

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

No to rightist bombings,
defend democratic rights in UK

— PAGES 3, 14

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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May Day rally backs Titan Tire strikers

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa — “There’s a strike fever going on, and the corporations see we’re not playing.” That’s how William Argue, a striking member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 303L from Natchez, Mississippi, described the backdrop to the May 1 solidarity rally celebrating the one-year anniversary of the strike by USWA Local 164 against Titan Tire here.

The 670 members of Local 164 hit the bricks May 1, 1998, fighting against forced overtime, two-tier wages, and for pension and health-care benefits for retired workers.

Local 303L joined the strike against Titan Tire in September. The company bought the Natchez tire factory last year, but demanded big concessions from the union as part of the deal. Some 70 Natchez strikers came by

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Chicago YS: ‘Defend right to choose abortion’

BY JACOB PERASSO

CHICAGO — Fifteen students and young workers, including members of the Young Socialists, took part in a protest against an attack on women’s right to choose abortion at DePaul University here April 28. “Not the church, not the state, women will decide their fate” and “Stop the lies! Hands off my body!” chanted the pickets, who kept up the action for more than an hour despite a light rain.

The protest was ignited by an anti-choice ad placed in the campus newspaper, the *DePaulia*, by the Illinois Right to Life Committee. The advertisement claimed that woman who have an abortion are more likely to get breast cancer and asserted that abortion is the “#1 cause of death in Illinois.”

The Young Socialists recently established a chapter in Chicago, through the recruitment of a DePaul University student. The YS has organized two meetings at DePaul, one of which was a discussion forum on the U.S./NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Students at DePaul have participated in campaigns of the Young Socialists, including building and participating in political forums, attending demonstrations, and staffing book tables on campus.

YS activity on the campus has been covered in the *DePaulia*. The newspaper took note of young people selling socialist literature and campaigning against the US/NATO bombing outside the Schmitt Academic Center. It ran a photo of the literature table and quoted those campaigning, as well as an article headlined, “Socialists call for end to bombing,” covering the YS discussion forum on Yugoslavia.

The YS in Chicago has also worked to bring students from DePaul and other young people in the area to picket lines and labor rallies. David El Rassi, a student at DePaul, has visited three times the picket line of striking steelworkers against Tool and Engineering here in Chicago.

Workers pay dearly for escalating NATO assault

Moscow signs deal with NATO powers

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

TIRANA, Albania — Following the May Day weekend, Washington significantly escalated the U.S.-NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. The imperialist force is using new weapons and striking at targets that have begun to cripple communication among working people throughout Serbia and Montenegro in a qualitatively new way and deprive them of basic necessities such as

Eyewitness report: workers from Kosova and Albania explain their struggles

— Pages 8-9

water and electricity.

As the *Militant* went to press, the media reported that Washington and other imperialist powers signed a joint statement with Moscow calling for an international armed force in Kosova and the withdrawal of Belgrade’s forces from the region. Kosova is reportedly to remain part of Yugoslavia down the road, with some type of self-government. There are no indications yet as to Belgrade’s response.

“For two days we have had no electricity in almost the entire city of Belgrade except



Bus and car were destroyed in U.S.-led NATO assault May 3 near the city of Pec, Kosova. Washington’s claims of attacking military targets have become increasingly flimsy.

for an hour or two,” said Branislav Canak during a May 5 telephone interview from his home in Belgrade. “Water has also been cut off as a result of the NATO bombing.” The 2

million people in Yugoslavia’s capital are now struggling to find potable water. “Water tanks sent by the government in some neigh-

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Baseball game is victory for Cuba

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

BALTIMORE — In what became a political, diplomatic, and athletic victory for Cuba, the Cuban national baseball team played the Baltimore Orioles in an exhibition game here May 3.

The game itself was a sound defeat for the Orioles, who lost 12-6. Cuban relief pitcher Norge Vera kept the Orioles hitless for almost seven innings, after stepping in

during the second inning. Despite a rain delay that took the game until almost midnight, supporters of the Cuban team remained in the stands until the end, waving Cuban flags and chanting “Cuba, sí! Bloqueo, no!”

From the beginning, the U.S. government and other opponents of the Cuban revolution tried to keep this game and the teams’ March 28 match in Havana from being a suc-

cess for Cuba. The Orioles won the earlier game 3-2, in 11 innings.

As of May 1, Washington was refusing to issue visas to about one-third of the 335-member delegation from Cuba. Cuban officials issued a statement to the U.S. State Department May 1, saying that Cuban participants “feel deceived and offended” over the visa denials. It continued, “Under these conditions, we will be forced to cancel the

game.” The State Department changed its course late that night, issuing visas to the entire delegation.

U.S. officials pulled out all the stops to try to get Cuban players to defect. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) said most of its local staff would be on hand during the game “to handle possible defections.” Orioles owner Peter Angelos then banned INS agents from the ballpark.

In response, Baltimore’s INS director, Ben Ferro, told the *Baltimore Sun*, “We will have to find other ways to do what we need to do,” including setting up a 24-hour telephone hotline to handle inquiries by members of the delegation and others.

Baseball agent and businessman Joe Cubas, who has made a dubious career of trying to buy off Cuban baseball players, was among those offering multimillion-dollar contracts to any member of the Cuban team who would defect. Only one person of the 335-

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—December 31, 1994

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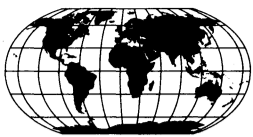
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Tazewell strikers ‘go back proud, with our heads up’ — page 7



Army coup takes over Comoros

Military officers took over the Republic of Comoros April 30, ousting President Tadjidine Ben Said Massonde. Army Chief of Staff Col. Assoumani Azzali stated that the coup was carried out "to prevent our country from being plunged into chaos." The country is made up primarily of the islands of Grand Comore, Moheli, and Anjouan off the coast of Mozambique, and has 700,000 residents. It won independence from France in 1975. On Mayotte, the fourth island in the chain, Paris engineered a referendum in favor of continued ties with the colonial power. It remains an "overseas territorial collectivity" of France today.

The French government has a long history of intervention in the Comoros through mercenaries and a direct invasion in 1995. Officials on Anjouan declared independence in 1997, with plans to renew ties with Paris. The Comoros government has made several attempts to put down this secession by military force. Coup leaders put officials under house arrest, suspended the constitution, and banned political activity and public gatherings.

Palestinian statehood is on hold

The increasingly bourgeoisified leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) — under pressure from Washington and other governments — postponed its planned May 4 declaration of an independent state, ostensibly until some time in June. Under the 1994 Oslo "peace" agreement signed by the Israeli government and the PLO, May 4 was the deadline for a decision on the final status of Palestinian lands occupied by Tel Aviv. As the date approached, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened to annex all disputed territories if the PLO tried to establish a state. Tel Aviv has backed a number of strategic land seizures by Zionist settlers in the West Bank that separate Palestinian villages from one another.

Meanwhile, pressure from Palestinians for their own country is building. On April 27 Palestinians demonstrated outside PLO leader Yassir Arafat's offices calling for statehood. Sa'ad Saleem, a cab driver, said, "The Americans and the Israelis always find an



Palestinians rally outside Yassir Arafat's office April 27 calling for declaration of Palestinian state

excuse to deny us our statehood. We've had enough.... If the Israelis want to invade, let them. I'll throw stones at them." One unnamed Palestinian official complained, "We go from one new deadline to the next. We have no firm commitments from the U.S. that it will recognize our state. Each new deadline gives Netanyahu more time to build new settlements."

Transport strike hits Nicaragua

Bus and taxi drivers in Nicaragua organized a nationwide strike April 29 to protest the high price of diesel fuel. Some 10,000 strikers set up roadblocks throughout the country. In an attempt to head off the protest, the minister of transportation announced the day before that the government was willing to

drop "liberalization" plans that would give more control to transportation companies. Workers went ahead with the strike anyway.

Cuba makes sugar harvest target

Workers and farmers in Cuba scored a victory by achieving their 1998-99 goal of harvesting 3.6 million tons of sugar. This is a larger *zafra*, or sugar harvest, than the previous season, which yielded a crop of 3.2 million. Gen. Ulysses Rosales del Toro, who was appointed sugar minister two years ago, announced that workers had reduced production costs and improve efficiency levels during the latest harvest.

Maryland students walk out

"It's not right to have kids going to school

in a place with roaches and mice," said Casandraccq Riley, a ninth grader at Bladensburg High School. "It's just uncivilized. It's nasty." Riley was one of more than 300 students who staged a three-hour walkout April 26 to protest subhuman conditions. The school administration called the cops on protesters, although no one was arrested.

Florida gov't okays school vouchers, limits right to choose

Florida's state legislators gave final approval to two undemocratic laws at the end of April. In one measure doctors must notify parents of a patient under the age of 18 years 48 hours before an abortion is performed, though consent is not required. Young women who don't want their parents in their business have to appeal to a judge for a waiver.

Under the guise of aiding poor children, government officials approved voucher legislation that would supposedly give all students regardless of income or grades "eligibility" to apply for up to \$4,000 a year to pay for private or parochial school tuition. Republican governor Jeb Bush has reportedly said he would sign both bills.

Maryland killer cop walks free

A grand jury in Montgomery County, Maryland, ruled not to bring charges against Sean Thiekle, a cop who claims he accidentally shot and killed Junious Roberts April 14. Thiekle, on paid leave during the whole episode, car-chased Roberts on unfounded suspicions of car theft. The cop says he shot Roberts by mistake. A doctor hired by Robert's family was "skeptical" about the cop's story, based on how the bullet entered.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

Fourth attack on Iowa Pathfinder store draws protests

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa — For the fourth time in six weeks the Pathfinder Bookstore, which provides office space for Socialist Workers mayoral candidate Amanda Ulman's campaign, was vandalized on April 24. In each

incident eggs have been thrown at bookstore windows. A news conference was held following the third incident April 12. On April 26 supporters of the Ulman campaign organized a second news conference and meeting to call on Des Moines authorities to apprehend those responsible for the attacks.

In her presentation at the meeting Ulman said, "We have received support from workers, farmers, college educators, and young people fighting against the the injustices of capitalism. Many have sent letters condemning these attacks and defending the right of working people and our allies to freely discuss politics.... Others have volunteered to monitor the bookstore after hours."

Drake University professor Daniel Spencer said in a statement, "I am writing to denounce these [incidents of vandalism], to demand that the City of Des Moines act swiftly and effectively to apprehend the perpetrators."

Larry Ginter, a Marshall County hog farmer and activist said, "no one has the right to

terrorize your political office... These acts of vandalism are attacking the First Amendment."

Paul Ford, a leader of the Grinnell [College] Coalition in Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, declared, "Guaranteeing free speech means not only protecting the people who speak but the tools they use to spread their message."

Four youths, members of the newly formed Iowa chapter of Anti-Racist Action (ARA), and Drake University professor Jon Torgeron joined other supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign at the April 26 meeting. After Ulman's presentation a lively discussion on how to fight rightist outfits that are becoming more active in politics took place. The ARA activists expressed interest in helping to organize more protests against the deepening U.S./NATO war in Yugoslavia.

Ray Parsons is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 310 in Des Moines.

THE MILITANT

Defend democratic rights

As the crisis of capitalism breeds more radicalization, we will see more antidemocratic thuggery from assaults on Blacks and gays in London to vandalizing of the Pathfinder bookstore in Des Moines. The 'Militant' covers the fights against these attacks and against the rulers' attempts to curtail democratic rights. Don't miss a single issue!



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London marchers say no to rightist bombings

BY CELIA PUGH
AND CAROLINE BELLAMY

LONDON — Two thousand people gathered May 1 in Brixton, a south London community, in response to the rightist bombings here over the last few weeks. The determined and noisy marchers then marched to central London to link up with 3,000 others at a trade union-organized May Day march.

The previous night a nail bomb had exploded in a Soho district pub frequented predominantly by gays, killing three people and wounding 68. Thirty-nine people were injured April 17 in a nail-bomb attack in Brixton, an area with a large Black population. A similar bombing April 24 wounded five people in Brick Lane, the heart of the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets, east London.

Police say they received telephone calls claiming responsibility for these acts from four rightist groups, including Combat 18 and the White Wolves. Combat 18 is described in the press as having members in the British Army and links with loyalist paramilitaries in Ireland. The police have been widely reported as having agents in Combat 18.

On May 2 police charged a 22-year-old man with responsibility for the three bombings. The police claim that he acted alone and had no connection with the rightist groups.

Militant reporters talked with residents of Brick Lane the day after the attack there. Groups of young people and others congregated on corners of Brick Lane, still cordoned off by the police. Hira Miah was working in a music shop when the bomb went off outside. He explained that the area, like Brixton, is racially mixed. "They are trying to use bombs to divide us, but they won't succeed. These bombs will just bring us closer together and start a fightback in the community," Miah said.

Fights against racist attacks and cops

Miah recalled the organized defense and demonstrations against a series of brutal racist attacks in 1993. Police attacked a vigil of Bengali youth outside the hospital where 17-year-old Quaddus Ali was being treated following an assault.

Police charged nine youths with taking part in the vigil they labeled a riot. Miah participated in protests against these racist attacks. This included a 50,000-strong demonstration through Tower Hamlets in March 1994 organized by local youth and community groups and backed nationally by the Trades Union Congress.

After these actions, racist gang attacks lessened, Miah said, but the police increased their harassment of local Asian youth. "I was getting stopped about three times a week. After the riots they stopped our cars, saying they were checking for weapons." Miah said that the police have not stopped him since the Stephen Lawrence report. An investigation into Lawrence's murder by racist thugs exposed police racism and inaction to bring the killers to justice.

Donna Melody, who is white, was born and raised in the area. She was taking her young daughter to Brick Lane just before the explosion. "The government puts words into other peoples' mouths," she said when asked what she thought of government laws to restrict immigrants and refugees, scapegoating them for deteriorating provision of hospitals, schools, and housing. "I think these racist bombs are disgusting. It's wrong to tar all white people who live in areas like this with the same brush."

The day of the Brick Lane explosion local Labour Member of Parliament, Oona King, who is Black, blamed the bombing on a "white backlash" against the Stephen Lawrence report.

The May 1 march from Brixton painted different picture. As demonstrators made their way to central London, people waved, cheered, and hooted car horns indicating the massive isolation of these rightists. Isaac Joseph, who lives in Brixton, joined the march. "This is my first time at a protest," Joseph said. "I saw the march go past my window. I told myself 'I should join them, we can make a difference!'"

On May 2 another 2,000 people joined a rally and vigil in Soho organized by gay rights groups. Among the speakers was government minister Paul Boateng. A police representative was cheered when he reported they had

charged a man with the bombings, but there remained a mood of anger among the crowd.

Some on the May 1 march expressed concern that the police were trying to use the bombings to attack democratic rights. Phelim MacCafferty, a student originally from Northern Ireland, noted, "They may try to bring in methods they have used in Ireland, like taking away our right to remain silent. We'll see more police harassing people in Soho, Brixton, and Brick Lane."

Pretext for curtailing rights

At a rally in Brixton on April 29, left wing Labour MP Kenneth Livingstone had called on the government to apply the "same methods as we have used against terrorism in Northern Ireland."

In recent years the police have increased street patrols and advocated greater use of street surveillance cameras by businesses and local councils. According to *The Observer*, there are now 1 million such cameras in use across the United Kingdom. These measures are endorsed by some leaders of community organizations in Black and Asian areas, who also call for rightist groups to be banned.

The Southall Monitoring Project, an antiracist group in west London, is organizing with local mosques and temples for 100 arm-banded volunteers to patrol the area and report anything suspicious to the police.

Labour home secretary Jack Straw appealed on BBC Radio 4 for people to inform the police of suspicions about workmates, neighbors, or acquaintances who may be members of rightist groups.

In a May 1 editorial the London *Times* argued that "members of every minority must now realise the police are their protectors."

Echoing this theme Prime Minister An-

Workers in Detroit protest on-the job deaths



Militant/Marty Ressler
"When I started at Ford there were 14 workers; now there are 9 doing the job of 14. This makes for profits and big bonuses for management, but for workers it goes in the wrong direction," declared Brian Papke, above. Papke works in the power plant of Ford's River Rouge auto factory, where six workers were killed in an explosion February 1. He was speaking at a Workers Memorial Day rally of 75 people in Detroit April 28. The entire day shift at Fitzgerald Finishing Co., where workers recently joined the United Auto Workers, held a rally the same day. Two workers have died there out of a workforce of 70 in the last two years.

thony Blair said May 2 that the police response to these bombings would help defend "what it means to be British." He used the same speech to justify NATO's bombing of working people in Yugoslavia.

Paul Galloway, Communist League council candidate for Levenshulme ward, Manchester, said the rightists gain "oxygen" for their actions from daily news of NATO raining bombs on working people in Yugoslavia, to the government stepped up scapegoating of immigrant workers with the new

restrictive asylum laws. The fact these attacks take place is then no accident. They are an inevitable result of the crisis of capitalism."

Galloway pointed to the way the youth on Brick Lane had won trade union backing for their march in 1994 as the best way to respond. (See statement on page 14.)

Celia Pugh is a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union. Caroline Bellamy is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union.

Strikers in Peru denounce Fujimori gov't

BY HILDA CUZCO

Workers across Peru took part in a general strike April 28, the first since President Alberto Fujimori took office nine years ago. They were protesting the government's economic policies, attacks on democratic rights, unemployment, and Fujimori's aspirations for a third presidential term.

The Peruvian General Workers' Federation (CGTP) called the labor action. Community organizations, women's groups, and student unions also participated. Four of the main opposition parties supported the action, and Alberto Andrade, the mayor of Lima and a presidential candidate for the year 2000, took part in the march and rally there.

In Lima, the capital city, around 2,000 demonstrators rallied in the main square Plaza de Armas. Juan José Gorriti, secretary-general of the CGTP, stated that "the majority of Peruvians" were participating in the strike, with the strongest support in other provinces. Mobilizations in the cities of Cuzco, Iquitos, and Huánuco shut down virtually all offices, stores, and schools.

A couple dozen Lima demonstrators were arrested in the early morning, accused of painting graffiti on the walls in support of the strike. Other reports indicated that some roads were blocked with burning tires in the capital city. Protesters were attacked by police in riot gear.

Fujimori's Bonapartist regime

Fujimori won the presidential elections in 1990 under the banner of "honest government" and promises to save "the people" from hyperinflation of up to 7,650 percent, "terrorism," and drug trafficking. Soon after taking office, he decreed brutal austerity measures to satisfy capitalist investors, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands to repay \$22 billion in back debt. His government's subsidy cuts and lifting of price controls skyrocketed prices of fuel and staples, and hundreds of thousands government employees and workers in state-owned companies were laid off.

The peasants, almost half of the population, have also borne the brunt of the "Fujishock" economy, as these policies are known. Exploited by the rich landlords, many peasants rely mainly on the coca leaf crop, material for cocaine production, as they cannot live on the prices they get for beans, corn, rice, and other crops. Sixty percent of the world coca production comes from Peru.

With austerity measures that lowered the living standards of working people in Peru, the Fujimori government paid \$1.7 billion of the outstanding loans to the IMF and the World Bank in 1993. This made his government eligible for new IMF loan-sharking funds.

At the same time Fujimori gave full powers to his military brass to try to crush the Stalinist Shining Path guerrilla organization beginning in 1991. Alleging that Congress failed to deal with "terrorism" and drug trafficking, he closed Congress and suspended the Constitution, staging a "self-coup" in April 1992. Fujimori replaced Congress and the Supreme Court with key military figures.

Despite his anti-working-class policies, however, Fujimori has been a highly popular president through most of his presidency.

Playing on widespread insecurity over social turmoil and the economic crisis, Fujimori was elected by presenting himself as a savior, standing above classes, who would bring stability, peace, and "clean government" by using decisive executive power to "cut through red tape." He portrayed himself as an outsider untarnished by the corruption of the discredited traditional capitalist parties.

This kind of political regime, which historically has often arisen in times of social crisis, is known as Bonapartist.

Fujimori initially won support by reducing inflation, dealing blows to the Shining Path, and attacking Congress and the courts as corrupt. Over the years, however, the demagoguery has worn thin, with the continuing capitalist economic crisis and the gradual process of working people regaining their confidence to fight for their interests.

In April of this year students and workers marched in Lima carrying signs that read, "Down with the dictatorship!" and "Fujimori, it's time to go!" marking the seventh anniversary of this Bonapartist takeover.

A country of 22 million, Peru's economy has been devastated by the world economic crisis. The combined rate of unemployment and underemployment runs at 50 percent. The economic crisis in Asia affected prices of important minerals such as copper and tin. The fishing industry has also suffered a blow with the damaging effects of El Niño, which moved vital varieties of fish away from the shorelines, hurting the substantial fish-meal production industry. The country has been in an economic recession, with an economic growth of zero at the end of last year.

Fujimori has been working to increase his chances for a third-term reelection, despite his drop in popularity polls to a low of 29 percent in last December. He won the presidency for the second time in 1995 playing up the arrest and show trial of Shining Path leaders.

President campaigns for third term

In 1996 Fujimori's government majority in Congress approved a law that allows him to run for a third term, despite the two-term limit in the new constitution, on grounds that his first term fell under the old constitution and did not count. The opposition appealed to the Constitutional Tribunal, which ruled against this exemption. Fujimori responded by dismissing the tribunal for exceeding its authority. A campaign that took two years to collect 1.5 million signatures calling for a referendum to bar a third term was also thrown out by the Fujimori majority in Congress, who argued that a two-thirds majority vote in that body was needed to hold a referendum.

Fujimori recently tried to refurbish his government by appointing eight new cabinet ministers, the largest change in his nine years of rule, after dismissing five in mid-April. The new faces in the cabinet include three women. Last year he also dismissed Gen. Nicolás Hermeza Ríos, the army commander once considered his closest ally and very close to his secret police strongman Vladimiro Montesinos. Defense Minister Julio Salazar Monroe, who was also close to Montesinos, was dismissed in mid-April, a surprise move in government circles.

Seeking to burnish his demagogic appeal as a "man of the people" in face of growing working-class resistance, Fujimori has been traveling to the provinces to inaugurate structural projects. He has put unpopular plans to sell state enterprises, namely two oil refineries, three electricity distribution companies, and the remaining hydro-electric generators, on the back burner for now.

Two new funds have been established, despite the recession. More than half a million retired state employees will receive two bonuses this year through Fonahpu, a government agency. A similar body, Mivivienda, will finance long-term mortgages for lower-middle-class families. Another plan will provide some workers and peasants with property titles by year's end. Meanwhile, Fujimori's government is seeking from the IMF a third three-year loan agreement.

'U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War' is now available in Spanish and French!

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — The fifth issue of *Nueva Internacional*, a Spanish-language magazine of Marxist politics and theory, was shipped from the Pathfinder printshop in New York Friday, April 30 — just in time for the beginning of an international campaign to increase the readership of the communist periodicals the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and of the *New International* magazine in four languages.

This new issue of *Nueva Internacional* is the translation of *New International* no. 11, featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War." Its publication follows that in March of the sixth issue of *Nouvelle Internationale*, the translation in French of the same issue of the magazine. A translation in Swedish will be published later this year as the third issue of *Ny International*. A translation in Icelandic is also under way.

The documents in this issue of the magazine are if anything more essential today than when they were published in English barely six months ago.

U.S. imperialism has lost the Cold War

The feature article of the magazine by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes is a political resolution discussed and adopted in 1990 by the SWP in the U.S. and communist leagues in other countries. Its main points can be summarized as follows:

- Imperialism is weaker today than ever before. "The exploiters," writes Barnes, "have not been able to resolve the increasing stagnation and vulnerability of the world capitalist system. They have not been able to impose crushing defeats on the working people and labor movements of a single imperialist country. They have not been able to overcome the political obstacles to their capacity to carry out sustained wars, or to prevent rebellions and fights for liberation by workers and peasants of the colonial and semi-colonial world. And they have not been able since 1917 to restore capitalist property relations to a single one of the countries where it has been overturned."

- Capitalism has suffered a historic defeat in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union with the collapse of the bureaucratic regimes. To restore their system of exploitation, the imperialists now have to directly confront millions of workers, farmers, and other toilers who have for the first time in more than half a century gained space to

discuss, organize, and fight for their rights and reach out to their fellow brothers and sisters in other countries.

- Stalinism was a counterfeiter of communism. Its worldwide disintegration opens the way for rebuilding a world communist movement capable of leading workers and farmers to power — a key precondition for them being able to begin rebuild society on the basis of human needs and new proletarian values of solidarity, cooperation, and dignity.

- The fight for national self-determination: the only road toward a world without borders. A key section of the resolution summarizes the strategic and programmatic conquests of the communist movement on the intertwining of the struggles by oppressed peoples with the socialist revolution. Thinking working and youth will find it especially useful for understanding the crucial place of the fight for Kosova independence today in the defense of the Yugoslav workers state.

- Despite a decade of assault, states the 1990 resolution, the "labor movement remains at center stage of U.S. politics" and in other imperialist countries. This conclusion, drawn from hard-fought strikes by rank-and-file Machinists and coal miners against Eastern Airlines and Pittston Coal at the end of the 1980s in the United States, is even truer today.



United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) members and supporters blocking road to Pittston Coal preparation plant during strike, April 1989. The "labor movement remains at center stage of U.S. politics" despite a decade of assault, explains 1990 SWP resolution, and that is even truer today.

Militant/Steve Marshall

"The evidence continues to accumulate that the working class in the United States and most other imperialist countries has emerged from the period of political retreat that followed the ... imperial assault on the people of Iraq in 1990-91. Signs of renewed defensive action are all around us," write Barnes and *New International* editor Mary-Alice Waters in the opening piece of the magazine, titled "Ours Is the Epoch of World Revolution."

Rebuilding world communist movement

This change in the mass psychology of the working class has in fact accelerated since that sentence was written last September, underlining even more the other, inseparable thread that runs through the issue: the opening that the deepening capitalist crisis and the shattering of the Stalinist roadblock provide for rebuilding a world communist movement.

Readers will find of special interest:

- The "Young Socialists Manifesto," drafted by members of the YS chapter in Los Angeles a year ago in order to clarify for themselves the character and activity of their organization and its relationship with the Socialist Workers Party, the communist vanguard in the United States. The editors decided to put this document right at the front of the issue in order to stress the fact that the point for revolutionaries is to change the world, not just to talk about it.

- The centrality of the Cuban revolution and of its communist leadership throughout the whole issue. As the 1990 resolution explains, "This 'subjective factor' — the genuinely internationalist character of the proletarian vanguard guiding the workers state in Cuba — is the most important objective contribution of the Cuban revolution."

This proletarian course by the Cuban leadership is confirmed in another piece of the issue, "Socialism: A Viable Option" by José Ramón Balaguer, a member of the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party. In this talk to an international conference of political parties held in Havana in October 1997, he reiterates, "In the present international conditions, we reaffirm that socialism is a necessity. Not only is it the logical result of the development of the productive forces on a world scale, it is the only alternative to guarantee the survival of humanity."

- The final section of the 1990 resolution, "Rebuilding a World Communist Movement," and the related article "The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today," by Waters, which closes the magazine.

This rich and concrete discussion includes an assessment of what the proletarian cadres of the communist movement had just accomplished during the Eastern and Pittston strikes.

It goes over the norms and institutions of a turn party like the SWP — a party "whose rhythm of work, norms of behavior, and political milieu are determined by the fact that the majority of its membership and leadership are industrial workers and members of industrial trade unions," as explains a translator's note added to the French and

Spanish translations of the issue.

And it codifies important conquests of the communist movement — like the "incompatibility of all forms of race-baiting with the construction of a communist party and leadership." Race-baiting is a very widespread petty-bourgeois practice by individuals of an oppressed nationality (or someone claiming to speak in their interests) of using demagogic methods to prejudice the credibility or leadership qualifications of someone of a different skin color.

The printing of the new French- and Spanish-language issues of this magazine significantly increases the scope of the communist arsenal. It will help put the articles they contains into the hands of workers, farmers, and youth whose language is French or Spanish — in Quebec, the United States, France, and many other countries. This happens at a time when the hunger is deepening among workers, farmers, and youth internationally for a clear working-class explanation and line of march in face of the accelerating crisis of the world capitalist system of exploitation — a crisis now dramatized by the murderous assault on working people in the Balkans by Washington and its imperialist allies and rivals.

Michel Prairie is the editor of *Nouvelle Internationale*.

MILITANT PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL Subscription drive

MAY 1 - JUNE 27

	Militant PM NI		
	Goal	Goal	Goal
Australia	14	3	12
Canada			
Montreal	20	10	30
Toronto	30	5	25
Vancouver	25	3	12
Canada Total	75	18	67
France	5	3	25
Iceland	8		
New Zealand			
Auckland	30	1	5
Christchurch	16	1	6
N.Z. Total	46	2	11
Sweden	16	6	6
United Kingdom			
London	35	8	30
Manchester			
UK Total	35	8	30
United States			
Atlanta	28	7	16
Birmingham, AL	35	5	10
Boston	35	15	25
Chicago	50	15	30
Central Illinois	20	4	
Cleveland	40	8	
Des Moines	40	20	20
Detroit	35	8	15
Houston	35	15	20
Los Angeles	65	30	40
Miami	35	15	20
New York	120	50	75
Newark, NJ	125	50	60
Philadelphia	32	6	15
Pittsburgh	30	5	20
San Francisco	90	40	40
Seattle	45	15	15
S. Minnesota			
Twin Cities, MN	50	12	15
Washington, DC	50	15	30
U.S. Total	960	335	466
Int'l Total	1154	372	617
Int'l Goal	1100	350	

New International

A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

■ No. 11

Now available in Spanish and French!

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

Jack Barnes

The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today

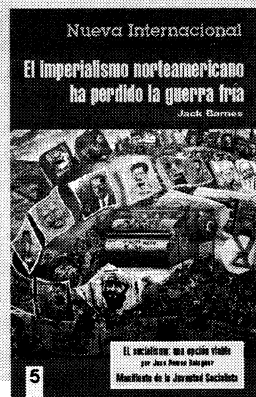
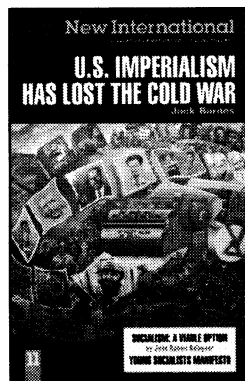
Mary-Alice Waters

Socialism: A Viable Option

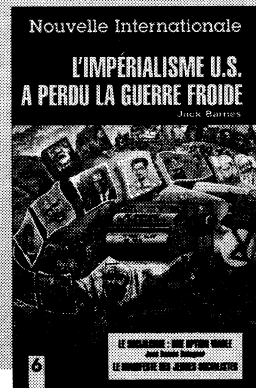
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'I want that book!' says Amtrak worker

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PITTSBURGH — "I sold a copy of *The Militant* to a co-worker at Amtrak who took a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-class Politics at the Millennium* to look through. He showed the paper and the book to another worker, a block operator who is from Grenada and went to college in Cuba," reports Ellie Garcia from Newark. "When I ran into him later, he told me the two of them read the *Militant* together, and the other worker still had his paper."

"When I was finally introduced to the block operator, the first thing he said was 'I want that book!' I pulled a copy out of my workbag and he bought it on the spot. We exchanged phone numbers and agreed to meet again outside of work."

Seth Galinsky, also from Newark, invited a Teamster union member over for dinner who he met while walking the picket line of a recently ended strike against the Hertz car rental company. The evening ended with the Teamster putting a down-payment on a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and a Pathfinder Readers Club membership. The two workers also made plans to join a solidarity rally for shipyard strikers in Newport News, Virginia.

Socialist workers in Pittsburgh have also stepped up their efforts to sell *Capitalism's World Disorder*, part of an international campaign. A team drove out to the University of Pennsylvania at Edinboro to set up a table in the Student Union. Two people came by, a man and a woman, who were very excited to see the Pathfinder book table. They said, "We can't find books like this around here. We need to add these to our library." They

bought a subscription to *the Militant* newspaper, a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and joined the Pathfinder Readers Club. When all was said and done, they purchased \$180 worth of books, including five different issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Together with the campaign to sell 1,500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* by June 14, socialist workers and young socialists launched a drive on May Day to sell introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as copies of *New International*. The results of the first week of the eight-week campaign will appear in the next issue.

From Stockholm, Sweden, Anita Östling reports, "We had a May Day mobilization here where we sold 51 copies of the *Militant* — in fact we sold out. We campaigned against the imperialist intervention in Yugoslavia and in favor of Kosova's independence. We also sold two *Militant* subscriptions, two *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and three copies of *New International*. Tomorrow [May 4] we will have a street meeting as part of the Communist League's election campaign for the European Parliament, where our candidates will speak through loudspeakers in the city center. On May 6 there is a rally outside parliament organized by the broad left to protest the bombings of Yugoslavia. There are no demands for Kosova's independence, though. We will



Militant/Megan Arney

Selling *Militant* to participants in May 1 rally against cop brutality in Orange, New Jersey.

bring the banner we raised in the May Day demonstration: 'Stop the bombings, NATO out of the Balkans, For Kosova's independence, Open the borders!' On May 8 we are planning a forum where Catharina Tirsén will speak having just returned from the *Militant* reporting team in the Balkans."

The *Militant* encourages its supporters to send in stories about their sales, and photos too. Remember, the deadline for sending in subscriptions and sales reports is noon each Tuesday.

BY SALM KOLIS

PITTSBURGH — A co-worker in the steel mill where I work, Joyce, got a copy of the *Militant* newspaper, and I encouraged her to read about the striking shipyard workers in Newport News Virginia. A couple days

later, when I ran into her she said, "I read the speech by Fidel Castro about fighting racism. We need leaders like that here!" So I decided to follow-up with a discussion about *Capitalism's World Disorder*. I gave her a copy to take home and look through over her days off, which she did.

"I took your advice," said Joyce, "and looked through the index. What caught my eye was the section in 'What the 1992 Elections Revealed' on 'Assault on the value of labor power.' What it explains about the economic insecurity of capitalism is just what we see here at LTV." What finally cinched the sale was a discussion of the campaign to sell the 1,500 copies of the book and the special sale price of \$20.

Capital is needed for printshop transformation

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Pathfinder's printshop here is preparing the next stage in the transformation needed to keep Pathfinder's entire book list in print. Pathfinder is appealing for \$250,000 in capital contributions. The fund got a big boost over the last month with \$75,000 in contributions, ranging from \$1,000 to \$19,000. This is a solid step toward raising the additional \$175,000 needed.

A single, renovated pressroom, a long-postponed project, is the next big step in

the reorganization of labor in the shop launched last year to reduce the costs of producing and keeping in print the more than 350 titles published by Pathfinder.

The new pressroom will house the three printing presses that produce Pathfinder books, pamphlets, and other socialist publications. The presses are currently separated by a wall that prevents operators of the web press and two sheet-fed presses from functioning as a single crew. Its removal will improve training conditions and help to increase productivity.

Digital workflow

Driving the transformation of the shop's productive capacity is the steady flow of Pathfinder books put in digital form by more than 100 volunteers from around the world.

In the last two months the worker-volunteers at the shop have produced some 15 titles using digital files, including 2,500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Jack Barnes and *New International* no. 11, as well as its Spanish and French translations. Other titles included *El rostro cambiante de la politica en los Estados Unidos* (the Spanish translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*); *White Music, Black Business*; and *Women and the Cuban Revolution*.

Nine additional titles are scheduled for printing in May, including *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention, Cuba for Beginners*, another 500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and *By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X.

The acquisition last November of a new computer-to-plate machine, combined with the efforts of the international team of volunteers, helped the shop eliminate a labor-intensive prepress department, making this stepped-up production of Pathfinder books possible at lower costs, higher quality, and with a smaller shop staff. Since mid-1998, the shop's staff has been reduced by almost a third.

On May 4, for example, the international volunteers rushed computer files to the shop for *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention*. It will be available ship to bookstores on May 8 for use by workers and youth campaigning against

Washington's brutal bombing of Yugoslavia.

New pressroom

"Our architect is now drawing up the initial plans to eliminate the wall in our current pressroom," web operator Ryan Lewis said in an interview. "We toured him through the shop and discussed our aims. He raised a number of possibilities, including ways to improve air quality, dust control, paper storage, lighting, and workflow."

The goal is to bring the pressroom in line with the standards of the shop's modern bindery, constructed in 1992. Workers in the bindery strive to set the tone and pace for production and training throughout the shop.

Workers in the press department are visiting other New York-area printshops to learn how they have dealt with similar issues, Lewis said. "We are also asking the companies that manufactured our presses to send out specialists we can consult with."

In the last three months, workers at the shop have begun to turn around a drop in commercial sales in the second half of last year. April was the best month for commercial sales since June 1998. Increasingly, print buyers are seeking the advantages in terms of costs, quality, and turn-around time they can get from shops that are on the cutting edge of digital printing.

"Increasing commercial sales and raising labor productivity begins to reverse the necessary deferral of capital expenditures to meet operating budget expenses," Dave Prince, a member of the Capital Fund committee, told the *Militant*. "It means the shop can begin to look to regenerate this capital."

"We're just beginning to understand what it means to make do with less people," said Doug Nelson, 24, the head stitcher operator in the bindery. "We're working it through. What each of us does makes a difference."

The recent increase in the flow of Pathfinder books and commercial work has "accelerated training and an has heightened awareness on the need for quality and greater labor productivity," said web-press operator Róger Calero. "We're training with an eye to greater output per hour and reducing wasted paper and other materials."

To find out how you can make a contribution, write: **The Capital Fund Campaign, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.**

Peter Thierjung is the head of the shop's bindery department and is a member of the Capital Fund committee.

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

Country	Goal	Sold	%
New Zealand			
Christchurch	10	8	80%
Auckland	10	6	60%
N.Z. Total	20	14	70%
Sweden	6	3	50%
United States			
Atlanta	40	18	45%
Washington, D.C.	60	23	38%
C. Illinois	17	6	35%
San Francisco	136	48	35%
Los Angeles	82	23	28%
Pittsburgh	40	11	28%
Seattle	50	13	26%
Detroit	78	20	26%
Des Moines	55	14	25%
Boston	50	11	22%
New York	120	25	21%
Houston	70	14	20%
Miami	45	9	20%
Philadelphia	50	10	20%
Twin Cities, MN	50	10	20%
Newark	150	26	17%
Birmingham	60	10	17%
Cleveland	60	10	17%
Chicago	75	11	15%
S. Minnesota	14	1	7%
U.S. Total	1302	313	24%
U.S. Goal/Should be	1500	675	45%
United Kingdom			
London	41	20	49%
Manchester	17	5	29%
UK Total	58	25	43%
Canada			
Vancouver	21	11	52%
Montreal	7	3	43%
Toronto	50	16	32%
Canada Total	78	30	38%
Australia	20		
Iceland	4		
Int'l Total	1488	385	26%

Country	Goals	Sold	%
United States			
PACE	15	7	47%
UAW	75	29	39%
UTU	80	31	39%
IAM	111	28	25%
USWA	80	16	20%
UFCW	80	12	15%
UNITE	70	8	11%
Total	511	131	26%
Should be	500	225	45%
United Kingdom			
RMT	4	2	50%
TGWU	7	1	14%
AEEU	2	0	0%
Total	9	1	11%
Australia			
AMWU	5		
MUA	4		
Total	9		

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

Titan Tire strike rally

Continued from front page
bus and car to the Des Moines event.

More than 1,500 strikers and union supporters took part in the action, which included a march to the struck plant followed by food and refreshments.

USWA members from locals around the Midwest made up a large part of the crowd, including contingents of tire plant workers from Bridgestone/Firestone plants in Des Moines; Decatur and Bloomington, Illinois; and Tennessee. Forty members of USWA Local 307 who work at the Goodyear tire plant in Topeka, Kansas, and other Goodyear workers from Lincoln, Nebraska, were there as well.

Ada Owens, a member of USWA Local 713L in Decatur, helped lead the chants on the march to the plant. "It's my struggle too," she said. At the Bridgestone/Firestone plant in Des Moines, workers built the May 1 rally and collected \$2,100 for the Titan strikers at the gates April 27 and 28. Contracts at Bridgestone/Firestone plants expire next year.

Kent Johnson, a member of USWA Local 787 at the Bloomington, Illinois, plant explained that workers there have been holding regular rallies outside the company office to build solidarity on the shop floor as contract negotiations draw near. He said, "Our local went to two rallies for the Titan strikers in Quincy, Illinois, and we came to the one today to show our support. We are supporting them and hopefully when we need it we'll get the same."

Before the rally began 150 people attended a panel discussion organized by Local 164. Rank and file strikers gave a powerful description of the stakes in the fight against Titan Tire. Lori Meier and Frank Lowery explained that under the provisions of the old contract, most workers had been forced to work 26 days in a row, and were often ordered at the last minute to work four hours of overtime. "I had parents to help me with child care, but lots of workers didn't have that," Meier said.

Sinnath Chan spoke out against the two-tier wages Titan imposed in the last contract. "I worked side by side, doing the same work as my co-worker, and I got lower pay than her. I don't understand that. Was it because I was low seniority? Because I am Asian-American?"

The panel discussion was moderated by

U.S. Senator Thomas Harkin, and presentations were given by USWA and AFL-CIO officials. A representative of the Iowa Faith and Labor Committee reaffirmed the group's support for the strike.

Byron Orton, the head of the Iowa Labor Commission, reported on the recent confrontation between Titan and the state agency over safety inspections of the struck plant. Production continues with the use of replacement workers.

In March and April company officials refused on four occasions to allow Iowa safety inspectors into the facility. Titan objected to the inspectors being accompanied by Local 164 officials, which is permitted by law.

Orton reported that when the inspection was finally conducted April 22, Titan Tire owner Maurice Taylor, Jr. took him aside and said, "Mr. Commissioner, we are at war. And when Morry Taylor is at war I do not lose."

The rally opened with a talk by Local 164 president John Peno, who applauded the determination of the strikers through turning points over the 12-month strike. "In June, when Titan presented its 'last best and final offer,' and told us to return to work or face replacement, not one union member crossed that day... In mid-February, when unemployment benefits ran out, not one member crossed."

He said three members have crossed the picket line in the last month.

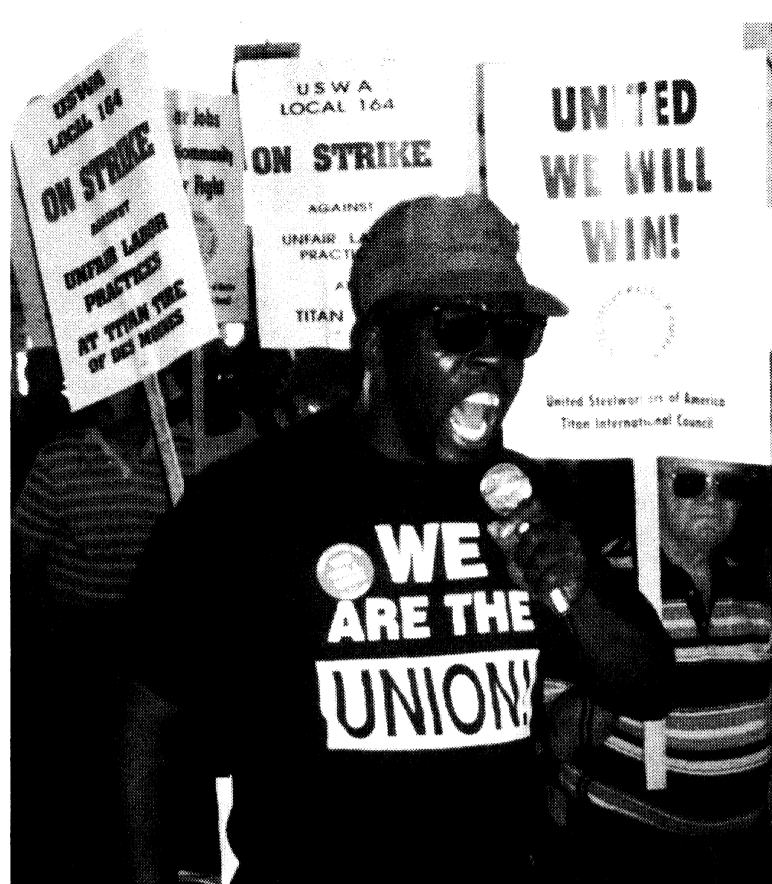
In an interview one Local 164 strike activist, still on probation at a new job said, "We're getting stronger the longer the strike goes on. Where I work now, about half the workers are in the union. I try to talk to people about joining, and tell stories about our strike." He added, "For us Asian-Americans this strike means a lot. The owners think they can get Asians to be good workers for just

\$7 or \$8 and hour, thinking we will cross picket lines. We proved them wrong and this makes me very glad."

Peno pledged solidarity with Local 303L in Natchez, and pointed to USWA organizing drives underway at non-union Titan plants, in Quincy, Illinois and Clinton, Tennessee.

Charles Long is a leader of the Clinton fight. He was part of an earlier organizing attempt in 1995 but was fired two weeks before the vote. In an interview with the *Militant* after the rally he said, "Titan has treated the people there so badly they see we need some kind of representation." Union handbilling with news of the Des Moines and Natchez strikes takes place once or twice a week at the Clinton factory. Long added that an April 10 picnic hosted by the USWA drew 250 workers and their families, helping to win new support for the union.

USWA International officials spoke along with AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Richard



Militant/Ray Parsons
Titan strikers and supporters rally on May 1 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Trumka. Dave Foster, Director of USWA District 11, pointed to other USWA struggles at Oregon Steel in Pueblo, Colorado, and at Kaiser Aluminum. Some 3,100 steelworkers at five Kaiser plants have been locked out since January 14, after USWA officials called off a 15-week strike. The unionists are fighting deep job cuts demanded by Kaiser.

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310 in Des Moines. Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.

Baseball game is victory for Cuba

Continued from front page
member delegation defected.

Cuban-American rightists had projected having thousands of protesters in front of the stadium opposing the games. But all that materialized was a demonstration of 300 opponents of the Cuban revolution that took place at the main entrance to Orioles Park at Camden Yards. They were mainly Cuban-

Americans from Miami, Florida, and Union City, New Jersey. These right-wing demonstrators, who had announced earlier that they would disrupt the game through a variety of actions, including throwing blood on Cuban players, urged ticket holders to boycott the game. The almost 50,000 tickets were sold out, however.

Opponents of the Cuban revolution also

staged a couple of provocations inside the stadium. During the fourth inning, three rightists ran across the field, one with a T-shirt reading "Freedom for Cuba. Forty years is too many," referring to the 40th anniversary of the 1959 revolution which brought workers and farmers to power on the island. Police arrested the men.

In the fifth inning, one more man ran onto the field with an anti-Cuba sign and T-shirt, to boos from the crowd. The rightist yelled at Cuban umpire César Valdez, who was in back of second base. Valdez picked him up, threw him to the ground, and proceeded to teach him a lesson. "Above all I am Cuban," a Cuban official later told the press what the umpire had said. "And there is no reason for me to stand for such a lack of respect."

There were no further interruptions after that. All four provocateurs were arrested and released after being given citations for criminal trespass. No one was arrested other than the four right-wingers. Police did kick out 19 audience members for various reasons, however, including holding up signs opposing the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

Nearly 300 people gathered outside of a side entrance to the ballpark to welcome the Cuban national team and oppose the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Participants came from as far away as Santa Cruz, California, to support Cuba both outside and inside the game. There were two vans of supporters from Miami and a bus from New York.

Speakers included Delvis Fernández of the Cuban-American Alliance and Education Fund; Sally Davies, president of the Association of Federal, State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 1072; Bill Goodin, an anti-police brutality activist in Baltimore; Joaquín Trujillo of the Antonio Maceo Brigade of Miami; and Marianne Peterson, a Cuban-American with the Maryland Coalition to end the Embargo against Cuba.

Oscar Ochotorena, president of the Alliance of Workers of the Community (ATC) in Miami, also addressed the rally. He began his remarks by referring to the successful celebration of May Day, the international workers holiday, in Cuba. He continued, "Sports is an important manifestation of culture. We of the ATC are here to support this game, which has a historic meaning."

He added, "We want the best team to win but, from the bottom of my heart, I want to say, let it be Cuba! Cuba, yes! Culture, yes! Baseball, yes! Blockade, no!"

Olga Rodriguez contributed to this article.

Collections needed now for SWP fund

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

NEW YORK — Members and supporters of the communist movement are responding to the increased opportunities to hook up with workers, farmers, and youth across the country who are fighting against their exploiters. This means organizing to join the fights wherever they are taking place — be it in the

shipyards of Newport News, Virginia, where 9,000 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 8888 are striking to win a decent contract, or in Buffalo, New York, where we joined with others to push back an attempt by right-wing forces to shut down clinics that provide abortions.

Contributions to the Party Building fund help make this all possible. Three weeks into the drive to raise \$75,000, we are lagging behind in collecting on pledges made to the fund and at winning new contributors among fighting workers and farmers. What is needed now is a serious effort over the next two weeks to send in substantial collections that will help get the fund on schedule.

The response teams of communist workers and youth received in the coalfields of Alabama and Kentucky is yet another example of the hunger that exists among many workers today for solidarity and for working-class explanations of political developments in the world today. Jerry Freiwrth, an oil worker from Houston, was part of a team that reached out to miners in western Kentucky over the past week. The team decided to go back to a Peabody mine where 55 issues of the *Militant* were sold the previous week.

"We sold 20 issues of the *Militant* and also a copy of the newly reprinted pamphlet *Coal Miners on Strike* at a shift change," said Freiwrth. "We sold an additional 27 copies of the paper at another Peabody-owned mine in the area that day as well." The team later went back to these two mines and sold another 25 issues of the paper. "On our second visit back we were able to have a few more extended discussions with miners," reported Freiwrth. "We learned about threats by the company to close one of the mines, and we were able to exchange names and phone numbers with a few miners."

"We found a lot of interest in the *Militant's* coverage on Yugoslavia," said Susan Lamont,

a steelworker from Alabama who participated in a Birmingham-based team that fanned out across the coalfields of Southern Appalachia. The coalfield team sold an issue of the *Militant* with the headline "NATO assault brings disaster to workers in Yugoslavia." Lamont said one miner at the US Steel portal who was opposed to the U.S. bombing said, "It's terrible what the government's doing to them. Those people drove the Nazis out during World War II." Twelve miners, including two women, decided to buy a copy from the team. The team sold an additional 15 copies at one Jim Walters mine, and three copies at another. At the second mine, they ran into a former subscriber to the paper who asked that team members get back in touch with him.

The tremendous interest in the truth about the U.S.-led war in Yugoslavia is reflected in the number of requests for *Militant* reporter Argiris Malapanis to speak at special meetings to raise money for the Party Building fund. Supporters in Miami are planning a meeting featuring James Harris, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees in Atlanta, who is active in linking workers up with farmers fighting for justice in the South. Pittsburgh supporters are planning a panel that includes Brian Williams, a steelworker from Washington, D.C., who is building solidarity with striking shipyard workers in Newport News. Also included on the panel is a young worker who helped lead a recent team to the coalfields in southern Illinois.

Supporters in every city are encouraged to nail down plans for meetings that will take place over the next few weeks. These events can be a real boost to catching up and helping to ensure that on June 15 the local goals are met in full and on time.

Contributions can be sent to 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Please make checks and money orders out to the Socialist Workers Party.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY BUILDING FUND

City	Goal	Collected	%
Miami	3,000	700	23%
San Francisco	9,000	1,885	21%
Detroit	4,500	275	6%
New York	10,000	284	3%
Newark	6,500	140	2%
Chicago	5,000	100	2%
Des Moines	2,600	50	2%
Houston	5,000	50	1%
Twin Cities	5,000	45	1%
Los Angeles	6,000	50	1%
Atlanta	3,000	-	0%
Birmingham	2,250	-	0%
Boston	3,000	-	0%
Cleveland	3,000	-	0%
Philadelphia	3,000	-	0%
Pittsburgh	3,250	-	0%
Seattle	7,000	-	0%
Washington, D.C.	4,200	-	0%
Other		1,035	
Total	85,300	4,614	5%
Goal/should be	75,000	28,125	38%

Kaiser Aluminum workers rally support across Ohio

BY KEVIN DWIRE AND SALM KOLIS

HEATH, Ohio — "USWA Local 341 — Go Steelworkers — 1 Day Longer." That was the message that streamed behind an airplane circling above 350 unionists and supporters as they rallied here April 24 to back members of the United Steelworkers of America locked out at Kaiser Aluminum.

The striking members of USWA Local 341 hosted the rally, which brought together supporters from Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Workers went on strike against Kaiser on Oct. 1, 1998, in Spokane and Tacoma, Washington; Gramercy, Louisiana; and Newark, Ohio. The strike became a lockout January 14 when Kaiser refused to accept the union's offer to return to work under the old contract while continuing negotiations.

"We're stronger now than the day we walked out. This has been a wake-up call," Kaiser worker Mollie Overbey told the *Militant*. "We realize that we have to be strong or we won't be a union or have a place to go back to, there won't be jobs worth working."

"This rally helps us get out our side of the story, especially here in Newark, where Kaiser's side dominates the media," said Annette Lindsay, who has worked at Kaiser for 25 years. "It was great to have workers come up to us on the picket line and shake our hands, especially workers who have been through their own strikes, because they know what we are going through. It was a big morale booster. We need more actions like this." Lindsay has participated in union sponsored

trips to Houston and California to picket MAXXAM Corp., which owns Kaiser. "I enjoy going on trips, meeting other workers, seeing how they are doing things and learning about other struggles," explained Lindsay. "Before this strike I sat idly by and didn't do anything about injustice. Now I want to do something. We as workers should be involved in social struggles, like the fight for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal. I hate that I couldn't be at the rally [in Philadelphia] for Mumia today, but I know there were other Kaiser strikers at the rally in California."

Veterans from recent union victories in Ohio came to throw their support behind the Kaiser workers. A group of USWA Local 3241 members from Marietta, who won a 23-month strike against MSI, brought a donation for the Kaiser workers. So did workers fresh from the recent strike at RMI in Niles. The first 130 workers went back into the RMI plant April 19 after approving a contract. RMI worker Patricia Williams of Local 2155 declared, "It was great to come and support the Kaiser workers and I want to do more of it and get others involved as well."

A group from USWA Local 5668 at Century Aluminum in Ravenswood, West Virginia, brought two truck-loads of food for the strikers. Retired 5668 member Johnny Lynch reminded the crowd that their plant used to be owned by Kaiser. "We were locked out for 20 months," Lynch said, referring to the 1990-92 fight at what was then Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. He recalled USWA Local 341 sent aid during their lockout. "Everyone



Militant/Kevin Dwire

Unionists from across region came to support locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers

gave us up for dead except the steelworkers. Local 341 is not going to die."

Marge Flanagan of the Women's Support Group at Local 5668 presented the Kaiser workers with donations totaling almost \$1,800. The Ravenswood steelworkers, whose contract expires June 1, take up solidarity collections regularly.

Two members of United Auto Workers Local 1910 from Ashland, Ohio, came to the rally and said they also plan to attend a May 8 rally to support workers at MTD in Willard, Ohio, who are trying to organize into the UAW.

The rally also heard a message from Julia Hill, one of several activists "occupying" giant redwood trees in the Headwaters Forest in Northern California. Hill told the rally through a telephone link about the fight to stop MAXXAM-owned Pacific Lumber

from clear cutting areas of the forest, and spoke about the need for unionists and environmentalists to work together to oppose corporate destruction of the environment.

Following the rally the crowd marched from the rally site to the Kaiser plant gate, holding a short rally on the picket line. They marched back to the rally site, and many went to the union hall to help unload the food donations from Ravenswood.

Kaiser worker Rod Foster told the *Militant* following the rally that morale is good. "It's a hardship on everyone, but we've hung tough." He said it was "good to see all of the out-of-state and local support."

Kevin Dwire is a member of UAW Local 1196 on strike against Central Brass in Cleveland. Salm Kolis is a member of the USWA in Pittsburgh.

Tazewell strikers go back 'proud, with our heads up'

BY ALYSON KENNEDY AND JOSHUA CARROLL

PEKIN, Illinois — Members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2283 voted 57 to 4 on April 25 to ratify a contract with Tazewell Machine Works here. The contract includes a dental plan, slightly better health coverage, a 401K pension plan, union-dues check off by the company, and a 15.5 percent wage increase over six years.

The 82 members of UAW Local 2283 began their strike on Oct. 5, 1998. They had no retirement plan, paid as much as \$70 per week for family medical insurance, and had neither dental nor optical coverage.

At a union meeting on April 11, the local was told by UAW international officials to return to work under the terms of the expired contract. They set a return date for April 19. The owner of Tazewell said he would begin negotiations within two weeks.

At the time, Terry Beebe, a Tazewell striker, explained, "I'm not totally comfortable going back without a contract, but this is right for the union." He went on, "If they don't sit down and negotiate with us, we'll go right back out again."

Tom Smith, a steadfast strike supporter and a member of UAW Local 974 at Caterpillar, commented, "This was the first strike for many of these guys. Six months is a long time. They stayed out 100 percent without a single guy crossing, and they showed [owner] Henry Cakora that they can stand up to him."

Caterpillar has moved large sections of production to largely nonunion plants where workers make substantially less money and have fewer benefits. Tazewell makes parts for Caterpillar. The strike received support from UAW locals at the Caterpillar and Mitsubishi plants, mine workers from central Illinois, and other working people in the region.

In mid-January, Local 2283 began organizing expanded picket lines. Between 50 and 100 unionists would turn out to "greet" the scabs at shift change. Workers on strike at the Lenc-Smith and Tool and Engineering plants in the Chicago area attended several of these actions.

Members and retirees from UAW Local 974 were among the strongest backers of the Tazewell strike. Dozens of them turned out at each of the expanded picket lines. The lessons they learned from their seven-year struggle with Caterpillar were well received by the Tazewell strikers.

UAW Local 974 and the Tactical Response Team (Blue Shirts) formed by some of the Cat workers during their fight raised tens of thousands of dollars through collections, a Christmas Party, a raffle, and a chili supper. Kenny Whetstone, a member of UAW Local 974 and the Tactical Response Team said, "As soon as we saw the picket lines we began organizing solidarity. We began collecting money at the turnstiles at the Cat gates until Caterpillar kicked us off. Then we stood in the street collecting money. Caterpillar started collecting for the United Way on their property and we would get donations from a lot of workers who wouldn't give to the company collection." Local 974 retirees staffed the Tazewell picket line on a number of occasions so that Tazewell strikers could attend various solidarity events.

Whetstone also described some of the history of the fight against Tazewell. "This was the first successful strike at Tazewell," he recounted. "In the 1970s they were organized by another union and couldn't get a contract. They tried to strike, but the union was broken. In 1989 the workers at Tazewell organized to get the UAW in, but had one of the worst UAW contracts in the region. For them to stay out this long, and remain 100 percent the whole time, shows that they were tired of being treated like second-class citizens."

One of the most successful solidarity events during the strike was a chili supper held at the UAW Local 974 union hall. Hundreds of workers in central Illinois turned out. A delegation of workers, most of them immigrants, from the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) on strike at Lenc-Smith in Cicero, Illinois, attended. They had been invited and were introduced to those in attendance by a striker from Tazewell who had visited their picket line in Chicago.

Strikers faced harassment from both the company and the city of Pekin. In November the *Pekin Daily Times* began to violence-bait the picket lines. Tazewell filed a lawsuit against the union on November 12, claiming strikers were harassing and intimidating workers going in and out of the plant. The city sought injunctions preventing burn barrels, portable toilets, and a picket shack on the picket line. On December 5 a circuit court judge granted a temporary injunction against the so-called threats made by strikers.

The injunction did not limit the number of pickets but restricted them within five feet

of passing vehicles. Police, however, continued to try to provoke incidents at the expanded picket lines. On March 2 Pekin Police deputy chief Charles Bassett accused a local power plant worker — the one Black worker on the picket line — of shouting at him and threatened to take him to jail. The workers stood up to the provocation and the cop was forced to apologize. The cop defended his racist attack by saying that at the time he couldn't see black or white; only red. In response all pickets now wear red ribbons.

During the strike the owner of Tazewell, Henry Cakora, called the union "communist, un-American, and run by mobsters" and vowed the strikers would never work for him as long as they had the union.

Cakora hired 110 scabs to break the union. He got rid of most of them as part of the agreement with the union, and others quit. Some 15 scabs still remain in the plant, 10 of whom have asked to sign union cards, according to Local 2283 president Chad Hartley.

In the last few weeks of the strike, the

expanded picket lines became almost weekly events. The last one was held on April 16, the Friday before the strikers returned to work. Strikers greeted the scabs at shift time for one last time. "We are a lot stronger now," said Terry Beebe. "Standing outside together has brought us closer to each other and strengthened the union."

After the union announced that the strikers would return to work April 19, many of the scabs simply walked off the job, reported Gene Preston, who has worked in the plant just under two years. At that point the company asked if it could begin to call back specific workers earlier to fill production needs. "We said no," explained Preston. "We all met at the union hall Monday morning [April 19], we drove down together, and walked into the plant together — proud, with our heads up, and 100 percent strong." Preston said, "It was about the coolest thing I ever saw."

Joshua Carroll is a member of the United Steelworkers of America.

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'America and Europe push own interests in Important minority of workers from Kosova and Albania oppose U.S.-NATO

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND ANNE HOWIE

TIRANA, Albania — "What a lot of people here tell you is true. From the day the NATO bombing began, the attacks on us by Milosevic intensified to an unimaginable degree. I never expected this kind of 'ethnic cleansing' to happen. I thought I'd die one day, probably sooner than later because of our struggle to end the oppression of the Albanian people. But in Kosova, not in Albania. I never expected to be thrown out of my house like this. What the United States is doing with its bombs is not helping us."

That's how Shaban Dace summarized his views to *Militant* reporters in a May 1 interview here at a camp for Albanians expelled from Kosova. It's located near the center of Tirana, by a lake in the city's central park. The 4,500 residents, about half living in tents and the rest in a makeshift trailer park, have named it "Magic City."

Dace worked in a small factory producing bottled wine and other alcoholic beverages in Pirane, a village near Prizren, Kosova, until 1991. He was fired then, like most industrial and other workers of Albanian origin in Kosova, because of his support for the Trepcan miners' strike. The miners demanded an end to austerity measures the regime of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade was trying to impose and recognition of national rights of the Albanian nationality. For the next eight years, Dace, his wife, and their four children tilled a small piece of land in Pirane to make ends meet.

On March 24, the day Washington launched the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia, paramilitary forces under the command of Zelco Rasnatovic — a Serb nationalist known as Arkan who is infamous worldwide for his brutality — and units of the federal Yugoslav army began shelling Dace's village at 4:00 a.m. and setting houses on fire. Villagers were given less than an hour to leave, Dace and others from Pirane said. Three days later virtually the entire population of Pirane, made of 220 families, found itself expelled to northern Albania.

Dace's story is typical among the nearly 400,000 Kosovar Albanians who have fled to this country. But his opinion that the NATO bombing has made everything worse is shared by a minority among those who are being deported from Kosova en masse. It is not a small minority, however, particularly among workers and farmers from Kosova.

Many working people in Albania express similar views, drawing on their experiences with repeated imperialist military interventions here. "America and Europe are each pushing their own interests in Kosova, and they are competing about it," said Minella Bala, a retired truck driver. He spoke to



Mass rally in Vlore, Albania, during revolt there in 1997. Opposition to the U.S.-NATO assault on working class and to increasing deployment of imperialist troops inside Albania is strongest among workers and farmers in southern Albania, where rebellion against pro-imperialist Berisha regime was based.

Militant reporters at his home in the port city of Sarande, southern Albania, May 3. "They mean no good for us. They are damaging our cause, the workers' cause."

Bala was the president of the citizens' council in Sarande, formed during the 1997 armed rebellion that eventually brought down the pro-imperialist regime of former Albanian president Sali Berisha.

Against the pro-NATO stream

The opinions of Dace and Bala go against the stream of the pro-NATO orgy unleashed on the population here by the Socialist Party government of prime minister Pandeli Majko and by virtually all political parties in Albania.

Skender Bej square at Tirana's center shows how far the SP administration has gone to open up Albania to the U.S.-NATO forces and aims. "NATO in Kosova," says a huge banner hung in the front of the building that houses the opera and the main public library there. The government-sponsored banner displays the Albanian flag on one side and the NATO flag on the other. A smaller banner on the same side of the building read, "May 1." It was up when we arrived in Tirana the night of April 30 and stayed up through the May Day weekend. We were told there were no May Day rallies of any kind anywhere in Albania, as has been the case for the last decade.

The media constantly praises the reactionary imperialist alliance and its operations in Albania.

In early April, the Albanian parliament voted unanimously to open the country's

ports, airports, air space, and military facilities to NATO forces attacking Yugoslavia.

The port of Durres, the country's largest, about 50 miles west of Tirana on the Adriatic, has been taken over by NATO forces. No one can enter its perimeter without Albanian army and NATO permission. According to what *Militant* reporters were able to see and hear, ships unload troops and their hardware almost daily, as NATO is rapidly building a force of more than 20,000 soldiers in Albania. No details are available from either the NATO command or authorities here at this point about the exact size or composition of the force among the 19 NATO member states.

For several miles south of the port of Durres, the coastal area has been closed off to public access with fences and barbed wire and turned into a large base for NATO troops. German soldiers guarding a NATO outpost in this area, right by the highway that runs along the coast, got agitated, pointing their automatic rifles as if they were ready to shoot at *Militant* reporters driving by who tried to take a photo of the scene.

U.S. forces that are part of the NATO deployment are largely based at the Rina airport, outside Tirana. Much of Albania's commercial air traffic has been curtailed to give virtually free access to warplanes of the Atlantic military alliance during their air raids in Kosova and elsewhere in Yugoslavia and their increasing exercises.

That seems to portend more battles at the Albania-Kosova border. While in Kukes, northern Albania, May 2, these reporters saw an Apache helicopter circling the area near the border, about 15 miles away. Clashes with Belgrade's forces were taking place at the time, we found out later.

Convoys of imperialist troops can be seen around the country, but particularly in the corridor from Durres to Tirana and Kukes. Trucks obviously transporting heavy weaponry towards the border with Yugoslavia are always well covered.

Washington and other imperialist powers are preparing for a possible ground invasion of Kosova on the pretext of stopping the mass deportations of Albanians from that region. Their operations in this country are a central part of surrounding Yugoslavia with an imperialist military noose and trying to get the so-called frontline states neighboring Serbia and Montenegro in line behind NATO's course.

Toward this end, Washington is increasingly using the forces of the Kosova Liberation Army, known as the UCK, its initials in Albanian.

UCK turning into Washington's tool

The UCK, which for years has waged an armed struggle for independence of Kosova, is turning into a tool to advance the aims of U.S. imperialism. It earlier incorporated, to a degree, a number of young fighters and

others involved in the mass struggle for self-determination inside Kosova who helped defend working people there from brutal assaults by Belgrade's forces.

Now, buses with UCK fighters in uniform can be seen headed to the border virtually every day we've been here. They often parade in Tirana yelling, "UCK! UCK!" They get some applause from pedestrians, but noticeable indifference from many as well.

Frequently UCK members have little U.S. flags pinned or sewn on their uniforms next to Kosova Liberation Army insignia.

A few we ran into in the camps for Albanians who fled Kosova, who were getting ready to head for their "training bases" near the border, were quite unabashed about identifying themselves as UCK members. They all openly expressed support for what NATO is doing and said they want weapons and air protection from NATO planes to get into Kosova in massive numbers.

"I was in the UCK and had left to go to Pristina to get some exams finished at the university when the Serbian police forced us to leave,"

said Burhan Elezi, a stomatology student originally from the Kacanik area in Kosova. "We only want arms from NATO and we'll do it ourselves. We also need help from NATO planes because we can't stand up to the Serbian weaponry. We'll take over Kosova." Responding to a question on whether accusations by Berisha, floated in the press here, that the UCK is not to be trusted because many in its leadership are "too Marxist oriented," Elezi said, "Absolutely not. The UCK has nothing to do with Marxism. We want to turn Kosova to the road of the West."

In the past, U.S. government officials have accused the group of being a terrorist organization. But they have largely dropped that designation since Washington succeeded in getting the UCK leadership to sign the accord — initially crafted at Rambouillet, France — that provided the justification for the NATO assault. It's likely that contingents of UCK troops will be used as the first cannon fodder by Washington if the imperialist powers decide to launch a ground assault on Yugoslavia.

Thousands of Albanian immigrants from several countries in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere have come here to join the UCK, which reportedly has 30,000 members in Albania now. We found that most of those we spoke to, either those already in the UCK or about to join it, were students, high school and university teachers, doctors and other professionals, and shopkeepers. Fewer were peasants or workers. Shefqet Loshi, for example, was a small businessman who had immigrated to Switzerland and spent 15 years there. He moved to Kosova about a year ago and used his savings to buy a business, he said, which was burned down a month ago. He is now operating out of the lake camp at central Tirana in organizing fund-raising for the UCK.

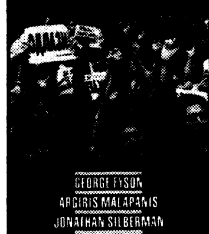
Criminal elements in Albania have also praised or publicly pledged troop support for the Kosova Liberation Army. A gangster known as Zani, for example, said after being released from jail recently that 26 of "his boys" would join the UCK. Zani ran one of the most notorious gangs in Vlore, southern Albania, during the working-class revolt against Berisha — terrorizing the population there. He did several months in prison subsequently for his activities.

Stories abound, unconfirmed by *Militant* reporters, of parts of NATO arsenals ending up in UCK hands here.

In the camps housing Albanians from Kosova, it often takes particular courage and determination among working people to raise opinions opposing NATO's course. Many who are ardent supporters of the imperialist assault intervene to try to stop those expressing views such as Dace's. Most of these people are openly, or more discretely sometimes, associated with the UCK and are trying to clamp down on civil discussion that goes against their views.

PATHFINDER

THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA



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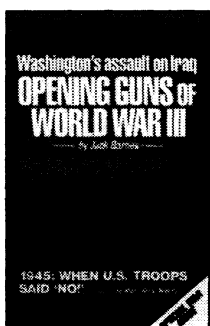
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Kosova'

war, explain why

Attempts to cut off discussion in camps

That's how the conversation with Rustem Kelmendi, a construction worker from Valisheva, Kosova, was cut short at the Asllan Rusi Sports Palace on May 1. The facility near Tirana's center serves as the central registration place of Albanians expelled from Kosova. Kelmendi faced no obstacles in telling his story at first. His brother had been killed by Belgrade's special police forces and Kelmendi saw the body mutilated later, he stated. But as soon as he began explaining that the U.S.-NATO assault gave the Milosevic regime the green light to take off with its "ethnic cleansing" dreams in Kosova, a group of other Albanians intervened to cut off the discussion. Some of those who surrounded Kelmendi belonged to the UCK, they said later.

At the same sports center — where up to 3,000 deportees are staying on any given day in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, waiting for possible reunification with family members or to be relocated to more humane facilities — a similar incident occurred. A *Militant* reporter was interviewing a student from Kosova. Another Kosovar Albanian who spoke some English had offered to translate the conversation. As soon as Shpendi Malaj, the high school student from Cakova, began explaining his opposition to the NATO bombing raids in Yugoslavia, the volunteer translator became angry, said some harsh words to his fellow Albanian and to the *Militant* reporter, and took off.

These exchanges multiply many times every day as Albanians have continued to be forced out of Kosova, terrorized into leaving by Belgrade's forces.



Militant/Natasha Terlexis

Entrance to Rekor shoe factory in Gjirokaster, Albania, during 1997 visit by *Militant* reporters. It is one of few privately owned factories in the country. The resistance by workers there to conditions Greek bosses want to impose highlights why imperialists have to use military force in attempt to restore capitalist social relations (see article below).

Estimates by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees put the total number of Albanians expelled from Kosova since March 24 at 675,000. More than 395,000 have crossed the borders into Albania. Nearly 205,000 have flooded Macedonia. The remainder are in Montenegro and Bosnia. Small numbers have been airlifted to other countries like Germany, Italy, Turkey, or the United States so far.

Kosovar Albanians have been dispersed throughout this country. The largest number, more than 90,000, are in Kukes in a number of camps that are in the worst conditions in terms of sanitation and protection from rain or other natural elements. Many people there, a large percentage of them

farmers, still have their tractors with them. Some had their tractors and cars burned by Serb forces before crossing the border, but the majority appear to have been able to cross with vehicles.

Militant reporters visited several camps in Kukes as well as in Tirana, and in Vlore and Sarande in southern Albania. After talking to dozens of people, a picture similar to what we found at camps in Macedonia and Montenegro emerged.

The "ethnic cleansing" by the Milosevic regime continues to unfold at a slower but steady pace. The repeated stories in the big-business media of large-scale massacres in Kosova are unsubstantiated or at best exaggerated. We asked repeatedly and found no

one who had direct knowledge of mass rapes. It appears that villages where the Kosova Liberation Army was not carrying out open activities had not faced, for the most part, major problems or harassment by Serb paramilitary gangs and special police forces prior to March 24.

At the Lipjane agricultural community in the Vershec village, for example, about 300 people were part of a relatively strong UCK unit in a population of 1,500, said Daut Nishari and his father, Sadik, during a May 3 interview at a camp in Kukes. "That was the reason the village had been attacked three times in the past year," Daut Nishari said. "The paramilitaries, though, had not been able to push us out until after the NATO bombing began." The Nisharis had changed residence seven times, moving from relative to relative, after their house was burned some months ago.

Dace said 16 people from his village were killed because they refused to leave their houses in Pirane or they decided to fight against Belgrade's troops on March 24-25. There had been no major problems with Serb forces prior to that.

The majority of those interviewed said the police or border guards in Kosova took their passports, drivers' licenses, or other personal documents on the way out of Kosova. Serb gangs also took most of the cash Kosovars carried with them. It was often done in a humiliating way. After passports were taken away near the border, guards at another checkpoint dozens of feet away asked for hundreds of German marks in fines because people did not carry passports, we were told

Continued on Page 13

Attitudes of workers at Albania shoe factory show imperialists' difficulty in restoring capitalist rule

BY CATHARINA TIRSEN
AND BOBBIS MISAILIDES

GJIROKASTER, Albania — "The plant should not be private. The state should own it," Perije Late told *Militant* reporters as she punched holes in leather parts at the local shoe factory here May 4. It was a prevailing view among workers.

"We just work harder and harder and are not paid well. They don't care about our rights, our security, or our health," exclaimed Late's co-worker at the next bench, who has worked in this factory for 12 months after many years in a cigarette plant. She didn't want her name disclosed.

Rekor Albania S.A. is a leather-tanning, rubber, and shoe factory in Gjirokaster, a town of 20,000 in southern Albania. It's one of the few privately owned plants in the country that a Greek capitalist, Spiros Papafioti, bought an 85 percent stake in 10 years ago. It's also a good example of what it will take for Washington, London, Athens, or other imperialist powers to reestablish capitalism here.

Christos Nanos, a representative of the mother company in Greece that bought the factory in 1989, complained bitterly about the workers' attitudes here in a May 3 interview. "Pardon the language, but Albanians have no sense of responsibility," he said. "If somebody in the family dies, they take five days off to mourn," he said. "Do you know how many days they get in Greece? Only three. The Albanians also stay home if somebody is ill in the family, and they don't even have to produce a doctor's note. We brought technology here from Greece, but the workers don't look after the machines. They damage them just to get a break." Nanos also accused the workers of stealing. "Not even India or Uganda is that bad."

Nanos had been sent to Gjirokaster two weeks earlier to "straighten things out," as he put it.

Not quite what bosses need

The Greek manager at the factory here was not just expressing his own anti-Albanian prejudices, but also his experience from very real attitudes he and other capitalists have a hard time breaking among working

people in workers states.

Rekor Albania S.A. turns a profit, according to Nanos, but nowhere near as much as the Greek bosses need or expect. The company is typical of the investments capitalist from abroad attempt here and in other workers states in Eastern and Central Europe. It is concentrated mostly in services, such as gas stations and shopping malls, and in light industrial facilities like Rekor, where labor costs are much cheaper than Greece or Italy. The median wage at this plant is \$100 per month, compared to about \$500 in Greece.

Workers produce boots for the militaries in Albania and Greece and work shoes for the telephone and electrical companies in both countries. Productivity is around 1,000 pairs a day, according to Nanos. "We could easily make 1,500 just by raising production consciousness," he said. "In Greece we would make enough shoes to flood the market with this kind of facility — 3,000 a day." He hopes to impose the kind of "work discipline" necessary to meet this goal in a couple of months. The plant has a leather processing and tanning component and facilities to produce leather clothing, in addition to the shoe production lines.

Flamur Cani, the Albanian manager of what remains a joint venture with the Albanian state, presented a slightly different picture than Nanos. "The capacity is 2,000 pairs per day and we produce 1,250," he said. Cani was Gjirokaster's mayor between 1986 and 1992. He was dismissed when the procapitalist regime of Sali Berisha came to power and was without a job for six years, he said. He was then appointed director, representing the 15 percent stake of the Albanian government in the plant. He continues to wield considerable power and there's evident tension between him and the two managers from Greece. A dispute among them was a factor in the kind of tour of the facility *Militant* reporters were able to get, and in our freedom to speak to workers on the job.

Nanos wanted to get rid of 1,000 pairs of shoes of substandard quality in storage by donating them to Kosovar Albanians in town. "I don't think we should give them defective shoes," argued Cani. "We should produce 2,000 pairs of top quality and give

those to the refugees."

All workers interviewed sided with Cani. Many have been organizing solidarity with the Kosovars. "We don't have enough money to have people from Kosova stay in our house," said sewing machine operator Miranda Zhuli. "But we often go to the camp here and invite a family home so they can shower and get a meal. We do what we can."

When the shoe factory was privatized in 1989 it employed 1,000 workers. Most of the work was done by hand. Now 330 people work here. A number of workers said they appreciated introduction of labor-saving machinery, but not the capitalist social relations the Greek capitalists are trying to impose along with it, such as this "downsizing."

Workers' side of story

"This factory has the best pay in Albania," claimed Cani. "The last two years the pay has been raised 40 percent."

"That's not true," said Kiriakos, a mechanic in the department that prepares rubber for the soles, who did not want his last name disclosed. "I used to get 35,000 lek (\$1=140 lek) a month and now I get 40,000." The mechanics' wage is top scale. Women in the sewing department say they earn 10,000 to 19,000 lek a month.

"The so-called 35 percent raise in the last contract was a sham," said Angelusa Gaba, 33, with 10 years in the plant. She is the union representative in her department. "They introduced piece rates throughout the company for the first time. And they raised the quotas, so the wage increase was wiped out. We have to work harder for the same pay. In fact some of us now make a little less because the company increased what we have to pay for health insurance and social security."

The company withholds nearly 12 percent from paychecks for social security along with a tax of 1,000 lek per month for the police force, which was dissolved during the 1997 rebellion against Berisha. This sum is dubbed the "solidarity tax" by the Socialist Party government of Prime Minister Pandeli Majko and most workers are resentful about it.

"I worked in Greece for a year," said Kiriakos, "and I made five times more

money there."

"My friends who now work in Greece, make 3,000 lek a day and I only get 400. We have exactly the same skills," says Eli Idrizi, who has worked in the factory for 28 years. Production runs from 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with an unpaid half-hour lunch break between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. They have no paid breaks.

"The daily norms are too high," said Idrizi. "You even hesitate to go to the bathroom." Her co-workers in the sewing department laugh at the last comment. It's an exaggeration, but is what the boss is trying to impose.

Secondhand machines

Much of the capitalist "investment" in factories in workers states consists of used machinery. As factories in imperialist countries upgrade their technology, the used machines they replace can be sent to Eastern Europe and "invested" in labor inten-

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Eyewitness Report from YUGOSLAVIA

Chicago
Sunday, May 16

Speaker:
ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
Staff writer for the *Militant* and
co-author of *The Truth about*
Yugoslavia

Reception: 3:30 p.m.
Program: 4 p.m.

\$5 donation requested
1223 N. Milwaukee Avenue
(at Ashland and Division)

for more information: (773) 342-1780

The forum by Argiris Malapanis in New York City, announced for May 15 in last week's *Militant*, has been postponed.

U.S. rulers intensify bombing, debate ground invasion

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As the NATO military alliance escalates its war against Yugoslavia, the imperialist intervention is deepening the course toward using ground troops. This intensification in their military operation has sharpened tactical debates among U.S. capitalist politicians and other ruling class figures, who are nervous about the political consequences of a ground assault.

On April 28 the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution, 249 to 180, requiring President William Clinton to get Congressional approval for launching a ground invasion. The big-business politicians rejected another measure, 2 to 427, to declare a "full" war against Yugoslavia. Another nonbinding resolution declaring bipartisan support for the bombing campaign failed 213 to 213.

"We're on the verge of ground troops," said Rep. Thomas Campbell, a Republican who asserted during the debate that the attack on Yugoslavia was unconstitutional without a vote of support by Congress.

"The best course of action ... is to use the overwhelming military might we have at our disposal to end this war swiftly and quickly," said Democratic Rep. Eugene Taylor, who pressed for a declaration of war.

The day after the Congressional debate the House Appropriations Committee approved a \$12.9 billion "emergency spending" bill for the military operation in the Balkans through September 30. The funds would also cover Washington's assault against the Iraqi people and enforcing the

"no-fly zones" there.

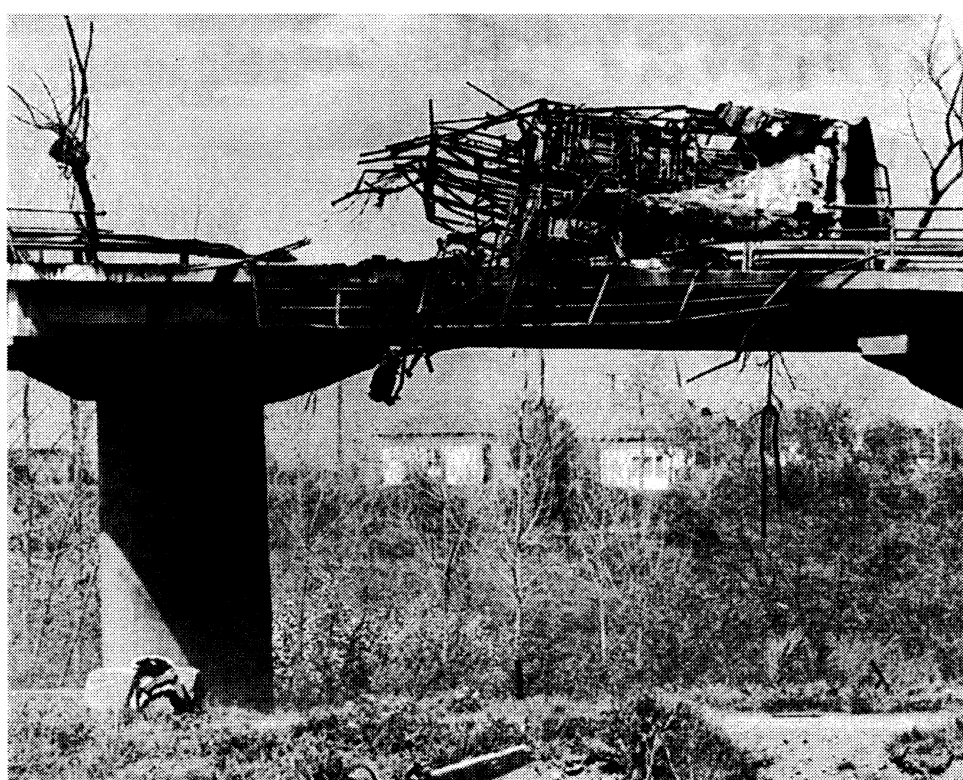
In the Senate, Republican John McCain, a presidential contender, has taken the lead in pressing for a resolution authorizing Clinton to "use all necessary force" in the Balkans. Democrat Charles Robb co-sponsored the resolution, which failed by a 72 to 22 vote May 4. "We are now weeks into an air campaign that may last months, and Americans need to prepare themselves now, psychologically at least, for war," Robb said May 3.

"We should not give the president blanket authority to get us into another Vietnam," said Sen. George Voinovich, opposing the measure.

Meanwhile, the imperialists have stepped up their air war with round the clock bombing attacks resulting in more civilian casualties. "We will not stop the bombing but will intensify the bombing," declared U.S. defense secretary William Cohen, responding to a call for a pause in the bombing by Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson to pursue negotiations.

Jackson, who supports imperialist intervention in the Balkans but with more diplomatic cover, led a delegation to Belgrade that secured the release on May 2 of three U.S. GIs captured by the Yugoslav military. The delegation included Congressman Rod Blagojevich, who has pushed for partitioning Kosova.

Washington and the big-business media are attempting to inure the U.S. population to the steady increase of what they cynically call "collateral damage" — Yugoslav civilians killed by "errant" missiles. Cohen announced



Bus demolished by NATO missile May 1 on bridge in central Kosova village of Luzane. At least 39 people were killed. U.S. rulers seek to inure workers to rising civilian deaths.

April 30 that B-52 bombers will begin dropping conventional bombs on Yugoslavia, which are "more likely to cause unintended damage and injury" than guided missiles, the *New York Times* reported April 30.

After a NATO missile slammed into a bus May 1 in the central Kosova village of Luzane, killing 39 people, Col. Conrad Freytag, a NATO military spokesman remarked, "When [Belgrade] allows public traffic over these bridges they risk a lot of lives of their public citizens." Two days later NATO warplanes killed at least 17 people after bombing and strafing a bus and some cars 18 miles from the Kosova city of Pec.

On April 29 a "stray" missile destroyed a house in the outskirts of Sofia in neighboring Bulgaria. It was the fourth report of NATO missiles hitting Bulgaria.

Joining the chorus to justify the rising death count and the imperialists' attempt to impose a military occupation force in Yugoslavia was the liberal *New Republic* magazine. A "large percentage" of Yugoslav workers and peasants are "legally and morally incompetent to conduct their own affairs," wrote Daniel Goldhagen in the May 17 issue.

Goldhagen, author of *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* claims that German working people actively supported fascist attacks aimed at Jews. He makes similar allegations against the Serbian people, asserting that a

holocaust against the Albanians can be prevented by an "allied-occupied Serbia, and a redrawn map that would certainly include a Kosova detached in whole or in part."

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman also blamed the Yugoslav people for not getting on their knees, calling for "sustained bombardment" to wreak havoc on the entire country. "The idea that people are still holding rock concerts, or going out for Sunday merry-go-rides," while the imperialist are waging a war against them is "outrageous," he exclaimed in his April 23 column.

He asserted only "a merciless air war" destroying power grids, water mains, bridges, roads, and factories would intensify enough pressure on Belgrade to make a deal. "Give war a chance. Let's see what months of bombing does before we opt for weeks of invasion, where *if we win*, we get to occupy the Balkans for years," Friedman declared.

When the Clinton administration first weighed launching an invasion into Kosova last fall, they ruled out using ground troops after reviewing the defeat of the Nazi occupation army by the Yugoslav partisan movement during World War II, the *Miami Herald* reported April 15. "Hitler badly misjudged the sentiments" of Yugoslavia's workers and peasants, the article noted. "The difficulty of the terrain and stubbornness of the Yugoslav people remain powerful common denominators."

Athens: 20,000 march on May Day to protest NATO assault

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — More than 20,000 workers and students marched here May 1 in the largest working-class protest to date against the U.S.-NATO aggression in Yugoslavia. The General Confederation of Labor of Greece (GSEE), the Athens Labor Center (EKA), and other trade-union bodies called on working people to turn this year's May Day rallies into anti-war protests. Protest marches also took place in Thessaloniki, Patras, Volos, and other cities. In the northern port city of Thessaloniki, a two-day blockade of the port was called by several trade unions and prevented the movement of NATO hardware bound for the Republic of Macedonia.

After a rally in downtown Athens, workers contingents marched to the U.S. embassy to express their opposition to the U.S. imperialist war. Most union contingents marched as part of the several thousand strong bloc of the Pan Labor Struggle Front (PAME) led by pro-Communist Party union officials. The march was met by several hundred riot police which had surrounded the U.S. embassy.

"Not one soldier to Yugoslavia, We won't fight for the USA and Germany!" and "EU and NATO syndicate of war!" chanted the marchers.

The protest included several contingents of students from various colleges and technical schools. Sprinkled within the protest were a few Serbian flags and Greek flags. Equally numerous, though, were the flag of the old Yugoslav federation. For the first time a contingent of Albanian immigrant workers participated and unfurled the Albanian flag.

Although speeches from union officials at the May Day rally reflected the Greek nationalist and pro-Serbian government stance of the labor officialdom, the tone of the action was in sharp contrast to that of an "antiwar" concert held a few days earlier, on April 26.

Some 50,000 people attended the concert in the central downtown square of Athens, which was organized by some 40 singers and musical groups, the same people who had pulled together a nationalist mobilization at the time of the abduction of Kurdish leader

Ocalan by Turkish secret police. It was supported by youth groups of all the political parties. At the April 26 concert Greek, Serbian, and Byzantine flags of Orthodoxy — a favorite of the right wing and fascists — abounded, side by side with red flags.

A few days earlier, Greek navy lieutenant Marios Ritsoudis refused to board his warship, which was headed to the Adriatic as part of a NATO force. The reason, Ritsoudis said, was that he is a Greek Orthodox Christian and would not be responsible for the deaths of fellow Orthodox Christians in Serbia. Many protests that have included right-wing forces, have had as a central slogan "Greece, Serbia, Orthodoxy!"

In a move aimed at giving Athens a substantial boost in air power in the Aegean Sea and in the Balkans, the government announced the purchase of 50 new U.S.-made F-16 fighter planes, 15 French Mirages, and 75 Eurofighters.

Supporters and friends of the Committee of Communists participated at the May 1 action, including by setting up a literature table with a banner reading, "No to the imperialist intervention! Greece out of NATO! Self-determination for the Albanians of Kosova! Open the borders to the refugees!" They handed out hundreds of statements explaining these demands and invited people to come to a forum on the war in Yugoslavia the next day. The forum was an eyewitness report by Natasha Terlexis, who participated in the *Militant* reporting team to Yugoslavia.

"I was attracted to your table by the banner, especially the point about self determination for the Albanians," said one young participant who identified himself as Ioannis, at the march. "No one else has presented that, and I strongly agree." Another young person expressed similar opinions, and bought the Greek translation of *Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and War* by Jack Barnes. In all seven copies of the Greek edition of *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working People should Oppose Intervention*, two copies of *Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and War*, and two titles by Marx and Lenin were sold off the table.

Supporters of the Committee of Communists did not participate in the April 26 event.

Shoe workers describe conditions

Continued from Page 9

sive production with low wages.

This is the case at the Rekor factory. "These machines were used when we got them from Greece," explained Arta Jaupi as she and other operators struggled with the decades-old sewing machines. "They break down every hour."

In the cutting department workers — all women here too — cut the leather, using power presses without guards or double buttons to prevent the machines from operating if a worker's hand is in the way.

As *Militant* reporters were talking to workers there about this point, Nanos, the Greek manager, entered. Getting wind of the type of conversation, he began shouting to the Albanian accountant, Spiros Lili, who was showing us around. "You must tell them they have to leave now. They are interrupting the work. I already told them everything they need to know yesterday!"

But a capitalist manager in a workers state is not omnipotent, even though he may represent the owner of 85 percent of the factory.

Lili, who had worked in production for more than 30 years and tended to side with the workers, disregarded Nanos's comments and continued the tour of the plant. He told *Militant* reporters later that Nanos had argued against the tour, saying he explained everything about the plant in the interview the day before. "But these are real journalists. They can't just get the picture from you. That was what was done during [Enver] Hoxha's time. They have to talk to the workers," I responded," Lili said. Hoxha headed the Stalinist regime in Albania until his death in 1985.

Eleven workers — all male — work in the department that prepares the rubber for the soles. As *Militant* reporters approached,

most of the workers who have been out in the yard — something Nanos complained about — hurried into the shop, where only two machines were running out of more than a dozen. "We work as much as we are asked," said Philipa Vlasi, the chief of the shift there. "Most of us are out of work now because there aren't enough orders."

No guards or emergency brakes

Two workers were pressing rubber together between two rotating rolls, feeding sheets of rubber into the machine with their hands.

"Most workers here are recently hired and unskilled," said Kiriakos, the mechanic. "They are not trained properly." While there, we witnessed a horrible accident. An operator's arm was squeezed between the two large steel rolls pressing elastic for soles. The machine had no guards and an inadequate emergency break. "Accidents like this happen frequently," we were told.

"Look," Kiriakos said, "he works for a small piece of bread and now he has probably lost his hand."

"Papafotiou will get the picture that we will not stand for this too long," said Gaba, the union steward. One fact not lost on the bosses is that these workers are armed. They have had Kalashnikov rifles at home since they revolted against Berisha two years ago. It's the attitudes of these workers that the bosses have to break.

Nanos, the Greek manager, indicated he was afraid to go out into the town. He lives in the plant compound and spends the whole work week inside the locked and guarded factory gate.

Argiris Malapanis contributed to this article.

What are imperialists' aims in Yugoslavia?

'Capitalism's World Disorder' takes up reason behind U.S./NATO assault

The newest title from Pathfinder Press, *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, is the single best source for understanding the U.S.-led NATO onslaught against Yugoslavia.

The bulk of the book consists of four talks given by Barnes between June 1992 and the start of 1995, as rival factions of the bureaucracy that had ruled Yugoslavia waged brutal wars over territory and resources in Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia, and as imperialist powers in Europe sought to intervene to advance their competing interests in the region.

Footnotes explain the subsequent U.S.-led NATO bombing of Bosnia and describe how Washington rammed the Dayton Accords down the throats of the warring parties in Yugoslavia and asserted itself as the dominant military and political power in Europe — occupying Bosnia over the corpses of Yugoslav workers and peasants.

The Dayton Accords put a spotlight on the real aims of Washington and its imperialist rivals in using the conflict in Yugoslavia as a pretext for military intervention: to attempt to lay the foundations for reestablishing capitalist social relations throughout the formerly federated Yugoslav workers state and to tighten the imperialist encirclement of Russia. These remain their aims today, as the Clinton administration attempts to force what it describes as a "Bosnia-style" occupation force in Kosova, while portraying itself as defender of Kosovar Albanians.

Top officials of the United States, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and other NATO member states gathered in Washington April 23–25. The summit was called to celebrate 50 years of the NATO "alliance," imperialism's supposed victory in the Cold War, and the bringing into NATO membership of three former Warsaw Pact countries. But the celebration became a war summit, one that highlighted sharpening conflicts between the imperialist powers and within the newly anointed NATO members, the workers states of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, as they are pressed into military involvement in the Yugoslav conflict. *Capitalism's World Disorder* helps understand these developments as well.

The first excerpt below is from "Capitalism's Deadly World Disorder," the third chapter in the book. It is from the discussion periods following a talk presented April 10, 1993, to participants in a regional socialist educational conference in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the following day to a similar gathering in Des Moines, Iowa. The other two selections are from Chapter 2 of the book, "So Far from God, So Close to Orange County: The Deflationary Drag of Finance Capital." It is based on a talk and closing presentation to a regional socialist educational conference held in Los Angeles over the 1994–95 New Year's weekend.

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BY JACK BARNES

COMMENT: My question is about Yugoslavia. Next week, U.S. warplanes are to go on patrol as part of NATO enforcement of the "no-fly zone" over Bosnia adopted by the UN Security Council last October. There is talk that if a peace treaty is signed, there may be 50,000 troops patrolling the area, many of them from the United States. If there is no peace treaty, the war will escalate, and there will be stronger calls for imperialist military intervention. Clinton seems to have backed off from his campaign tough talk against the Serbian forces in Yugoslavia, and top U.S. military officers say they are against going into Yugoslavia, too.

At the same time, there are politicians in both the Democratic and Republican parties who are calling for air strikes by Washington right now. Whatever happens in the so-called peace talks, the war just keeps going on, the death toll mounts, and bigger forces keep coming into play. I was wondering how you read all this.

RESPONSE: I do not think it is in the interests of the United States ruling class to intervene militarily in Yugoslavia right now. It is not in their interests for one and only one reason. From their standpoint, and at a political price



Militant/Lasse Johanson

Protesters at parliament building in Belgrade oppose Milosevic's war against Bosnia, July 1992. U.S. rulers hoped warring parties would weaken Yugoslav workers state, then they would intervene.

they are willing to pay, there is no better course than what is taking place right now.

The U.S. rulers and their spokespeople have some tactical disagreements among themselves, that is true. But those are arguments among the foxes guarding the chicken coop. They are arguing about how fast the tide might turn against their interests, knowing they will likely need to go into Yugoslavia sooner or later.

But there is no evidence that they are planning to go in right now. Most of the U.S. ruling class currently holds the view: "So what? So tens of thousands of people are being slaughtered and hundreds of thousands more turned into refugees. So the Serbs and Croats are killing each other and they are both killing the Muslims. So what?" The U.S. rulers don't lose sleep over "ethnic cleansing."

Some of their European rivals have vested interests in one or another of the warring gangs of the fractured bureaucratic caste in Yugoslavia. German finance capital in particular has an economic and political stake in the Croatian and Slovenian side. At the end of 1991, Bonn was the first imperialist power to recognize the governments in Croatia and Slovenia, following their public break from the Yugoslav federation a few months earlier. London, and also Paris to a degree, are trying to balance between the contending forces, each for its reasons.

And the imperialist powers as a whole worry that peoples throughout the Islamic world identify with the victims of ethnic cleansing in Muslim areas of Bosnia, and that there may be pressure for Iran or other regimes in the area to get involved. Moscow maintains ties to the Serbian regime in Belgrade as a way to maintain some influence in the region, and this will be a source of conflict and tension as well.

But the current administration in Wash-

ington and the bipartisan directors of U.S. foreign policy have decided it is not in their interests to intervene directly at the moment. They hypocritically lament the horrors and ask how anyone can stand by and watch it. But they do stand by and they have been watching it. They have been doing nothing but watching it for a year. They are content to let the warring parties themselves weaken the Yugoslav workers state, and to let their European rivals spar with each other and take on the precarious policing operation in Bosnia. They are teaching a lesson on "Europe," NATO, and Washington's indispensability as a European power.

It is not some special weakness that is preventing Washington from going into Yugoslavia. To the contrary. They are simply not going to risk the price they know they will pay in this country by sending in troops until they have good reason to do so. When they are convinced the bleeding has gone on long enough, and that a change in course is now to their advantage, the U.S. rulers will weigh the costs and act accordingly. They have no strategic vision for the Balkans. Their aim is to weaken and eventually destroy the Yugoslav workers state, and gain an edge on their European rivals in the bargain. They are following a pragmatic course, as they always do.



NATO is not only weaker than it seems; it is not even an organization, contrary to what the name North Atlantic Treaty Organization implies, and it is less of an alliance than ever before. For most of the political lives of many of us, we thought of NATO as a thing. Even at its strongest, however, NATO was never a thing; it was the registration of a certain international relationship of class forces. It was a name for a collection of imperialist nation-states, each with its own

government, its own armed forces, its own currency, and its own class interests. But we used shorthand, as human beings do, and fetishized the NATO alliance (with no substantial damage to our political orientation, in this case, I should add).

With the collapse of the Soviet bloc and Warsaw Pact, however, the rulers of the various European and North American capitalist powers no longer have any commonly perceived threat greater than their own diverging interests that would impel them to pay the price they once did to huddle under Washington's strategic nuclear umbrella. At the same time the imperialist rulers, and the masters of U.S. finance capital above all, want to place themselves in the strongest position militarily under these new conditions to someday roll back the remaining conquests of the Bolshevik-led revolution in Russia and reimpose the unimpeded dominance of capitalist exploitation.

If we recognize that fact, then we can understand what is behind the current tussle among various imperialist powers about how rapidly to extend NATO membership to certain former Warsaw Pact members in Central Europe, especially Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The debate over that aggressive move represents a further weakening, not a strengthening, of NATO. It deepens the divergence among NATO members, with the U.S. rulers in their big majority at the head of those pressing for eastward expansion. And, of course, it sharpens tensions between Moscow and Washington and other NATO governments.¹



For the past three years, we have watched the first large-scale war take place in Europe in almost half a century. There has been massive, sustained artillery shelling. Air power has been used to bomb civilian populations in Europe for the first time since the bombings of Dresden, London, and other cities during World War II. Altogether U.S. jets, together with warplanes from the United Kingdom, France, and Holland, have carried out five bombing operations in Yugoslavia since February 1994.²

All this has been happening in Yugoslavia. It is a war that has brought to the surface the deepest conflicts among the imperialist powers in Europe and North America since the collapse of the Stalinist apparatuses at the opening of the 1990s. It is a war that has exposed the increasing contradictions in what continues to be called the NATO alliance.

And what do we find right at the center of this European war? We find that one of the combatants, the Bosnian government, presides over a majority Islamic population. We find the terror squads of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic agitating against "Islamic fundamentalism" as the pretext to promote murderous "ethnic cleansing" along national and religious lines among working people who had lived and worked alongside each other for decades since the Yugoslav revolution in the aftermath of World War II...³

¹ At Washington's initiative, the April 1999 NATO summit meeting scheduled in Washington celebrated the 50th anniversary of the imperialist alliance by adding Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to the current sixteen members. U.S. president Clinton initiated the proposal for an eastward expansion of NATO at a summit meeting four years earlier. In pressing this course, Washington has flatly rejected Moscow's repeated protests, including the Russian government's proposal that NATO pledge not to deploy nuclear weapons or build military bases in the new member countries. Clinton's second-term secretary of state Madeleine Albright pulled few punches in stating Washington's aim in an article written for the weekly *Economist* of London on the eve of her first European trip in February 1997: "Now that democracy's frontier has moved to Europe's farthest reaches, what logic would dictate that we freeze NATO's eastern edges where they presently lie, along the line where the Red Army stopped in the spring of 1945?"

It has been over the corpses of Yugoslav workers and peasants, first and foremost, that the U.S. rulers have asserted their position as the world's dominant "European power" since the early 1990s. As rival capitalist governments in Europe wore themselves out seeking to emerge the winner in the new Balkan wars, Washington sabotaged their various "peace initiatives" in Yugoslavia. Then, in 1994–95, the Clinton administration organized several rounds of sustained bombardment of Serbian forces, culminating in the NATO military occupation of

Bosnia since late 1995 under the terms of the so-called Dayton Accords. Washington pushed for the April 1999 NATO summit to formalize the U.S.-dominated alliance's authority to deploy military forces beyond the borders of its member states.

These U.S. moves have sharpened conflicts between Washington and its European rivals. In December 1998, on the eve of the NATO summit in Brussels, Paris and London announced agreement on a course toward giving the European Union for the first time the authority to deploy combat forces abroad. Given the British government's post-World War II "special relationship" with Washington, the U.S. rulers were especially alarmed at London's concurrence in this initiative. In response, U.S. Secretary of State Albright warned that "European decision making" must not come "unhooked from broader alliance decision making."

² By late May 1995 U.S. and NATO forces had conducted eight bombing assaults. The most massive bombing came in August and September 1995, as some 60 NATO planes carried out some 3,200 sorties over a two-week period. The air strikes were combined with shelling from NATO positions on Bosnian hillsides and the launching of Tomahawk cruise missiles from U.S. warships off the coast. In October, in the wake of this sustained bombardment, Washington announced a cease-fire by Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian forces. Talks at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, later in the year laid the basis for Washington to spearhead sending an

occupation army of some 60,000 NATO troops — including 20,000 U.S. soldiers — into Bosnia. As of early 1999, the U.S.-organized occupation force, initially scheduled to depart in late 1996, remained in Bosnia with no settled departure date.

Washington once again threatened NATO air strikes against Serbia in 1998. The Clinton administration backed off this threat in October 1998, after the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav government agreed to begin talks on the withdrawal of its military forces from Kosova, a territory populated by ethnic Albanians. The Serbian regime, whose forces remained in Kosova at the opening of 1999, has carried out a military offensive in that region, driving as many as 300,000 Albanians from their homes; in 1998 alone some 2,000 Albanians were killed or disappeared. While opposing the Kosovans' demand for national self-determination, Washington has exploited the conflict in Kosova — as it continues to do in Bosnia — as a pretext to maintain the NATO military occupation in Yugoslavia.

³ Among the major activities of the U.S.-organized NATO "Implementation Force (Ifor)" in Bosnia in 1996 was pressuring Bosnian Muslim authorities to deport volunteer fighters from Iran and other countries with large Islamic populations and to cut off further military aid and training from the Iranian government. The first widely publicized NATO military operation was a February 1996 raid on what Washington labeled an Iranian-run "terrorist training camp" near Sarajevo.

Working class is target of NATO bombing

Continued from front page

borhoods are not enough to supply the population."

Canak is the president of Nezavisnost (Independence), the trade union federation, independent of government control.

A similar, if not more stark, situation has prevailed in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia's third-largest city and the capital of Vojvodina, the country's main agricultural region that borders Hungary. According to Dusan, a member of the Students Union in Novi Sad who spoke to *Militant* reporters by phone May 5, the city has had no running water for 10 days.

The effects of the latest intensification of the U.S.-NATO bombing are bringing disaster on working people. Perishable food is spoiling in refrigerators across the country while ovens that run on electricity cannot be used for cooking. Telephone lines have deteriorated.

With much of the country's TV and radio network out of commission, including local stations that are increasingly being targeted by NATO's bombers, it's very difficult to know what's happening beyond your neighborhood, said Canak.

Beginning on May 3, NATO began using a new warhead that dusts power cables with graphite filaments, triggering massive short circuits. Based on telephone interviews by *Militant* reporters, bombs or missiles using this new technology appear to have been used repeatedly in the last three days.

"We are able to turn off and on the light switch in Belgrade," NATO spokesman Jamie Shea boasted with imperial arrogance May 4. It's part of tightening "the noose" around Yugoslavia, as NATO commander Wesley Clark put it, following the April 23-25 war summit of the imperialist military alliance in Washington, D.C. In addition to Belgrade, NATO has attacked effectively the power grids in a number of cities in Serbia, such as Drmno, Kostolac, Bajina Basta, and Novi Sad.

Humiliation, anger, will to resist

The effect on working people and youth in Yugoslavia is to solidify the view that they are the main target of the U.S.-NATO assault. "I feel humiliated and angry," said Dusan, asking to get the message around the world that it's more important than ever to demand an end to the bombing. "It's not damaging the regime. It's damaging ordinary people. We are less likely to accept NATO troops in Kosova now." Dusan was among the students who led the 1996-97 protest movement that forced Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to reverse his antidemocratic annulment of municipal election results.

"Milosevic justifies the 'ethnic cleansing' against Albanians in Kosova in the name of fighting 'UCK terrorists,' just as NATO justifies the killing of civilians supposedly to protect Albanians from Milosevic," he added.

The "collateral" damage is mounting, as claims of attacking military targets become transparently flimsy. On May 2, for example, NATO aircraft bombed the village of Valjevo, 60 miles southwest of Belgrade, destroying a two-story house and damaging many apartment buildings nearby. NATO officials claimed they were targeting a tank plant there, without offering any evidence that such a factory exists.

"Now I see that NATO's words about civilians not being the enemy were lies," said

Sonja Yovanevic, a government employee in Belgrade. "I didn't believe them anyway."

An increasing number of young people and workers in Albania are also coming to the conclusion that the brutal assault on Yugoslavia is against their interests. "It's terrible," said Kliton Nenaj, a student at Tirana University, on May 6, referring to the cuts in electricity around Serbia. Nenaj was ambivalent about the NATO attacks before. "It's another example that people, whether Serb or Albanian, are those who suffer. The politicians have created the entire problem."

In the 45 days since Washington launched the attack on Yugoslavia, NATO warplanes have flown more than 15,000 sorties, reaching 600 per day this week. A number of bombers are now flying at lower altitudes than the 15,000 feet jets kept at so far, and are coming into more clashes with Belgrade's air force.

"They are moving toward attacking everything that moves. They could very well see what they are bombing," said Dusan, pointing to the bus that was bombed in Kosova May 3, killing about 35 people.

The skyline over Novi Sad was black from the smoke rising from the city's oil refinery, which had been bombed again before Dusan spoke to us on the phone. The city's main TV transmitter had also been knocked out. According to Dusan, food supplies in and around Novi Sad are beginning to run out, even though Vojvodina has the country's highest agricultural production. With fuel shortages, farmers are having a harder time using machinery on the land. Individual gasoline rations have already been cut to 5 gallons per month, down from 10. Many hospitals that lack their own power generators are having to operate with candles, we were told.

This comes on top of the destruction of much of the country's industry and infrastructure the last six weeks, which had brought unemployment to more than 70 percent.

Attacks on Montenegro intensify

NATO's bombing campaign has also intensified in Montenegro, where Washington has been trying to engineer a break-up of the republic from its federation with Serbia. To appease a "pro-Western" administration there, Montenegro's industry and infrastructure had been spared until the end of April. Not any longer. During the first week of May, a number of bridges and the railway from the port of Bar to Belgrade have been bombed.

"Workers are the target," said Dragan Duric, in a telephone interview May 5. Duric is the international officer of the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Montenegro. The bombing of the railway is having a devastating effect on the already

dwindling production at the republic's main steel plant at Niksic. "In the last week, a number of villages have been bombed and homes destroyed for the first time," he added. The first civilian casualties in Montenegro occurred this week, though the government in Podgorica, the republic's capital, has not released figures so far.

According to Vojin Djukanovic, economy minister of Montenegro, the port of Bar, which had been working at 50 percent capacity before the bombing is now operating "at about nothing, 5 to 10 percent perhaps." Around 40 percent of Montenegro's workforce was already without jobs as of the end of April. If Washington enforces its planned naval blockade to stop oil shipments arriving at Bar "it would be the end of Montenegro, it would strengthen the forces of Slobodan Milosevic and would even provoke a civil war here," said Djukanovic.

Those in the administration of Montenegro's premier Milo Djukanovic favor a more rapid opening of the republic to imperialist bank trusts and integration of Montenegro into the world capitalist market. The republic's administration has kept its well-armed police force under its control, despite demands by Belgrade to turn over command of the police to the federal army.

Duric, who has been among the vocal opponents of the anti-democratic policies of the regime in Belgrade, said an escalation of the tension between the republic's police and federal army would be disastrous for working people. "NATO should stop its bombing right now and no ground troops should be sent into Kosova."

The latest escalation of the air raids come as top NATO military commanders have indicated the assault on Yugoslavia has failed

to achieve the expected capitulation of the Belgrade regime.

"Quite frankly and honestly, we did not succeed in our initial attempt to coerce Milosevic through air strikes to accept our demands," said Gen. Klaus Naumann, who is retiring May 6 as head of the alliance's military arm. It has been a mistake by NATO to refrain from using "surprise and overwhelming power," he added. Belgrade has given no indication so far that is ready to accept an armed NATO force in Kosova and withdrawal of its forces from the region, which are the main imperialist demands.

The escalation of the U.S.-NATO bombing campaign is ratcheting up tensions between Washington and Moscow. Russia's parliament scrapped consideration of the Start II nuclear treaty for now, which would have substantially reduced Moscow's nuclear warheads.

The Chinese government, which has also opposed the imperialist assault on Yugoslavia, has announced new plans to modernize its military because of the nature of the unfolding NATO war in the Balkans.

An article in the *People's Liberation Army Daily* said Beijing should adjust its military strategy given NATO's high-technology assault against Yugoslavia. The article said that China should be prepared "for limited war under high-tech conditions." The paper said that Beijing had carried out insufficient research and even less training on "warfare against air strikes and remote precision strikes from a distance." The indicated shift could lead to greater development of intermediate and long-range missiles able to hit distant bases or ships, such as aircraft carriers, said a front-page article in the May 5 *Financial Times* of London.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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Fighting to Defend Affirmative Action Today: Labor's Stake in Winning Programs that Unite and Strengthen the Working Class. Speakers: Martina Pickett, plaintiff in class action suit against Detroit Edison; Willie Reid, Socialist Workers Party and member of United Auto Workers Local 235. Fri., May 14, 7:30 p.m. Din-

ner 6:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Dinner \$5. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

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The Road to Women's Liberation. Speakers: Linda Harris, Communist League and member of AMWU. Fri., May 14, 7 p.m. 176 Redfern St. 1st Floor, Redfern. Donation: \$4. Tel: 02-9690-1533.

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CALENDAR

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Video showing of "War and Peace in Ireland." From film maker Art McCaig. An account of British oppression in occupied Northern Ireland, banned in England. Thur., May 27, 7:30 p.m. McGovern's Tavern, New Street. Sponsored by the New Jersey Irish Northern Aid Committee. For more information call: Mark Sheerin: (201) 784-3573.

CORRECTIONS

There were several errors in the article "500 farmers rally in Minnesota against worsening conditions," published in the May 10 *Militant*. The names of William Heffernan and Lyndon LaRouche were misspelled. John Crabtree is from the Center for Rural Affairs. And in the list of participating organizations should have included the National Farmers Organization.

Read it and retch — Announcement of the decision to call up 33,000 military reservists came on the heels of Clinton's foulmouthed rap about a postwar plan to "re-



Harry Ring

build" Kosova.

Right, boss? — "In this conflict we are fighting not for territory but for values." — Anthony Blair, Britain's Labour Party prime min-

ister, and U.S. junior partner in its Yugoslav bloodletting.

Tsk — A \$250-million missile-warning satellite ended up in the wrong orbit following its launch off an Air Force Titan rocket.... It was the first Titan IV flight since a spectacular \$1-billion launch explosion in August." — News item.

They could throw up the food — Screwing up a revision of its data base and preparing its computers for Y2K, Colorado's welfare agency mistakenly issued food stamps to low-income people who qualified for the stamps in February, but not March. Now the agency would like to get paid for the

stamps. So far, no one has volunteered. But some have complained, explaining they don't know how they'd pay it back.

But nobody's in jail — The feds declared 21-million pounds of Thorn Apple Valley meat and poultry unfit for human consumption. Three months earlier, 30 million pounds of meat products produced at the same Arkansas plant were recalled. More than 12 million pounds of contaminated hot dogs and baloney were already shipped to Russia and South Korea. Appropriate notification has been made.

The justice system — According to an Amnesty International re-

port, the U.S. female prison population has tripled since 1985 and now number 138,000. Many are subjected to sexual assault and other abuses. They are "usually nonwhite and poor."

101: Targeting the Bill of Rights — Thomas Monaghan, who sold Domino's Pizza for 1 billion, is spending \$50 million to establish Ave Maria law school. The first professor enlisted is right-winger Robert Bork who was too hot for the Supreme Court. The declared purpose of Ave Maria is to turn out lawyers sensitive to the moral consequences of the law. Monaghan says it will be "the West Point for the Catholic laity."

A draw — A state attorney in Florida, who allegedly represents indigent Death Row inmates, was cleared by the Bar Association of organizing a \$5 "Death Pool." Participants bet on which of four condemned prisoners would be executed. He claimed no money changed hands. All four prisoners were executed.

Pardon the plug — A web site is peddling a "Millennium Conception Kit." Includes a fertility guide, ovulation prediction tests, pregnancy test, massage oil, and candles for \$49.99. And to think, you get *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, for less than half.

NATO bombing has spurred 'ethnic cleansing'

Continued from Page 9

by many people, on the threat of holding some family members as hostages. All the vehicles driven by Kosovar Albanians we saw in Kukes or on the long mountainous road from northern Albania to Tirana had no license plates. They had been taken by Belgrade's military. This is a conscious effort by the Milosevic regime to make more difficult any future return of these people to their hometowns.

Conditions vary widely at the camps

Tens of thousands are being put up on a voluntary basis by residents of Albania who bear the burden of housing the newcomers. Government aid in form of food and sanitary supplies has barely begun to be distributed to these families, and the portions are meager. The conditions at the camps housing Kosovars vary widely. Facilities ran by the Albanian government — whose ministers have no shortage of self-serving statements about "the excellent handling of the refugee crisis" by Tirana — tend to offer the poorest conditions. Two such camps in Kukes had no running water, electricity, or garbage collection. Every time it rains the entire camp turns into a muddy field and water floods most tents, we were told.

Minella Bala in Sarande explained most clearly what a number of other Albanians alluded to. Prejudices against Kosovar Albanians exist throughout the country. And many Kosovars do not look forward at all to a long stay in Albania. In Sarande, for example, no Kosovars are staying in residents' houses. They are put up at a hotel that had been burned out during the 1997 revolt and other similar facilities.

"Authorities here simply cleaned up that hotel a little," Bala said, "but didn't go out of their way to welcome the Kosovars." Those who just arrived from Kosova are used to a much higher standard of living than virtually all working people in Albania, as a result of the differential progress in development achieved through the revolutions in Yugoslavia and Albania in the last half cen-

tury.

Bala raised these points, confirmed by *Militant* reporters with Kosovars living in the hotel he described, to refute statements in the main TV stations from Greece that Kosovars were being moved consciously there by Tirana to "dilute the weight of the Greek-speaking minority" in southern Albania. Most imperialist powers are utilizing the conflict to advance their competing interests, Bala explained. For the rulers in Greece, the possible annexation of parts of southern Albania — which nationalist forces in Greece call Vorios Ipiros (north Ipiros, which is the name of the Greek province bordering Albania) — has been a long-term goal for the last half century.

Athens and Rome, in particular, are using substantial financial resources to set up camps with conditions much better than anything the Albanian government can put together. Even though many working people appreciate humane living conditions for deported Kosovars, a number point to more long-term and not-so-obvious goals. "Italy is most likely planning to turn the camp at the airport in Vlore into a military base of some sort once the refugee crisis abates," said Albert Shyti, pointing to the camp being set up by the Italian army at the formerly abandoned airport in Albania's third largest city. Vlore was also the hotbed of the 1997 revolt. Shyti was one of the central leaders of the citizens' committee that led the struggle against Berisha in Vlore.

Even though the would-be capitalists in power in Albania have won wide acceptance for the massive deployment of the U.S.-NATO forces here — much more so than for the previous deployment of French, Italian, and Greek troops following the 1997 rebellion — imperialism still faces the task of defeating the working class in this country to accomplish its goals.

Washington is utilizing the assault on Yugoslavia to consolidate its hegemony as the number one military and economic power in Europe. And the U.S. rulers and their allies in Europe are laying the groundwork for using their military might to do what they've been unable to carry out by other means: reestab-

lishing the domination of capitalist social relations in Albania and Yugoslavia and tightening the noose around Russia with a similar goal in mind there.

One symbol of how far they themselves sense they have to go is the fortification of the U.S. embassy in Tirana, which our bus from Skopje passed by on the way into Albania's capital. It's done in a way none of the *Militant* reporters here have ever seen before. The outside thick stone wall surrounding the complex has electrical barbed wire on top. Inside there's another wall, higher than the outer one, made of a double layer of sand bags. No one can peek inside from the street level. The front and other main gates are locked shut. Personnel use other not-well-known entrances, we were told. A number of Albanians in the bus pointed to the scene and made jokes or laughed.

Differing views on NATO bombing

Despite the attempted intimidation by thuggish elements in the camps, a number of working people described to *Militant* reporters situations similar to those recounted by Kosovar Albanians in Macedonia and Montenegro, sometimes refusing to buckle as pro-imperialist elements intervened. "The NATO bombing has helped the Serbian government to carry out the 'ethnic cleansing' in Kosova," said Shpendi Malaj. "It's destroying both Serbs and Albanians. They should stop the bombing."

At the hotel in Sarande housing Kosovars someone from the town of Vushtre, near Mitrovica, told *Militant* reporters that a number of Serbs had deserted from the Yugoslav army and were asking Albanians in his neighborhood two months ago for

help in getting civilian clothes to escape. He did not want his name disclosed.

Others described similar stories of pockets of opposition to Belgrade's policy in Kosova among the minority of 200,000 Serbs who lived there. Vjosa Paloca, whose family farmed on the outskirts of Klina, a town of 15,000 near Pec, Kosova, said at least three of her Serb neighbors asked her to stay and offered to help stop the terrorist gangs from driving Albanians out. "I don't know what happened to them," she said, after the police set large sections of the city on fire to force the majority Albanian residents to leave.

This appeared to be true in a number of cases where Serbs and Albanians lived in the same town. In the village of Dobrojevo near Pristina the population was about half Serb and half Albanian. "We didn't have a problem with most of our Serb neighbors before March 24," said Eyhrie Sulejmani. "After the bombing started some started saying, 'You wanted NATO, now go to Albania and get NATO to help you.' They collaborated with the police to get us out. But other Serbians tried to stop it. When they couldn't, they left themselves."

When asked if they were aware that many government officials and pundits in the United States, Britain, and other countries participating in the bombing of Yugoslavia have spoken openly against independence for Kosova, most Kosovar Albanians said it was the first they heard this.

"We need independence now, without a question," Sulejmani said, expressing a commonly held view. "Return to autonomy we had before 1989 won't do. We can no longer trust the regime in Belgrade. And anyone arguing about dividing Kosova in two parts

Continued on Page 14

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



May 17, 1974

NEW YORK — Shortly before 1 a.m. May 7, a photoengraved plate of a single page of the New York Daily News was brought into the composing room of the nation's largest circulation newspaper. Printers refused to lock up the plate and send it on to the stereotypers, and were fired.

Bertram Powers, president of New York Typographical Union No. 6 was in the composing room, seized the plate and destroyed it. It had been produced on new, automated equipment partly with nonunion labor. It marked the start of an attempt by the publishers here to produce newspapers without printers. The early morning scene in the composing room of the News was the end of prolonged contract negotiations and the beginning of a new stage in the test of strength between the unions and publishers. The turning point came as expected and was enacted as if rehearsed. When the symbolic plate was destroyed, police entered and evicted 200 printers who were working the night shift. Thus began a lockout of printers that may quickly spread.

The printers' last contract expired March 30, 1973. For the past 16 months Local 6 has been discussing contract terms with the publishers. During that time the publishers have not budged from their original offer of an annual \$13.85-a-week pay raise. They also demand a free hand to introduce com-

puterized typesetting and other forms of automation in the composing rooms. This is the stickler that stands in the way of settlement.



May 16, 1949

DETROIT — By this time the whole world knows that 62,000 workers at the Lincoln plant are out on strike and that the whole Ford empire is shut down. Tens of thousands of additional Ford workers have been laid off throughout the country as well as workers employed in numerous feeder plants supplying parts for Ford cars.

The simple issue in the strike is the speedup. It is a climax of the long smoldering resentment of this question throughout the industry and the inability of the Ford local leadership, in particular, to settle this issue satisfactorily at the Rouge plant.

For over three months the chief officers of UAW-CIO Local 600 have been meeting with the Ford Company over the speedup of the final assembly lines in the "B" Building. But despite numerous agreements on paper, the speedup went on unabated.

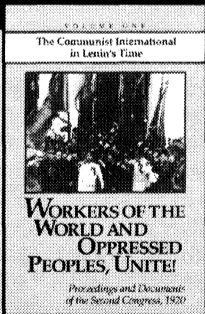
Finally the pressure from the workers grew so intense that the local leadership was forced to call for a strike vote to be taken simultaneously with the run-off elections for local officers during the week of April 18. The strike vote carried by the overwhelming vote of 31, 926 to 4,400.

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has to walk over the wishes of most of us."

Kosovars won autonomy in 1974 as a result of a decades-long struggle for self-determination by the Albanian nationality — which until the beginning of this year comprised about 90 percent of Kosova's population of 2.1 million. Autonomy meant the right to elect a regional parliament and veto power by the local government on most matters affecting Kosova, such as education, health care, and police functions. Four years before autonomy, the University of Pristina had been opened, with all courses offered in both Serbo-Croatian and Albanian.

Albanians had been recognized as a distinct nation and their language recognized as one of the official languages of Yugoslavia as a by-product of the victorious social revolution led by the Partisans in the aftermath of the successful struggle against the country's occupation by Nazi troops during World War II. The Partisans united working people of all nationalities under a program that called for equality and mutual respect of all nations. In the early years of the 1942-45 revolution, partisans from Albania, Yugoslavia, and Greece collaborated and even tried to carve out a course for a socialist federation in the Balkans that different nations would join on a voluntary basis — much like the Bolsheviks succeeding in doing in the early years following the 1917 Russian revolution.

But the Yugoslav revolution, and the workers state it brought into being by abolishing capitalist property relations, were deformed at birth by Stalinist domination of the regime of Josip Broz, known as Tito. Tito was the central leader of the Communist Party in Yugoslavia, the main political force among the Partisans.

Prior to the victory of the revolution, 50,000 Albanian partisans in Kosova had joined the struggle, partly on the basis of Tito's promises that Kosovars would have the right to national self-determination, "up to secession." But that was not to be. Following the victory of the antifascist struggle, Tito's armies drowned a rebellion by Albanian partisans in blood when they tried to carry out the earlier agreement on self-determination. The struggle for a republic in Kosova, like the six other republics of the former Yugoslavia, dates back to those days. Despite these early setbacks, Albanians in Kosova benefited from some of the initial affirmative action policies instituted as a result of the Yugoslav revolution to aid industrialization and the building of infrastructure of the least developed regions. But as a bureaucratic caste crystallized its hold on power in the 1950s under Tito's Stalinist misleadership, these gains began to be eroded. Tito opened up the Yugoslav economy to investments from imperialist trusts less than a decade after the victory of the revolution. Austerity demands by the International Monetary Fund, advanced as a precondition for further loans, combined with the bureaucratic, anti-working-class methods of planning and management by Belgrade, resulted in an economic crisis that affected underdeveloped regions like Kosova disproportionately. These conditions meshed working-class struggles like the Trepca strike Dace spoke about with the struggle for national rights in Kosova.

That was when the Milosevic regime launched its nationalist tirades to justify its crackdown on the working-class resistance to its austerity policies at the end of the 1980s. In doing so Belgrade found it necessary to revoke even the limited autonomy in Kosova to retain control of the land and other economic resources to maintain the parasitic existence and bourgeois way of life of the section of the ruling caste loyal to the bureaucracy in Serbia.

That set the stage for the current explosion.

Views among workers in Albania

Knowledge of the impact of the U.S.-NATO assault on the working class in Serbia and Montenegro — which now comprise the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — affects the views of working people and youth inside Albania.

Militant reporters made a point of showing a number of photos they got while in Yugoslavia, prior to the trip to Albania, that graphically depict destruction of factories, farms, houses of workers and farmers and individuals affected by it. "Serb people are human beings like us," said Manjola Goxhaj, after seeing those photos. She is an Albanian who works as a translator in Tirana and was traveling on the bus from Skopje to Tirana with *Militant* reporters April 30. "The United States has no right to bomb them." Ermal Keço, a construction engineering student at the University of Tirana who accompanied *Militant* reporters and helped translate, had a similar reaction.

Opposition to the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia and the increasing deployment of imperialist troops inside Albania was strongest among workers and farmers in southern Albania, where the rebellion against Berisha was based.

That revolt was sparked in January 1997, when fraudulent "pyramid" investment funds promoted by Berisha's regime collapsed and many working people lost their life savings. Hundreds of thousands of Albanian workers who had immigrated to Greece, Italy, Germany, and other imperialist countries in search of jobs and a living income had returned at that time to reclaim their savings after hearing of trouble with the pyramid schemes. They had been lured into depositing their savings there with promises they would double their money within months. "Berisha's promises of a get-rich-quick capitalism turned into a nightmare," said Violetta Chrisafi, a sewing machine operator at the Rekor shoe factory in Gjirokaster (see article elsewhere in this issue). "We didn't sit back. We fought back."

Workers, farmers, students, and others took to the streets to demand compensation from the state, relief from the

Mobilize to stop racist bombings

The following statement was issued by Paul Galloway, Communist League candidate for Levenshulme ward, Manchester, England, council elections, following two rightist nail-bombings in London.

The Brixton and Brick Lane bombings are an attack on all working people. These cowardly acts are aimed to push back and intimidate all those who stand up against racism. It is no accident Brick Lane was targeted. This is an area where over the years working people have fought and struck a powerful blow against the racists through mass protests.

This terrorist action is a product of weakness, not strength. The mass sentiment for justice for Stephen Lawrence, killed in 1993, is a sign of the racists' isolation. At the same time these thugs gain encouragement from the policies and actions of the Labour government. They gain oxygen from the daily news of NATO bombs raining down on working people in Yugoslavia and from the government's stepped up scapegoating of immigrant workers with the new restrictive asylum laws.

already heavy burden of the government's attempt to integrate Albania into the world capitalist market, and an end to police repression that had become widespread under the rule of Berisha's Democratic Party. Berisha tried to suppress the rebellion by force. But hundreds of thousands resisted and got support from sections of the military and thousands of former army officers Berisha had dismissed as loyal to his rival, the Socialist Party. By early March 1997, the government lost control of the southern half of the country. Albania's army and police were dissolved for a period of time, most of the population got arms, and the jails were thrown open. To avoid the fall of the regime through revolutionary means — a development that would have boosted the self-confidence of working people and set a dangerous precedent for all the rival layers among the rulers — the Socialist Party joined the Democratic Party in a coalition government. This regime invited imperialist troops to intervene to help it quell the revolt under the guise of "restoring stability."

The governments of Italy, Greece, France, and other countries dispatched 7,000 troops by mid-April under the sanction of the United Nations. New elections were held last summer, while the country was under foreign occupation. The Socialist Party won a large majority in parliament and has ruled ever since.

Stability has not been the order of the day, however. Last September, Berisha's forces led an armed revolt that forced former premier Fatos Nano to resign. The SP administration subsequently named Pandeli Majko as the new prime minister. While the government has been able to reconstruct the police and army, many other state institutions don't function well. Industry remains devastated here. This has been the case since 1992, when Berisha cut state subsidies as part of his "market reforms." About 90 percent of state-owned plants have been shut ever since, leaving little choice to most workers but to emigrate to other countries, especially for the younger generations. According to unofficial estimates, up to one-third of the country's population of about 3.5 million has immigrated in the last decade.

Albanian revolution, and degeneration

"There is not much future for young people so most of them leave," said Ioanis Savas Xeras, a shepherd at the majority Greek-speaking village of Dervitsani in southern Albania, near Gjirokaster, during a May 3 interview. He was part of the partisan movement in Albania that led a struggle to rid the country of the Nazi occupation during World War II. The partisans, led by the Communist Party, or Albanian Workers Party, turned the antifascist struggle into a social revolution by the mid-1940s, establishing a workers state, in a similar fashion as in Yugoslavia. Xeras said he had hoped "the abolition of capitalism would bring a better future." Prior to the revolution there was no irrigation or machinery for agriculture and most farmers like himself were slaves to big landlords, he said.

Xeras spoke highly of the initial agrarian reform in the late 1940s but was opposed to the forced collectivization of the land and the "super dictatorship of Hoxha." Enver Hoxha headed the CP regime and ruled Albania until his death in 1985. During the reign of this Stalinist regime, which turned to Moscow for collaboration for a brief period in the early 1950s and then aligned itself with Beijing, Albania's borders were virtually closed for working people, who were kept isolated from the rest of the world. Xeras's son died during a hunger strike in prison during Hoxha's reign, jailed after passing around flyers for democratic rights in high school.

Despite the horrible deformation of the Albanian revolution from birth, Xeras was not for returning to capitalism, drawing on his experience before the revolution. "I am not a politician or a diplomat," Xeras explained. "I am simply telling you my life experience." The shepherd vehemently opposed Berisha's "market reforms," and took up arms against the hated DP regime in 1997. He also did not think highly of the current orientation of the SP regime towards "the West." Both the Socialist Party and Democratic Party are largely run by former Communist Party officials who went their separate ways at the beginning of this decade, leading to the dissolution of the rul-

The fact these attacks take place is no accident. They are an inevitable result of the crisis of capitalism. That is what happened in the 1920s and 1930s, and that is what we see the seeds of today.

The failure of the police to arrest and charge Stephen Lawrence's murderers was also no accident. The racist gangs who carried out these attacks are spawned by the very system the police seek to defend. Right now the government and police are trying to use the bombings as cover to take away democratic rights. The police will have to be forced, by the mobilizations of working people, to find and prosecute those who carried out these bombings.

When the youth of Brick Lane mobilized in 1994 against racist attacks they won trades union backing for their march of 50,000. Today the unions can and should be won to this course. Joining with the Skychef TGWU strike at Heathrow for union rights which is led mainly by Asian workers is another important way to both strike a blow against the racists and strengthen the unions in fighting for the interests of all working people.

ing stratum as a coherent caste. The main good thing that happened since 1990, as Xeras put it, "is that the borders opened so young people can immigrate and we have a little more freedom to express ourselves."

No to privatization

Many of Xeras's views were shared by a number of industrial workers we interviewed at the TEC thermoelectric plant in Fier, the Ballshi oil refinery, the Rekor shoe factory in Gjirokaster, and elsewhere. In fact, compared to interviews we did last year, we found that opposition to privatization of state-owned industries increased.

At the TEC plant in Fier only one of the dozen or so workers who spoke to us supported privatization of the complex, which employs 700 workers. Even the plant manager, Lirim Alisinani, was against it this time. The former director, one of Berisha's men who had pushed hard to place the plant on a long list for sale to foreign investors, was replaced two years ago in the aftermath of the 1997 revolt. Armando Bardo, an electrical engineer there, laughed when asked about it. "Privatization?" he said. "Why? It will only mean layoffs, probably a wage cut and loss of paid holidays." Workers there make 14,000 to 25,000 lek per month, a relatively high wage in Albania. They have 60 days vacation a year, as well as health insurance and paid meals at work.

The cost of a loaf of bread is 70 lek. A kilogram of meat costs 600 lek and a kilogram of tomatoes 200 lek. So food costs are high for most workers, whose average daily take-home pay is around 400 lek.

At the Ballshi oil refinery, where most workers had pinned their hopes on an Australian company, Caravoil, buying a majority stake in the refinery up to last year, opinions were much more divided this time. The facility has been running at 20 percent capacity for the last two years, having suffered serious damages during the rebellion and plagued by old, largely Chinese, technology. Even one of the administrators there was not too keen about the Australian investor this time. He pointed to another smaller refinery in the area bought by an Australian company, which was "destroyed" by the capitalist investors. Production decreased from 500 to 300 tons of oil per day and workers did not see any wages for months. "It was a disaster," Baftiar Aslani, head of planning, said. But the administrator pinned his hopes for reviving the Ballshi refinery on finding a "strong investor from Europe, not like the Australian."

A number of the workers had different opinions, though. Sali Saliu, a young operator at the hydrogen unit, said in response to comments by a supervisor that only U.S. investments can save the day: "Their plans for foreign investment are OK, if it means improving technology and production. But the union is never going to accept layoffs of two-thirds of the workforce that the Australian company wanted." At the Ballshi refinery, 200 of the workforce of 1,500 were put on long-term holiday last year because of the drop in production for the last half decade. But even these workers get full pay for two years before going to unemployment compensation.

These workers and their stance seem to have kept the capitalists away.

Among these workers we found the strongest opposition to the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia. "You can call me a pacifist, but I am against the bombing," said Trifon Tashi, a turbine operator who has worked for 31 years at the TEC plant. He was arguing against one of his co-workers, Eduard Velaj, who said the NATO assault could help stop "ethnic cleansing" in Kosova. Saliu at the Ballshi oil refinery also opposed the imperialist assault.

At the Rekor Albania S.A. shoe company, half the workers interviewed expressed open opposition to or questioned Washington's course. It was the highest percentage among all the workplaces we visited. "I just don't like NATO," said Melpomeni Dimitraki Vrenja, a sewing machine operator. "We didn't have a good experience when the Italian and Greek troops came here two years ago."

Catherina Tirsen from Stockholm, Sweden, and Bobbis Misailides from Athens, Greece, contributed to this article.

California farm workers demand right to unionize

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way

strawberry pickers in Coastal Berry's fields, hospitalizing three UFW supporters.

Sandra Rocha, who works at Coastal Berry, was one of the workers beaten in the attack. She participated in this year's demonstration.

ON THE PICKET LINE

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.

SALINAS, California — As hundreds of farm workers return to Northern California to work in the strawberry fields, United Farm Workers union organizers have been banned from organizing by a decision of the state Agriculture Labor Relations Board.

Governor Gray Davis, a liberal Democrat, has avoided appointing three members to the state board since January. The *San Francisco Examiner* reported April 23, "United Farm Worker (UFW) organizers, who helped Davis win a landslide victory in November, can't walk onto the strawberry fields to talk to workers or even go to their homes."

The UFW kicked off this year's organizing effort at a march and rally of 600 people held here April 18. The rally, overwhelmingly comprised of farm workers, was a commemoration of the life of union founder César Chávez.

As participants marched two miles through town, motorists honked their horns in support and residents came out to watch. Some joined in as marchers waved red-and-black UFW flags and chanted "Si, se puede" (Yes, we can).

Last year the UFW concentrated on unionizing farmworkers at Coastal Berry Co., one of the state's largest growers, employing 1,500 workers. The effort was thwarted when antiunion workers who formed a grower-organized outfit, the Coastal Berry Farm Workers Committee, successfully petitioned and won a certification election. The UFW boycotted and later contested the election. The election was voided in November by an administrative law judge pending review by the Agriculture Labor Relations Board.

On July 1, 1998, prior to the election, antiunion thugs assaulted

"We have made gains," Rocha told the *Militant*, "because we have been fighting. We got a wage increase last year, and we are being treated with a little more respect. There is still a lot of favoritism. They fired a lot of the thugs who were involved in the attack against us. But not all of them are fired. We'll see how things play out."

Dolores Huerta and Arturo Rodriguez, leaders of the UFW, spoke at the rally. Rodriguez called on growers to respect workers' right to organize. He cited the example of Swanton Berry Farm, a small organic farm north of Santa Cruz, which is the only strawberry grower to sign a contract with the UFW so far. He also appealed to Governor Davis to quickly appoint new members to the Agriculture Labor Relations Board.

March participant Guadalupe Rosas had just arrived from Michoacán, Mexico, only to find out that because of the heavy rains the companies are not hiring for a few more weeks. "This is not good news because it is shortening our work season," Rosas noted how bad things are in Michoacán. Unemployment is high, and in the countryside, where most jobs are, people are making 50 pesos a day, about \$4.75.

Antonio Ayala, a lettuce picker who has worked for D'Arrigo for 14 years, has seen his wages go from \$7.00 an hour to \$6.50 an hour. "We have to support the union, because with the union we fought for and won a medical plan and other benefits."

Mireya Gómez, a student at Cabrillo College participating in the march stated, "My parents and I worked in the fields, and with all the injustices going on, everyone's participation is very important. This is much deeper than just celebrating the life of César Chávez, we are here to address the issues that farmworkers face everyday and learn how to fight back."

Indiana poultry strikers win a contract at Tyson

CORYDON, Indiana — The members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local

227 on strike at the Tyson Foods poultry processing plant here ended their strike March 25 amid many cheers, hugs, and handshakes. The contract was ratified 191 to 61.

After buying the plant as part of its acquisition of Hudson Foods in 1998, Tyson demanded 21 cuts in benefits and work rules. The company was forced to back down in face of the strike, which lasted 82 days and won support from other workers in the area.

The new agreement includes a pay increase, dental and vision care, and other new benefits. All workers will retain their jobs. The contract does include some concessions. Paid breaks will be phased out in exchange for biannual bonuses over the life of the contract, double-time pay for Sunday work is eliminated, and the probation period is extended from 46 to 60 days.

After the vote was announced, workers caravanned to the picket line to celebrate there.

Michigan nurses strike over wages, conditions

MONROE, Michigan — Sixty-one workers at the Mercy Memorial Hospital Nursing Center went on strike March 25 over wages and working conditions.

The strikers, members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 157, voted unanimously for strike action. They maintain the picket lines 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, with every striker doing a daily four-hour shift.

The nurse's aides, housekeepers, cooks, and laundry workers at the 70-patient center are the only unionized workers at any Mercy Memorial facility in this southeast Michigan town.

Kathy Bussell, a nurses aide who has worked at the center for four years, explained, "We want \$.75. [That's] \$.25 in each year of the contract. We only make \$7.41 an hour. The company said they would give us the money if we gave up premium pay for working over 40 hours and on holidays."

The pickets explained that they

Washington State teachers demand raise



Militant/Lisa Ahlberg

More than 4,000 public school teachers, school employees, students, and supporters from across Washington State gathered at the State Capitol in Olympia April 17 to demand a 15 percent wage increase for all public teachers over the next two years. This action follows a series of sickouts and protests by teachers. Teachers in the Seattle area held a one-day walk-out April 22 to press their demands. In the city of Renton, the school board decided to close schools in anticipation of a union vote.

are paid low wages as it is, and that unionized nurses aides at a nursing home in Frenchtown, just north of Monroe, make \$8.08 an hour.

On top of the low pay, workers volunteer their days off with no pay to accompany patients on field trips.

The company has had special lighting installed and has brought in special 24-hour security, a first at the center. Mercy is already advertising for strike replacement workers in local newspapers. A nurses aide needs two weeks' training before they can work with residents. Mercy is the only nursing home in the area that pays workers while they train, so strikers have told people who are interested to take the class, get paid, and go to work for one of the company's competitors.

The bosses have refused to negotiate with the unionists who walked out. Bussell explained that a doctor who visits patients at the center told the pickets a manager said they don't have to negotiate because "the strikers are all women and will get tired and come back."

Bussell said her response is: "It's getting warmer so it will just get easier to walk the picket line."

On the picket line, a resident was leaving with members of his fam-

ily and described the conditions inside the nursing home. He reported the place was badly understaffed. Only two people were working the second floor where he lives. Strikers reported that normal Saturday staffing would have been two nurses and five aides.

The labor movement in the area has supported the strike. An April 3 solidarity event drew "a couple hundred people and they also picketed the hospital," Bussell said. Others on the picket line said members of UAW Local 723 at a nearby Ford plant have helped staff the lines. After a 70-year-old striker was hit with a tomato thrown from a passing car, the picketing by other trade unionists has stepped up, especially from workers getting off the afternoon shift. The day these reporters first visited the picket lines, locked-out Detroit newspapers and UAW members from the Detroit area made the 40-mile trip to show solidarity.

Bernie Senter and Francisco Picado in San Francisco; Jim Horn, a member of the UFCW in Louisville, Kentucky; Manuel González in Santa Cruz, California; and Marty Ressler and John Sarge in Detroit contributed to this column.

LETTERS

Abuse of women in prison

In the March 29, 1999, issue of the *Militant*, you ran a letter that I wrote concerning prisoners' rights. Enclosed is an article that was run in the March 29 edition of the *Connecticut Post*. The article [on two female prisoners who have filed petitions protesting the pat-down searches that they are subjected to by male guards at the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Connecticut] is exactly representative of the abuses and issues that I had in mind when I wrote my original letter.

The women prisoners mentioned in the article must be commended on their effort to stand up and fight for a change in a system that clearly holds the upper hand, because they must live in that very system.

Support must be given to these women and to all those that stand and fight for what is right and to change what is going on.

I want to comment on the fact that the staff writer for the *Connecticut Post* who wrote that article (Michael P. Mayko) had to be critical of these two women and make the comments about their crimes, as if to imply that what happens to them now as con-

victs is justified because of the crimes that they committed.

I don't know Trinia Holder, one of the plaintiffs, but I do know that trying to slander her by writing about the crimes that she committed is wrong and I cannot see what bearing her crimes have on the crimes now being committed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons against her and other women.

I do know Beatrice Codianni-Robles very well, and I have watched from the very beginning of her ordeal the repeated attacks on her by the press in Connecticut. Beatrice Codianni-Robles is my mother, and I say to Mr. Mayko and to the rest of the press that slander her: Find your integrity and report on the real and true issues and facts, not on the mistakes and false accusations that envelope Beatrice and all the other women of her integrity, determination, and character that must endure the pain and blatant sexual abuse that they are trying to stop.

The press will protect the victim of sexual abuse by keeping the name of the victim confidential. But when a woman is brave enough to use her inner pain and suffering as the cata-

lyst for change and she is a prisoner, it is her past deeds that are focused on — deeds that have nothing to do with the issue at hand.

Support these brave women in their struggle!

A prisoner
Niantic, Connecticut

Faculty reject contract

"I may have a Ph.D., but I'm not stupid." Sentiments like this were common as Cal State Long Beach faculty voted 183 to 70 to reject the tentative agreement between the California Faculty Association (CFA) and the chancellor's office of the California State University (CSU) system. Statewide, the agreement was defeated by a vote of 2,230 to 1,748, or 57 percent to 43 percent.

Acceptance of the agreement would have meant that faculty — and the union — relinquished control of the university to the chancellor and to the idea that the university should be run like a business. Academic freedom would exist in name only.

For 16 years student fees have steadily increased, as have class sizes. The percentage of full-time

tenured faculty has steadily declined, as nearly one-half of the faculty are now temporary, part-time lecturers. Chancellor Charles Reed is also proposing year-round CSU operation.

The salaries of CSU faculty have declined 8 percent in terms of buying power since 1991. CSU faculty salaries lag 11 percent behind that of comparable universities. While the contract proposal offered a 3 percent pay raise for professors, most CSU campus presidents and other top administrators received pay raises of 12 percent or more (the second of 3 planned annual raises).

Perhaps the most galling feature of the tentative agreement was the so-called "merit pay" scheme being forced on faculty. As a CFA flyer noted, "Most CSU faculty are repelled by the increased use of 'merit' pay raises as promoted by Chancellor Reed and the CSU Trustees. Faculty reject their distortions of the terms 'accountability' and 'merit.' Faculty who have done excellent work for 10 to 30 years deeply resent the idea that they will 'perform better' if they dance the tune of the campus president so as to gain scarce, discretionary

('merit') pay raises." This unfair system is divisive and destructive for faculty morale.

In response to Chancellor Charles Reed's unilateral imposition of work rules following the rejection of the contract, CFA's statewide assembly voted to authorize a range of job actions, up to and including a strike, at CSU's 22 campuses. This is the first imposition and strike vote in the institution's history.

The vote was taken after consultation with professors, librarians and counselors around the CSU system revealed nearly unanimous support for the work actions.

CFA will now ask the AFL-CIO, county central labor councils, the Teamsters union and the California Teachers Association for strike sanction.

Gene Ruyle
Long Beach, California

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.

Cuban youth discuss revolution with workers and students in Seattle area

BY LIEFF GUTTHIUDASCHMITT AND LEA KNOWLES

SEATTLE—Luis Morejón and Itamys García, two Cuban youth leaders, came to Seattle as part of their six-week U.S. speaking tour, and some 360 people in several meetings heard them speak about the Cuban revolution today. They met with mechanics, baggage handlers, and other workers at Alaska Airlines and spoke at Bastyr College, Garfield High School, the University of Washington (UW), El Centro de la Raza, and Seattle University (SU).

Morejón, 23, is a professor and general secretary of the Enrique José Varona Teacher Training Institute. García, 27, is a veterinarian and leader of the Federation of University Students. Both are members of the Union of Young Communists.

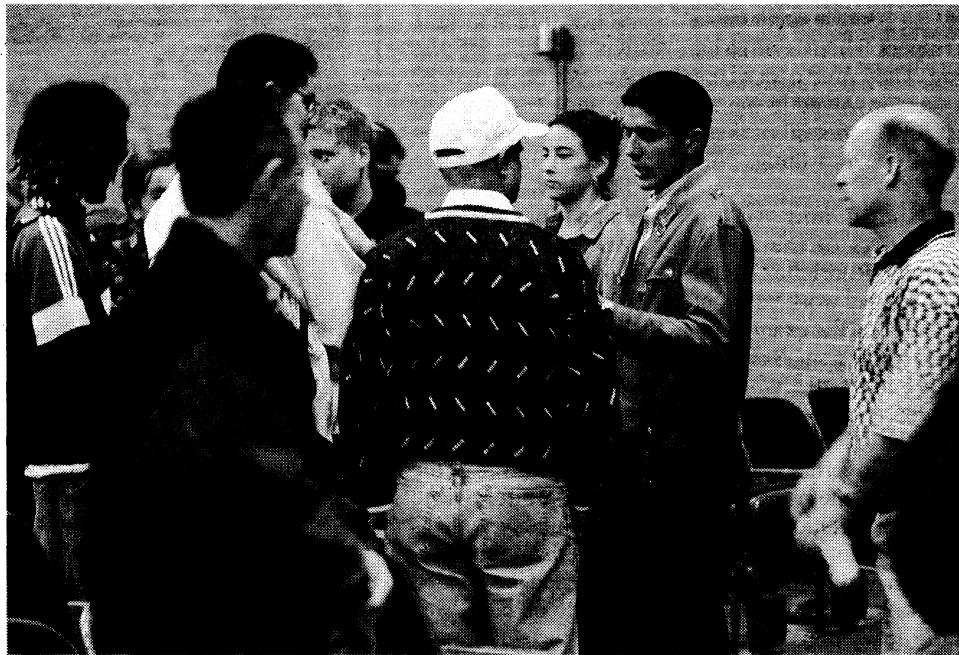
The local leg of the tour was organized by the Seattle Committee on Cuban Youth and Education, chaired by Anna Witte, professor in the Department of Foreign Languages at Seattle University. The committee included a high school teacher, three high school students, several workers, and several university students, including two leaders of the MEChA chapter at SU.

On April 27 Morejón and García spoke with five Alaska Airlines workers, as well as other workers and youth, at meeting near the Sea-Tac Airport. Arne Farstad, a stock clerk at Alaska Airlines and a member of the International Association of Machinists, explained the history of struggle of workers at the airline, dating back to the last strike there in 1985.

The Cubans made presentations, which were followed by discussion on the situation that workers face in Cuba, as well as in the United States. During the discussion Morejón and García were asked, "Are there strikes in Cuba?" Morejón's response was that there are no strikes in Cuba because workers run the factories in their own interests. By going out on strike, he explained, workers would only be hurting themselves.

The next day Morejón and García had the chance to meet with members of MEChA, a nationwide Chicano student organization, and the student body president at the University of Washington, along with a few other people. Miguel Bocanegra, the vice president of the campus MEChA chapter, welcomed them to the university.

Morejón made a brief presentation,



Participants at April 29 Seattle University event meet Luis Morejón (second from right).

mainly focusing on the things he had learned about the reality for young people living in the United States. He explained how he and García had met young Mexicans living in the United States today who are unable to learn in their own language because of attacks on bilingual education and who aren't able to go to a university because they are not citizens of this country. He pointed out the hypocrisy of this situation in light of the fact that half of the land that makes up the continental United States today was stolen from Mexico 150 years ago. Morejón explained that equal "access to culture presupposes access to all levels of education."

The Cubans discussed many topics with the UW students, including how Cuba was able to end the institutionalized discrimination against women and Blacks that was prevalent before the revolution in 1959.

Morejón expressed how glad they were to meet student and youth organizations in the United States. He and García have been inviting the young people that they meet on their nationwide tour to come to Havana this August for an International Youth and Student Seminar About Neoliberalism. After the meeting members of MEChA discussed

the possibilities for building a delegation from Seattle to the conference.

Later that day they were part of a weekly Chicano-Mexicano-Latino class with 35 people, most of them youth, at El Centro de la Raza, a local Latino community center. A group of students from Seattle University, including some from the campus MEChA chapter, attended and participated in the class. Morejón reviewed the history of Cuba's struggle for independence, first from Spanish colonialism and then from U.S. imperialist domination. García described the challenges that Cuba has faced since the collapse of trade with the Soviet Union.

One part of the discussion focused on the role that different generations of young Cubans have played in leading the revolution. Morejón said that the generation of youth at the beginning of the revolution faced the challenge of carrying out a massive literacy drive to teach every Cuban to read and write, and to defend Cuba from U.S. invasion and other aggression. Now young Cubans confront the challenges of continuing to build a socialist society in the face of the U.S. embargo and to draw youth into leading the revolution in all areas. But he emphasized

that "young Cubans are educated in internationalism" and anti-imperialism. Youth have played an important role in Cuba's history of internationalist missions, from Bolivia to Angola to the recent medical teams Cuba sent to Central America and the Caribbean in the wake of Hurricane Mitch.

The last meeting took place April 29 at Seattle University. Everyone was welcomed to the meeting by the university and student presidents of SU, the chairperson of the city Department of Neighborhoods, a member of the King County Executive Committee, and a representative of the SU MEChA chapter. One hundred fifty students, workers, and others attended the event.

A lively question-and-answer period followed the presentations by Morejón and García. One participant, interested in the question of "transnational investment" and how it affects countries of the Third World, asked, "Why wouldn't it shatter Cuba's socialist system?"

García pointed to the measures that the Cuban government has taken to make sure that investment is done according to the conditions set by Cuba. She said, "The government made sure that at least 50 percent of all profits stay in Cuba." Foreign capitalists don't own companies in Cuba, but can participate in a joint venture with the state and must abide by Cuban laws. The youth leader emphasized, "We knew that these measures would bring positive and negative" effects and "social inequalities" that the leadership of the revolution must be conscious of addressing.

Morejón pointed out that the current measures taken by the government were first discussed by the working class in meetings known as workers parliaments. These were organized in every workplace to discuss the measures proposed in the national assembly. Only after these meetings did the government adopt the measures agreed upon in 1994.

After leaving Seattle, Morejón and García made one final stop in Watsonville, California. There they met members of the United Farm Workers who have been fighting the big growers and pro-company thugs to unionize in the strawberry fields.

Lieff Gutthiudaschmitt is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

— YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD —

Atlanta youth discuss high school shootings

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, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, California, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429.

E-mail: 105162.605@compuserve.com

BY ALFONSO GARCÍA

ATLANTA — "What's behind this social tragedy?" was the question discussed at the April 30 Militant Labor Forum here on the recent high school killings in Colorado. Floyd Fowler, a member of the United by Steelworkers of America and of the Socialist Workers Party, and Olympia Newton, a member of the Young Socialists in Washington, DC, spoke. Some 15 people, two of them high school students, attended the program.

Fowler pointed to the hypocrisy of U.S. President William Clinton's statement, "We must teach our children that violence solves nothing," when he is currently heading up the NATO war against Yugoslavia. Fowler focused on the legal violence perpetrated by the ruling capitalist class — from police brutality to the near-daily bombing of Iraq. These acts of brutality, he said, create a so-

cial atmosphere where deeply alienated elements reject all sense of human solidarity and engage in anti-social violence.

Newton focused her talk on the ideology of the culture war promoted by ultrarightist politicians like Patrick Buchanan. She noted that an aspect of this culture war is the criminalization of youth. "The rulers of this country are taking more steps to ensure that more young people will end up behind bars," she said. "These measures include broadening the scope of crime — everything from curfew laws, to drinking laws, to the stepped-up drive making underage smoking a criminal offense."

The Young Socialists, Newton explained, seeks to win young people to the side of the only force which can change society — the working class. She pointed to the examples of the strike by Steelworkers at Newport News Shipyard in Virginia, Yugoslav students and unionists who are opposed to the NATO bombing and for self-determination for Kosovo, and the thousands of young people who gathered April 24 in Philadelphia and San Francisco to demand freedom for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. She also pointed to the young Cuban doctors volunteering for internationalist missions to the Latin American countries hit by Hurricane Mitch.

The following day, YS members from Atlanta and Washington, D.C., participated in the Auburn Avenue street festival with a table of Pathfinder books. We used the festival to campaign against the US/NATO war against Yugoslavia and to participate in the drive to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. We also campaigned with *Capitalism's World Disorder*, using it to help discuss out political questions with people who stopped at the table.

The table was a spot for lively political discussions with young people and others attending the festival. Two students from Georgia State University stopped at the table and talked politics with us for about 10 minutes. They bought a copy of the *Militant*, *Che Guevara Speaks*, and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Frederick Engels. They were very interested in *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and decided to visit the Pathfinder Bookstore when they had more money.

Overall, the team of Young Socialists and other *Militant* supporters sold 15 Pathfinder books and pamphlets, including 4 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, as well as 2 subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Alfonso Garcia is a YS member in Atlanta. Olympia Newton contributed to this column.

Young Socialists Fund Drive April 3–June 13

City	Goal	Paid	%
Seattle	150	60	40%
San Francisco	1000	50	5%
Atlanta	300	0%	0%
Austin, MN	150	0%	0%
Boston	200	0%	0%
Chicago	500	0%	0%
Detroit	200	0%	0%
Houston	100	0%	0%
Los Angeles	1000	0%	0%
New York	1000	0%	0%
Philadelphia	50	0%	0%
Salt Lake City	100	0%	0%
Santa Cruz	300	0%	0%
Twin Cities	400	0%	0%
Washington, D.C.	200	0%	0%
SWP convention	500	0%	0%
Total	5500	110	2%

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