and immigrant workers during his April 8-14 visit to Georgia. The MST has been at the forefront of the battle for land in Brazil, a nation of 140 million where millions of rural toilers have been dispossessed by landlords and capitalists. The MST has organized land takeovers by tens of thousands of farm families throughout the country.

Olsson, 27, is a member of the MST's National Coordinating Committee from the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul. He is a leader of an MST-run cooperative farm involving 28 families in Piratini, near the border with Uruguay.

As a leader in the fight for the land in Brazil, Olsson was interested in meeting farmers in the United States to share experiences. As part of an April 8-10 seminar in southern Georgia sponsored by Agricultural Missions, a group affiliated to the National Council of Churches, Olsson met farm leaders Willie Head and Gladys Williams.

A few days later Olsson traveled to central Georgia to meet Eddie Slaughter, vice president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA). The BFAA is active in the fight of farmers against decades of U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) racial discrimination.

"Meeting Augusto helped put things in an international perspective," Slaughter said, "especially because I've been reading about peasants in Australia, land reform in Cuba, and what they're doing in South Africa." Slaughter noted many similarities between the fight of Black farmers in the United States and the struggle of landless workers in Brazil. There is a difference, Slaughter added, "in Brazil they don't have the land, while here we're losing it. But we face many of the same conditions. When I grow peanuts, I'm forced to use certain companies' chemicals, and in Brazil they're forced by the government to grow particular crops and use chemicals from the same powerful com-

panies. When he mentioned Monsanto as part of their problem, I thought that that was really something, because Monsanto has a bite on me, too."

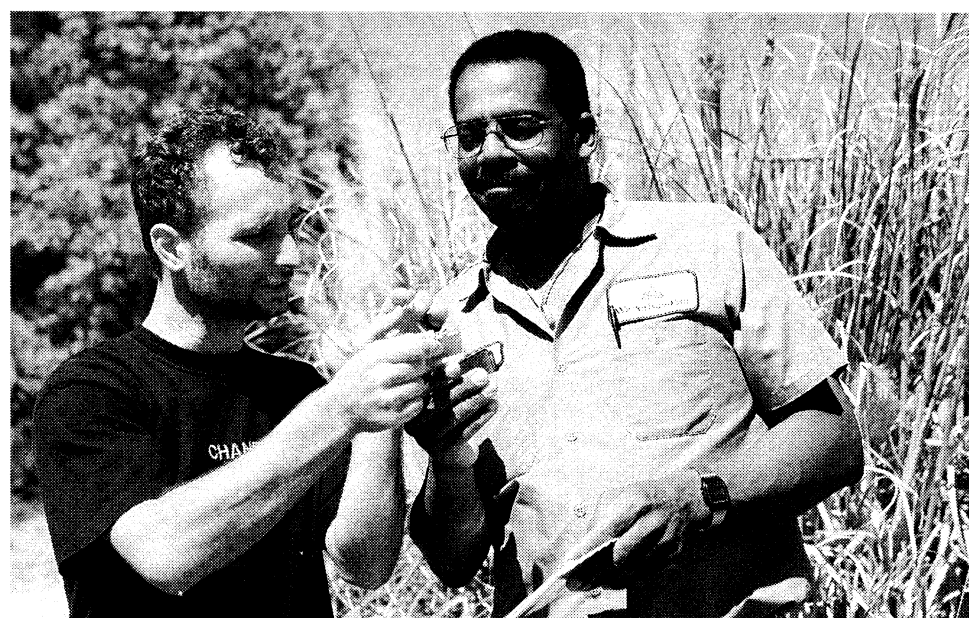
Olsson spoke to 25 people at the Mision Catolica, a church and community center. He was welcomed by Father Carlos Carreras, who noted that "many in this church are and have been migrant workers. They come to this country looking for solutions, but the problem is the same here."

Olsson began by explaining that in Brazil "2 percent of the landowners own 46 percent of the land" and traced some of the history of this extreme concentration of wealth from the colonialists' dispossession of the indigenous peoples to the time of slavery and after, when the freed-slaves were blocked from becoming landowners.

"The first principal of the MST," Olsson continued, "is the fight for the land. We organize large numbers of landless workers to go onto areas of unused land that is owned by the giant landlords. Today there are 50,000 families living in these encampments, in plastic tents. They have occupied the land and are waiting to win title to the land under the Agrarian Reform Law. They live in this way for two, three, up to nine years. We now have another 200,000 families throughout Brazil who have won the land in this way."

Olsson emphasized that "land itself is not enough. We must have a real agrarian reform. We want education, health care, culture, credit, and access to industry so people can have jobs. And we fight with other workers to create a more just society. The society that exists today will not bring us the land and agrarian reform. We face violence from the big landowners, who organize gunmen, murders, and attacks, and collaborate with the government and police against us."

In the discussion period, a worker agreed with Olsson on the need to win more than the land itself, explaining that "in Ecuador there is 'agrarian reform' but the people have to leave the land. They didn't have the infrastructure. Banks wouldn't give loans and the



Militant/Linda Joyce

Augusto Olsson (left) from Brazil and Eddie Slaughter, vice president of Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, on Slaughter's farm in Georgia April 14.

government wouldn't support the farmers."

Another participant asked "What is the alternative? I am an agronomist from Columbia. You need to change your strategy. You can't rely on old plants like yucca and bananas. Try for crops that have a market like cilantro and other herbs."

"In Brazil there is vast hunger," Olsson responded, "so we're thinking about crops like beans, rice, and corn. We don't really have a government in Brazil, but a clown who does the bidding of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This is the problem throughout Latin America. During the so-called Green Revolution a model was imposed on us that disrupted our agriculture and polluted our country. When we asked for bank loans a certain percentage had to be spent on poisonous herbicides and pesticides. The government focuses on a monoculture of crops for export. But we don't want Brazil to be a platform for export. In a country as immense as Brazil, rich in land and climate, we should be able to produce enough beans for all. Instead beans have to be imported."

Later in the week Olsson spoke at the Militant Labor Forum. When asked what he had learned in his time in Georgia, Olsson said, "When I came to the U.S. I was sur-

prised to find many farmers have problems, especially the Black farmers I met in south Georgia.... I found out not only about race, but class. I was glad to meet people like you, and find out that workers and farmers here are resisting imperialism." Earlier in the day Olsson visited the Ford Assembly plant in Hapeville, where he was toured by a United Auto Workers (UAW) member and stopped to shake hands and exchange quick conversations with workers as they worked on the line. Olsson felt the experience gave him a better understanding of the exploitation faced by workers in the United States.

In the discussion at the forum, Olsson described some of the MST's activities in solidarity with the struggles of other workers and farmers around the world. In particular he made it clear that "We have great respect for the Cuban revolution and the Cuban people.... To show our solidarity, in the settlements we organize, the people collected pencils and paper for Cuba, and after the recent devastating hurricane each family donated enough to buy three kilos of beans for Cuba."

Mike Italie is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 1997.

Volunteers rush to prepare 'Truth about Yugoslavia' for reprint

BY TOM TOMASKO

With the imperialist onslaught against Yugoslavia, one of Pathfinder's books, *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention*, has rapidly gone out of stock. The steering committee of the project to put all of Pathfinder's titles in digital form has pledged to just as rapidly get it ready for reprint. The deadline for having it ready to hit the presses is the first week of May.

The Reprint Project is an effort by more than 100 volunteers around the world to place all of Pathfinder's titles on compact disks in order to take advantage of computer-to-plate technology. The new technology makes it possible for Pathfinder's print shop to reprint them quicker, cheaper, and with less-skilled labor. The quality of the books is also improved, with easier-to-read type and more detailed photos than some of the books printed many years ago.

The effort to keep the communist movement's arsenal of books in print has taken several strides forward recently. Most importantly, the Reprint Project is now utilizing a common database accessible through the Internet. This will make the work more efficient, transparent, and secure.

The database is a place where volunteers go to get their work assignment and where they post it when completed so that it is readily available to the next person or team of volunteers downstream in the production pipeline.

For instance, a book that has been formatted in a new style as compared to its last printing can be accessed by the team of format checkers, who carefully inspect the work for errors. It is simultaneously available to those assigned to make a new index. The unnecessary duplication of e-mail and time delays is eliminated.

Proofreading will also be more efficient. Scanners, who start the process of digitizing a book, make two kinds of computer files for most books. One is an exact image of every page of a book, the other is an editable text of those very same pages. The latter needs to be proofread against the original book because the process of digitizing text is not perfect. Heretofore, the pages of the book had to be sent to each proofreader by "snail-mail" regular post office mail, while the text file was received with the speed of e-mail. The database will now have both files for proofreaders to download.

Any volunteer who is given authority to enter the database can see a list of books in production and the stage each book is passing through. This especially helps the steering committee of the Reprint Project to see the flow of work and recognize bottlenecks sooner. The database also limits the damage if a volunteer's computer crashes.

Another step forward is financial. From the start the Reprint Project has been 100 percent self-financing. Each volunteer is responsible for her or his own computer, software, Internet access, and mailing costs. However, there are some expenses involving the reproduction of book photos and graphics that the team doing this work cannot and should not bear themselves. The steering committee estimates these costs to be about \$22,000 over the life of the project. About \$2,700 has been raised so far.

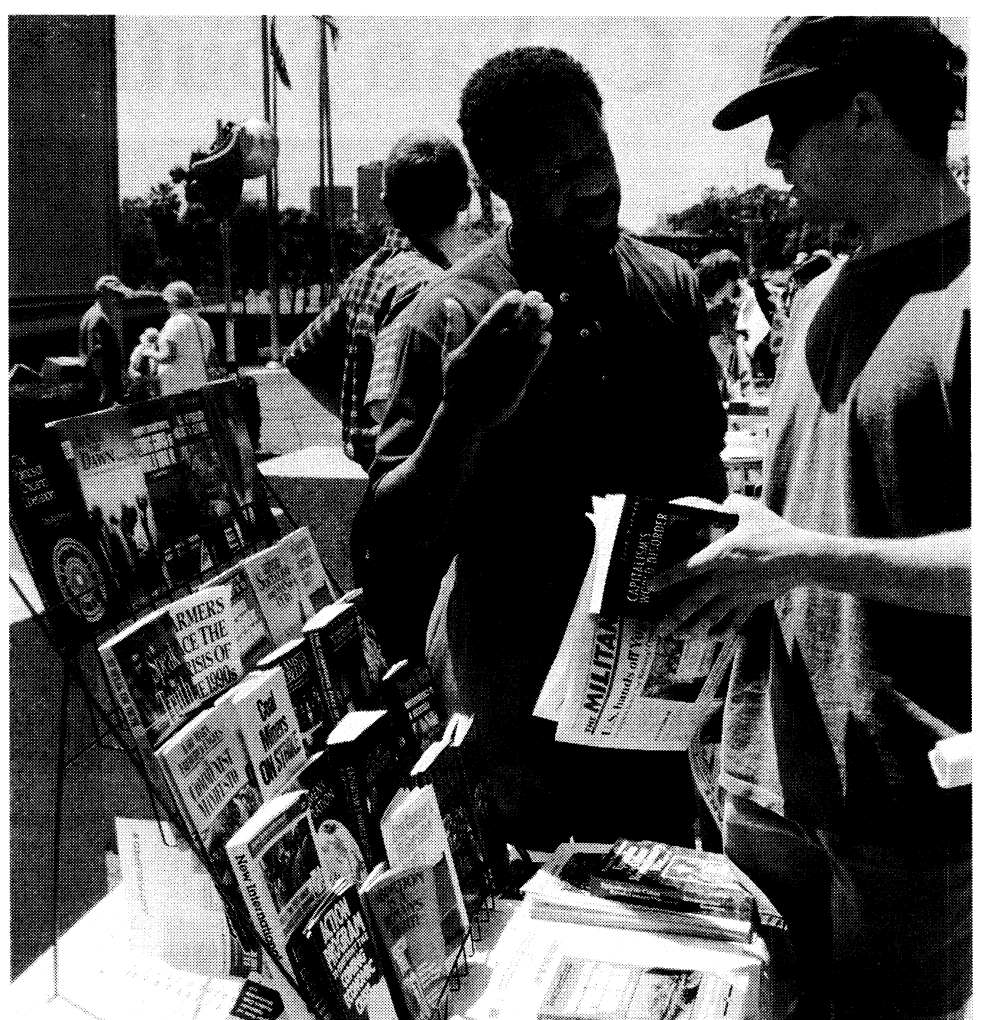
The committee proposes a campaign to have volunteers make modest monthly contributions of \$20 or more over two years.

"We believe this would cover all our costs," said Ruth Cheney, the head of the project and one of the four members of the steering committee. "The idea for this campaign springs from the fact that 14 volunteers, although not a lot of attention had been paid to it, are already giving monthly pledges."

In addition the committee is looking for a few individuals who can make much bigger one-time contributions.

A third success is registered in the fact that one-half of all Pathfinder's 350 books and pamphlets have been scanned and manuscripts prepared for proofreading. If the scanning team continues preparing proofreading manuscripts at a rate of 15 titles a month — the average for the last four months has been 16 — then this aspect of the project will be finished sometime in November. The 18 volunteers concentrating on this effort can then work on proofreading, formatting, or preparing graphics and photos.

The Reprint Project has set a goal of having 10 titles a month ready for reprint — the estimated rate by which Pathfinder's titles go



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Selling socialist literature at protest against Washington's bombing of Yugoslavia April 14 in Los Angeles. All five copies of *The Truth about Yugoslavia* that Pathfinder supporters had were snapped up, as well as three copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

out of print. This goal has yet to be achieved. From December of last year to February of 1999, the project has averaged five titles a month — a giant step forward from the average of one a month for most of 1998.

Another success is the ability of the project to hyper-prioritize certain small books that Pathfinder needs to fulfill classroom orders or for other political opportunities, and to do this without disrupting the production flow of other books. The project has made *The*

Communist Manifesto, one of Pathfinder's most popular books, one of its top priorities, right after the book on Yugoslavia.

Those interested in keeping the lessons of the communist movement in print can contact Ruth Cheney via e-mail at ruthchen@flash.net

Tom Tomasko is a member of the Reprint Project's steering committee and a member of the International Association of Machinists, Local Lodge 1781.

'Militant' 1998 index, bound volumes available

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"Workers' resistance accelerates: From Iowa to Australia, more workers say 'No!' to the bosses," read a headline from the May 19, 1998, issue of the *Militant*. By perusing the 1998 index of this socialist newsweekly, a reader will not only get confirmation of this fact, but also see the conditions for the nascent development of a working-class vanguard in the United States.

The index — listing articles both by subject and author — and the bound volume of all 47 issues in 1998 plus index, are now available. They offer a wealth of information for workers, farmers, and students who want a record of the year "published in the interests of working people."

Among the highlights of 1998 were the victory by members of the United Auto

Workers (UAW) at Caterpillar, who forced the company to rehire all 160 workers "illegally terminated" for union activity over the past six and a half years, and the UAW's seven-week battle with auto giant General Motors. The eventual settlement at the two plants that initially struck left the central issue — GM's drive to reduce its workforce and impose substantial productivity increases — unresolved, and gave workers confidence to fight the next round.

Militant correspondents covered the three-year lockout of workers at the Crown Central Petroleum refinery in Pasadena, Texas, and their fight against sabotage frame-up charges. The record of the 98-day strike by members of the United Mine Workers of America against Freeman United Coal Co. is contained in the 1998 *Militant*. And

the battle by farmers who are Black against racist discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture can be read. These farmers are in the forefront of thousands of toilers on the land who are taking action to fight the effects of a worldwide collapse in farm prices and to demand relief.

The year 1998 was the 100th anniversary of the struggle to end U.S. domination of the peoples of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. On July 7 half a million workers went on a two-day general strike to back the phone workers' strike against the sale of the national patrimony. "It's a strike of the people," said Puerto Rican independence leader Rafael Cancel Miranda. Cancel Miranda spoke with admiration for the Cuban revolution, which "gives you a sense of the dignity of life."

A special feature of the paper last year was interviews with three Cuban generals, published in the *International Socialist Review* supplement to the paper.

Also useful to refer to today are the articles by a team of *Militant* correspondents who went to Yugoslavia in March 1998. Among other developments, they covered a demonstration of 100,000 Albanians in Kosovo who were protesting against attacks by Serbian police and army units on several villages. As Washington and other imperialist powers deepened their probes for military intervention and discussed plans to set up a NATO training center in Macedonia for a military occupation force in Kosovo, the *Militant* spoke with miners and other workers who explained how the Albanian struggle for self-determination is intertwined with defense of the gains of the 1945 Yugoslav revolution.

Other coverage ranged from a *Militant* reporting team to Indonesia following the ouster of the Suharto dictatorship to on-the-spot coverage of the battle by dock workers in Australia to prevent the government and employers from breaking their union, and more.

The 1998 index was mailed to all subscribers with their last issue. Additional copies can be ordered for \$1.50 each. Bound volumes are \$75. You can also order the index and bound volume from 1997, at the same prices.

Please send your order with payment to The Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Capital Fund keeps Pathfinder titles in print

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Counting down the days left in April, the socialist workers in Pathfinder's print shop here are stepping up efforts to keep several Pathfinder titles in print, including getting out *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working-People Should Oppose Intervention* at the beginning of May, as volunteers race to have it prepared for reprinting. (See article above.)

Capitalism's World Disorder by Jack Barnes, the newest title published by Pathfinder, went back to press earlier this month. Spurred by a campaign by socialist workers and youth to promote and sell the book, print shop volunteers produced 1,500 in March and another 900 copies in April. Some 2,500 copies in all have been printed and bound in just under six weeks. Orders by Pathfinder Bookstores for *Capitalism's World Disorder* recently topped 2,000.

Nueva Internacional no. 5, the Spanish-language edition of *New International* no. 11 featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," is on press and due to be delivered April 30. This new book is a timely complement to the arsenal of socialist publications that will be sold in an eight-week international sales drive that kicks off May 1.

In the last few days, reprints of three pam-

phlets have been delivered to Pathfinder. These are *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota*; *El Manifiesto Comunista* — the Spanish edition of *The Communist Manifesto*; and *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*.

In addition, *Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution* by Mary-Alice Waters, an Education for Socialists publication, is again available after having been out of print for several months.

The following titles are also in production to be delivered this month: *Black Music*, *White Business* by Frank Kofsky; *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara; and *Cuba for Beginners* by Rius.

The delivery schedule for April is another step in an effort organized by the worker-volunteers at Pathfinder's print shop to maintain a monthly rhythm of production that keeps Pathfinder titles in print and available.

This effort has received a considerable assist from contributors to the Capital Fund, a fund launched to underwrite the transformation of Pathfinder's print shop, including the shop's acquisition of state-of-the-art labor-saving machinery to make plates for the presses directly from computer files.

Peter Thierjung is a member of the Capital Fund Committee and heads up the Pathfinder print shop bindery.

Workers buy 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

BY SALM KOLIS

PITTSBURGH — "I have to have that book," said a meatpacker and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in Perry, Iowa, referring to the new title from Pathfinder, *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-class Politics at the Millennium*. At their April union meeting, Edwin Fruit showed the book to this worker, who is originally from El Salvador. She had participated in a March 28 immigrant rights march in Marshalltown, Iowa, and is interested in helping to get a contingent of meatpackers to the May 1 rally celebrating the one-year anniversary of the strike by members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) at Titan Tire in Des Moines. Fruit said, "I asked her if she would have a problem with the book being in English, and she replied, 'I want to practice my English and I can use a dictionary if I don't know what a world means.'"

The Iowa tour of Cuban youth leaders Itamys Garcia and Luis Ernesto Morejon set the stage for selling five more copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. People "bought the book because they were interested in an understanding the crisis of capitalism," said USWA member Simone Berg. "Hearing Luis and Itamys explain what the Cuban revolution was about really brought home the idea that you can change society, and that you need to have an analysis of the problems that we face to do that." Four of those who bought books also joined the Pathfinder Readers Club. The first chapter of the book, "A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics," is the first reading for a local Young Socialists class series on the Prospects for Socialism Today.

In Seattle, Scott Breen has sold four copies of the new book so far. "Three members of the International Association of Machinists from Boeing went to the picket line in front of Kaiser Aluminum's plant in Tacoma, Washington, to show solidarity with their six-month strike," Breen said. "While we were there, we met a striker who has a subscription to the *Militant*. When I showed him a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, he mentioned he had read about this new title. He said he was driving down to Fortuna, California, to participate in a conference on Labor and the Environment and I drew his attention to the section of the book that deals with the socialist view of that very

question. He wrote a check out for the book on the spot."

Two additional copies of the new book were sold while Breen was staffing the Pathfinder Bookstore. "Lastly," Breen reported, "I called a co-worker at Boeing to invite him to a Militant Labor Forum on Yugoslavia, and told him about the new book. He came to the forum and bought the book, renewing his membership to the Pathfinder Reader's Club as well."

Mary Martin, a member of the International Association of Machinists, was part of a three-day team of socialist workers who sold 37 copies of the *Militant* and two subscriptions to striking shipyard workers, other workers, and students in the Newport News area, which is the site of a strike of 9,000 shipyard workers.

"I sold my third copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* this past week to a striking shipyard worker at Newport News Shipbuilding" Martin reports. "This Steelworker had expressed interest the first time I met him in getting a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. I met him again last week when we were both taking a break from the picket line. After completing the subscription form and receiving his first copy of the *Militant*, he pointed to the ad on the front page of the paper and asked, 'Now, what about this book?' I had it with me and he made a hefty down-payment and promised to pay off the few remaining

dollars on my next visit.

"We talked about how the strike is part of the resistance by working people to their worsening living conditions. And how the road to winning battles to defend our living conditions and rights, as explained in the book, lies, in part, in fighting workers' ability to find each other, learn about and back each others' fights."

This week we include the list of goals adopted in local by socialist workers and youth to sell copies of *Capitalism's World*

Disorder by May 31. As the chart below shows, the quotas adopted through discussions in each city fall short of the national goal of 1,500 decided at the April 1-3 Socialist Workers Party convention. (This includes the quotas for selling 500 books on the job and through work in the unions that socialist workers adopted in mid-March.)

Supporters of the campaign are urged to review their local quotas in light of the overall campaign. Next week's *Militant* will report total sales in each city so far. The deadline for sending in these figures each week is Tuesday at noon, E.D.T.

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

Response from miners in Illinois to 'Militant' team shows importance of SWP fund drive

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

A team of socialist workers and young socialists is on the road right now in the Illinois coalfields. They are selling the *Militant*, *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, and the just-reprinted pamphlet *Coal Miners on Strike* at mine portals and in communities where miners and other workers live. Among their aims is to link up with the class-struggle militants who will be interested in attending the active workers conference to be held in Oberlin, Ohio, August 5-8.

This is the kind of activity the \$75,000 Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund, which runs through June 15, will help make possible over the coming months.

In order to do this we need money, and we need it fast! What can partisans of the communist movement do to get it? First, we need to plan fund meetings and banquets for early May. Second, let's start collecting right away. That will help local fund supporters get in the right groove.

Team member Sarah Katz phoned in a report from southern Illinois April 21. They had just sold 14 copies of the *Militant* at a mine portal there. Seventeen miners bought paper at four other portals earlier in the week. "People seemed to like a workers' newspaper," said Katz. "When we showed them the lead headlines, the next thing miners would say is, 'How much?'" Five workers also gave small donations.

Later that day they went to another mine and sold 11 *Militants*, three copies of *Coal Miners on Strike* and one copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. "We're on our way right now to meet with a miner who wants to renew his subscription to the *Militant* and buy a coal pamphlet," Katz reported. She said they would show him *Capitalism's World Disorder* and ask him if he was interested in taking several *Coal Miners on Strike* pamphlets to show his co-workers.

Socialist workers in Illinois are making a special effort to sell the pamphlet, which features *Militant* coverage on the United Mine Workers strikes in 1977 and 1978, at the same time they meet their quota for *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

Between visits to the portals, the socialists put up literature tables at a number of Walmart stores in the area. "We sold six papers in a half an hour at Walmart before the managers asked us to leave, three in 20 minutes at a second, and 13 in an hour" at yet another Walmart, Katz explained. And "we met a number of young, newly hired miners interested in the paper." A total of 68 papers were sold on community sales alone. "And we'll be here several more days," said Katz.

In central Illinois, a coal miner who had participated in the 111-day strike in 1978 bought *Coal Miners on Strike*. The spouse of a miner

who has been on strike against the Freeman Coal Co. last year also snapped up a copy. Four people bought *Coal Miners on Strike* in the course of two sales on April 10 and April 17. One woman was so impressed with the pamphlet it wasn't clear if she was buying a copy for herself or her father, who is a miner.

Contributions to the Party Building Fund help pay for increased travel, phone, and other expenses incurred as the communist movement extends its reach to and deepens its collaboration with vanguard workers, fighting farmers, and revolutionary-minded youth opening up the possibility of recruiting some of them to the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists.

A broad range of people, including those just mentioned, will want to contribute to this fund. Asking for pledges and collecting on them right away will maximize the possibility to meet and surpass the \$75,000 goal.

Organizing special political forums in the first several weeks of the fund campaign can help give it a boost. In New York, Argiris Malapanis, who is currently heading up the *Militant's* reporting team in the Balkans, will be speaking May 8.

A chart, with the goals of SWP branches across the country will be published in the *Militant* printed May 6. Please send in photos and notes on your experiences related about the campaign.

Contributions can be sent to 410 West

Street, New York, NY 10014. Please make checks and money orders out to Socialist Workers Party.

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder' IN THE UNIONS March 15 - May 31			
	Goals	Sold	%
UAW	75	26	35%
UTU	80	21	26%
IAM	111	23	21%
USWA	80	11	14%
UFCW	80	8	10%
PACE	15	1	7%
(in Houston)			
UNITE	70	4	6%
Total	511	94	18%
Should be	500	225	45%

IAM—International Association of Machinists; PACE—Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers; UAW—United Auto Workers; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA—United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder' April 1 - May 31	
CITY	GOAL
Atlanta	40
Birmingham	60
Boston	50
Chicago	75
Cleveland	60
Des Moines	55
Detroit	78
Houston	70
Los Angeles	82
Miami	45
Newark	150
New York	120
Philadelphia	50
Pittsburgh	40
San Francisco	136
Seattle	50
S. Minnesota	14
Twin Cities, MN	50
Washington, D.C.	60
TOTAL	1240

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

Sat., April 24
Solidarity Rally for Striking Workers at General Tire
USWA 850, Continental Blvd.
Charlotte, North Carolina
1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.

Solidarity Rally for Kaiser Workers
Newark, Ohio

Wed., April 28
Solidarity Rally for Newport News Shipyard Strikers
At corporate H.Q. Newport News, Virginia

Sat., May 1
Rally for striking Steelworkers at Titan Tire
Des Moines, Iowa
12:00 p.m. 2727 East Market
For more information call: (515) 262-4935

POSTPONED:
Rally for Locked-Out Crown Oil Workers
Pasadena, Texas
For more information call: (713) 475-9560

Tues., May 18
United Steelworkers Labor/Environmental Conference
Conference. Houston, Texas
9:00 am—2:15 p.m. Crowne Plaza Tower, 2222 West Loop South; 2:15 p.m. March from Crowne Plaza to Maxxam/Kaiser Aluminum at 5847 San Felipe.
Other activities planned for May 17 and 19
For more information call: (713) 783-1400 x123

Sat-Sun., May 21-22
Second Annual Black Farmers Convention
Convention. New Orleans, Louisiana

Australia: Gordonstone miners explain fight

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia — Since October 1997 miners at the Gordonstone underground coal mine near Emerald in central Queensland have been standing up to a union-busting lockout, first by ARCO and now by new owners Rio Tinto.

Recently miners and family support group members from Gordonstone took their fight to Sydney for the first time. As well as speaking to other workers about the 18-month fight to defend their jobs and their union, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), they were also in town to attend an April 7-8 Federal court hearing on their case for reinstatement to their jobs.

Picket lines were first set up at Gordonstone in October 1997 after ARCO sacked all 312 miners there. Rio Tinto is now trying to restart production with non-union labor, moving scabs through the picket lines with massive police backing in February.

Rio Tinto also registered a new, nonunion labor "agreement" with the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) February 2. Under new antilabor laws, this overrides the old union contract.

The CFMEU's courtroom challenge centers on Rio Tinto's refusal to recognize earlier AIRC decisions that found ARCO's mass sackings to be unlawful, ruled in favor of compensation, and ordered reinstatement on the basis of seniority if the mine resumed production.

The union is also challenging the validity of the nonunion "agreement" imposed by Rio Tinto.

While the contingent of 13 miners and 3 family support group members was away from Gordonstone, their picket line was boosted by 10 CFMEU members from Victoria and three members of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) from Brisbane, a reflection of the widespread support the Gordonstone miners are winning within the labor movement.

CFMEU and MUA members from Sydney have also spent time on the picket line there since Rio Tinto moved to restart the mine. A 1,200-strong union march took place in Emerald February 27.

While most of the sacked miners were encouraged by the union to find work elsewhere while the mine was mothballed, a core of around 30 have maintained the picket line, reported Dave Weller, the secretary of the Gordonstone CFMEU Lodge, at a public meeting of 60 at the CFMEU hall in Sydney March 31.

Weller, a fitter at the underground mine, recounted some of the experiences of the long dispute with the mine's owners. "Without the support of wives and other supporters we wouldn't have been able to keep going," he said. "We know we're not alone

after coming down here."

Jim Lambley, the Queensland district vice president of the CFMEU mining and energy division, also spoke at the meeting, explaining that they had visited workers at a number of building sites around Sydney. He pointed to the contribution the CFMEU in New South Wales had made in "sending people to Emerald" to participate in the picket line and rally. "It lifted the whole town. That's why we came down," he said.

Ten of the picket line veterans from Gordonstone took the two-day bus trip to Sydney at the beginning of April.

They stopped overnight in Gunnedah, where they were hosted by miners who fought a year-long battle in 1995-96 against Rio Tinto's attempt to impose 12-hour shifts at the Vickery mine. The unionists also stopped by a protest picket line set up by miners sacked out of seniority in October 1998 at the Hunter Valley No. 1 mine.

Diane Vaccaneo was one of three family support group members who flew to Sydney to take part in a protest rally organized by the CFMEU at the Rio Tinto head offices April 8. At the rally, Vaccaneo told this reporter she had met with CFMEU members at a number of construction sites during her visit, as well as with MUA members at Patrick stevedoring company.

Vaccaneo, her husband Stuart, who is president of the Gordonstone Lodge, and another miner exchanged experiences with a small number of wharfies at an MUA-organized early morning barbecue outside the gate at Patrick's Port Botany container wharf April 7.

It was the first anniversary of the massive battle last year to defend the union from a union-busting assault by the company and government.

"We're not even fighting for ourselves now," Evelyn Weller, a family support group member, said at the rally of around 40 people. "We're fighting for our children, against the conditions they're trying to impose on us."

"I won't stop till I see justice," she said. Solidarity messages can be faxed to the Gordonstone picket at (617) 4982 3505.

Bob Aiken is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union. Linda Harris and Doug Cooper contributed to this article.

5,000 rally to back N.Y. janitors' strike



Some 5,000 unionists rally to support striking janitors in New York April 14.

BY MITCHEL ROSENBERG

NEW YORK — Well over 5,000 unionists rallied and marched on the Port Authority bus terminal here April 14, in support of janitors who have been on strike for three years against the Port Authority and its cleaning contractor, Laro Service Systems. Leading the action was a large contingent of the strikers' local, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32B-32J, whose 55,000 members are janitors and maintenance workers in commercial and residential buildings throughout this city.

Workers struck this facility in 1996 when Port Authority contracted its cleaning union to Laro, which attempted to bust the union and has hired workers who are not union members while getting rid of workers who had seniority. The company employs about 200 workers at the bus terminal.

Unionists from health-care workers' Local 1199, carpenters, electricians, hotel workers, laborers, operating engineers, garment workers, and members of the United Auto Workers and Teamsters took

part in the rally. Among the crowd were many building janitors still in uniform. "We just took off early to be here," said Joe, a 32B-32J member who works at a midtown office building. Others with him nodded in agreement.

Among speakers at the rally were AFL-CIO president John Sweeney, whose home local is 32B-32J; Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson; and newly-appointed trustee of Local 32B-32J Tom Balanoff. Jackson attempted to tie the unionists to support for the U.S. bombing of Yugoslavia, stating "If you can fight for human rights and dignity in Kosova, then you can fight for it in New York City."

Discussions among the participants ranged from the Laro strike and recent union fights, to the current struggle against cop brutality in New York, to the bombing of Yugoslavia. Donna Lubavitch, a 32B-32J member from the Dalmatian coast, which runs from what is now Croatia to Bosnia, called herself a Yugoslavian and condemned the bombing and the breakup of her homeland.

Women in Steelworkers union meet in Canada

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO — Some 238 delegates and guests, most of whom are members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), took part in the Women of Steel conference here March 7-10. This national gathering, sponsored by the USWA in Canada, was its second women's conference in recent years.

Women came from across Canada, with a large proportion from Ontario. Roughly a third were attending their first conference. A handful came from Quebec, of whom several were International Association of Machinists (IAM) members. The IAM and USWA, which exist in the United States and Canada, and United Auto Workers in the United States are slated to merge in the coming years.

A handful of delegates from the United States were warmly welcomed.

The conference featured plenary panels and workshop discussions on two themes: women participating in organizing drives to expand union membership, and health and safety issues.

The experiences and contributions of delegates who work in industry marked the gathering. The only woman underground coal miner in Canada; one of the only fourteen women working among the 5,000 USWA members at Stelco steelworks in Hamilton, Ontario; and a millwright from a Saskatchewan uranium mine who is a woman all spoke

from the floor during plenary sessions.

Numerous others were fork lift drivers, set-up people, or machine operators in factories with few women. During workshop sessions on health problems at work, everyone came up with the same wrist, back, elbow, and knee pains from repetitive motion or heavy lifting. The discussion painted a picture of hundreds of women experiencing skirmishes and different situations — usually confidently, certainly individually. Most saw the union as a defender of women's rights and were very ready to turn to male co-workers for solidarity.

In the final plenary discussion, this reporter pointed to how 200 women had won jobs at Stelco as the result of a USWA-led campaign in the early 1980s, and said the labor movement needs to fight for affirmative action measures to win more jobs like those back, or win them for the first time. When women do win those jobs, we gain confidence, respect — and better pay. Clearly numerous conference participants were finding ways to do this. Applause and wide smiles greeted this idea, though these issues were not part of the conference agenda.

Partly because the retail sector of the union did not send any delegates, the experiences and contributions of those who work in industrial settings colored the gathering.

Like many other unions, the industrial character of the USWA has been diluted in recent years through organizing drives and mergers with unions in unrelated sectors. During the gathering, the University of Toronto staff were granted their USWA charter. This group of more than 2,000 won union recognition in December 1998, forming one of the largest Steelworkers locals in the province. Betty Neufeld from USWA Local 2952 in British Columbia spoke from the floor, explaining how she had been drawn into the unionizing drive at the bingo hall where she works. The boss found out and started complaining about her hair, which he declared

was too long and loose. So for the duration of her next shift, she wore it in seven pony tails all over her head. A week later Neufeld was fired, but that didn't stop her. She drove people to work, talked to co-workers alone, and got her friend's husband to park his car outside the bingo hall and had people getting in one side, signing their union card and slipping out the other side. The union was won and she is back at work.

More than 14,000 striking school support staff were picketing Toronto-area schools during the conference. Several announcements were made at different sessions encouraging delegates to join the picket lines early in the morning. Half a dozen did so at various points. One of these delegates, Rosa Chu from USWA Local 5338, said it was her first time walking a picket line. Others asked for information on the fight.

There were 21 members of USWA Local 5338 present, including this reporter, who met over lunch to exchange names and phone numbers, and begin discussing our work situations. A large majority of the members of this amalgamated local work in the metal and wood manufacturing plants of Ontario Store Fixtures in Toronto.

Jaswinder Kang, a member of Local 5338 who works at Circle Foods with many women from the Punjab, explained that union seniority gives women the right to do some heavier, better-paid jobs. The union has arranged for the company to order flour in smaller bags to make them lighter for lifting. Kang and others are now trying to convince more women that they can take these positions.

Pearl Henry and three other women reported back to Local 5338 meeting on the conference and have been assured of support for their efforts to pull a women's committee in the local together.

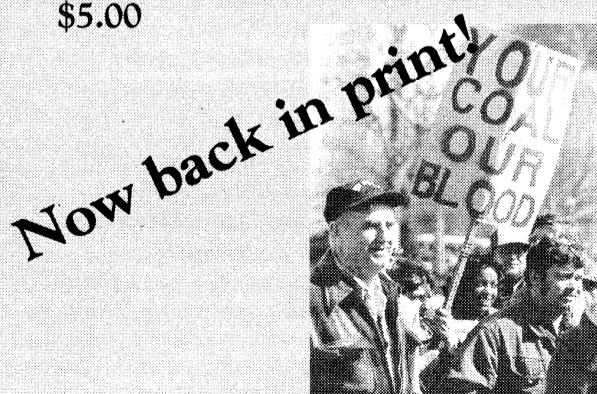
Katy LeRougetel is a member of USWA Local 5338.

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YS campaigns against imperialist war in Balkans

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, P.O. Box 40393, San Francisco, CA 94140-0393. Tel: (415) 824-1429.

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The following letter was sent by the Young Socialists National Executive Committee to all YS members April 13.

Dear Comrades,

Last week, the National Committee (NC) of the Young Socialists met during the convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The NC decided on several campaigns that would guide the organization's work nationally leading up to the Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, this August.

At the heart of every chapter's and at-large member's work should be the organization of a working-class campaign against the U.S./NATO-led war on Yugoslavia. In collaboration with the SWP we can organize educationals and picket lines to expose U.S. imperialism's motives in Yugoslavia, and sell the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at plant gates and door to door in working class communities.

The NC voted to kick off a campaign parallel to the SWP's to sell *Capitalism's World Disorder*, a handbook needed by all young fighters, young socialists, and allies that we meet on the job, campus, and in the mass work we are doing. Every chapter and at-large member should take on a goal and report it to the NEC (National Executive Committee) by April 18.

Although the Cuban Youth Tour is well under way, each chapter should discuss how it can participate and help build the tour, even if it is not coming through the city you live in. Comrades can organize to drive to the closest city where the tour is headed. Chapters should also organize classes on the Cuban revolution. The NC proposes that a YS column be written by every chapter where the tour visits. The YS column will be an important tool to build the tour in other cities, and attract young fighters to the Young Socialists.

A central topic discussed at the SWP convention was the opportunities for recruitment to the party. We should expect that the SWP branches will be fighting for a culture of recruitment in their weekly rhythm. This may translate in an increase with meetings

with co-workers, pre-forum dinners, heightened activity in mass work, regional teams, and an overall higher level of attention paid to working-class fighters who have shown interest in our movement. We should expect that this level of political activity will increase the opportunities to recruit to the YS also. Leadership attention in all areas will be necessary to win all contacts to the politics and program of the YS that we have conquered through our previous conventions.

We raised \$500 at the SWP convention and have \$8,500 to go by June 1. It is critical that chapters rapidly get their goals into the National Office, so we can establish a weekly chart in the *Militant*. Chapters should discuss setting dates for fund-raising events. All areas should pursue possibilities of gaining honoraria at college campuses, and inviting YS speakers from other areas to speak at events along with any other creative events that are possible. The funds will be used to allow us to rapidly respond to political openings and to maintain a national office in San Francisco.

The new mailing address is:
Young Socialists National Office
P.O. Box 40393
San Francisco, CA 94140-0393

s/ Samantha Kern
 for the YS National Committee

BY HEIDI WARD

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Members of the Young Socialists and other young activists in Minnesota have participated in several activities to protest the U.S. imperialist assault against Yugoslavia. On April 16 several students, young workers, and members of the Young Socialists participated in a speak-out against the war held at the Pathfinder Bookstore. A young airport worker related discussions with her co-workers about Clinton's announcement that thousands of reservists would be called upon and commented that the military's ranks are largely made up of workers. She asked how we can respond to this contradiction on the job.

Andrea Algiers, a freshman at the University of Minnesota, came to the forum after meeting socialist workers campaigning against the war at a Young Socialists/Socialist Workers Party table at the university earlier in the week. After the forum she bought a copy of the *Militant* newspaper because of its coverage on the Cuban revolution.

After the forum five of us, including

Thousands in New York march against police brutality



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Some 7,000 demonstrators in New York marched April 15 demanding justice for Amadou Diallo, killed by the cops in February.

Algiers, two members of the Young Socialists, a young worker who attended the YS convention, and a member of the SWP headed over to Macalester College in St. Paul to talk to students involved in a "Peace Encampment" there. The students we met at Macalester explained they organized the encampment because they felt they needed to do something about the war in Yugoslavia. They have been camping out in tents on the campus grounds for almost two weeks. The four students we talked to agreed that their protest was over the U.S./NATO bombing in Yugoslavia. We discussed different perspectives on the political goals of the U.S. government, the United Nations and its "international tribunals," and if we should support independence for Kosova.

One student opposed independence for Kosova, asserting that further dividing Yugoslavia wasn't warranted. Another student disagreed. "I support self-determination for Kosova in whatever form it takes," he said,

"independence included."

Several students looked through the *Militant* newspaper and the current editorial that includes an internationalist perspective explaining why workers and youth should oppose the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia, as well as support independence for Kosova. We also shared the Pathfinder title, *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention*. Before leaving we invited the campers to a broadly sponsored demonstration taking place Saturday morning and an afternoon class sponsored by the Young Socialists to continue the discussion on how to oppose U.S. imperialism in the Balkans. Four young people came to the class, including two students from the University of Minnesota, one of whom attended Saturday's demonstration. The next class will be held on Saturday, April 24, at 6:30 p.m. at the Pathfinder Bookstore in St. Paul. For more information, call (651) 644-6325.

Cuban youth speak to farmers, youth in Iowa

Continued from Page 3

Cuba's response to the devastation of Hurricane Mitch in Central America last year. Thousands of Cuban volunteers were sent to provide medical and other assistance.

Morejón explained, "the U.S. is a country where the standard of living is superior to the countries of Latin America...so you have immigration to this country of workers looking for a better life. They don't have a right to make these immigration laws that attack the people."

On April 12 García and Morejón spoke at a public meeting at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. The meeting was sponsored by Latin American Studies Concentration, the Grinnell Socialists, and the Political Science department. More than 85 people, most of them Grinnell College students, attended the event.

Morejón gave a brief presentation on the history of the Cuban struggle against colonial oppression. "The struggle of youth led by Fidel Castro opened a new chapter of struggle for independence and social justice," he said. The hallmarks of the Cuban revolution, he said, "are our anti-imperialism and our internationalism."

Need to think of collective advancement

García detailed the achievements of the revolution in health care, education, and in the equality of women, and described the impact of what Cubans call the Special Period in the 1990s, when Cuba lost 85 percent of its foreign trade following the col-

lapse of the Soviet Union. She stressed, "Since 1959 there has been no torture; no peasant has been robbed of their land. We are a free and democratic republic where the most important thing is the dignity of human beings."

After the presentations, one student asked if the Cuban youths' college studies are dictated by the government. Morejón responded, saying, "The revolution seeks to influence the education of youth, aware of Cuba's status as a Third World country. We influence youth to show the importance of studying health care and education. There is a difference between influence and coercion."

When asked about the emigration of Cubans to the United States, García explained, "Cuba is not really a paradise. It is an underdeveloped country that decided to build socialism. There are material needs and lackings. Not everyone is willing to put up with these needs to make the revolution. If you do not think of 'us' and collective advancement, it is very hard to live in Cuba."

The meeting received prominent coverage in the Grinnell College *Scarlet & Black* newspaper. The article quoted student sponsors of the event on their impressions of the presentations.

Elizabeth Fry, a member of the Grinnell Socialists, said, "I think it was really ideal for the campus. In the U.S. there is a lot of ignorance about Cuba. I think it's really important to not just listen to our country's media."

On April 13 Morejón and García partici-

pated in meetings at ISU in Ames. García spoke with professors and students at a mid-day reception hosted by Professor David Acker and sponsored by the College of Agriculture and International Agriculture Programs. An exchange took place about farming in Cuba and the United States. García described her work in Cuba producing animal vaccines.

That evening 100 people turned out for a public meeting on the ISU campus. Two carloads of workers and youth who had met the Cuban youth two days before drove 40 miles from Marshalltown to Ames, to hear Morejón and García again. Others from as far away as Kansas City and Austin, Minnesota, participated in the event.

The meeting was opened by Professor Wayne Osborn, who read greetings from Mayor Daniels of Des Moines. A lively discussion unfolded after the presentations.

Morejón replied to a question about Cuba's 11th-inning loss at the hands of the Baltimore Orioles baseball team. "There were factors [that led to Cuba's defeat], but I can't justify it," he said.

"We have confidence in our players not only because of their qualities but because of their values. They have refused offers to play for money.... Don't miss the [rematch] May 3!"

Another person asked about Cuba's role "exporting revolution" throughout Latin America in the 1960s. Morejón responded, "We should make a clarification. Revolutions are not exported. We did not import

our revolution. That's why when the Soviet Union fell we were able to continue."

He added, "We have not exported revolution but we have always had solidarity with just causes in the world. And the Cuban revolution was not just important in the 1960s, but in the '70s, '80s, and '90s. The doctors in the most isolated areas devastated by Hurricane Mitch are Cuban doctors. The university that thousands of Latin American doctors have graduated from is Havana University."

Nicholas D'Amico, an ISU student and member of the Iowa Committee on Cuban Youth and Education said, "I wanted to learn from a personal angle what the impact of the U.S. embargo on Cuba has been, and I got that. The tour and meeting at ISU went better than we expected."

Morejón and García met with Iowa Governor Thomas Vilsack and Lt. Governor Sally Pederson during their visit. During this meeting Morejón noted that U.S. government policies toward Cuba do not reflect the warm response the two youth leaders received while on tour. The April 14 Des Moines *Register* had front page coverage of the tour.

The Iowa Committee on Cuban Youth and Education will meet April 21 to plan ongoing activities in solidarity with Cuba.

Ray Parsons is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 310. Maggie Trowe is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1149.

Union strongholds are target of bombing

Continued from front page

imperialist attack has nothing to do with military targets or 'protecting' Albanians," Novica said in an April 20 interview at the Pancevo offices of Nezavisnost (Independence), the trade union federation independent from government control. "It's directed against all the workers of Yugoslavia."

A number of Albanian farmers and other working people who have fled from Kosovo into Macedonia told *Militant* reporters at the NATO-run camps there that the U.S.-led assault was to a large degree responsible for the massive "ethnic cleansing" drive by the regime of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic in Kosovo (see coverage on facing page).

On the morning of April 21, at least three missiles hit the Usce Business Center, on the side of the Sava River across downtown Belgrade, setting it ablaze and destroying much of it. The 23-story building housed the offices of the governing Socialist Party of Serbia as well as several local TV and radio stations and other companies. A decade ago it served as the offices of the Central Committee of the former League of Yugoslav Communists. Greek reporters on the scene said the building had been evacuated after an apparent tip about the impending assault. The state-run Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, however, said an unspecified number of casualties occurred. Regardless of the human toll, the bombings in and around downtown Belgrade have a deep psychological impact on most people here.

Factories destroyed systematically

According to Tanjug, several people died in the Pancevo bombings, though the government has not released figures — a policy it has maintained throughout the month-long NATO assault. Unofficial estimates of casualties range from 300 to 1,000, the bulk of them civilians, with more than 3,000 wounded throughout Yugoslavia.

Industrial facilities are being destroyed systematically day by day around the country. On the afternoon of April 19, Branislav and Stanimir, two leaders of the Students Union of Yugoslavia who asked that their last names not be used, took *Militant* reporters to see a boiler plant right next to a large residential area in New Belgrade, on the bank of the Sava river on the other side of the city center. The two students were among the main organizers of the 1996-97 protests that forced the Milosevic regime to reverse its antidemocratic annulment of municipal election results that registered victories by an opposition coalition in 15 of Serbia's 19 largest cities.

The heating plant was bombed April 4. The main part of the factory was not hit. But the oil storage depots and the facility that cleans the river water used in the plant had been demolished. The factory heated water that was pumped into houses providing central heating and hot water for 400,000

of the 2 million residents of Belgrade. No plans currently exist to repair it. The impact of this bombing would be more severe if it were winter.

The explosion killed a worker guarding the facility. It shook apartment buildings, including the one where Stanimir lives, and shattered windows throughout the neighborhood. "This is the kind of military targets they are talking about hitting," Stanimir said. "I sit here and see my country destroyed factory by factory, town by town. About half the bridges don't stand anymore."

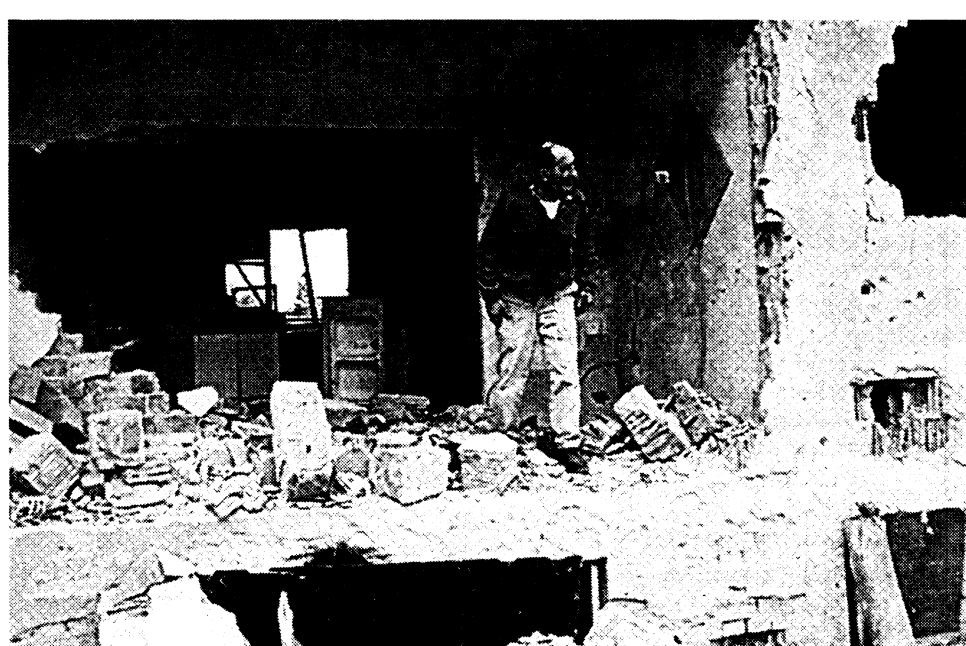
The students and trade unionists interviewed by the *Militant* kept pointing particularly to the bombing of dozens of houses in Aleksinac, a mining town in southern Serbia, and of the huge Zastava complex in Kragujevac — the largest car manufacturing plant in Yugoslavia — that has been destroyed. As Branislav Canak, president of Nezavisnost, put it, "These are examples of the fact that the main target of the bombing is the working class in Serbia and throughout Yugoslavia."

Unemployment is soaring

Unemployment is soaring as the bombing unfolds. In the last month, another 200,000 workers have been laid off either because their factories or other workplaces have been destroyed or because the plants they got supplies from or sold products to have been bombed. Prior to March 24, when Washington unleashed the NATO bombings, joblessness hovered around 55 percent among a workforce of nearly 3 million in Serbia and Montenegro.

"Beginning on April 9, and over several days, the assembly lines, the foundry, the electricity-generating plant, the tool-making department, and pretty much the whole Zastava complex were demolished by the bombing," said Cristina Ranic, a member of the metal workers union who worked in the shipping department of the plant, during an interview in Kragujevac April 20. "Now 38,000 workers have been left permanently without jobs. NATO has brought us a catastrophe."

Missiles also destroyed Zastava's boiler plant, which provided heat and hot water for



Home in Cuprija, Kosovo, was bombed April 8 by U.S.-led NATO forces. A government spokesman said 12 people were killed and 400 families made homeless in the blast. Destruction of factories and workers' homes "are examples of the fact that the main target of the bombing is the working class in Serbia and throughout Yugoslavia," said Branislav Canak, president of the independent union Nezavisnost.

the entire city, an industrial center of 250,000 people. According to Milan Nolic, president of the metal workers branch of Nezavisnost, more than 62,000 metal workers have already lost their jobs in Serbia and Montenegro because their plants have been bombed.

Another 80,000 workers in plants in Belgrade, Pristina, and the outskirts of Kragujevac that produced spare parts and other supplies for Zastava will lose their jobs, said Dragan Ranic, regional director of Nezavisnost in the Kragujevac area. The impact spreads across the formerly federated Yugoslavia, including the oil refinery in Modrica, Bosnia — one of the few industrial facilities that survived the 1992-95 war in that republic — that produced motor oil for Zastava.

"This is something we never expected would happen," Dragan Ranic said. He added that 165 workers were seriously injured in the bombing assaults, which also damaged some housing. "We had anticipated the bombing because a part of the plant was used to produce revolvers."

The jobless workers are supposed to receive compensation of about 40 percent of their pay. But under the current crisis everyone is uncertain the government will have the funds to do so. None of these workers have received any income for the last three weeks, we were told. "We can only survive

by help from relatives who are farmers in the villages around here or by growing food in the garden," Dragan Ranic added.

Humanitarian aid from trade unions and other international organizations has begun to come in, but Nezavisnost members have not seen any of it yet. Nezavisnost, which has campaigned against the regime's austerity measures and its nationalism that has contributed to the breakup of Yugoslavia, organized about 20 percent of the workforce at Zastava. The remaining workers were organized by the Confederation of All Trade Unions of Yugoslavia (CATUY), which is tied to the government.

In a rare show of unity, both Nezavisnost and CATUY issued an appeal to trade unions around the world in early April demanding an end to the NATO assault. "We urge all international and national trade union organizations, workers, and peaceful forces in the world of labor to act to stop immediately and unconditionally all armed actions in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," said the letter signed by Branislav Canak and CATUY president Radoslav Ilic. "We urge you to stand up against the defeat of diplomacy and the victory of force used by NATO."

Hundreds of plants — along with bridges, thousands of housing units, telecommunication transmitters, public buildings, the water

Continued on Page 10

UK rulers rally for NATO assault, debate tactics

TONY HUNT

LONDON — Working closely with Washington, the Labour Party government of Anthony Blair has taken a prominent role internationally justifying the imperialist bombardment of Yugoslavia. With notable exceptions, most liberal and social democratic politicians and commentators support Blair's line. There has been criticism from figures in the right-wing and the Conservative party leadership who, while supporting the war, have expressed deep unease.

While London carries out only 10 percent of bombing raids, Blair has been point man in the propaganda war, aggressively promoting NATO's onslaught during several U.S. media appearances, as well as at home. The war was a "just war in a just cause, a fight for civilization itself," he told reporters April 20 during highly publicized visits to NATO headquarters in Belgium and a British air force base in Germany. "I assure you of our determination to see this through to the end" he added.

Reflecting a shift in policy on the use of ground troops, which he has to date opposed, Blair also said ground forces could be used under the guise of "allowing" returning Albanians back to their homes in Kosovo after several weeks of bombing. London is nervous about the use of land forces given the likelihood of fierce resistance from workers and farmers in the Yugoslav workers state.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the change in a statement to parliament the previous day. Kosovo should become a United Nations "protectorate" under military occupation, Cook said. Speaking to reporters April 20, Cook explained this shift did not alter his opposition to self-determination for the Albanians. "No, we are not proposing indepen-

dence for Kosovo" he said.

If anything, spokespeople for the Liberal Democrats, the third bourgeois party at Westminster, have been more bellicose than Blair. Outgoing leader Patrick Ashdown has been in the Balkans and told BBC TV's *Panorama* that NATO should deploy ground forces and "go in hard." Meanwhile, Kenneth Livingstone, a prominent left-wing Labour Member of Parliament, has supported the war and called in parliament for the use of ground troops. Actress Vanessa Redgrave — another well known figure on the left of bourgeois politics here — has publicly backed the war.

Speaking on the 20th anniversary of her election to office, April 20, former Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher vigorously supported the war which she said was "eight years too late" and called for a ground invasion.

In parliamentary debates April 19 and 20, the government faced criticism from right and left. Thirteen left Labour MPs tried unsuccessfully April 20 to force a vote as a protest against the war. None, however, is on record supporting the Albanians fight for independence in Kosovo. Anthony Benn, the most prominent of these politicians, has called for the involvement of another imperialist body, the United Nations, to oversee negotiations on the future of Kosovo. "The bombing won't work," he has said.

Tory foreign affairs spokesperson Michael Howard clashed with Cook April 20, accusing the foreign secretary of a "lack of clarity" over the goals of the military action. The previous day a Tory MP Peter Tapsell described the bombing campaign as "the most incompetent operation in which Britain has been involved in since the Crimea," referring to a 19th century war.

The right-wing former Conservative de-

fense minister Alan Clark, said the NATO assault was "clumsy, wasteful and shambolic." He also employed anti-Americanism to attack the U.S. Air Force for the killings of Albanians.

Behind much of the criticism from the right is the spotlight being thrown on the underlying weakness of British imperialism and concern in ruling circles over their capacity to sustain an extended campaign and its cost. "British Troops Facing Years in Kosovo" was the banner headline in the right-wing *Daily Mail* April 20 reporting on the proposal for occupying Kosovo. Because "Britain already has more ground troops in the area than any other country ... they would inevitably be required to play a major role." This "will alarm military planners," the *Mail* said because half of Britain's 110,000 army is already on active service. An important factor was that the occupation of Northern Ireland "continues to require massive troop deployment" the paper said.

Help tell the truth about Yugoslavia

The Balkans reporting trip is only possible thanks to the contributions of the workers, farmers, students, and others who rely on the *Militant* for accurate reporting in the interests of working people.

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Albanians who fled Kosova tell of struggle

BY ANNE HOWIE

SKOPJE, Macedonia — Thousands of Albanians terrorized into leaving their homeland in Kosova continue to stream across the border into Macedonia every day. *Militant* reporters witnessed some 3,000 coming through one of the border crossings, in Blace, April 16. Four days later, the Macedonian government of president Kiro Gligorov closed the border, saying there is no more space in the camps. Thousands, however, came over the mountains that day.

Official figures put the number of Kosovar Albanians who have fled here to 136,000 in the last month. Among them, nearly 17,000 have been sent to other countries — mostly Germany and Turkey. Another 360,000 Albanians have crossed Kosova's border into Albania, 70,000 have fled to Montenegro, and 32,000 are in Bosnia. This means that one-third of Kosova's population of 1.8 million Albanians have so far been forced out.

According to accounts from Albanians in the camps where they are held here, a significant number — if not the majority — of the 200,000 Serbs who lived in Kosova have also left. Many because they were afraid for their lives because of the NATO bombings, others because they were opposed to the "ethnic cleansing" campaign under way in Kosova. A few thousand of these Serbs have come to Macedonia, but none are in the refugee camps. They stay with relatives or others who volunteered to put them up.

This human flood, along with the 13,000 NATO troops deployed here, have produced an explosive mix in Macedonia, one of the republics of the former Yugoslavia that declared independence in the early 1990s.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Albanians who fled Kosova from Ferizaj (the Albanian name for Urosevac) at camp near Skopje April 16. Seated at center is Mustafa Llabjani, who worked as a hospital technician in Ferizaj. He was fired in 1990 when Milosevic revoked Kosova's autonomy, and has been working odd jobs since then. Standing at left is the daughter of Hajrez Ruski, a teacher in the unofficial Albanian-language school system in Ferizaj, who said of the NATO-run camp, "It's a natural prison."

It has a population of 2 million, of whom 23 percent are of Albanian origin, according to government statistics. Albanian organizations say the figure approaches 40 percent. The population also includes significant numbers of Turks, Romanians, Roma gypsies, and others. Gligorov's regime says the Albanians streaming from Kosova threaten to upset the ethnic mix of

the republic and is pushing for moving the Kosovars to other countries.

Around 50,000 of the Kosovar Albanians are in camps set up by NATO and the Macedonian government, scattered across hillsides near the border. The rest are housed in the homes of Macedonian Albanians.

While support for the bombings and illusions in the aims of the imperialist forces

attacking Yugoslavia are widespread, a significant number Albanians, particularly those now stranded in the camps, are questioning Washington's course.

Conflicting views on NATO assault

Mohammed Thatsi, a fruit store owner in Pristina who had been in the NATO-run Stankovic camp for 10 days April 16, gave this answer when asked if the NATO assault would help the Albanians' struggle for independence: "Right now they are making everything worse," he said. "Everyone is leaving Kosova. Little by little only the dogs and the cattle are left. So there is no struggle for our rights."

"We wanted a solution, a peaceful solution, not a war," said Akija Memisi, a taxi driver from the Glesa village in the Kacanik area. He had just arrived at the Stankovic camp from the border the evening of April 16. "We are against the bombing."

Bujar Xoxha, who worked in the state bank in Pristina, agreed. "Ethnic cleansing started in Kosova nine years ago," he said. "But the NATO bombing has sped it up."

Voglic Ziber, a farmer from the Grlica village near Kacanik, added. "Seselj had said that Albanians would be forced out of Kosova with the first NATO bomb." This is exactly what happened. NATO gave the cover to the paramilitary groups and Belgrade's police to do what they planned for a while. Ziber was referring to Vojislav Seselj, head of the Serbian Radical Party, a rightist group that is part of the coalition government in Belgrade.

A young man from Ferizaj — the Albanian name for Urosevac, a town in Kosova about 20 miles north of Skopje — who asked that his name not be used, said the stated aim of imperialism, to defend Albanians, didn't tally with reality. "It's like in Bosnia, they knew what was happening, and they just watched." He was referring to what the U.S. rulers did during the 1992-95 war in Bosnia.

At the beginning of that war, Washington adopted a policy of watching the murderous bombing of civilian areas by the rival regimes in Yugoslavia and letting the powers in the European Union fuel the conflict through military intervention under the cover of "peacekeeping" missions. Then Washington gave partial promises it would support "peace initiatives" by the EU powers, while doing everything it could to sabotage each one of them. At the same time, the White House prepared its own military intervention. Finally, Washington unfurled its NATO banner in 1994, launching bombing raids that led to the Dayton accords, which paved the way for the NATO invasion and occupation of Bosnia by NATO troops.

Serb soldiers desert Yugoslav army

Interviews with several dozen Albanians held at the camps paint a picture of how the "ethnic cleansing" is being carried out. Many of the accounts indicate that a wholesale emptying of Kosova, village by village, town by town, is under way.

It's mostly done by Serb paramilitary
Continued on Page 14

Bombings affect Macedonian economy

BY CATHARINA TIRSEN

SKOPJE, Macedonia — On the third day of NATO's bombing assault on Yugoslavia, 2,000 of the 2,500 workers at the OHIS chemical factory here were laid off. "We were told to go home and come back after one month, on May 1," said Natalija Atanasovska.

She works in the sewing shop at OHIS, producing work clothes for the rest of the work force there. Atanasovska has worked at OHIS for 25 years. "There are shortages of raw materials that we get from Serbia," she explained. The factory imports chemicals like PVC and polyacrylic from Belgrade. Most of its finished products, such as plastic, detergent, and paint, return there through barter.

Only the pharmaceutical department of the OHIS factory, where 500 people work, is currently operating. "They say they have raw materials for about two months," said Atanasovska. "Then they don't know what will happen."

The situation here underlines how intertwined economics and politics in the Yugoslav republics — Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia — remain, despite the break up of the federated government in the early 1990s.

Since the recent bombing, "All contracts with Serbia have been stopped and they expect the economic losses to be \$220 million the first month and \$150 million every month after that," said Jursit Rifat, vice president of the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia. "Besides, now all goods that normally go through Yugoslavia have to go through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, which means 700 km longer roads, long waits, and taxes at every border."

Atanasovska is not the only one laid off in Macedonia. "Thirty-five thousand workers have been laid off now, and they expect 70,000 more to be laid off later, that is 20 percent of the workforce," said Zoran Velkov.

The Macedonian government owes about \$1 billion in foreign debt, most of it left over from the foreign debt of the federated Yugoslavia, which was divided up between the republics. Macedonia became an independent state in 1992. In mid-April, the government here asked to renegotiate its foreign debt with the so-called Paris Club of imperialist investors. Velkov had a small toy shop for the last 10 years and has seen business go up and down depending on events like the war between the regime in Croatia and the rest of Yugoslavia, the war in Bosnia,

and the sanctions against the present Yugoslavia, composed of Serbia and Montenegro.

There are also sanctions against Macedonia imposed by the Greek government, closing the southern border. About one year ago Velkov went bankrupt. "Before the sanctions against Yugoslavia, unemployment in Macedonia was around 10 percent. It went up to 45 percent when the United Nations imposed sanctions against Yugoslavia. When they were eased, the economy slowly recovered, and unemployment went down to 30 percent. Now it will go up again," he said.

"This situation is worse than when we were hit by the sanctions against Yugoslavia," said Atanasovska. At that time 20 percent of the workers at OHIS were permanently released, and the others subjected to rotating one-month layoffs, 100 workers at a time. "This time it is worse because we don't know at all what will happen." Her husband, Jordan Atanasovski, had to retire prematurely when the aluminum plant where he worked released 1,100 of its 1,800 workers due to the sanctions against Yugoslavia. Of the remaining 700 workers, 200 are slated to keep their jobs during this crisis, so far.

While laid off, Natalija Atanasovska receives between 55 and 70 percent of her regular wage, minus allowances of 10 percent for food and 5 percent for transport to work that are normally part of her pay check. She has just received 55 percent of 14 days' pay for the first two weeks laid off. Workers here used to be paid monthly, but in recent years they have received only two weeks' pay at a time for lack of funds. Jordan has his pension.

Their two sons, 22 and 26 years old, are both unemployed and not entitled to social security since they are unmarried. So the whole family of four adults have to live on Jordan's pension of 200 DM (1DM = US\$0.54) and 55 percent of Natalija's wages. "It is basically enough for food. Clothes and other things will have to wait," Natalija said.

Because of the war, all trade with Belgrade has stopped. The same goes for all other former Yugoslav republics, which together are the number two trading partner with Macedonia after the European Union, since their goods were transported through what is now Yugoslavia.

The OHIS chemical plant was built and designed to supply all of Yugoslavia. Macedonia, which is a small country of 2 million inhabitants, accounts for only 10 percent of its market, while 80 percent goes to the current Yugoslavia, and a big part of

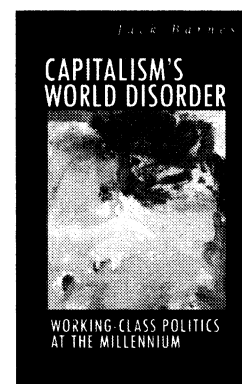
that to Kosova.

This situation is similar for all economic links between all the former republics of Yugoslavia. Slovenia supplies a big part of spare parts, Macedonia agricultural products, and Serbia industrial products, for all six republics. Processed products from the more industrialized areas depend on raw materials from the other. One example cited by Velkov was the well-known salami sausage produced in Slovenia, which depends on high quality meat imported from Serbia.

Natalija Atanasovska recounted how the OHIS factory, like many others, has been "privatized." Shares of the company were sold to the workers by government decision, with some money deducted from their pay checks to pay for them.

This has not affected the functioning of the factory. The management runs it as before, with the same formal involvement of workers: management-appointed worker "representatives" on the board. If the management wants to sell the shares however, they have to call together a meeting with all the workers to approve any proposal. There has not been a proposal to sell the mines in Macedonia, which remain government owned.

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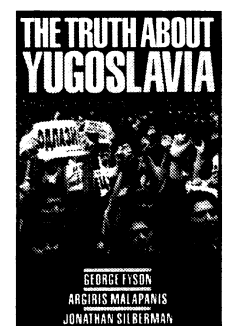
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U.S.-NATO assault

Continued from Page 8

supply system in Zemun, a handful of agricultural cooperatives, and dozens of cultural and religious institutions — have been destroyed so far. Oil refineries and petroleum and related product-storage depots have been a particular target of the bombings. But the NATO attacks have not spared other factories, such as the cigarette-producing plants in Nis and Vranje, causing an acute shortage of cigarettes, which are more in demand during the current nerve-racking assaults. Long lines at kiosks selling cigarettes can be seen throughout the country.

Black market is flourishing

The overall economic situation is not desperate yet, but it seems it will quickly become so if the NATO assault continues for long. From what *Militant* reporters could see and hear, food prices have not increased substantially. The average monthly wage of workers who have jobs is around 150 German marks (US\$81), while costs for food and basic utilities such as electricity and telephone for a family of three is around 200 marks per month. (Wages and prices are commonly calculated in marks here). That means workers crowd many family members into one household and need income from two or three people to make ends meet. Transportation fares are very low, and during the bombing conductors let most people ride for free.

The black market is flourishing and that's where many unemployed workers have turned to. We saw very long lines at gas stations. Gasoline is now rationed, and hoarded on the black market. The bombing of oil refineries and oil storage facilities is having an impact. Gasoline rationing is popular, however, guaranteeing most people about 10 gallons per month. A big percentage of the population owns cars in Yugoslavia. Domestic production of the Yugo and other vehicles at fairly affordable prices made that possible over the last three decades. The flattening of Zastava, however, has brought that to an end for now.

The destruction we observed of small parts of Belgrade is nothing near the devastation of Sarajevo, Bosnia's capital, at the beginning of the war there in 1992 and 1993. Street combat and ground shelling there had more of an impact than the current aerial bombardment. The Tomahawk missiles and laser-guided bombs Washington, London, and other imperialist powers used to hit the ministry of the interior and other government buildings here were accurate. One of these buildings that housed facilities for the military seems fine on the outside from a few hundred feet away, but its guts are completely demolished from the bomb that fell through the roof.

During the day, the capital city and its life seems to be as bustling as in the last couple of years, especially when the sun shines. The streets empty quickly after dusk and traffic is very light — both because of lack of gasoline and fear of where the bombs may fall.

For many people, this nightly uncertainty for a month is also nerve-wracking. Schools and universities are closed, and there are no provisions for child care. At night, when the

air alarm sirens go off, thousands head for the bomb shelters, we were told. Most people, however, refuse to do that so far, explaining that these shelters are quite uncomfortable and they can't believe that large-scale attacks on residential areas are about to take place. Most hope, or expect, that the bombings will cease some time soon. No one can offer evidence to that effect, though.

Among middle-class layers, especially, panic is getting to be more the order of the day. A professor who teaches at the political science department at Belgrade University, who asked that her name not be used, was one of the best examples of that. "Belgrade is now like a prison," she said. "It's hard to maintain your psychological equilibrium on a daily basis."

Economic crisis prior to NATO assault

Cacak and other trade unionists pointed out that the economic crisis that's now accelerating was widespread prior to the NATO assault. In addition to those officially unemployed, about half the workforce, over 800,000 workers, were on long-term "forced vacation," receiving 60 percent of their wages. These layoffs that were supposed to last a few months often went on for years.

The origin of this situation — now exacerbated by the war and the economic sanctions put in place on Washington's initiative — lay in the degeneration of the Yugoslav revolution in the aftermath of the Partisan victory against the Nazis.

The Partisans, led by the Communist Party, whose central leader was Josip Broz, known by his nom de guerre Tito, united toilers from every nationality behind the struggle against Nazi occupation in World War II. Putting into practice a program that called for mutual equality and respect for all nationalities, and that opposed chauvinism and the domination of one nation by another, was a central factor in the Partisan victory against the Nazis. Hundreds of thousands of working people who had joined the Partisans turned the victorious antifascist struggle into a social revolution. By the end of 1945, they had put in power a workers and farmers regime that by the late 1940s had nationalized the means of production, distributed land to the poor peasants, and instituted a monopoly of foreign trade and economic planning — in short establishing a workers state, even if deformed at birth by Stalinist domination.

In the years that followed, Albanians and other oppressed nationalities were recognized as distinct national groups for the first time. The Albanian language became one of Yugoslavia's official tongues. At the University of Pristina opened in 1970 in the capital of Kosovo, where the current conflict is centered, all courses were taught in Albanian.

While affirmative action measures were taken to develop the more economically backward regions of Yugoslavia in the early years of the revolution, these steps affected Kosovo less. As a privileged bureaucratic caste crystallized its hold on power under the Stalinist misleadership of Tito, the initial gains of the revolution began to be undermined. Kosovo remained far behind in economic develop-



Students in Yugoslavia protest Milosevic regime's undemocratic annulment of elections, December 1996. Leaders of Students Union of Yugoslavia, which organized many of those actions, have been in forefront of significant minority in Serbia who have opposed Belgrade's systematic denial of national rights to Albanians in Kosovo.

ment compared to other regions, including neighboring Macedonia. This continued to fuel the struggle for a republic, including mass protests at the end of the 1960s that led to the granting of autonomy in Kosovo as a region of Serbia in 1974.

Tito had opened up the Yugoslav economy to foreign investment from imperialist bank trusts, acting through institutions like the IMF, long before other regimes in Eastern Europe adopted similar policies. So when the first worldwide recession hit in the mid-1970s, the gyrations of the capitalist market system adversely affected Yugoslav working people too. This fact, combined with the bureaucratic, anti-working-class methods of planning and management by the Stalinist regime, produced an economic crisis that was the worst in the least-developed areas like Kosovo. By the mid-1980s, for example, unemployment throughout Yugoslavia averaged 14 percent. It was 27 percent in Macedonia and 50 percent in Kosovo.

At the opening of this decade, Milosevic and the other rival regimes in the Yugoslav republics launched a war to get or maintain control of as much land and resources as possible to preserve their parasitic existence and bourgeois way of life — using nationalist rhetoric in the process to justify the slaughter.

"From the beginning, Nezavisnost led the antiwar campaign and opposed nationalism," said Dragan Ranic. "We explained how dangerous it was for workers to see themselves and begin treating each other as different nationalities with opposing interests rather than Yugoslavs with common interests as workers." While not winning a majority of workers as members, these views have been at the center of the resistance to the policies of the Milosevic regime and the attempts by the imperialist powers to dismember Yugoslavia.

Ranic and other workers explained that the economic sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia have taken a heavy toll on the working class. Of the 38,000 auto workers at Zastava only 3,000 were employed in production in March, "because we couldn't sell abroad or get many imports," according to Ranic. "The last thing we need is more sanctions."

That's exactly what Washington and other imperialist powers are planning, however, to top off the bombing. At the April 22-24 NATO summit in Washington to mark 50 years of the reactionary Atlantic alliance, the Clinton administration has announced it will push for an oil embargo on Yugoslavia. Most European Union members have indicated they will support it.

Posing as a defender of Albanians against the "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo, Washington and other imperialist powers are ratcheting up the pressure on Belgrade, planning to partition Kosovo and occupy it with imperialist troops. A dozen U.S. Apache antitank helicopters intended to bolster NATO's ability to assault Belgrade's ground forces left their base in Italy April 21 en route to Albania, with another dozen expected to follow within a day. Washington has also requested the use of Bulgaria's air space for NATO raids against Yugoslavia, and the government in Sofia has agreed. The government of Slovakia has also approved the transit of NATO troops, according to Tanjug.

There is deep opposition to these moves by the regimes in the workers states in the region. A demonstration of 30,000 took place in Sofia April 20 against NATO's assault and the stance of the Bulgarian government. Nearly 10,000 residents of Niksic, Montenegro, organized an anti-NATO protest April 21 and similar actions have taken place in Macedonia.

The U.S. rulers' aim is to boost Washington's hegemony in Europe as the number one military and economic power and lay the foundations that could allow the reestablishment of capitalist property relations throughout the formerly federated Yugoslav workers state. The NATO assault has also accelerated Washington's collision course with Moscow. Russia's ambassador to Zagreb, Eduard Kuzmin, said April 17 that his government would take a different course if NATO's air campaign turned into a ground invasion. Moscow has vigorously protested the bombing but has not attempted to aid Belgrade militarily. Asked by reporters how NATO's campaign would jeopardize Russia's security, Kuzmin said NATO's deployment of troops to Yugoslavia would bring the Atlantic alliance yet another step closer to Russia's border.

Illusions in 'int'l community' shattered

The U.S.-led assault seems to have shattered many of the illusions students who led the 1996-97 protests and other young people here had in "democratic" imperialism.

"The NATO bombing made me lose any confidence I had in the 'international community'," said Stanimir, expressing a sentiment common among these students. He also said that until the bombing he had been more of a pacifist. He never fathomed shooting at people. Now, he says, he would still refuse to join the army to go and fight his brothers and sisters in Kosovo. But if he were drafted in an anti-aircraft unit, he would certainly go.

"Let them come and fight us face to face, rather than with bombs that fall from the sky and where no one can see the enemy," said Stanimir. Dozens of youth and working people said the same thing in their own words to *Militant* reporters. This seems to express a genuine patriotic determination to defend Yugoslavia against imperialist assault expressed throughout most layers of society.

Many of these young people, including those who in the past deserted the army because of their opposition to the war initiated by Belgrade to prevent the breakup of Yugoslavia by force, view the army defending the country against the bombing as "our army." Many residents of New Belgrade, for example, regularly bring water and food to soldiers building a floating bridge on the Sava in anticipation of bombings of main bridges in the city. At the same time, these youth oppose "their army," which includes paramilitary squads, the police, and units of the armed forces involved in the "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo.

Clampdown on democratic rights

Stanimir and Branislav described most clearly what a number of people told *Militant*.
Continued on Page 14

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Ohio RMI strikers: 'We go back stronger'

BY TONY PRINCE

NILES, Ohio — The first group of workers at Reactive Metals Inc. (RMI) Titanium reentered the plant here April 19, after more than six months on strike. They had voted one week earlier to end their strike, which began October 1, by a vote of 370 to 67. The workers are members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Locals 2155 and 2155-7, which together have 513 members.

The group of 160 going in was cheered on by about 35 other RMI workers who stood by the plant gate at 6:30 in the morning and discussed some of the lessons of the strike. WASN radio personality Chris Montgomery, who had supported the strike on the air, broadcast live from the front porch of "Aunt Ruth," a woman who lives nearby and who supplied electricity to the strikers' trailer during the strike.

One of the main topics of discussion was how to win the reinstatement of 11 workers the company fired during the strike. The company threatened to press federal charges against the 11 fired workers if the Steelworkers did not ratify the contract. Under the agreement their cases are referred to arbitration. Some workers felt that they should refuse all overtime and "special assignments," and work to rule until their co-workers are rehired. Others predicted that there would be more grievances now. One worker who voted for the contract said "I liked the economic package but I feel terrible about the 11."

Under the terms of the new contract RMI's parent company RTI will be a signatory to the agreement. The contract includes a successorship clause, which means it will remain in force even if the company is sold. Additionally, the pension will increase, the profit sharing plan will continue, and there will be a \$2.50 per hour wage increase over the life of the four-and-a-half-year contract. One significant concession by the union is that the length of time required to get up to full pay has been increased from 6,000 to 9,000 hours, and the number of pay steps in this progression has increased from 7 to 10. The contract will expire Oct. 15, 2003.

Heather Barrass, one of the fired workers, told the *Militant*, "Many of my fellow union members are mad about our not getting our jobs back right away. The company is trying to force the union to sacrifice us to get a settlement. But I'll fight to clear my name and join the union's effort to win our jobs back. I think the union is in a stronger position back in the plant now to fight for our jobs, even if it takes a while."

Strikers won solidarity, backed others

In the course of their battle, the RMI



Hundreds rallied in solidarity with striking RMI Steelworkers on March 28 in Niles, Ohio.

Militant/Tony Lane

workers fought their way through attacks by the police, the courts, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and the media. They won solidarity from unionists throughout the Mahoning Valley, which includes the cities of Niles, Warren, and Youngstown, Ohio, and beyond. The RMI strikers in turn built support for other workers on strike, like the nurses at Trumbull Memorial Hospital in Warren and Teamsters at East Manufacturing in Randolph, Ohio.

The strike was provoked when the company tried to use a change in ownership to call into question the profit sharing plan, which was a major source of income for the workers in the recent, profitable years of the company. The workers also wanted a successorship clause in case the company is sold, and a pension plan on a par with other major USWA plants in the area.

RMI hired a security outfit specializing in antiunion attacks, and put up new fencing, cut down trees at the plant entrance, and installed high-powered lighting and video cameras.

But the workers demonstrated their readiness to defend their union. They mobilized in the early days of the strike to push the antiunion thugs back from the plant entrances and back into the plant buildings, which is where they stayed from that point on. They held two rallies of hundreds of workers in the first weeks of the strike, winning support from a number of the unions in the area, including USWA Local 1375 at WCI Steel and International Union of Electronic Workers Local 717 at Delphi Packard, both in Warren.

The union formed several committees to involve workers in carrying the strike forward. There was a Women's Action Com-

mittee for the wives of strikers, which evolved into the Spouses' Support Committee as husbands of female strikers also became involved. The Strike Assistance Committee provided financial help to strikers in need. The Outreach Committee traveled to plants and shopping centers to spread the word about strike rallies, and the Mobilization Committee organized the rallies. Several strikers pointed out during the course of the six-month fight one of the big strengths of the strike was the high degree of involvement of the ranks.

Suzanne Jones, a member of the negotiating committee from Local 2155-7, said the RMI strikers got out to every strike they heard about. In addition to the strikes at Trumbull Memorial Hospital and East Manufacturing, this included conflicts at Applewood Nursing Home in Austintown, Ohio, and Mercer Forge in Mercer, Pennsylvania. Several RMI workers plan to go to the April 24 rally in Newark, Ohio, for the locked-out Steelworkers at Kaiser Aluminum.

Attacks from cops, courts, and media

As the months passed the attack against the union stepped up. On February 12 about 100 cops attacked 300 steelworkers and their supporters who had mobilized in front of the plant because of rumors that the company was bringing in scabs. The cops arrested seven workers, some from RMI and some from WCI. In the wake of the attack the Weathersfield cops forced the union to take down its picket shack across the street from the plant. The plant is in the town of Weathersfield; the other side of the street is in Niles.

The police attack took place in the context of a campaign of violence-baiting against the union by the Youngstown *Vindicator* and local police officials. The *Vindicator* printed a full-page ad by the company on February 12 charging the union with violence; it refused to publish two paid ads from the union responding to RMI's claims.

A week later a federal judge handed down an injunction limiting the number of workers on the picket line and prohibiting cameras and the writing down of license plate numbers of vehicles entering and leaving the plant. The NLRB asked U.S. Marshals to enforce the injunction. Meanwhile, the company continued to videotape the picket line.

Rather than driving the workers back, these attacks increased the unity and determination of the union. The strikers got a permit from the city of Niles and put their picket shack right back up. They held a rally of 500 people on February 21 to protest the cop attack. About 150 rallied in Pittsburgh in front of the headquarters of USX Corporation, a major shareholder in RMI, on March 10. The outreach committee went to steel mills in Cleveland, Steubenville, Canton, and Lorain to get out the word about a March 28 solidarity rally. Over 100 Steelworkers held a "Sock Hop and Family Fun Day" fund-raiser on March 21 at the WCI steelworkers hall in Warren.

On March 16, RMI fired 11 of the strikers for action "against the company and/or its employees during the ongoing strike." One of the strikers pointed out that she wasn't even on the picket line at the time the alleged actions took place.

The morale and level of organization of the strikers was evident at the March 28 rally,

which attracted about 750 people. The Local 2155 Safety Patrol, dressed in orange T-shirts, directed traffic and provided security for the rally. The Spouses Support Committee organized a cook-out after the rally was over. Donations were announced from unions all over the state and beyond. Workers came to the rally from plants in Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. The strikers vowed to stay out "one day longer" than RMI.

On April 8 the company and union officials reached a tentative agreement. Hundreds of strikers turned out to discuss the contract proposal April 10 at a mass meeting at the McKinley High School gym in Niles. The main issue that the workers expressed concern about at the meeting was the fate of the 11 fired workers.

Some of the first workers coming out of that information meeting were angry that the 11 were not coming back with everyone else. Larry Bundy declared, "I don't want any part of it. I don't like the way they're dealing with the 11. The company is threatening federal charges against these 11 if we don't accept the contract."

Roger Carey expressed the mixed feelings many workers had about the proposal. "They're saying it's best if they drop all the criminal charges, but they're still fired," he said. "It's kind of like blackmailing us to accept the contract. I think it's a decent contract, the successorship language is good, but it leaves a bad taste in a lot of our mouths. If we don't okay it they say they'll charge a bunch more workers with criminal charges... Do we help them more by going back or by staying out? I don't know."

Some of the members were swayed by the fact that several of the fired workers urged ratification of the contract. According to Barrass, the 11 met before the April 10 meeting and decided unanimously to support the contract and to speak in favor of it.

'No doubt we're stronger' from strike

Several strikers expressed pride in the fight the union has carried out, despite their anger over the 11 fired workers. "For the length of time we were out, we did good," said Steve Bright, one of the 11.

Maintenance worker Tim Shannon added, "We'll go back with our heads high."

"There's no doubt in my mind that we're stronger now. I don't think we were a union before the strike. We're strong now. We're like one big family," said Suzanne Jones.

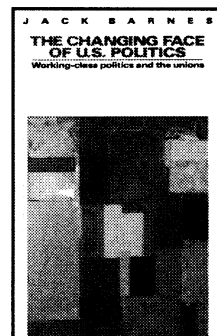
Russ Jones said that one of the union negotiators had told him that as the negotiations were winding down one of the negotiators for the company told the union side, "We never thought you'd make it past the second month. But then two months went by, then three, then four, then five, and then in the sixth month you had that big rally across the street from the plant, and we knew we had to settle this thing."

Tony Prince is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Cleveland, Ohio.

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Titan Tire strikers prepare for Iowa solidarity rally

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa — Strikers at Titan Tire are preparing for a solidarity rally May 1 that will mark the one-year anniversary of their fight. The 670 unionists, members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164, walked out May 1, 1998, against forced overtime, two-tier wages, and for medical and pension benefits for retired workers. In September 1998, members of USWA Local 303L in Natchez, Mississippi, joined the strike against Titan Tire when the company refused to negotiate with the union following its purchase of the plant there.

The May 1 action will feature a rally at noon at the Local 164 union hall, 2727 East Market Street in Des Moines. There will be a march to the Titan Tire plant several blocks away, followed by a picnic back at union headquarters. USWA and AFL-CIO officials are scheduled to speak, along with a number of state and local politicians.

Local 164 president John Peno said that a busload of Local 303L strikers will make the trip from Natchez for the rally. Faxes building the rally have gone out to a large number of union locals around the country. USWA members from the Bridgestone/Firestone tire plant in Bloomington, Illinois, are planning to attend. Steelworkers locals

in Minnesota are organizing a bus, sponsored by USWA District Council 11, which will stop in Mason City, Iowa, to pick up USWA members there. Workers at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines, members of USWA Local 310, are planning a gate collection to help build local participation in the May 1 event.

In other developments, on April 1 the Iowa unemployment commission rejected Titan's appeal of unemployment compensation that the Des Moines strikers had won last fall. Contract talks are set to resume in St. Louis.

On at least four occasions, most recently on April 16, Titan management refused to allow Iowa State safety inspectors to tour the Des Moines facility, objecting to the presence of Local 164 representatives. Several hundred replacement workers are producing tires inside the struck plant. The union filed safety complaints after Des Moines rescue units responded to repeated emergency calls. According to the April 17 *Des Moines Register*, the inspectors had warrants or court orders giving authorization for the inspections. For more information on the May 1 rally call USWA Local 164 at (515) 262-4935.

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310.

Shipyard workers strike

Continued from front page

steps of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., followed by lobbying Congressional representatives. Some 750 strikers made the three-hour trip by bus to take part in this event.

In addition plans were set to organize a family day at an area park on April 24 and a rally at the corporate headquarters in Newport News on April 28.

The shipyard workers' strike began April 5. Their main demands are for wage increases and pension improvements. The union is asking for a \$3.95 across-the-board pay raise over a 36-month contract. The company is offering instead a nearly four-year contract with only \$1.50 in raises over the four years, plus a pay-for-performance package that could add up to another dollar for some of the workers.

Cadence-style songs and chants led by picket captains rang out as testament to the high morale among striking Steelworkers.

It's time

It's time to make a change
We are the people who can do it!
88 gonna make the change
88 gonna make the change!

Ain't no sense in looking down
Ain't no contract on the ground!
Ain't no sense in going back
Till we get a good contract!

Can't no scabs
Build no ships
Am I right or wrong?
YOU'RE RIGHT!

Along with the strike, the union organizing effort continues. Barry Credle, a shipfitter who has worked in the yard for three years, is proud of the fact that his work gang was 100 percent in the union by the time of the strike.

Credle, who previously worked at a non-union shipyard for 15 years, explained he didn't join the union right away when he hired on at the Newport News yard. Then his sister, Elaine Utterback, a pipefitter for 24 years in the yard, had a talk with him. She

Federal judge rules against pilots' union

Continued from front page

to "integrate" Reno into American. Currently Reno pilots make about half of what American pilots do.

The astronomical fine, ordered April 15 by Judge Joseph Kendall of the Federal District Court in Dallas, is supposedly compensation for the \$50 million the carrier allegedly lost when pilots defied the order. It is one of the largest amounts ever levied against a union in the United States, and is more than the APA's total treasury.

The APA has 15 days to appeal the decision, which it plans to do.

When Kendall, a former cop, first announced his back-to-work order, he unleashed a tirade of attacks and slanders against the pilots and their organization. He charged, "The radical element that appears to be in control of the Allied Pilots Association seems determined to fly American Airlines into the side of the mountain, taking themselves, the company, their co-workers, and their customers with them."

Pilots showed their determination and rejection of the judge's action by calling in sick in greater numbers than before. On February 12 the judge then cited the union for contempt of court and initially fined it \$10 million. Kendall also then ruled in favor of the company's demand that the union pay for the financial losses of the company during the sick-out. The union argues the airline lost just \$1.4 million to \$4.7 million in the days after the contempt of court ruling.

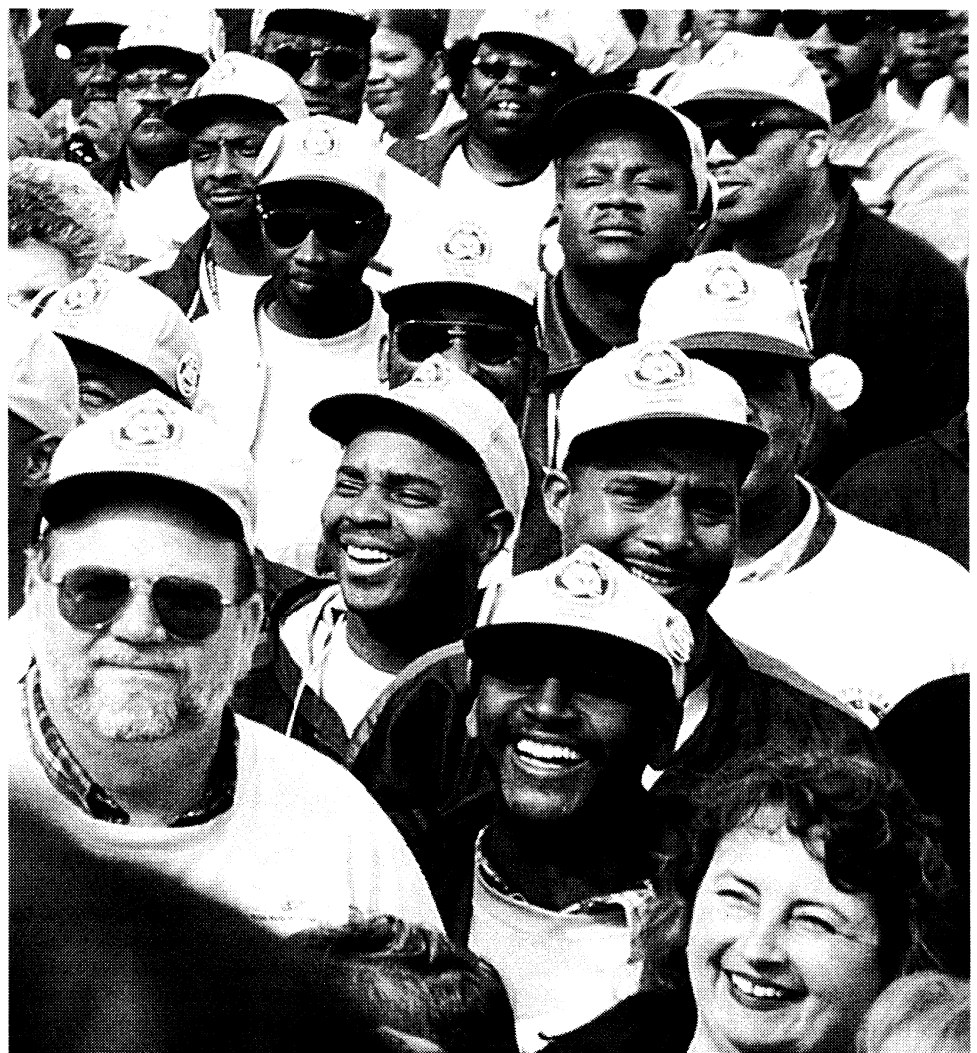
The current fight is the latest in a series of conflicts between American pilots and the company. In the mid-1980s, a two-tier scale was introduced, which paid new hires less. The pilots later fought successfully to get rid of the two-tier. After layoffs and cut-backs throughout the system in the early 1990s, the pilots struck in 1997 against company demands that jeopardized job security. President William Clinton ordered them back to work after just four minutes, under the antiunion Railway Labor Act. Many pilots are still angry about concessions they were forced to accept by the Presidential Emergency Board Clinton then imposed.

told him, "Every man who is not in the union is a yes man for the company. If you don't want to be in the union you are agreeing with whatever they do to you and whatever they take from you and saying you won't go against that." So Credle joined the union.

"The company looks at us like a tool," he said. "When we're broke or worn out they just throw us away and get another one." Credle went on to help organize his whole work gang of 14 to be in the union. "I told them 'Be for yourself and be for those working with you.'"

Meanwhile, the company has imposed 12-hour shifts on those still working. According to the April 19 *Daily Press*, published in Newport News, the strike has stalled production on some of the most important jobs in the yard, including the refueling of the aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz*. While hundreds of supervisors and nonunion contract workers are driving into work at the uppermost gate on the yard, only a small proportion of hourly, union-eligible workers are crossing, according to numerous accounts by striking workers at that gate. At shift change on April 16, pickets hollered at everyone who entered the gate to work. One striking worker urged each person to "Wake Up! Think about what you are doing!"

Mary Martin is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1759 and works at National Airport in Washington, D.C. Nancy Cole and Becca Arenson in Philadelphia contributed to this article.



Striking USWA members at Washington, D.C., rally April 21.

Militant/Stu Singer

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Behind the United States-NATO War in Yugoslavia. Fri., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (at Mission St.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

NEW YORK

New York

Eyewitness Report from Yugoslavia. Speaker: Argiris Malapanis, staff writer for the *Militant* who just returned from reporting trip to Yugoslavia. Fri., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 59 Fourth Ave. (corner of Bergen St.) Donation \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

PENNSYLVANIA

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New Opportunities in the Fight Against the Death Penalty and Police Brutality. Panel discussion. Speakers: Al Duncan, Socialist Workers Party, active in New York protests against the police killing of Amadou Diallo; Theresa Choice, mother of Ba-rae Choice, who was framed by

cops; Latonya Dawson. Fri., April 30, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m.. 1906 South Street (at 19th). Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

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An Eyewitness Report from Yugoslavia. Speaker: Anne Howie, Communist League, just returned from a *Militant* reporting trip to the region. Sat., May 1, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. Tel: 0171-928-7993.

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Independence for East Timor! No Australian/New Zealand Intervention! Speaker: Colin Parker, Communist League. Fri., April 30, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

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East Timor. The Struggle for Independence Deepens. Speaker: Annalucia Vermont, Communist League. Fri., April 30, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: (3) 365 6055.

EYEWITNESS REPORTS FROM YUGOSLAVIA

LONDON

Speaker: Anne Howie

Saturday, May 1

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Speaker: Argiris Malapanis

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Harry Ring

his private library. A California real estate dealer pledged \$15 million and got two visits with the Pope.

P.S. Make a more modest donation to the Socialist Workers Party-

Building Fund. Admittedly, all you get in return is a warm thanks and the knowledge that you're helping to advance the fight for a rational society.

Lord love a lumpen — "Lord Hemphill has made a strong case for reform in the Upper House without opening his mouth. Since he inherited his title in 1957, he has not uttered a single word in the chamber. Hemphill, however, has attended 101 days in the last session, allowing him to claim up to £14,140 (more than \$21,000.)" — *The Times*, London.

Practically stable — "Indo-

nesia's inflation rate drops to 45 percent" — News headline.

'Int'l crisis? Doesn't affect us' — "Profits generated by the Fortune 500 companies declined for the first time in seven years in 1998 as U.S. companies suffered the effects of the economic crisis in Asia, Russia and Latin America." — Associated Press.

Obviously needs a budget — Dorothy Olsen, 82, and her spouse are among those hit by the closing of the HMO in their California area. The HMO provided prescription medicines as well as doctors' care. Says Olsen: "We live on \$1,503 a

month Social Security. Without the HMO, my prescriptions cost \$1,200 a month."

See, you're not forgotten — A group of Denver-area home builders plan to put a half billion in a "high-end" development, with units mostly priced at \$700,000 to \$750,000. Some homes will go for up to \$2.5 million. "Eventually," a spokesman added, "we'd like to have some product in the \$400,000 to \$540,000 range."

Funny how these things work out — Last year, a Taiwanese company illegally dumped 8,500 tons of mercury-contaminated waste in

a field outside a Cambodian resort town. Cambodia wants to be rid of it. The Safety-Kleen Corp. wants to add it to its waste dump in California's Imperial Valley, about five miles from the Salton Sea. It's also near a low-income, largely Latino, community. Some call it environmental racism.

'Reinforcements now appearing...' — A reader, en route to San Francisco, jotted down this bit of conversation between a passenger and a flight attendant: **Passenger:** "Do you like music? **F.A.:** "Music? What kind of music?" **P:** "What's your favorite song?" **F.A.:** "That's easy. 'Solidarity,' my union song."

Self-determination is only road to world without borders

The following selection is from the 1990 Socialist Workers Party resolution "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," published in issue no. 11 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. These excerpts appear under the heading, "The fight for national self-determination: the only road toward a world without borders." *New Internationalist* no. 11 is copyright © 1998 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

1. In bringing to power and consolidating a workers and peasants regime, the socialist revolution opens the beginning of the end of the centuries-old history of national oppression, divisions, and enmities.

a) The fight against national oppression is always intertwined with radical agrarian

BOOK OF THE WEEK

reform to liberate the rural toilers from

(1) precapitalist forms of exploitation, by expropriating the landlord classes and abolishing all forms of feudal and semifeudal rents, including compulsory labor duties; and

(2) capitalist exploitation under the rents and mortgages system, by nationalizing the land, guaranteeing the right of peasants to till the soil, and ensuring them adequate means to do so (low-interest credit, seed, fertilizers, tools, and cooperative production and marketing facilities).

b) The advance toward socialism is possible only on the basis of guaranteeing the right of national self-determination to all oppressed nations and nationalities, as well as forging a voluntary federation of workers and farmers republics.

(1) The socialist revolution sounds the bell of "nation time" for oppressed nations and nationalities.

(2) This course was advanced by the Bolshevik leadership under Lenin's guidance following the October 1917 revolution.

(a) As the October victory in Russia gave an impulse to revolutionary uprisings elsewhere throughout the old tsarist empire, the communist leadership began to forge a voluntary federation of the various republics organized on the basis of soviet power — both where the dictatorship of the proletariat had been established (as in Russia and the Ukraine), as well as where it could not yet be established but revolutionary workers and peasants governments had come to power (as in most of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics).

(b) Lenin insisted on a *Union* of Soviet Socialist Republics, not a new "Soviet" nationality with patriotism used as cover for maintenance and expansion of Great Russian chauvinism and bourgeois nationalism; not a new "socialist nation-state" suppressing minority nationalities; and not a federation limiting itself to formal equality, but one that took affirmative action to develop the economies and culture of the oppressed nations in order to close the historical gap in social and economic conditions between them and the formerly oppressor Russian nation.

(c) National self-determination, like other democratic rights, is subordinate to defense of the workers state in face of counterrevolutionary assault and imperialist aggression. The denial of national rights, how-

ever, weakens rather than strengthens the defense of a workers state. The Soviet republic's policy on national self-determination and its revolutionary agrarian reform were key to mobilizing the peasantry and the victims of tsarist national oppression behind the workers' struggle during the civil war against the combined military forces of imperialism and the domestic landlords and capitalists.

(d) Defense of the workers state itself is subordinate to initiatives by the revolutionary leadership of the state to advance the world struggle for national liberation and socialism (e.g., the transfer of crack Cuban troops and equipment to Angola to win the battle of Cuito Cuanavale; preparations to aid the FMLN, Panama).

(3) The Communist International adopted the Bolsheviks' course on the right to self-determination as the foundation of communist policy on the national question.¹...

6. "Workers and oppressed peoples of the world, unite!" was the slogan raised by Lenin to summarize the international communist policy of unconditional support for national liberation struggles against imperialist oppression.

a) The regimes in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China have reversed this policy of political solidarity and material assistance to the fight for national liberation, subordinating these struggles to the national diplomatic interests of the castes and their unending search for stable relations with imperialism.

b) Unlike the imperialist ruling classes, the castes do not directly exploit Third World nations through the export of capital. But the castes are complicit with imperialist exploitation through the benefits they reap from unequal trade at prices determined by the world market.

c) The Communist Party of Cuba is the first mass communist leadership of a workers state since the Bolsheviks to carry out a proletarian internationalist approach to the fight for national liberation from imperialist oppression and exploitation.

(1) Following a course explained most clearly by Che Guevara on behalf of the revolutionary government in a February 1965 speech to the Afro-Asian Conference in Algiers, Cuban communists advocate a conscious policy by the more industrially developed workers states to close the gap in economic and social conditions with less developed workers states, workers and farmers governments, and regimes in the Third World arising from popular revolutionary struggles.

(a) They demand that trade with such governments *not* be based on prices of production reflected in the world market, which embody and perpetuate the exploitative transfer of labor time from oppressed nations to imperialist countries. Instead, trade should take into account the widely differing levels of labor productivity among these nations in order to foster development aimed at more equitable relations.

(b) They propose that the more economically advanced workers states provide direct aid to foster the industrialization and economic and social development of countries that face a legacy of imperialist plunder.

¹ See Lenin's report and theses on the national and colonial question in *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings of the Second Congress, 1920*, vol. 1, pp. 211-16, 283-90, part of the Pathfinder series, The Communist International in Lenin's Time.



Opening rally of 1920 Congress of Peoples of the East, Baku, Azerbaijan. Initiated and led by Bolsheviks, it was held jointly with Baku soviet and Azerbaijan trade unions.

(2) The Cuban government and Communist Party have applied this policy in their fight for preferential trade and pricing policies for Mongolia, Vietnam, and Cuba within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or Comecon) trading bloc.²

(a) The Cuban government and party

² The CMEA was founded in 1949 at Moscow's initiative with the stated purpose of coordinating trade and investment policies of the Soviet and Eastern European workers states. In subsequent years Mongolia (1962), Cuba (1972), and Vietnam (1978) joined the council. Yugoslavia was not a member but participated in some CMEA bodies. Albania withdrew in 1961. North Korea and China were never CMEA members or associates. The CMEA announced in January 1990 that it would begin functioning on the basis of world market prices payable in hard currency, and officially dissolved eighteen months later, in June 1991.

have advocated that similar CMEA policies be applied toward Grenada, Nicaragua, Angola, and other governments established through victorious popular revolutions or under fire from imperialism.

(b) To the degree allowed by its own limited resources, Cuba itself sends internationalist volunteers and provides unstinting help to advance the social and economic development of such countries.

(c) In advancing these policies, communists in Cuba link them to the call for united action to demand that imperialism cancel the Third World debt, to the call for a New International Economic Order that establishes trade and barter arrangements that cease transferring the fruits of labor from oppressed nations to industrially advanced ones, and to the call for greater social and economic justice in Third World countries themselves.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



May 3, 1974

BOSTON — A heightened campaign by anti-abortion forces in Massachusetts has led to the indictment of a doctor for manslaughter because of a legal abortion performed in October 1973.

Four other doctors at Boston City Hospital have also been indicted on charges of "illegal dissection" of fetuses obtained following legal abortions.

Dr. Kenneth Edelin, a Black physician who is the chief resident in obstetrics and gynecology at Boston City Hospital, is charged with the death of a fetus reportedly 24 weeks old.

In charging manslaughter, the grand jury is clearly trying to force the courts to rule on the question of when a fetus becomes viable. The Supreme Court, in the January 1973 decision legalizing abortion in the United States, defined viability as that time when a fetus is "potentially able to live outside the mother's womb, albeit with artificial aid."



May 2, 1949

By a seven to one majority the 65,000 members of Ford River Rouge Local 600 UAW-CIO voted for strike action against the speedup in the Ford Motor Company. Earlier in the week members of Ford Lincoln Local 900 also voted overwhelmingly for strike action. 1. Full reinstatement of the 47 fired workers; 2. Guaranteed take-home pay for certain employees of the brake shoe department; 3. Dismissal of the corporation's suit against the union for "damages" from the alleged slowdown.

Recently over 1,000 members of UAW Local 154 demonstrated before an office of the Michigan Unemployment Commission demanding unemployment payments. The Hudson Motor Car Corporation has followed a coldly calculated policy of operating barely 15-20 hours a week.

Meanwhile the company has instituted a major speedup. Many Hudson workers have been thrown on city relief rolls and private charities.

Macedonia

Continued from Page 9

gangs — the most notorious of them run by Zelco Rasnatovic, known as Arkan, who did much of the same in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995 — with the help of Belgrade's police. The conscript army is used very little. There is still much opposition to these kind of brutal operations among regular soldiers. The 40,000-plus troops at the Kosova-Albania border are professional soldiers, we were told, not normal conscripts.

Some Albanians reported desertions of soldiers from Belgrade's army who refused to carry out "ethnic cleansing" orders. Sahabi Ishmali, from the village of Brod, had been in the Neprosteno camp for four days April 19. He described how a group of Yugoslav soldiers from Serbia and Montenegro deserted their unit six days earlier. "There was a big group from Ferizaj, more than 20 soldiers," he said. "They took off their uniforms and went knocking on the doors of Albanian households, asking for civilian clothes. The Albanians helped them." They left with the departing Albanians. A two-hour gun battle ensued between the soldiers who defected and paramilitary squads that spotted them. "They got away, but we don't know what happened to them after that."

Bujar Xoxha described how paramilitary soldiers started to empty his neighborhood in Pristina. "Two or three days after the NATO bombing started, they first came for money. Then they started pushing people out, rounding up groups and leading us to the train station." Others described tanks being parked in the streets and residents being given less than half an hour to get out. When villagers would flee to surrounding hills, their houses would often be burned. The population of entire villages was forced to flee across the border in that fashion.

Most Albanians at the camps said the local Serbs, often their neighbors, were initially telling them to stay and not be frightened by the rightists. No one realized at the beginning the level of organization of these gangs and the degree of their collaboration with state authorities. They come to places like Pristina, which has many mixed neighborhoods, with a detailed list of who lives in each apartment building and who is married to whom, being careful not to expel Serbs along with Albanians. The few that are in mixed marriages, like a video-game-store owner who asked to remain anonymous, were simply pressured to go, as all houses and apartments around them progressively emptied and they became scared as the gangsters ransacked nearby apartments. But then most Serbs realized they are powerless in front of the heavily armed gangs, given the absence of revolutionary leadership, and decided to leave themselves.

Shahe Rusti, a nurse from Pristina, explained she used to work with Serb staff and patients. "We had no problem. The people are not guilty, only the politicians."

Conditions in the camps are generally dismal, especially when rain turns the ground to mud and the tents flood. Despite reports in the U.S. and British press that the conditions in Macedonian-run camps are substantially worse than in the NATO camps, the actual differences in supplies, organization, and general conditions of life are insignificant. NATO-run Stankovic is the largest, housing up to 40,000 Albanians. It has no hot water for showers or facilities for cooking hot food. The camp is surrounded by high fencing, guarded by armed soldiers. People in the camps can only go out if they can get papers to prove they have relatives living in Macedonia. Communication with relatives elsewhere is made practically impossible by the lack of telephones. "It's a natural prison," said Hajrez Ruski, a teacher in the unofficial Albanian school system in Ferizaj.

Opposition to NATO deployment

Among Macedonians, the imperialist attack on Yugoslavia and the deployment of NATO troops here is widely opposed. Nearly 4,000 people gathered in Skopje's main square April 17 for a protest and concert against the bombing. "NATO Out Of Macedonia," "NATO: New American Terrorist Organization" were among the popular slogans. While there were no anti-Albanian signs to be seen, toward the end a couple of clusters of drunken young men began chanting racist slogans.

"NATO is not interested in the Albanian people, they don't care about them," said a Macedonian who asked that his name not be used. "I don't have a good opinion of Milosevic. But you can only remove him with democracy, because bombing allows him to unite all of Serbia."

Two French soldiers of the NATO force here were injured when residents of the Kuceviste village, 10 miles north of Skopje, stoned a passing convoy of NATO vehicles April 20. The French troops had to abandon one of the vehicles, which the villagers then set on fire.

It is the pressure of this widespread opposition to the bombings that has led the Macedonian government to reject the request of NATO to use Macedonia as a dispatch point for a possible ground invasion of Kosova.

'We're displaced, not refugees'

According to Refet Elmazi, deputy minister of defense in Skopje, one of the few Albanians in the Macedonian government, there is no problem with most Albanians from Kosova staying in Macedonia. "We are interested in the deportees being close to Kosova," he said. "Don't spread them all over Europe as this helps ethnic cleansing."

Most Albanians interviewed by *Militant* reporters in the camps say they want to return to Kosova and don't like being described as refugees. "We want to go back. We're displaced by force, not refugees," said Bujar Hoxha.

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'We'll defend Yugoslavia'

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tant reporters. The NATO bombing has given Milosevic a green light to clamp down on democratic rights and turn back what has been accomplished over the last decade — from the antiwar protests in 1992-93 to the 1996-97 mobilizations.

The protest movement two years ago that forced Milosevic to drop his attempt to annul election results had a number of intertwined results. It increased the self-confidence of working people and youth and lessened their fear of the police and other repressive institutions. It diminished, for a period, the effectiveness of nationalist propaganda used by Milosevic — as well as his rivals in the regimes in the various former Yugoslav republics — to justify the 1992-95 war, objectively aiding those who favored reunification of the country. And it encouraged similar resistance to antidemocratic measures throughout the Balkans — from Albania to Bulgaria.

Branislav Canak said that many workers joke that NATO's special target is the independent trade union, since many of the factories that have been destroyed were Nezavisnost strongholds, like the UTVA aircraft plant in Pancevo. "What we've tried to build for the last decade NATO is destroying," the trade unionist said more seriously.

Space to carry out quite a range of political activities has certainly been narrowed. Women in Black, one of the organizations that has campaigned both against the breakup of Yugoslavia and in support of the struggle for self-determination of Albanians in Kosova for nearly eight years, had been organizing picket lines and other activities — many centered on defense of national rights of Albanians in Kosova — until a month ago. Over the last four weeks, the group has been unable to meet, said Zorica Trifunovic, one of the founders of the group.

"The NATO bombing has increased support for the government," Trifunovic stated. She also added that the first trials have been held in Nis of three young people who refused to be drafted and sent to Kosova. They reportedly got four years in prison each. Men between 14 and 64 are not allowed to travel abroad now and the government has begun to draft thousands who have completed military service. Belgrade is also getting volunteers, but apparently not enough.

The war emergency measures that have been established require permits from the government by any group that wants to organize protests, including actions against the NATO bombing. The only two organizations that have been granted such permits so far are Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia and the United Left headed by his wife Mirjana Markovic. The nightly vigils/music hubbubs on the Brastvoi, Belgrade's main bridge over the Sava, are sponsored by these two groups, and smell of staging.

Both the Student Union of Yugoslavia and Nezavisnost report that they and many other organizations have been denied permits to sponsor anti-NATO protests of their own.

One outlet for genuine protest against the NATO assault, including by thousands who oppose the policies of the Milosevic regime, is the daily rock concert at Republic Square in Belgrade. The one *Militant* reporters saw April 19 had thousands of young people. (In subsequent days we discovered that the composition of the crowd depends to a large degree on the performers.) Many of the youth and others who attend, and the groups that provide entertainment, took part in the 1996-97 protest movement.

On the morning of April 22, about 5,000 workers marched in downtown Belgrade in a protest organized by the Confederation of All Trade Unions of Yugoslavia. "Stop the bombing" and "Stop the lies" were the main slogans.

The government is trying to use even these events, however, to promote Serbian nationalism, with some degree of success. Not completely, though. When Vojislav Seselj and his escort showed up a week ago with a sizable group of supporters and signs of the Serbian Radical Party — which many people in Belgrade describe as fascist — a large majority of the crowd at Republic square demonstratively turned their backs to them, forcing them to leave. Everyone we spoke to knew about this incident and described it as a good sign, no matter how pessimistic about the prospects ahead.

Seselj and his party are part of Milosevic's coalition government. In fact, some of the most prominent parties in the now defunct Zajedno opposition coalition, which won many municipal elections in 1997 after four months of daily street protests, have joined the ruling coalition. Vuk Draskovic, head of the Serbian Renewal Movement who was one of the main spokespeople for Zajedno, for example, now has a cabinet post. He has been an ardent defender of Belgrade's course in Kosova.

Struggle for national self-determination

Branislav Stanimir, and several other students interviewed by the *Militant* have been in the forefront of the significant minority in Serbia who have opposed Belgrade's systematic denial of national rights to Albanians in Kosova. Their group, the Students Union of Yugoslavia, is the main organization that carries the continuity of 1996-97 protest movement.

These young people attempted to forge an alliance in struggle with the Independent Students Union in Pristina, which organized the large student protests for national rights in the fall of 1997, giving a new boost to the struggle for national self-determination in Kosova. This was a vanguard initiative, based on the conclusions these students had drawn, through their own experiences, about the police and cop brutality in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis and other cities in Serbia. *Militant* reporters had actually met Branislav, Stanimir, and other Serbian students in Pristina during the March 13,

1998, rally of 100,000 people there called by the Albanian students to demand reopening of the University of Pristina and an end to repression by Belgrade.

After militant strikes and demonstrations for better economic conditions and recognition of national rights broke out at the end of the 1980s in Kosova, Belgrade cracked down, revoking autonomy in 1989. Pristina was the city where Milosevic launched his nationalist tirades to justify grabbing territory and resources for the ruling bureaucracy loyal to him. Teachers, medical personnel, municipal and other government employees, and most industrial workers were fired from their jobs en masse for refusing to sign loyalty oaths to Serbia. TV and radio programs in Albanian were banned, and schools up through the university level that taught courses in Albanian were closed. Prejudices against ethnic Albanians have been widely promulgated ever since by the regime, having a detrimental impact on many working people throughout Yugoslavia.

"Most of the student groups disappeared a year after the 1996-97 protests," said Branislav in April 18. "We realized that the conflict in Kosova was heating up and started contacts with our Albanian colleagues in Kosova. Until that point, it was unimaginable to have Albanian and Serbian groups meet officially. After joining the demonstrations in Pristina in March of last year we were called 'fifth columnists' by the government media in Serbia."

The Serbian students supported unconditional return to the pre-1989 autonomy in Kosova, but didn't agree on independence. That proved to be the sticking point in their attempt to develop common activities with the Independent Students Union in Kosova. Contact between the two groups ended in February, shortly before the NATO assault.

Between June and August of last year, Belgrade launched an offensive in Kosova to counter gains made by the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK), a group that has waged an armed struggle for independence. During that period, the Students Union of Yugoslavia conducted an antiwar campaign throughout Serbia and Montenegro, opposing the repression by the Milosevic regime.

About 200 students canvassed most large cities and towns of Serbia, 60 of them from Belgrade and the rest from local areas, distributing 1 million flyers and talking to people at street corners, shopping centers, and working-class communities. "We had teams of three to five students for about a month," said Martina Vukasovic, a mathematics student at Belgrade University. "We figured we reached about 7 percent of Serbia's population. Our main message was that patriotism doesn't mean repressing and killing those of other nationalities. We did this during the heaviest fighting in Kosova last summer and we faced ourselves the wrath of the police."

"We found the greatest receptivity among ordinary people, peasants, and farmers," Vukasovic said. "Whether they had voted for Milosevic or not they were the least taken in by his nationalism. These were the people for whom the regime's confrontation with the Albanian nationality, or with Muslims in Bosnia before, didn't make any sense. We are all Yugoslavs."

Vukasovic said her family had pleaded with her not to take a particular assignment as part of this campaign — visiting Novi Pazar, a predominantly Muslim city in the Sanjak region of Serbia. "When we went there we only had flyers in Cyrillic at the time," she said. "All of us were Serbian and we were passing out leaflets and talking to people in the old part of town surrounded by six mosques. I felt completely safe. In fact, I was more comfortable there than any other city."

They were often put up by members of Nezavisnost, which collaborated with the Students Union in the antiwar campaign. In most cities they were harassed by the police. About 60 students were arrested, often more than once, and were held for up to a day in jail. Authorities stopped short of bringing charges against them.

"All that has ended for now with the NATO bombing," Vukasovic said. The Students Union has had to curtail its public activities, we were told.

The Students Union, Nezavisnost, Women in Black, and other organizations have issued a joint statement demanding an immediate cessation of the bombing and all armed operations, the resumption of the peace process in which they offer to send representatives, and an end to the practice of ethnic cleansing and repatriation of all refugees.

In a parallel way with the students, Nezavisnost, which has about 300,000 members, tried to establish links with the Independent Trade Union in Kosova, Branislav Canak said in an April 19 interview. They encountered similar problems because of their stance on the question of national self-determination. Canak said he was for Kosova returning to its autonomous status at least, until the bombing began. "We should have built more civil bridges. That could have avoided the war."

The NATO assault provided a political cover for Milosevic, Seselj, and paramilitary groups to try to carry out their dream of an "ethnically cleansed Kosova that's part of their 'greater Serbia.' That's not my country. That's not the Yugoslavia generations fought for," Canak stated. "NATO is the best possible umbrella for ethnic cleansing. Those strikes and bombs won't bring democracy or stop the humanitarian catastrophe under way throughout Yugoslavia. The worst enemy of this government and of the NATO attackers are the workers."

What has developed in the last month, the horrible "ethnic cleansing" of Kosova, Canak said, "makes a strong argument that the Albanian people have a good case for their demand for self-determination."

Natasha Terlexis contributed to this article.

New Jersey Steelworkers fight union busting

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

Militant reporters were in the union hall, a child from the neighborhood came in holding several 30-30 shells, high-powered live ammunition. He told the Steelworkers that a man

ON THE PICKET LINE

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

HAMILTON, New Jersey — "We've been out since September 12," said Tom Wood, president of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 3355. "The company wants to be able to lay people off out of seniority and keep them on layoff while bringing in temporary workers with no job description who wouldn't belong to the union."

The bosses at Demag Delaval Turbomachinery call these temporary employees "Dixie Cup workers," Wood said, "because when they were done with them, they'd throw them away!"

There are 170 members of USWA Local 3355 on strike against Demag Delaval, which produces parts for naval ships, turbines, and boilers.

"The company implemented their last offer, which we had turned down, and sent us all a certified letter saying we no longer have a job," Wood continued. The March 3 letter informed unionists that as of March 15, the company intended to hire permanent replacements. Prior to that deadline, the workers could present unconditional offers — in writing — to return to work and, after the conclusion of the strike, could reapply for employment.

To date, the company refuses to negotiate. The state of New Jersey is denying the workers unemployment, claiming they are involved in an economic strike, which the Steelworkers strongly deny.

Two days before the contract expired, strikers Joe Haas and Tim Pollock explained, the company claimed there was a bomb scare in the plant and sent all the workers in the shop home. "But it was some kind of special bomb, that wouldn't get the people in the office, because they kept them at work!" commented Haas.

"They told us to take our tools when we left and had our paychecks at the door," Pollock added.

"Sounds like a lockout, doesn't it?" asked Haas.

The strikers have faced continual harassment from local police and IMAC security, a union-busting outfit hired by the company. While

matching the description of one of the most provocative IMAC goons had just driven up and put the ammunition on the sidewalk immediately in front of the union hall. Wood called the police, who took over an hour to arrive. "If Demag found bullets down there on the line," said unionist Al Koellhoffer, "we'd be pushed up against the fence. But if we call, they don't come."

"Yeah," said Haas. "We would've been arrested, arraigned, and jailed by now."

The company has also used the courts to limit the activities of Local 3355, getting an injunction early on against it having more than five pickets on the gates. The Steelworkers have responded by welcoming members of other unions, who have come on a regular basis to take the place of Local 3355 members on the line. Rallies of up to several hundred have been held outside the gates.

One rally took place March 16, the first day of the permanent replacements, when Teamsters from northern New Jersey, hotel workers from Atlantic City, communications workers presently fighting for a contract with the state, and others gathered to block scabs from entering the plant. The cops and IMAC organized buses to get the replacement workers through the crowd. Four unionists were arrested. "Anything that happens, IMAC films our reaction and they use it court against us," said striker José Colón.

Almost every morning 20 police cars sit by the gates checking the activity of the unionists, counting the number on the line, and seeing if other unionists are joining that day. "Or," said Koellhoffer, "they hide behind the building across the street."

Looking at a recent *Militant*, the Steelworkers were struck by the similarities between their fight and that of the USWA strikers at RMI Titanium in Ohio. "It's like reading about us!" said one. Commenting on the RMI slogan of "One Day Longer" another striker exclaimed, "That's our slogan too! We'll last one day longer than the company!"

Thousands protest low minimum wage in UK

TYNESIDE, England — Thousands of workers demonstrated here April 10, protesting legislation by Anthony Blair's Labour government that set a minimum wage level of £3.60 per hour (£1 = \$1.65), with workers below the age of 21 excluded. The central demand of the

present-day Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Vojvodina.

Kosova and what is now Macedonia had been part of Serbia since the 1912/13 Balkan Wars. The six republics mentioned in your article were created for the first time in history by the Yugoslav constitution of January 1946. Not one of them had ever existed as a republic before.

Erik Wils
Antwerp, Belgium

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.



Militant/Lee Oleson

USWA Local 3355 members and supporters picket Demag Delaval April 10 in Hamilton, New Jersey.

action was a minimum wage of £5 with a progression to the £7 European Union minimum.

An estimated 15,000 took part in a march and rally, which were organized and built primarily by Unison, the health service union. Tyneside is a once heavily industrialized area in the northeast of England hit by large-scale closures in basic industry. Marchers carried a broad range of union banners in addition to Unison, with larger contingents from the Communication Workers Union, the General Municipal and Boilermakers union, and the Manufacturing, Science and Finance union. Other participants included members of the National Union of Students and the National Union of Mineworkers, North East Area.

There were also banners from workers involved in struggles, such as the Tameside Careworkers, from care homes locked out a year ago by Tameside Care Group for refusing to accept a take-back contract; Hillingdon Hospital workers, ancillary workers sacked after striking in October 1995 for refusing to sign a take back contract; Lufthansa LSG Skycheffs workers, sacked for fighting against imposed changes in work practices; and Magnet workers from a Darlington fitted kitchen manufacturer, sacked in 1996 for refusing a divisive pay deal.

The march ended at a festival with music and stalls held in and around the Tele-Arena in Newcastle.

Teamster car haulers launch contract fight

DETROIT — Hundreds of Teamsters from across the country packed the Teamster Joint Council Hall here March 28. Many were local union officials, though there were numerous working members, attested to by the row of carhaul trucks parked outside. They were joined by dozens of locked-out Detroit newspaper workers and a small number of other Detroit-area unionists.

The rally kicked off the union's campaign to win a decent contract for the 12,000 union members, drivers, yard workers, mechanics, and office workers in the carhaul industry. These workers move new vehicles from rail ramps and assembly plants to new car dealerships and handle about 95 percent of new car deliveries.

Union members work for 17 companies that make up the National Automobile Transport Industry, the national bargaining agent for the bosses. Seven thousand Teamsters, about 60 percent of those covered under the national contract, work for one company, Allied Holdings. The industry reported revenues of almost \$2 billion last year, but when contract talks opened in February the employers demanded concessions. The national contract expires May 31.

Speakers included James P.

Hoffa, the newly installed international president of the Teamsters, and Stephen Yokich, president of the United Auto Workers. They were joined by a host of local union officials from across the country. The general theme of all these speeches were that Hoffa would bring in a good contract.

In discussions with the drivers present, what came through was a determination to change ever-worsening conditions in the industry.

A number of older workers pointed out that there were 36,000 carhaul Teamsters only 25 years ago, but through speedup more vehicles are being moved by one-third that number today. They said the union needed to block "double-breasting," a practice in other parts of the trucking industry where employers set up nonunion companies to compete with their union operation and then demand concessions from the unionized workers. Pensions were also important to drivers.

After the rally, carhaul workers attended one of five workshops on how to organize the contract campaign. A popular chant during the rally summed up their mood, "United We Stand, United We Win."

Kathleen Flanagan in Newark, New Jersey; Hugh Robertson in Manchester; and John Sarge, a member of the United Auto Workers in Detroit, contributed to this column.

'We're displaced by force, we're not refugees!' say Albanians

Continued from Page 14

Since there is no immediate prospect of that happening, however, many Kosovar Albanians in the camps say they prefer to go to another country, especially if they can return to humane living conditions.

Albanians living in Macedonia have gone out of their way to house as many as they can from Kosova. A professor of English at the University of Tetovo, an unofficial institution organized by the Albanian community, has 27 Kosovar Albanians in her house. This is done consciously to counter the efforts by the Gligorov regime to send as many of the displaced Kosovars as possible to other countries.

The town of Tetovo is in the north west of Macedonia, and its population is 90 percent Albanian. It has been the center of the fight for the rights of Albanians in Macedonia. There is a constant traf-

fic of army vehicles on the roads, the main concentration of NATO forces situated nearby. Most Albanians interviewed in Tetovo said the large presence of troops in the town was welcome. "They make us feel safe," said Elida Merseli, a 17-year-old high-school student. This view is not universal, however.

Students in Tetovo reported a rise in incidents of harassment of Albanians in Macedonia. These tensions, however, are practically nonexistent among workers. That was the case with young workers in a toy shop in Skopje. Three are Albanian, three Macedonian. The boss is Croatian.

"We enjoy working together. We talk a lot. Sometimes we disagree, sometimes we agree, but we discuss," said Muharem Aziri who is Albanian. Ibru Stafa, who is also Albanian, said he supports the NATO bombings. Goran Stofianovski, who

is Macedonian, replied, "The United States comes as a 'democratic' country, but what about the situation of Blacks in the U.S.? This is the same as they did to the Native Americans. And Britain hasn't solved the situation in Ireland. They should settle these things at home first."

Asked about self-determination for Kosova, Stafa replied, "Yes, we want independence." Stofianovski added that "if Kosova was a Yugoslav republic, and all the refugees returned, it would be OK. Until it is a republic, there will be no peace. But I can't say what another country should do."

After speculation as to the result of the forthcoming Manchester United football match, Stafa added, "Look, I'm Muslim, he [Stofianovski] is Orthodox. But we've all been working together and going out together for 10 years. It's impossible for us to kill each other."

LETTERS

A correction on Kosova

In the article "The roots of fight for Kosovar independence" (*Militant*, April 12, page 5), appears a gross factual error. I think you should correct it with a special box, in view of your pledge to provide readers with the facts on the war against Yugoslavia.

The *Militant* wrote, "Following the imperialist slaughter of World War I, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was formed in 1918 by the union of six republics: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia."

In fact, it was formed in 1918 by the union of the two pre-war kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro with those parts of defeated Austria-Hungary roughly corresponding to

Nurses in Canada defy gov't order, win broad support in 10-day strike

BY PAUL KOURI

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan — For 10 days, 8,400 members of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) on strike throughout this western Canadian province successfully defied back-to-work legislation, court injunctions, and an intense government campaign to portray them as greedy and irresponsible. Nurses started returning to work April 18 at the request of union officials who signed a "framework agreement" with New Democratic Party (NDP) provincial premier Roy Romanow and Brian Rourke, chairman of the employers' Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO). The NDP is a social democratic party with organizational ties to the unions.

The government had said it would never negotiate with the union until its members went back to work. In the agreement it promised a bit more money than it had decreed in the back-to-work legislation, known as Bill 23.

Initial reactions from nurses to ending the strike were mixed. "I don't think we could have continued any longer," Janet Wirchenko, a nurse at St. Paul's Hospital, said on her way into work April 19.

Another nurse leaving work, Karen Bjarnarson, said, "I think we should have continued until we got something fair. I feel abused, violated, and disgusted."

Nurses rally in face of gov't demands

The government passed Bill 23 five hours after the nurses walked out on April 8. Hundreds of nurses chanted and pounded on the doors of the legislature as the legislation was being debated. That evening 2,000 nurses from around the province rallied in Regina



Nurses' picket line in front of St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on April 15.

Militant/Paul Kouri

and resolved to continue their strike.

The SAHO obtained a court order April 11 threatening the nurses with heavy fines and the possibility of jailing union leaders. Nurses responded with an even bigger rally of 3,000 on April 12, again in Regina. They chanted "Hell no! We won't go!" The event was covered on national television.

Addie Loomes, a home-care nurse for 23 years, said, "If they are going to legislate contracts they may as well ban unions. I think that's one reason we're getting so much support. Two hundred and fifty teachers joined our picket line last Friday."

"I'm willing to stay out as long as it takes. I can't continue working under these conditions," declared Maureen Mills, a nurse at City Hospital. "I was on strike in Alberta in 1989 when the nurses successfully defied back-to-work legislation and won a better contract."

At Royal University Hospital (RUH), Lily Leung and Vivian Childe, with 19 and 11 years nursing experience respectively, said they couldn't believe they were being legislated back to work. "Some nurses in my ward were intimidated," said Leung. "One felt she had to go back to work because her religion says they can't break the law. Others fear the consequences on their ability to travel to other countries where they have family," she said in reference to a court order enforcing the legislation.

Nurses on the picket lines described how deteriorating working conditions, including mandatory overtime, were affecting patient safety. The accumulated effects of cutbacks in health care throughout Canada, combined with a growing shortage of nurses, has substantially increased workload. Mandatory overtime is now a fact of life for nurses here. They are sometimes required to stay and work a second or even a third shift if a replacement cannot be found.

Most nurses, often with the help of their spouses and children, wrote their own placards for the rallies and picket lines. They often reflected humor with their deeply felt convictions about the justice of their struggle. Some read, "No tea break...no pee break" and "Put me in jail — I need a rest."

Unions throughout the country sent messages and financial contributions. The Canadian Union of Postal Employees, whose members were legislated back to work in November 1997 and are still without a contract, sent \$50,000. Hundreds of workers from many different unions joined the picket lines.

Government says "22% is too much"

During the strike the Romanow government placed full-page ads headlined "22% is too much" in the daily newspapers. While some were influenced by this propaganda against the nurses, others didn't buy it. Ca-

nadian Auto Workers Ahmed Abdelwahab and Amr Ibrahim, who work at a local hotel, walked the picket line. "We hope they get 100 percent of what they're asking for," said Abdelwahab. "We don't think they're asking for too much," added Ibrahim.

The April 13 monthly meeting of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 248P at Mitchell's Fine Foods in Saskatoon voted to send \$2,000 to the SUN strike fund and to encourage members to join the picket lines. The local has 1,100 members. Six of them were on the line at RUH April 16, following their midnight shift.

As the strike entered its second week, pressure mounted on the nurses to return to work. A province-wide meeting of some 100 union officials of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, while critical of the government's strike breaking actions, shelved proposals to call a centralized mobilization of the federation's 100,000 members to back the nurses. This reflects the labor officialdom's reluctance to initiate action against the NDP government.

Officials of two other major unions in the health-care sector, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) with 10,000 members and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) with 12,000, signed tentative agreements with the SAHO during and before the nurses' strike, putting the government in a stronger position to impose a similar package on the nurses.

CUPE officials announced April 19, 61

percent of their members voted in favor of the offer, which provides for 2 percent yearly wage increases over three years. This is in accordance with wage guidelines set by the Saskatchewan government for all public workers. In order to avert an impending strike by 10,000 SEIU health-care workers during the nurses' strike, the government sweetened its offer by adding a 2.1 percent increase in benefits to come into effect April 2000.

In the case of SUN, nurses who work for the federal government in a veterans hospital recently won a \$9,000 yearly pay increase as a result of a pay equity fight by their former union, the Public Service Alliance of Canada. SUN was demanding that all nurses should be brought up to this level — an increase of 22 percent over three years — to bring nurses' wages here closer to the level of those elsewhere and help reverse the tendency of nurses to leave the province.

The Saskatchewan New Democratic Party government's line against the nurses has angered many of the NDP's union supporters, some of whom are questioning whether their unions should continue to support the party.

According to a summary of the "framework agreement" published by SUN, the total monetary package represents a 13.7 percent increase over three years, more than the 7 percent the government had decreed in Bill 23 but far short of the 22 percent SUN members were fighting for. Furthermore, how much of this money will actually be translated into an increase in nurses' wages is still being negotiated.

Paul Kuling, SUN Saskatoon district president, said, "Although I'm somewhat disappointed, I think it's the best agreement we could get under the circumstances."

Jan Jonsson, a public-health nurse, said, "Our unity and our confidence in the union would've been strengthened more if the members could have come together as we did in the first days of the strike to decide whether to go back or not. Perhaps we could have stayed out longer and forced the government to come closer to meeting our demands."

A court hearing on April 19, which was to decide on the fines to be levied on SUN for failing to comply with a court injunction to respect Bill 23, was adjourned for a week at the request of the union's lawyer.

Roger Annis, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Vancouver, contributed to this article.

Toronto transit workers strike over wages

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO — The 7,800 bus drivers, fare collectors, and maintenance workers at the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) struck for two days April 19-20. Members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 113 rejected the employer's "final offer" by 78 percent in a Labour Relations Board-imposed and -supervised vote.

Union members have had a mere 1 percent wage increase in the last seven years. Bus drivers' top wages are Can\$20.61 an hour (US\$13.80) after three years. The TTC offered a 6 percent wage increase over three years; the union demanded 9 percent. Strikers explained that government interference in union deliberations led many to reject the offer. Despite media hype about traffic gridlock, picketers received many supportive waves and honks from passersby. Several pickets were talking about the actions by Saskatchewan nurses, who defied back-to-work legislation recently. Less than 12 hours into the transit strike, provincial premier Michael Harris announced that he would introduce legislation to force a return to work.

A tentative agreement between the transit commission and union officials was announced at 3:30 a.m. April 21, and workers were back on the job within hours. They have not yet voted on the proposed contract, which includes binding arbitration on any wage increase over 2 percent a year.

'Bell is going too far,' say phone strikers in Ontario and Quebec

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO — Since April 9 more than 9,000 members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) have been walking picket lines outside Bell Telephone installations in Quebec and Ontario.

Wilf Kortleve, one of 140 cable repair technicians in the Greater Toronto area, told the *Militant* as he walked the line, "Bell is going too far. I think what they're really after is to break the union. They've split off all kinds of operations like the people who look after the buildings, the warehouses." Through this those workers have lost benefits such as sick days, one of the things Bell is trying to eliminate from the present contract.

Currently, CEP members work 40 hours every week and are paid for 38. The other two hours are banked, and used as paid days off. Bell is seeking a 37½-hour workweek with no time banked for days off. But at the

bosses' discretion during peak periods, the workweek could be extended to 40 hours at regular pay. Strikers explained that all the concessions being demanded practically negate the wage increase of 12 percent over five years being touted by the employer. "Besides, given all the changes in technology, five years is too long a contract," said Kortleve.

"I know for a fact that some people have been without phone service for a week because of the strike. That means people without 911 emergency services," added Kortleve. "Ten managers are trying to cover the whole 416 dialing area [Toronto]. We're praying for rain." Line damage often becomes obvious after rain, as water seeps into cables damaged by squirrels or other wear-and-tear, necessitating repair.

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