

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban generals: 'We're not veterans, we're combatants'

— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 63/NO. 23 JUNE 14, 1999

Stop bombing Yugoslavia now! U.S.-NATO troops out of the Balkans! Defend the Yugoslav federation! Self-determination for Kosova!

As Clinton and the NATO commanders boast that they have forced the capitulation of the Milosevic regime in Belgrade, they are continuing their brutal assault on the working class of Yugoslavia.

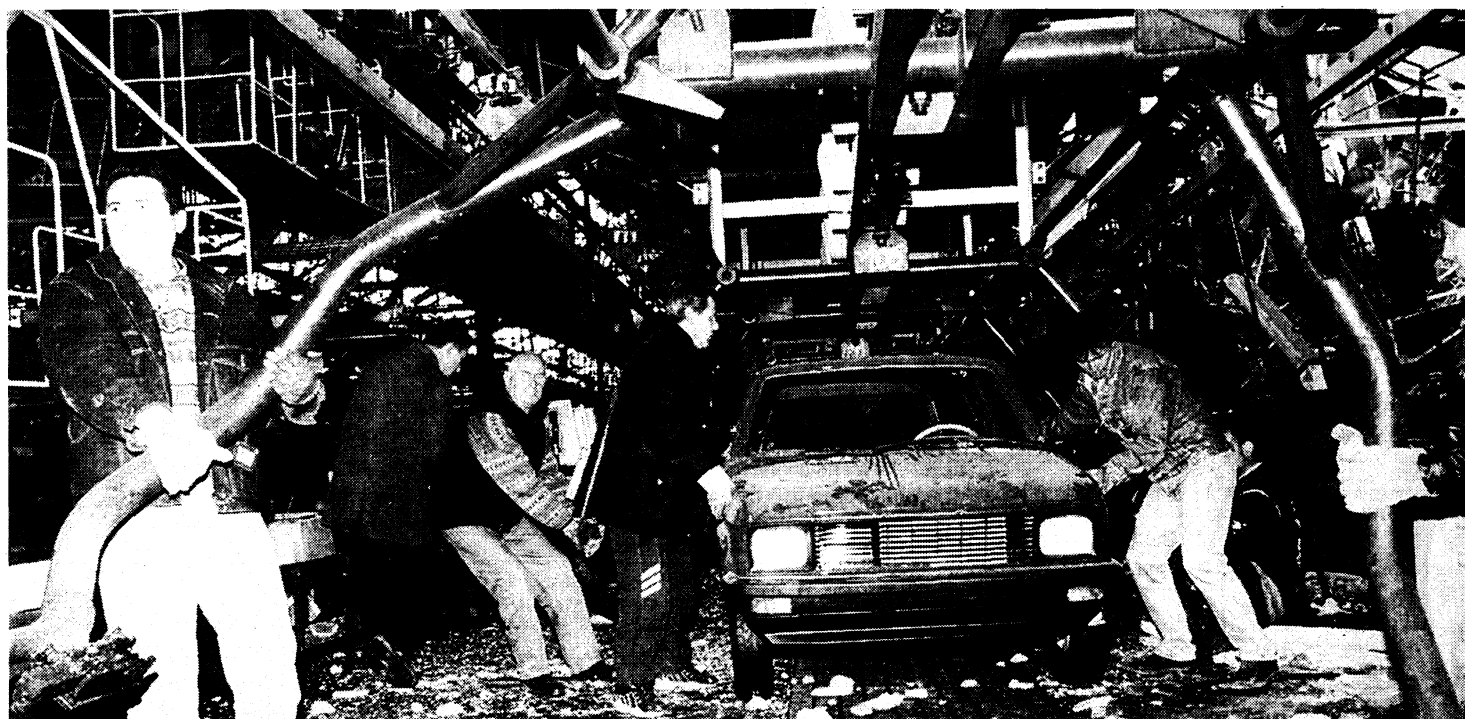
We urge our readers to join in actions demanding an immediate halt to the bombing and the removal of all U.S. and NATO troops from the Balkans. The June 5 actions in Washington D.C., San Francisco, and other cities across the United States offer such an opportunity. Opposition to the imperialist slaugh-

EDITORIAL

ter is completely intertwined with defense of the Yugoslav federation. And this in turn is tied to our call on workers, farmers, and democratic movements worldwide to support self-determination for Kosova.

Washington's goal in this war, as it was in Bosnia, is to dismember Yugoslavia and bring the country under its domination. Their crocodile tears notwithstanding, the U.S.-NATO assault has nothing to do with defending Albanians from "ethnic cleansing." The indiscriminate bombing of Albanians and Serbs in Kosova by the imperialist powers, their refusal to open their borders to the refugees, and their opposition to the self-determination for Kosova are a proof of that. The imperialist rulers hope to erase the gains of the Yugoslav revolution, to wipe it from the memory of working people in the Bal-

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Workers push cars off line at Zastava factory in Kragujevac, Yugoslavia, after U.S.-NATO attack. Working class is target of bombing.

'Peace plan' sets stage for imperialist occupation

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"I have an aunt who lives outside Belgrade, very near Pancevo, you know, the industrial center that's full of refineries and other factories," said Dusan, a university student in Novi Sad, in a June 3 telephone in-

terview from his home in the capital of Vojvodina. "Four days ago, NATO planes dropped leaflets in the afternoon saying 'Hey Pancevars, we didn't forget you.' She picked one up in her neighborhood. Hours later, when the night came, the warplanes

hit that city strong, several times, with many bombs. They are calculating criminals who are trying to destroy not only our country but our dignity."

The story by Dusan, who asked that his
Continued on Page 6

Shipyard strikers: 'Support is overwhelming'

BY MIKE ITALIE
AND ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

PASCAGOULA, Mississippi — As the walkout by almost 8,000 workers here enters its third week, the strikers remain determined and the huge Ingalls shipyard appears lifeless.

"These are serious times, and we are some serious people," stated Leon Fantroy, Jr., a member of Pipefitters Local 436 with 23 years at Ingalls Shipbuilding. "We're in this together

with the shipyard workers at Newport News. We are prepared to sacrifice to get what we want, like they are." Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 8888 at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia have been out since April 5 (see article on page 3).

"When the company says we're the best paid," said pipefitter Chris Packer, "they're lying." Jimmy Cox, 48, with 17 years as a shipfitter, said top wages are \$14-15 per hour. "We haven't gotten a raise in six years."

The strikers' central demands are for up to \$4 per hour raises over three years, with no increase in workers' medical costs, and safety.

As the *Militant* went to press, Ingalls strikers were voting on the company's latest contract proposal, which included \$2.30 in wage increases over a 45-month contract and increases in workers' monthly insurance payments totaling \$15. The unionists previously rejected a 36-month contract with

Continued on Page 11

'Anti-terror' drills near Philadelphia spark outrage

BY CANDACE WAGNER

CHESTER, Pennsylvania— Fifty-five residents and supporters marched here June 1 to protest recent mock invasions by U.S. Army Special Operations forces in this town just south of Philadelphia.

The training exercises, dubbed "Exercise Roller Ghost," were nighttime attacks on vacant buildings in residential neighborhoods. Soldiers stormed vacant public housing project dwellings, detonated bombs, and sprayed live gunfire. Helicopters buzzed overhead.

Residents nearby were alarmed and angry. "Chester is under siege, that's what I thought," Yvonne Carrington, a tenants' council president, told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

"They wouldn't have done it if this wasn't a Black community," Anita Porter told the *Militant*. Porter lives one block from the site.

Over the week of May 11-16 similar operations took place in Camden, New Jersey, and in Philadelphia.

An uproar has followed the attacks in Chester. A federal judge launched an inquiry into which city officials gave the army permission to carry out the exercises there. The director of the Chester Housing Authority (CHA) testified that after being contacted by army officials for permission, he expressed concern. The next notice he received

Continued on Page 11

SWP extends campaign to sell 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

BY NAOMI CRAINE

CHICAGO — "We're beginning to make progress in the campaign to get *Capitalism's World Disorder* into the hands of working-class fighters," said Frank Forrestal in a report to the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, which met here May 30-June 1. Forrestal is a member of the SWP's Trade Union Committee.

The National Committee decided to extend the sales effort by two weeks — until June 27 — to build on the positive experience of the last two weeks and meet the goals.

"In the last week, socialist workers have
Continued on Page 5

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JACK BARNES

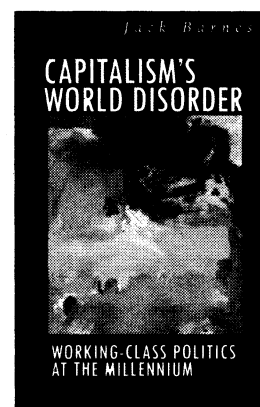
"We have watched the first large-scale war take place in Europe in almost half a century. There has been massive, sustained artillery shelling. Air power has been used to bomb civilian populations in Europe for the first time since the bombing of Dresden, London, and other cities during World War II.... All this has been taking place 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." —December 31, 1994

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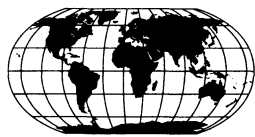
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India, Pakistan in military clash

The Indian government has stepped up its offensive against guerrilla forces fighting for independence in Kashmir, bringing it into sharp conflict with the Pakistani regime. Pakistani army spokesperson Brig. Rashid Quereshi declared May 27 that Islamabad's forces had shot down two Indian warplanes that ventured "well inside our territory." The Indian government said only one plane was shot down and the other crashed due to mechanical problems. The next day New Delhi announced four of its soldiers and a pilot died May 27 when the guerrillas shot down one of its helicopters. One-third of the region of Kashmir is inside Pakistan, and the rest is held by India.

The governments of India and Pakistan have fought two wars over the territory of Kashmir in 1947 and 1965. This was the first time in nearly 30 years the Indian government used air power, which included Jaguar bombers, MiG fighters, and helicopter gunships. Both of the regimes tested nuclear weapons last year.

Filipino dock workers strike

Dock workers and cargo handlers walked off the job at the Cebu port May 24, paralyzing one of the Philippines' largest ports. Tons of cargo and thousands of passengers were stuck at the port, which accounts for at least 80 percent of the country's shipping industry.

The unionists were protesting the firing of 14 workers of the Puerto Servicio de Cebu cargo handling company, as well as unfair labor practices by other companies. The dock workers said they will continue their strike until their demands are addressed by the bosses at the United South Dockhandlers Inc., Puerto Servicio de Cebu, and other shipping firms.

Palestinians fight land grab

Israeli cops attacked Palestinians in East Jerusalem May 27 as they tried to block the construction of a Zionist settlement in Ras al-Amud, a neighborhood of 11,000 Palestinians. It was the first confrontation since the May 17 Israeli election. The Palestinian Authority has demanded Israeli prime minister-elect Ehud Barak halt the expansion of the Zionist land grabs when he takes office and return all land and property stolen from Palestinians.

East Jerusalem is claimed by the Palestinian leadership as the future capital of a Pales-

Eurotunnel workers hold job action



Eurotunnel workers in France bar a car trying to enter the tunnel May 31. The workers are fighting for pay raises and more jobs. They blockaded the tunnel in a job action that lasted several hours, holding up thousands of cars and buses.

tinian state. Along with the West Bank, East Jerusalem was captured from Jordan by Tel Aviv during the 1967 Mideast war. The Zionist regime also seized the Golan Heights from Syria and the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt in that war.

Miners end walkout in Ghana

Gold miners at the Ashanti Goldfields Company returned to work May 25 after a 12-day strike. The workers were demanding pay increases, including a hike in the minimum monthly wage from \$132 to \$500. They ended the walkout after the bosses agreed to start wage negotiations within 72 hours and not victimize

those who participated in the strike. Gold bosses said the strike cost the company more than \$8 million in export earnings and a loss in gold production of more than 28,000 ounces of gold. Gold is one of Ghana's main exports.

Polish farmers block highways

Farmers in Poland demanded an increase in government subsidies as they blocked dozens of roads with farm equipment throughout the country May 27. Cops broke up some of the roadblocks. Thousands of farmers joined several protests in the capital city of Warsaw earlier this year, demanding higher prices for their products and a ban on food imports. "We are going to be wiped out," said Jan Kuchta, a farmer in the Kruczy Borek hamlet.

The farmers are being devastated by the fall in sales to Russia, the international collapse in agricultural prices, and government attempts to carry out "market reforms" in agriculture. Farm production has dropped 20 percent and demand for farm commodities has fallen 25 percent in the 1990s, according to government officials.

Spain: farmers defend land against pollution 'cleanup' plan

Farmers in Aznalcázar, Spain, are fighting government plans to expropriate 10,000 acres of farmland polluted by the waste reservoir of a nearby zinc mine that burst open last year.

Toxic sludge, containing high levels of acid, cadmium, lead, and arsenic, is now embedded in the soil and water. Government inspectors annually approved the faulty reservoir.

"I'm not moving," declared farmer José Alvarez, whose land is on the expropriation list. "I won't give it up. They're offering half the value." Carmen Moreira, a local farmer and an organizer of the farmers protests, said Madrid's "new love for the environment is a phony," pointing to piles of trash on public land.

10,000 workers strike in Guyana

Some 10,000 postal workers, nurses, clerks, ferry boat operators, and other members of the Guyana Public Service Union walked off the job in April after the government rejected their demand for a 40 percent pay hike. The government offered a 4.6 percent wage increase. Riot cops attacked several thousand strikers May 25 as they protested in front of President Janet Jagan's office. Union officials say they are planning a "national civil disobedience campaign." Meanwhile, the Trade Union Congress federation ended a three-day general strike over the May 22-23 weekend.

Student arrested after walking out on prayer at graduation

Nick Becker was detained by a Maryland State cop May 26 when he tried to return to his high school graduation after walking out to protest prayer during the Calvert County commencement ceremony. "I told the cop I'm getting my diploma," said Becker. The cop barred him from reentering and threatened to give the student a citation "for failing to obey a lawful order."

Becker said prayer didn't belong in a public ceremony and had successfully appealed for a moment of silence. But a sizable layer in the audience, led by government officials including County Commissioners President Linda Kelly and County Commissioner David Hale, participated in the prayer. "This is a churchgoing community, and no one... is going to tell us when and where we can pray," Kelly declared, after trampling on the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution separating the state and religion.

Airline bosses: safety is too costly

The failure of the Federal Aviation Administration to enforce regulations regarding crew rest "is seriously compromising aviation safety," said Richard Rubin, a member of Allied Pilots Association. The rule stipulates that pilots receive at least eight hours of guaranteed rest between flight duties. Fatigue has been blamed for a number of plane crashes.

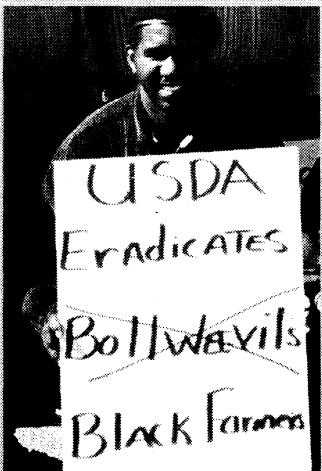
Currently major airlines such as American, Delta, United, and others may use "reserve" pilots who are on call for days at a time and sometimes end up being awake continuously for 23 hours by the time their flight duty ends. Airline bosses balk at following the FAA regulation, saying it would force them to hire more pilots, costing them millions of dollars.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Support farmers' struggle to keep their land!

Dairy farmers in Vermont are fighting the U.S. government's attempt to foreclose on their land. Black farmers in the South have been doing the same, and fighting racist discrimination. The 'Militant' reports on these struggles and explains the importance of a workers' and farmers' alliance. Don't miss a single issue!



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Puerto Ricans protest Navy's uranium shells

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — In face of growing public outrage in Puerto Rico and internationally over U.S. Navy war maneuvers in Vieques, U.S. military officials have now admitted the Navy used uranium-tipped shells at firing ranges in Vieques and Torii Shima, an uninhabited island off the coast of Okinawa. In both cases, the Navy claims that the radioactive shells were loaded onto the aircraft by mistake.

The issue of the U.S. military occupation of Vieques, which several generations of workers and fishermen in Vieques and pro-independence forces have waged a fight against since World War II, erupted again after David Sanes, a Vieques resident working as a security guard, was killed April 19 during an "accidental" bombing by U.S. Navy.

For four consecutive weekends, forces opposed to the U.S. military occupation have set up encampments on the restricted area of Camp Garcia on the eastern end of Vieques, an island off the east coast of Puerto Rico inhabited by roughly 9,300 people. Two-thirds of the island are used by Washington as a military training ground. Several hundred people have taken part in the

protests there.

Protesting members of the Northern Fishermen's Association are occupying La Yayí Cay, on the northeast tip of Vieques. The Puerto Rican Independence Party has also set up a camp in the area. Among the actions, religious leaders and others erected a chapel just north of the observation platform where Sanes was killed. On May 29, a number of unionists donated tools and construction materials to build the chapel.

"The chapel is meant as a response to the military exercises," said Ismael Guadalupe of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques. "They use Vieques for war games and we aim to change that."

Navy officials admitted to firing 263 uranium shells in Vieques, though they claim it was limited to one incident in March 1999. The Navy acknowledges firing off 1,520 uranium bullets in Torii Shima in 1996. The Navy said that both instances were accidents. Uranium bullets are radioactive and toxic, with more destructive power than lead bullets. Any time such a bullet is fired carcinogenic uranium is released into the environment.

Vieques has a cancer rate twice that of the rest of Puerto Rico.

Workers rally to back ANC in S. Africa vote



Militant/T.J. Figueroa

Some 85,000 people filled a stadium in Soweto, South Africa, May 30 for a rally to support the African National Congress (ANC) prior to the June 2 elections.

The public outrage has pressured a response from Puerto Rican government officials, despite the pro-statehood stance of the administration. "For me the information that

they [Navy officials] are offering me has no credibility. I'm presuming that there was more than one accident," said Secretary of State and acting-governor Norma Burgos.

Virginia shipyard strikers welcome Ingalls walkout

BY MARY MARTIN AND BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia — The U.S. Navy has canceled part of Newport News Shipbuilding's \$30-million overhaul of the *USS Truman* aircraft carrier because the yard has no carrier-capable dry dock available. The Navy claims the cancellation has nothing to do with the two-month-long strike by 8,200 Steelworkers here. But the dry dock is not available because it is still occupied by the *USS Nimitz*, whose two nuclear reactors are being defueled and decontaminated. The shipyard's plans prior to the launching of the Steelworkers' strike in early April was to have this work completed by June 5. Now the Navy says this work could take many more months. After completing a crash five-week training course, supervisors and salaried engineers began working on the *Nimitz*'s nuclear reactors May 13. Numerous strikers on the picket lines point out how this is a dangerous and unsafe act on the part of the company, since

virtually all the qualified, experienced, nuclear refuelers remain on strike. The Navy is backing this strike-breaking move.

Striking nuclear mechanics trained for an entire year in preparation for working on the *Nimitz*. Newport News is the only shipyard in the world to have refueled a nuclear carrier. "You can become qualified by taking a written test, but that doesn't mean you have the experience, skills, and ability to do the work," stated Ray Rougeau, a shipfitter on strike against the yard. "They are trying to say the people in the yard are even more qualified than those of us out on strike. That just means the written test scores were higher."

The union at a May 19 news conference in Washington, D.C., and through a subsequent advertising campaign, blasted the company's moves as a dire threat to health and safety of not only workers in the yard but the entire community. In its most serious allegation, union officials reported that the yard discharged radioactive resin into a container that

might have been cracked. The union's claims prompted an inquiry by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) into safety practices inside the yard, but not into nuclear issues. As the strike goes on, those on the picket lines are more determined than ever to stand their ground in their fight for safety, respect, and dignity on the job, and a decent contract that includes a significant increase in wages and pensions.

"People are fed up with the yard," stated Bob Fitzgerald, a pipefitter with 23 years at Newport News. "It's stand up now or we may never get back. If we stand up now the company will think twice the next time."

"We are having barbecues here on the picket line every night," stated Jamie Rodriguez. "We are letting the scabs know we are eating well and having a good time. Let 'em smell that while they are working. We're not suffering! I can stay out as long as necessary."

Workers here have welcomed the strike

by 8,000 other shipyard workers at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi (see article on front page). When asked what he would like to say to those strikers, spray-painter Zeké Cook responded, "Hold on! Fight for what you believe in. That's what you are supposed to do. Don't be afraid to sacrifice. Like me, I'm not going nowhere. I'm holding on to my guns and I have a family of four. In the strike, this is when you find out how many friends you have."

Meanwhile, the Pentagon has come out against the bid by Litton Industries Inc., which owns Ingalls, to buy the Newport News shipyard for \$1.3 billion in stock. In response, shares of Newport News stock plunged \$5.25 or 16 percent on May 28. Several weeks earlier the government also blocked a move by General Dynamics Corp. to take over the shipyard.

The Navy said they were concerned about keeping in place an agreement with the shipyard reached shortly after the strike began to eliminate \$360 million in labor costs and materials over the next five years. However, a Litton spokesman made clear that their company would implement this cutback agreement if their bid were to be approved.

Party Building Fund gains momentum

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

NEWYORK — Supporters of the Socialist Workers 1999 Party-Building Fund, for the past two weeks, have gotten on a rhythm, mailing in

payments in the range that would surpass the goal in eight weeks. This week money came in from every city on the scoreboard totaling \$11,686. With only two weeks remaining in the drive, however, fund organizers in every city need to turn up the heat to collect on all pledges. Collections of \$18,500 a week will be necessary to reach the \$75,000 goal by June 15.

The fund meetings have definitely provided the boosts needed in several cities. Boston supporters held a May 29 meeting featuring Mary Martin, an airline worker from Washington, D.C., who gave an eyewitness report on the shipyard strike in Newport News, Virginia. Supporters were able to win new contributors to the fund at the meeting and took in \$1,350 toward their goal. In Seattle, where Argiris Malapanis spoke on Yugoslavia, nearly \$800 in contributions were collected — including \$250 in new pledges. (These collections will be counted in next week's scoreboard.)

Supporters in many cities have planned fund meetings for the next two weekends. Fund supporters in Detroit and Pittsburgh are planning to get people to attend a June 12 meeting featuring Argiris Malapanis in Cleveland, Ohio. Malapanis will also be speaking in Washington, D.C. at a meeting following the June 5 action against the bombing of Yugoslavia taking place at the Pentagon.

Mary-Alice Waters and Martin Koppel, reporters for the *Militant* who recently returned from participating in activities celebrating the 40th anniversary of the May 17, 1959 agrarian reform in Cuba, will be speaking at fund events as well (see ad at right). These meetings can attract fighting workers, farmers, and youth who are looking for answers to the crisis of capitalism today — many of whom will appreciate the opportunity to contribute to a fund that helps finance the activities of the SWP.

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

Mary Martin is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Brian Williams is a member of United Steelworkers of America.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY BUILDING FUND

City	Goal	Collected	%
Chicago	5,000	3,225	65%
Detroit	4,500	2,755	61%
San Francisco	9,000	4,860	54%
Cleveland	3,000	1,566	52%
Los Angeles	6,000	3,100	52%
Miami	3,000	1,445	48%
Twin Cities	5,000	2,374	47%
Atlanta	3,000	1,415	47%
New York	10,000	4,623	46%
Birmingham	2,250	1,040	46%
Philadelphia	3,000	1,255	42%
Des Moines	2,600	1,000	38%
Washington, D.C.	4,200	1,515	36%
Boston	3,000	1,000	33%
Pittsburgh	3,250	960	30%
Seattle	7,000	2,050	29%
Newark	6,500	1,580	24%
Houston	5,000	1,160	23%
Other		1,060	
Total	85,300	37,983	45%
Goal/should be	75,000	56,250	75%

Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution

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Saturday, June 12

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Editor of *New International*, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, just returned from Cuba

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Banquet: 5:30 p.m.

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Speaker:

MARTIN KOPPEL

Editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, just returned from Cuba

Programs will benefit the Socialist Workers Party Building Fund

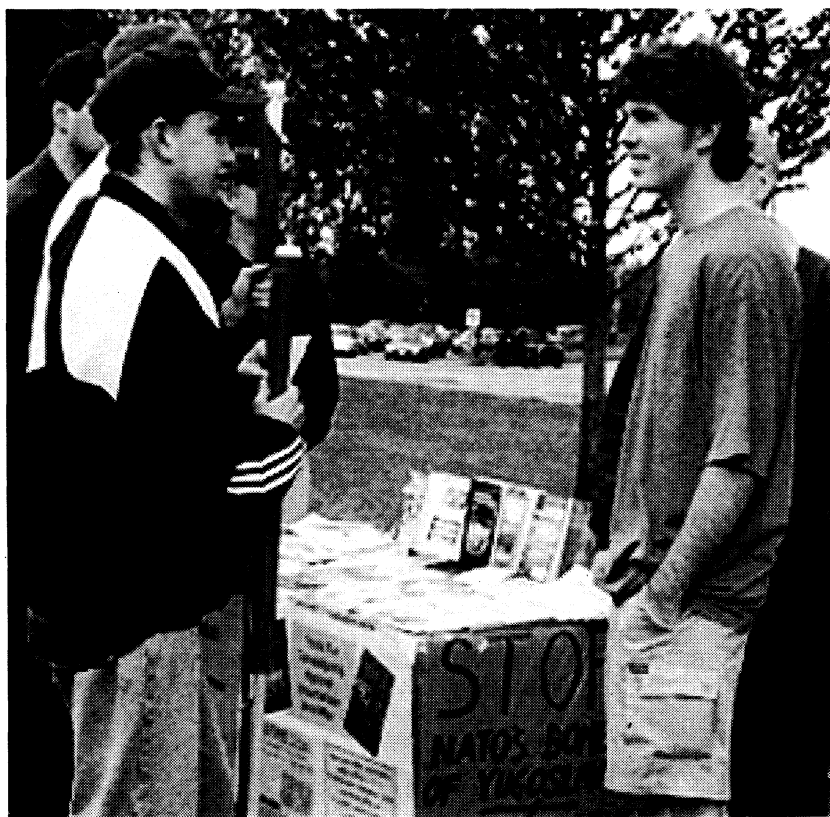
YS Nat'l Committee maps out plans to join workers in battle, start Marxist summer schools

BY SAMANTHA KERN

CHICAGO — Members of the Young Socialists National Committee and other YS leaders from across the country met here May 29-30. This was a working meeting, where the leadership of the Young Socialists discussed the summer schools and campaigns necessary to build the YS on the road to the August 5-7 Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio (see ad on page 11).

In her opening report Cecilia Ortega, a member of the YS National Executive Committee and a meatpacker in the San Francisco Bay Area, laid out a regional perspective for chapters and members. "Part of making our summer schools a success is working with other chapters and members in our area to organize joint classes, campaign together against Washington's war in Yugoslavia and for self-determination for Kosovo, and join the regional sales teams to coal mines, packinghouses, and factories outside of our cities. This is an important way Young Socialists can work together, get to know each other politically, and help each other recruit in our different cities."

Ortega pointed to the lead taken by the YS chapters and branches of the Socialist Workers Party in California in putting together a syllabus for the summer school that will be used in both Los Angeles and San Francisco. The plan includes several joint weekends of study. Readings focus on *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* and several books on the history of the Socialist Workers Party: *The History of American Trotskyism* and *The Struggle for a Proletarian*



YS member in Vancouver staffs literature table at May 15 demonstration against NATO bombing of Yugoslavia.

Party by James P. Cannon and *In Defense of Marxism* and *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

The California socialist summer schools will kick off in San Francisco after a weekend of activity, including participating in a West Coast demonstration to demand the end of U.S.-NATO bombing in Yugoslavia and a YS-sponsored forum "Youth and Struggle Today," which will raise money for the YS National Fund Drive (see article below).

Eight Young Socialists so far have agreed to move to designated "summer school centers" — in Los Angeles, Chicago, Birmingham, or Atlanta — for the summer to help strengthen and build chapters there. This will be key in carrying out the regional perspectives in the Midwest, South, and West Coast.

"Every chapter should see as their responsibility to make sure not one regional team goes out without a young socialist on it," Ortega added. A number of YS members spoke during the leadership meeting about their participation in such teams, selling the *Militant* and *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and learning more about the class struggle in the United States. Chapters in the Midwest have especially taken the lead, with Young Socialists taking part in teams to the Powder River Basin in Wyoming to talk with coal-miners; to St. Louis, Missouri, to talk with car haulers at Chrysler and TWA

workers leading up to possible strike deadlines; and a recent week-long team to Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and South Dakota to talk with meatpackers. This is an important part of strengthening the Young Socialists' orientation to the working class, and will lay the ground work for building new chapters across the country.

During the discussion, Paul Pederson, a National Committee member and volunteer at Pathfinder Press's printshop, said that in preparing the summer schools "we are putting something together that will combine a schedule of intense study of the traditions and lessons of 150 years of the communist movement and political activity.

"This will include getting out to picket lines and social struggles like the fight to free Puerto Rican political prisoners and demand independence for Puerto Rico." The YS National Committee decided to endorse and build the July 7 demonstrations to demand the release of Puerto Rican political prisoner José Solís at federal buildings across the country and the national demonstration on July 24 in Washington D.C. demanding the release of all 16 political prisoners in U.S. jails. There are also local opportunities to join in this struggle, such as the June 13 Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York City, which has been dedicated to calling for the release of the prisoners.

"Young people will be extremely attracted to this summer package," Pederson said. "We definitely want people who are considering joining the YS to participate in every aspect of the summer school," added Luis Rivera, a member of the NC and an electrician here in Chicago. "It's a great way they can participate in the work of the YS and gain a better understanding for our political views."

The meeting also heard an

evaluation of the recent tour of Cuban youth leaders Itamys García and Luis Morejón that YS members helped organize. Olga Russi, a student and leader of the YS in Los Angeles, reported. "The tour was a success for the Young Socialists as a national organization. We came out of it more politically confident, with more experienced members, and with a layer of young people who are attracted to the Cuban revolution and the Young Socialists."

The YS recruited two new members during the tour and developed stronger relationships with other organizations we worked with on the project. This was also an important part of carrying out a campaign that was decided on at the national convention last December, and one of the central principles of the Young Socialists: defense of the Cuban Revolution.

The meeting also discussed the upcoming conference on "Youth and Neoliberalism" to be held August 15-18 in Havana, Cuba, hosted by youth organizations there. In addition to sending a delegation, Young Socialists will encourage other groups and activists met through the tour to participate in the conference.

Luis Rivera contributed to this article.

MILITANT PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL Subscription drive

MAY 1 - JUNE 27

	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Sweden*	16	8	50%	8	6	8	7
Australia	14	5	36%	3	0	12	1
Canada							
Vancouver*	30	13	43%	3	1	15	5
Montreal	20	7	35%	10	4	30	5
Toronto*	35	8	23%	5	2	25	12
Canada total	85	28	33%	18	7	70	22
New Zealand							
Christchurch	16	7	44%	1	0	6	0
Auckland	30	8	27%	1	0	5	0
N.Z. total	46	15	33%	2	0	11	0
United States							
Atlanta	28	18	64%	7	5	16	4
Los Angeles	65	34	52%	30	14	40	17
Birmingham, AL	35	14	40%	5	0	10	1
San Francisco	90	36	40%	40	4	40	10
Seattle	45	17	38%	15	1	15	4
Philadelphia	32	12	38%	6	1	15	0
Houston	35	11	31%	15	2	20	3
Des Moines	40	12	30%	20	23	20	6
Cleveland	40	11	28%	8	0	10	1
Miami	35	8	23%	15	4	20	7
Boston	35	7	20%	15	5	25	5
New York	120	24	20%	50	18	75	12
Washington, D.C.	50	10	20%	15	0	30	5
Chicago	50	8	16%	15	3	30	5
Newark, NJ	125	20	16%	50	11	60	14
Detroit	35	5	14%	8	1	15	1
Pittsburgh	30	4	13%	5	0	20	0
Twin Cities, MN	50	6	12%	12	6	15	1
Central Illinois	20	1	5%	4	0	7	0
So. Minnesota	8	0	0%				
U.S. total	968	258	27%	335	98	483	96
Iceland	8	2	25%			2	0
United Kingdom							
London	35	9	26%	8	1	30	8
Manchester	24	6	25%	2	0	14	7
UK total	59	15	25%	10	1	44	15
France	5	0	0%	3	0	25	3
Int'l totals	1201	331	30%	379	112	655	144
Goal/Should be	1100	550	50%	350	175	600	300

* raised goal

Young Socialists \$9,000 Fund Drive April 3-June 30

City	Goal	Received	%
Chicago	500	596	119%
San Francisco	1000	815	82%
Seattle	250	185	74%
Santa Cruz	300	134	45%
Salt Lake City	100	10	10%
Atlanta	300		0%
Austin, MN	150		0%
Boston	200		0%
Detroit	200		0%
Houston	100		0%
Los Angeles	1000		0%
New York	1000		0%
Newark	200		0%
Philadelphia	50		0%
Springfield, IL	75		0%
Twin Cities	400		0%
Washington, D.C.	200		0%
Other		500	
Total	6025	2240	37%

The YS has launched a \$9,000 fund drive to be completed by June 30. 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.

YS extends fund drive

BY J. PARADISO

CHICAGO — The May 29-30 Young Socialists leadership meeting here decided to fight for the YS to be an independently funded organization and maintain its national office by extending the \$9,000 national fund drive two weeks, to the end of June, and making it a nationally led campaign.

This decision was the result of a discussion on the need for seriously planned fund-raising events. Chapters and at-large members plan to raise the money through selling political T-shirts and buttons, collecting pledges from members and supporters of the YS, and a variety of other political fund-raising events.

The Chicago YS chapter has surpassed its fund drive goal of \$500, reaching the \$596 mark this week. YS members helped to build and organize a forum here May 29 that featured reports from several working-class struggles. The chapter also gave a fund pitch at the forum and organized a social event and raffle afterward to raise money. More than \$350 was raised that evening and an additional \$500 was pledged toward the \$9,000 fund drive.

The forum included a report from the Newport News strike, a report from the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, and a report from a labor battle and picket lines at a Rockwell plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Young Socialists earlier held a garage sale here that raised \$160 from items donated by members and supporters of the Young Socialists.

SWP Nat'l Committee discusses campaign to sell 'Capitalism's World Disorder' to miners, others

Continued from front page

sold nearly 50 copies of the book through our work in the industrial trade unions," Forrestal noted. This is the largest one-week increase since the campaign was launched in mid-March. It registers the fact that the steering committees leading the work of socialists in several unions have shifted gears and have now begun to give detailed attention to leading the campaign.

"This leaves a substantial job ahead of us," Forrestal noted, referring to the double goal of selling 500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* through work in the unions — both among co-workers and at labor and other political actions — and 1,500 copies overall. It means we must sell 69 books a week in the unions and 205 a week total for the next four weeks.

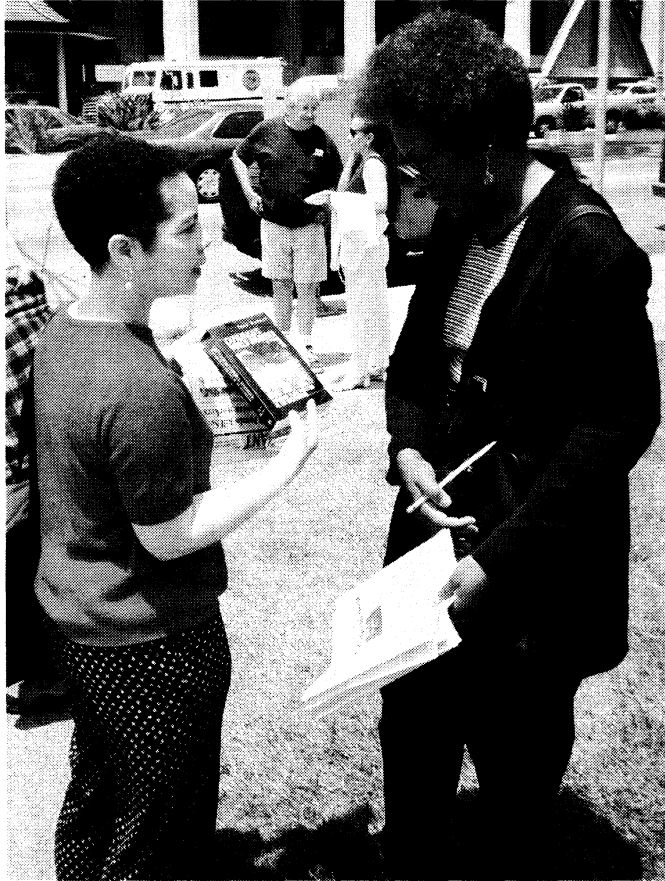
"The party and the Young Socialists have registered our biggest successes, and proven these goals can be met, when we have organized to reach out and participate in the ongoing labor resistance," Forrestal continued. "It seems another opportunity presents itself every day — from the possible strike by car haulers nationwide, [which was called off after all-night negotiations], to the hotly contested union representation election among strawberry workers in California, to the brewing contract vote by members of the Steelworkers union at Century Aluminum in Ravenswood, West Virginia."

The biggest jump in the chart this week is in sales by socialists in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), who sold 17 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*; they had sold 24 copies in the previous two months. Joshua Carroll, who organizes the steering committee of socialist workers in that union, reported to the National Committee that USWA members were joining that weekend with locked-out Kaiser Aluminum workers in Gramercy, Louisiana; striking Titan Tire workers in Natchez, Mississippi; striking Continental General Tire workers in Charlotte, North Carolina; and unionists on strike at a potato chip plant in Pennsylvania.

Floyd Fowler, a USWA member in Atlanta, sent a note describing the response he received by calling *Militant* subscribers among the Continental General strikers, and then driving up to visit them. Of the 13 subscribers he spoke to, "11 said they were interested in renewing."

One of the tire workers he spoke to had been a striker against Eastern Airlines during the 1989-91 union battle there. He said, "I have to have that book," when told about Pathfinder's book *The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists*. "Another guy said, 'I read the paper cover-to-cover, and then I take it to the union hall.'"

Another worker in Charlotte who has been



Militant/Laura Anderson
SWP leader Nan Bailey sells *Capitalism's World Disorder* at an anti-cop brutality action in Los Angeles May 27.

part of a Teamster organizing drive bought a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and of *New International*, "and then volunteered another \$10 for the young people," Fowler wrote. "I had mentioned that the YS would be raising money to send members to the Active Workers Conference" in Ohio this summer.

Over the next two weeks, leaders of the party's trade union committees will be heading teams to meet workers in the coalfields and elsewhere. The most recent coal team to West Virginia and Ohio sold six copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, three *Militant* subscriptions, and more than 150 copies of the *Militant*. Joe Swanson is leading another week-long coal team in Wyoming that begins June 5. Another team in the works will go to Spokane, Washington, the heart of the Kaiser Aluminum union fight.

The success of this campaign is intertwined with the drive to win new readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International*. This campaign, which is at the halfway point and ends June 27, is lagging. Over the next four weeks, supporters of the socialist press need to sell 769 introductory *Militant* subscriptions, 238 to *Perspectiva Mundial* subs, and 456 copies of *New International*.

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Pathfinder sales representatives in New Zealand are finding an interested response to *Capitalism's World Disorder* from commercial bookstores and libraries.

To date, four bookshops and one public library have ordered copies. This includes an order for six copies from Auckland's largest central city bookstore, together with 29 copies of 10 other titles. Two other shops have also ordered additional Pathfinder titles along with *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

Several of the 29 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* sold by Pathfinder supporters in New Zealand have been to young people becoming interested in

working-class politics. A student from Auckland University pushed a note under the door of the Pathfinder bookstore here saying he was interested in finding out about Marxism and trade unions. A few days later he came into the shop and, after a long political discussion, bought *Capitalism's World Disorder* and joined the Pathfinder Readers Club.

A worker at a large Auckland factory organized by the Engineers Union, who has been reading the copy he bought from a socialist co-worker there, commented that he appreciated the book's explanation of how capitalism works, as well as the section on education in capitalist society.

BY MYRNA TOWER AND HEATHERWOOD

A May 23-30 meatpacking team visited towns and packing-house gates in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota where we met some important fighters and got more hands-on experience with the changes going on in the class struggle.

Sixteen members of the socialist movement participated in the team throughout the week, four in the YS.

Workers we met bought 95 copies of the *Militant* and 48 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Twenty-four people subscribed to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and two purchased copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. There is some opposition to the U.S.-NATO war in Yugoslavia, and workers have big questions about it.

There is a lot of interest in reading about union struggles. Many workers are angry about the campaign against immigrant workers being carried out by the immigration cops through Operation Van-

guard in Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota. This includes a number of U.S.-born workers, as we learned not just from the number of *Militants* we sold, but from the thumbs-up signs we got for our bilingual signs that said "Equal rights for all immigrants."

In South Sioux City we met Silvia and Martín Ledesma. They are fighting for justice for her brother and his brother, who have been in prison since 1995 serving life sentences on frame-up charges of kidnapping and rape. The Ledesmas are fighters for the rights of Mexican workers, and they are union militants as well. Both are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

We also learned more about the farm crisis on the trip. We ran into a corn farmer going door-to-door in Fremont, Nebraska. He said, "I pay \$2.60 a bushel to grow it, and I only get \$1.63 a bushel when I sell it. You can't make any money." He told us he thought prices will not go back up anytime soon.

In Omaha we sold at the gate of Offutt Air Force Base, with a sign that said "U.S./NATO Troops Out of Yugoslavia!" One airman bought a paper, saying he hoped he wouldn't have to go to the Balkans. Several waved or gave us the high sign; only a few yelled hostile comments.

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

April 1 - June 27

Country	Goal	Sold	%
Iceland	4	4	100%
New Zealand			
Auckland	20	18	90%
Christchurch	14	12	86%
N.Z. Total	34	30	88%
Sweden	6	5	83%
Canada			
Montreal	7	7	100%
Vancouver	21	18	86%
Toronto	50	28	56%
Canada Total	78	53	68%
United Kingdom			
London	41	31	76%
Manchester	17	5	29%
UK Total	58	36	62%
United States			
Atlanta	40	31	78%
Washington, D.C.	60	43	72%
Pittsburgh	40	24	60%
San Francisco	136	79	58%
Detroit	78	38	49%
Seattle	50	24	48%
Los Angeles	82	37	45%
Miami	45	20	44%
Des Moines	55	22	40%
Houston	70	28	40%
Birmingham	60	23	38%
C. Illinois	17	6	35%
New York	120	41	34%
Twin Cities, MN	50	17	34%
Newark	150	49	33%
Boston	50	15	30%
Chicago	75	22	29%
Philadelphia	50	13	26%
Cleveland	60	14	23%
S. Minnesota	14	1	7%
U.S. Total	1302	547	42%
Australia	20	8	40%
Int'l total	1502	683	45%
Total goal/should be	1500	1095	73%

MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE In the unions

	Militant		% Goal	PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold		Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Australia							
MUA	2	1	50%			1	0
AMWU	3	1	33%			2	0
Australia total	5	2	40%			3	0
Canada							
IAM	5	2	40%			4	0
USWA	7	1	14%	1	1	6	0
UNITE	4	0	0%	1	1	6	0
Canada total	16	3	19%	2	2	16	0
New Zealand							
EU	3	1	33%				
MWU	2	0	0%				
SFWU	2	0	0%				
N.Z. total	7	1	14%				
United States							
UNITE	15	3	20%	20	3	12	1
PACE (Houston)	7	1	14%	1	0	3	0
UAW	40	5	13%	4	0	15	0
IAM	50	6	12%	12	0	20	2
UTU	50	6	12%	5	0	20	0
UFCW	35	0	0%	25	0	20	0
USWA	35	0	0%	4	0	20	0
U.S. total	232	21	9%	71	3	110	3

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder' IN THE UNIONS

	Goals	Sold	%
United States			
PACE (Houston)	15	14	93%
UTU	80	49	61%
USWA	80	41	51%
UAW	75	38	51%
IAM	110	49	45%
UFCW	80	19	24%
UNITE	70	14	20%
Total	510	224	44%
Should be	500	385	77%
United Kingdom			
TGWU	7	2	29%
RMT	4	1	25%
AEEU	2	0	0%
Total	6	3	50%
Canada			
IAM	7	5	71%
USWA	7	3	43%
UFCW	3	0	0%
Canada total	17	8	47%
Australia			
AMWU	5	2	40%
MUA	4	0	0%
Total	9	2	22%

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

Working class is target of U.S.-led assault

Continued from front page

last name not be used, was characteristic of the scorn for the people of Yugoslavia that the U.S.-NATO forces have increasingly displayed after two and a half months of ceaseless air raids. The brutal bombings have reduced much of Yugoslavia's industry and infrastructure to rubble and brought devastation to the country's working class. The last two days of May, air strikes on a bridge in Varvarin, a medical facility in Surdulica, and apartment buildings in the overwhelmingly Muslim city Novi Pazar killed more than 40 civilians.

The U.S.-NATO assault has had a wearing impact on the youth and working people of Yugoslavia. It also produced the first signs that the regime of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic is conceding most of Washington's demands.

On the 72nd day of the bombing, Serbia's parliament approved a "peace plan" proposed by Moscow's envoy, Victor Chernomyrdin, and Finland's president, Martti Ahtisaari, who was representing the European Union. The two visited Belgrade June 2-3 to present the latest ultimatum by the imperialist powers attacking Yugoslavia. Prior to the visit, Moscow signaled agreement with NATO demands it had earlier rejected, such as the virtually complete withdrawal of Belgrade's forces from Kosova.

The plan approved by Serbia's parliament includes a provision for such a withdrawal to take place within a week. A limited number of Belgrade's troops, in the hundreds, are supposed to be allowed back later to take up positions at key border crossings. The plan also accepts the deployment in Kosova, under United Nations auspices, of an international force "with an essential NATO participation"; the return of all refugees and displaced people; and an interim administration of Kosova to be decided by the UN Security Council. Kosova is to remain formally within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with "substantial autonomy."

Washington indicated it has no intention of halting the bombing short of implementation of its demands. "Until Serb forces begin a verifiable withdrawal from Kosovo, we will continue to pursue diplomacy, but we will also continue the military effort," said U.S. president William Clinton June 3. He was meeting that day with Pentagon officials to discuss a plan for deploying a 150,000-strong NATO force to invade Yugoslavia this summer if the Milosevic regime does not capitulate. "What is essential is that the military action contin-

ues," British prime minister Anthony Blair chimed in, in his usual excessively arrogant manner.

Among Washington's allies — who are also

first name. "But it is capitulation." The Milosevic regime is particularly pointing to the absence of any reference to a referendum that could lead to independence of Kosova, one of the clauses in the earlier accord in Rambouillet, France, that preceded the March 24 launching of the NATO air strikes. Belgrade refused to sign the Rambouillet agreement.

The Serbian parliament approved the accord by a vote of 136 in favor, 72 against, and 3 abstentions. Deputies of the Serbian Radical Party, which many people in Yugoslavia describe as fascist, voted against and the party's head Vojislav Seselj vowed to resign from the government once the first NATO troops are deployed in Kosova. Milosevic's Socialist Party backed the deal.

The opposition Civic Al-

ton, Ohio, for talks that authorized Washington to spearhead an occupation army in Bosnia of about 60,000 NATO troops, including 20,000 from the United States. NATO troops remain in Bosnia today, with no settled departure date.

"Hypocrites like Clinton and Jamie Shea may be smiling now," said Dusan. Shea is NATO's spokesman, infamous for peddling Washington's justifications for the bombing. "They are responsible for killing so many people. I hate to see their troops in Kosova. But under the circumstances it may be the lesser evil."

The other option people of Yugoslavia would have faced was a ground invasion, Dusan said. "In a ground war, many American soldiers would have died as they did in Vietnam. But also many Serbian people. With such a reactionary regime in power in Belgrade, it would have been very difficult to defeat the strongest empire on earth."

This opinion was shared by most of the students and trade unionists interviewed by the *Militant*.

"If the war stops we'll be able to resume political activities," said Dusan, who is a leader of the Students Union of Yugoslavia. The organization is among the largest student groups in the country. It was in the forefront of protests for democratic rights two years ago, which forced the Milosevic regime to back off from annulling municipal election results that brought an opposition coalition to power in most of Serbia's largest cities. The Students Union also organized antiwar canvassing throughout the country last year, to oppose the Milosevic regime's repressive policies in Kosova. Since March 24, the Students Union has had to curb all street actions under the war emergency measures, Dusan said.

Others were less optimistic.

"I am not so sure about how easy it will be to organize public activities again," said Martina Vukasovic, 19, a mathematics student at Belgrade University, in a June 3 phone interview. "There is no longer any media independent from the state. It will take time even if the bombing ends."

"There is no peace until the bombing ends," said Branislav Canak, president of Nezavisnost (Independence), the trade union federation independent of government control.

Main target: industrial working class

A number of people pointed to the so-called "collateral" damage from the NATO air strikes and the wearing impact of the war on increasing layers of working people.

On May 30, four NATO warplanes bombed the bridge over the Juzna Morava River in Varvarin, a small town in southern Serbia, near Krusevac, an industrial center of 80,000 people. "They hit the bridge in the middle of the day, at lunch time, as people were using it to go to the market," said Dusan. "One person was killed and several wounded with the first attack. Hundreds of people then gathered to see what happened and help the wounded. In less than 20 minutes the planes came back and dropped more bombs on the crowd that was gathered. The skies were very clear. They could see." At least 9 people were killed and 28 wounded.

The next day, U.S.-NATO bombs and missiles hit the Special Hospital for Tuberculosis and Pulmonary Diseases in the southern town of Surdulica, killing 20 people and wounding 50. Two other missiles struck a senior citizens' home within the complex.

Earlier on May 31, a residential area in Novi Pazar, a capital of Sanjak, a region in Serbia inhabited overwhelmingly by Muslims was struck, killing 14 people.

In each of these cases, U.S. and NATO officials claimed civilian casualties were mistakes. This has continued to arouse questions and opposition to Washington's course, including in Albania. "They are making too many 'mistakes,'" said Albert Shyti in a telephone interview from Vlore, Albania. "It's not believable."

The human toll at the beginning of June exceeded 1,500 civilians dead and 5,000 wounded as a direct result of the nearly 32,000 bombing sorties, according to Belgrade's fig-



Above, an apartment building burning in Belgrade, June 1. The building caught fire as residents were cooking with firewood, which the apartments are not equipped to do. Constant cuts of electricity, due to U.S.-NATO bombings of power stations, have brought many new hardships in the daily lives of working people throughout Yugoslavia.

Right, a boy in Cuprija, a small town in central Serbia, looks at his house demolished in a May 29 NATO attack that devastated the city center, injuring 10 people. U.S. government officials claimed this was once again "collateral" damage to a military target.



competitors — in Europe, German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder tried to paint a more optimistic picture. He termed the deal Belgrade agreed to a "political breakthrough," adding, "Peace in my opinion is very close." The government of Germany has vehemently opposed any steps towards a NATO ground invasion of Yugoslavia. This stance comes amid a weakening of the German economy and the mark, which has dragged the euro down significantly against the U.S. dollar. Paris, which has often been at odds with Washington's foreign policy, also celebrated the deal as "the outcome that we wanted."

Reactions by youth, working people

In telephone interviews with a number of students and trade unionists in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, and other cities, most described the accord as capitulation of the regime, but also expressed reserved hopes that the war may end.

"The state media is going out of its way to describe the deal as some 'great victory,'" said Vladimir, a student at the University of Novi Sad who asked to be identified only with his

liance called for the resignation of the government, saying Belgrade could have accepted very similar terms earlier, before hundreds were killed in the NATO assault.

"Milosevic is acting like he did with the Dayton accord in Bosnia and earlier with the first breakup of Yugoslavia," said Dusan. "He first turns down any compromise, leading to war and ruin. And then he signs something that's as bad or worse than before the bombing."

In the early 1990s, as the rival regimes tried to tear apart the Yugoslav federation by fighting over control of territory and resources to maintain their parasitic existence, Dusan said, "Milosevic turned down proposals for a more loose confederation of the Yugoslav republics and instead pressed for war. We could have been more united. But look at where the country is at today. Milosevic doesn't care about the Serbian people or Yugoslavia. He has simply used the strife in Kosova to stay in power."

Washington and other imperialist powers intervened and used the conflict from the beginning to advance their competing interests by fueling the war. The U.S. rulers in particular began reconstructing NATO in the 1990s on the corpses of the Yugoslav people. They aimed to reinforce Washington's dominance over rival capitalist powers in the Atlantic alliance and lay the foundations for returning Yugoslavia to the complete domination of capitalism. They acted simultaneously to tighten Washington's military encirclement of the workers state in Russia and other former Soviet republics.

In the early 1990s the U.S. government sabotaged one initiative after another by Paris, Bonn, and London to act as power brokers in the war-ravaged Yugoslav workers state; each hoped to gain military and economic leverage against Washington and against one another. As failures mounted for the European occupation force in Bosnia, operating under a UN flag, and as diplomatic efforts foundered, Washington pressed successfully for U.S.-led NATO air strikes and naval and ground shelling against Serbian forces, conducting more than 3,000 such assaults between February 1994 and September 1995.

In late 1995, after this sustained bombardment, the U.S. rulers brought representatives of the Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian forces to the Wright-Patterson Air Force base in Day-

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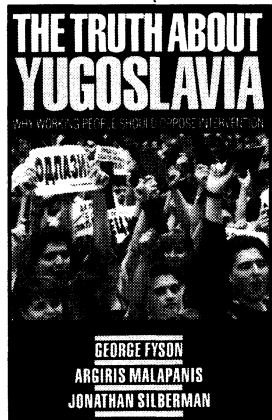
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ures. The Yugoslav government has also acknowledged that 1,800 of its troops have been killed.

Branislav Canak of Nezavisnost made another point. "It's not simply 'civilians' who are being murdered," he said. "Their main target is the working class, especially industrial workers. You can't explain otherwise the systematic destruction of factories. How can workers organize and fight for their rights if there are no factories, if their workplaces are destroyed?"

According to unofficial figures, more than 90 percent of Serbia's 3 million workers are now unemployed, double the prewar figure. Most of the heavy industry has been destroyed. The recent targeting of power stations across the republic has brought daily cuts in electricity and drinking water, as pumps can no longer function, as well as shortages of basic staples such as bread. "We haven't had electricity for the last four days," said Marco Kokic, a technical school student in Belgrade June 3. "It only comes on for about an hour or two at 3 in the morning."

"Belgrade now gets 25 percent of the electricity it needs," said Vukasovic. "It's worse in other parts of the country." Public transportation in Belgrade has been curtailed to a minimum. A reduced number of buses run mainly during the morning rush hour and between 1 and 4 p.m. "At other times there are basically no buses or trams. And there are no street lights."

Major industrial centers like Nis, Serbia's second-largest city, have been particularly devastated. "They bombed the industrial strip as you come into town again today," said Duci Petrovic, a student at the university of Nis who comes from a working-class family, in a June 3 interview. Two days earlier NATO warplanes destroyed the warehouse of the Tobacco Industry of Nis, the country's largest cigarette manufacturing complex that used to employ 3,000 workers. "They destroyed the remaining supply of cigarettes," Petrovic said. The main production facility had been bombed in early April.

"People are being worn down here," Petrovic added. "We have no water at home, no electricity to cook, and lately bread is scarce along with sugar and cooking oil. I no longer watch television. We've been reduced to mere survival, not living."

Self-determination for Kosova?

Under the circumstances the possibility for an end to the bombing seem positive to many young people and workers. "We don't want NATO troops anywhere in Yugoslavia," said Bojan, a member of the Students Union in Novi Sad. "But after everything Milosevic has done, we will be in a better position to fight for democratic rights again if the war ends." Bojan said Belgrade has passed a new law prohibit-

most of them to Macedonia and Albania in the last two and a half months — half the prewar population of 1.8 million Albanians in the province.

Others pointed to the possibility of renewing contacts with Albanian students in Kosova, if the deportees are allowed to return. In early 1998, delegations of Serbian students organized by the Students Union of Yugoslavia joined mass rallies for the national rights of Albanians in Kosova and attempted to forge alliances with their counterparts.

"We may be able to renew these contacts and start rebuilding bridges that both NATO and Milosevic have done everything they could to destroy," said Dusan from Novi Sad. "We must do that whether the Kosovars are going to remain citizens of Yugoslavia or be close neighbors."

"This will not be easy, but we have to go out of our way to rebuild confidence in each other and trust," said Vukasovic. "The only way to do that is by supporting the right of self-determination for Kosova. I would like for Kosova to remain part of Yugoslavia, but only if there can be established mutual equal-



Tobacco factory in Nis, Yugoslavia, that was destroyed by U.S.-NATO bombing on April 15. At the end of May, NATO warplanes bombed the factory warehouse, destroying remaining supplies of cigarettes, which are now in even shorter supply. Working people are incensed at these attacks, in a country where the majority smoke and at a time when cigarettes are in higher demand due to the nerve-racking conditions of war.

M. Desotovic

ity and respect of all nationalities. It's hard to imagine how we can accomplish that with the same government in power."

A growing number of Serbs who supported simply the return of autonomy to Kosova and opposed the repressive policies of the Milosevic regime are now supporting the right to self-determination in Kosova. Nezavisnost, which has been working with a growing num-



Jovan Nikolic sits in his house in the town of Pancevo, an industrial center near Belgrade, which was damaged in a June 2 U.S.-NATO bombing. "The working class will rebuild Yugoslavia against both the bureaucrats in power here and the U.S. imperialists," said Branislav Canak, president of Nezavisnost, the independent union federation in Serbia.

anted their national, cultural, and religious identity and to enjoy the widest possible autonomy and even independence if, after peace is achieved through a just and peaceful politi-

European Union member states announced June 3 they had agreed for the EU to take over the military powers of the Western European Union, a dormant military alliance of the EU powers that are also members of NATO. The EU has had no military function until now.

This coincides with the fall of the euro, the attempted common currency in the European Union launched at the beginning of this year, fueled mainly by the economic and military weakness of Bonn vis-à-vis Washington.

The euro has declined 12 percent against the U.S. dollar since January 4. "The euro's plunge," said an article in the June 3 *New York Times* "has also put the spotlight on Germany, which accounts for one-third of the 11-nation euro-zone.... Economic growth is running well below 2 percent, slower than any other euro zone country but Italy. Its exports are languishing, investment capital is heading overseas and unemployment remains stuck above 10 percent."

Other politicians and pundits point to the U.S. economy that remains much stronger than any of the EU countries.

Some point to the continued inability of the ruling class in a number of countries to use to strict "budget deficit" criteria that accompany the launching of the euro to push further cuts in the social wage. "Investors were rattled last week when European finance ministers agreed to let Italy run a slightly higher budget deficit than it had originally promised. The war for Kosova underpins such pessimism."

As Washington is making headway against its rivals in the European Union, sharpening interimperialist competition in the process, it is also pushing along its collision course with Beijing and Moscow.

On June 2, as Chemomydrin and Ahtisaari headed for Belgrade, the Chinese and Russian governments repeated their demand that NATO air strikes be halted before further negotiations to solve the crisis in Yugoslavia. Russia's foreign minister Igor Ivanov spent the day in Beijing meeting with top Chinese government officials. Both sides announced their mutual desire to foster a "strategic partnership" aimed at countering Washington's hegemony.

U.S. dominance and fall of the 'euro'

Meanwhile, the U.S. rulers have been doing their utmost to use the turn of events to consolidate Washington's domination as the number one military and economic power in Europe. As Washington pressed the bombing assault and began preparing a possible ground invasion, it fueled rifts between the U.S. rulers and Bonn and Paris. Officials of the 15



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Albanian farmer trying to repair tractor at camp in Kukes, Albania, May 2. He drove his tractor over border into Albania, expelled from Kosova with his family by Belgrade's forces. A growing number of youth and trade unionists in Serbia are trying to build alliances with fellow Albanians and support self-determination for Kosova.

ing political activities inside universities. "But we'll set up tables in front of the schools and fight for our rights anyway."

Bojan and his organization have been vocal opponents of Belgrade's "ethnic cleansing" in Kosova. The brutalization and mass expulsions by Belgrade have resulted in nearly 900,000 Kosovar Albanians being deported,

ber of nongovernmental organizations, has produced statements leaning in this direction. Among others who defend the interests of working people around the world, the Cuban government issued a statement saying it "strongly condemns the monstrous crime against the Serb people, while supporting the right of the Albanian Kosovars to be fully guar-



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Workers at Rekor Albania S.A., a shoe factory and leather-tanning plant in Gjirokaster, Albania, May 4. A large percentage of workers there were opposed to NATO assault on Yugoslavia, drawing from their experience with imperialist troops occupying their country after they rebelled and brought down the procapitalist regime of Sali Berisha in 1997.

Cuban generals: 'We're not veterans, Interview with leaders of the Association of Combatants

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA, Cuba — "We're not veterans — we're combatants," Brig. Gen. Gustavo Chui Beltrán affirmed.

"As members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, we're not like those who sit around talking, holding social events and living from their memories of history. We're engaged in the day-to-day struggle for the unconditional defense of our socialist revolution."

Chui Beltrán, together with Brig. Gen. Sergio Pérez Lezcano, both reserve officers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) of Cuba, spoke with *Militant* reporters at the national headquarters of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution (ACRC) in Havana on May 24. Chui Beltrán is the secretary of finances of the association. Pérez Lezcano is its deputy executive secretary and heads the organizational bureau.

As we sat down to talk, the intensifying U.S.-NATO war against the people of Yugoslavia was uppermost in their concerns, and the Cuban generals wanted to make their position clear. "In face of the indiscriminate bombing of the Yugoslav people by the U.S. government and NATO," Chui Beltrán said, "we condemn the genocide being carried out against this sister people and demand an immediate halt to the massacre and a settlement through peaceful means."

The Association of Combatants brings together revolutionary fighters of several generations in Cuba. Its prominent role today is part of the initiatives by the vanguard of the revolution, including the fighters of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, in taking the political offensive to confront the challenges that stem from the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and its effects on the Caribbean nation.

The combatants carry out work in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods to win a new generation to the fight for socialism by telling the history of the Cuban revolution through their own experiences and setting an example through their day-to-day activity.

This was the second opportunity *Militant* reporters had to speak with Chui Beltrán and Pérez Lezcano. The earlier occasion, in



First national conference of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, held Dec. 5, 1998, in Havana. Banner reads: "This is a people of fighters."

November of last year, was on the eve of their first national conference.

The ACRC is a young organization, they explained. "We held our founding conference five years ago, on Dec. 5, 1993," said Pérez Lezcano. "It was during the most difficult period of the revolution." He was referring to the early years of the economic crisis in Cuba, commonly known on the island as the Special Period, that was precipitated in 1990 by the abrupt loss of 85 percent of the nation's foreign trade as the Soviet bloc regimes disintegrated.

Several generations of combatants

Today the association has 300,000 members organized in 11,200 neighborhood committees throughout the island. It is "totally voluntary, nongovernmental, and self-financing," Pérez Lezcano pointed out.

Who are the members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution?

"It is made up of three generations of combatants," Chui Beltrán explained. "The first generation is made up of combatants from the 1930s and '40s," he said, includ-

ing those who fought against the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado as well as Cuban internationalists who fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the republican forces against the fascists. Some of these fighters are now in their 70s and 80s.

"Then there is the generation of combatants from the end of the 1940s to just before the triumph of the revolution in 1959," Chui Beltrán said. Many members of the association fought in the Rebel Army, which under the command of Fidel Castro directed the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959 and opened the road to Cuba's socialist revolution. The president of the association is Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida, a leader of the Communist Party of Cuba who was one of the leaders of the Rebel Army and July 26 Revolutionary Movement.

"And then there is the generation that came after the triumph of the revolution, including the youngest ones, who carried out internationalist missions, such as those who fought in Angola and Ethiopia," Chui Beltrán noted. Some of these are as young as 28 years old.

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans served as volunteers in Angola between 1975 and 1990, fighting alongside the Angolan people to defeat successive invasions by South Africa's apartheid regime. Cuba sent thousands of volunteer troops to Ethiopia in 1977 to help beat back a U.S.-supported invasion by the Somali regime.

Chui Beltrán and Pérez Lezcano themselves have been revolutionary fighters since they joined the Rebel Army in the late 1950s.

"My father, of Chinese origin, had a small business in my home town in Santiago de Cuba," Chui Beltrán recounted. "I joined the underground in Santiago when I was 16 or 17 years old. I functioned in the under-

ground as a guerrilla until a few days after the April 1958 strike."

When the ill-prepared April 9, 1958 general strike, called for by the revolutionary forces, was quickly crushed and the Batista dictatorship escalated its offensive against the movement, he and others in the eastern city of Santiago "were forced to go to the mountains. I went up the Sierra Maestra and joined the Mario Muñoz Monroy Third Eastern Front, led by Commander Almeida.

"I was in the guerrilla struggle until the triumph of the revolution," Chui Beltrán said. "I arrived in Havana on Jan. 8, 1959," with the main columns of the Rebel Army headed by Fidel Castro. He has been in the Revolutionary Armed Forces ever since.

"I carried out two internationalist missions in Angola, in 1976-77 and 1987-88. During the second one I fell on an anti-tank mine and lost a leg," Chui Beltrán said.

Pérez Lezcano related his background. "I grew

up in a poor peasant family in Pinar del Río, and I've been working since I was 10 years old. When I was 14, I moved to the city and studied, with a great deal of effort, at a business school. When Batista imposed his dictatorship — with all the torture, persecution of students, assassinations it unleashed — I came to Havana and then went to Santa Clara, where I joined the guerrillas in the Escambray mountains with Che." He fought under the command of Ernesto Che Guevara in the battle of Santa Clara in the final days of 1958, which helped seal the fate of the tyranny.

In 1979 Pérez Lezcano took part in an internationalist mission to Nicaragua, shortly after the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship and the opening of the revolution in that Central American nation.

"It's been 40 years, but it seems like yesterday," Chui Beltrán remarked. "We went through all the phases in the struggle, from the underground struggle, to the *guerrilla* in the Sierra Maestra, and all the different stages since the triumph of the revolution."

These included, he said, Cuba's defeat of the U.S.-orchestrated mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs (referred to as Playa Girón in Cuba) in 1961, the struggle to crush counterrevolutionary bandits in the Escambray mountains in the early 1960s, and the October Crisis in 1962, (which the U.S. government calls the Cuban Missile Crisis), when Cuban working people forced Washington — which had brought the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust — to back off from invading the island.

Those eligible to join the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, Pérez Lezcano explained, include "combatants of the FAR and the Ministry of the Interior, who must have at least 15 years' service to be eligible to join. Other categories of combatants are not required to have a minimum number of years of service, but must have taken part in action, such as the struggle against the bandits in the Escambray or elsewhere, Playa Girón, and internationalist missions.

"The Association of Combatants also includes the founders of the Border Battalion at Guantánamo, next to the U.S. naval base, as well as the 15 women militia leaders from the first officer training course of the Revolutionary National Militias."

Referring to the latter group, Chui Beltrán explained that in the early years of the revolution, as working people organized into popular militias to defend their revolution, "there were two or three courses for militia

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we're combatants' of the Cuban Revolution

leaders. In the first course there were 15 women who were trained as officers. They went on to lead militia battalions and companies."

In addition, the association also admits the mothers and fathers of those who have died fighting in defense of the revolution.

Work in schools, factories, communities

Above all, the Association of Combatants focuses its political work on winning the young generations to a revolutionary working-class perspective — to do with their lives what many of these combatants have been doing for more than four decades.

In the schools, says Pérez Lezcano, "we carry out what we call patriotic-military-internationalist work. We convey our experiences as combatants to children and youth, from elementary school to high school, pre-university, and university students. Our members aren't academic lecturers. They talk about their own lives to audiences of youth."

Chui Beltrán explained that "every school is linked to a neighborhood Association of Combatants. We give talks to the students about the history of the revolution both nationally and in that particular community."

"When the combatants go to the schools and give talks, the students love it — and so do the teachers, because the

combatants are telling about their own experiences. For example, someone who fought alongside Che will talk about their experiences in battle with him, explaining what Che was like.

"That's important. The teachers know history because they read and study it, and they can explain things theoretically, but it's often not from their own experience. So the teacher can talk about a historical event, and then the combatant will come and tell how that event actually occurred and what he did in it.

national Days of Defense are part of the revolutionary leadership's strategy, known as the War of the Entire People, of organizing millions of Cubans for the defense of the revolution against any imperialist assault.

"All the combatants, only a minority of whom are retired, play an important role in the military reserves," Chui Beltrán explained. "And we are always the first when it comes to the Days of Defense, and in preparing the Production and Defense Brigades in the factories. Those of us who have jobs participate in the defense units in our work-



Militant/Martin Koppel

places. And we take part in the units in our neighborhoods."

The Association of Combatants does political work in the neighborhoods. It collaborates with all the mass organizations in the country, such as the Union of Young Communists, Federation of Cuban Women, Central Organization of Cuban Workers, and National Association of Small Farmers. Members of the association set an example by joining volunteer brigades to bring in the sugar, coffee, or tobacco harvests.

"The work of our members with these

"We're not an elite that lives removed from that struggle. Wherever there is a problem, you'll see the combatants stepping forward."

"This living history is something we must not lose. We must revive it and keep it for the future."

He added, "Our combatants are now going to speak at the universities too. Many of us are a little intimidated by the universities, because of the high cultural level there. But we've broken through that fear now, and we're doing work with groups of university students."

The Association of Combatants is also present in factories and other workplaces. "We educate other workers, giving talks on dates that commemorate a historical event or the death in combat of a martyr of the revolution," Chui Beltrán noted. "The combatants all signed the Declaration of the Mambises of the 20th Century. We took part in that effort and got people to sign it in all the neighborhoods and workplaces."

The "Declaration of the Mambises" — referring to the 19th century plebeian fighters for Cuba's independence from Spain, or *mambises* — was a 1997 statement signed by military officers and hundreds of thousands of other Cubans expressing support for the revolution and rejecting a public appeal by the Clinton administration to Cuban officers to overthrow the central leadership of the revolutionary government in exchange for some U.S. funds.

The combatants also play a role in military training activities, from the army reserves to the popular militias in workplaces and neighborhoods. Mobilizations such as the

institutions is all voluntary," Chui Beltrán stressed. "Since the big majority of the combatants are of working age and hold jobs, we usually do our work outside normal working hours. Members of the association do a lot of work in the evenings and on Saturdays and Sundays. We go to our meetings, we work with the mass organizations, in the schools, in the workplaces. The combatants are everywhere."

"In other words, we're not an elite that lives removed from that struggle. Wherever there is a problem, you'll see the combatants stepping forward."

Women combatants

The two generals underscored the role played by women in the Association of Combatants. Of the 300,000 members of the association, some 5 percent are women today. "We have women combatants from all the different periods in the revolution," Chui Beltrán pointed out. "The majority of them are young internationalists. They have served in various countries as combatants, nurses, FAR officers, or in other capacities. For example, the president of the Association of Combatants in Guantánamo province is Victoria Arrúes Caraballo, who was the head of the women's antiaircraft artillery battalion in Angola."

He noted that "women have played a crucial role in the fight for our country's independence and sovereignty since the time of the *mambises*. During the war for liberation



Above, members of Cuban women's antiaircraft artillery battalion at a ceremony marking their return from internationalist mission to Angola in late 1980s, where Cuban volunteers fought alongside Angolan fighters to defeat invasion by the South African apartheid regime. The head of this battalion is currently the president of the Association of Combatants in Guantánamo province. "The majority of women members of the Association are young internationalists," noted Cuban Brig. Gen. Gustavo Chui Beltrán, seated at right in adjacent photo.

Members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution (ACRC) dedicate themselves to winning the young generations to a revolutionary working-class perspective — to do with their lives what many of these combatants have been doing for more than four decades. Left, Cuban brigadier generals Chui Beltrán and Sergio Pérez Lezcano (seated at left) during November 14 interview with *Militant* reporters. Both have been active revolutionaries since the late 1950s when they joined the Rebel Army headed by Fidel Castro, which led Cuban workers and farmers in the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959.

in the Sierra Maestra, for example, we had the Mariana Grajales women's platoon, which was initiated by Fidel.

"Today one of the generals of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, who is part of the leadership of the Association of Combatants, is Brig. Gen. Delsa Esther Puebla, who everyone calls Teté. She was a member of the Mariana Grajales platoon during the revolutionary war."

"The Cuban revolution itself has had many internal revolutions, and one of them was the liberation of women," Chui Beltrán added.

Balance sheet of first five years

Commenting on the first national conference of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, held December 5 in Havana, Pérez Lezcano said the meeting drew a balance sheet of their first five years. Leading up to the national gathering, discussions were organized in the 11,000 local associations as well as on the municipal and provincial levels. Some 600 delegates and 300 guests from around the island attended

the conference.

"We think we've consolidated ourselves as an organization that defends the revolution," he remarked. "We went into that conference with much more experience, maturity, and unity."

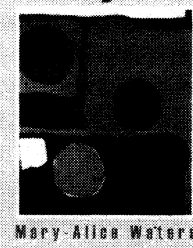
"I say more unity because, before the association was founded, we were combatants from different generations who did not know each other. Sometimes we even lived in the same neighborhood, on the same block, but didn't work together as we are doing now."

Chui Beltrán agreed with Pérez Lezcano on the advances made by the Association of Combatants. He added, "Our great task is to work with the new generation — to help prepare them for the future and for today. We explain to them that under capitalism, a small group of people live well but the big majority live under terrible conditions."

"That's why we're working and fighting so hard. I tell other combatants that the revolution is once again offering us a responsibility — to unite in order to help educate the new generation. We have an important, historic task to fulfill."

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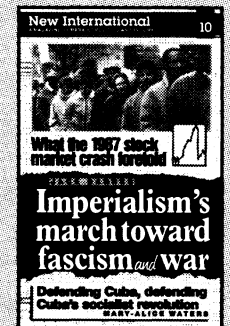
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'Capitalism's World Disorder' is top seller for Pathfinder at book fair in Iran

BY TONY HUNT

TEHRAN, Iran — People bought 26 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* at the 12th Tehran International Book Fair. It was the best seller among nearly 500 books sold at the Pathfinder Distribution stand, including many titles by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and books about the Cuban revolution.

More than 1 million people from every corner of the country attended the May 4-14 fair. This annual event is a conquest of the 1979 Iranian revolution, which overthrew the dictatorship of the U.S.-backed monarch, the shah. By popular demand the government hosts the international fair, as well as local book fairs, to help make literature more accessible to the Iranian masses, especially scientific and technical texts. Books published abroad are heavily subsidized by the government to make their purchase possible. President Mohammad Khatami, opening the fair this year, proposed that the subsidy be increased. This reduced prices by one-third.

The biggest section of the fair is the area selling books in Farsi, the official language in Iran. In addition, there were 295 foreign publishers displaying books this year, with the largest number of titles in English.

Fair officials reported there was an increase in the number of Arab publishers this year. The majority came from Lebanon and Syria, but there were also sellers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan.

Publishers from foreign countries generally experienced higher sales this year, due in part to the last-minute increase in the Iranian government subsidy and also to greater demand for books of all kinds. This was true of the Pathfinder Distribution booth, which sold nearly 100 more books than last year.

One woman decided to buy *Capitalism's World Disorder* because she opposed the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and supported self-determination for Kosova. The imperialists' drive toward war was an important factor in several visitors choosing this book. Others picked it up to read about where the author places the Iranian revolution in world politics. Quite a few customers were struck by the photo display in the book, such as the graphic pictures of police brutality in the United States and protests against it.

Fifteen copies were sold of *New International* no. 11, featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War." That title was quite controversial and led to many discussions. Often people bought it because they were looking for an explanation of what has happened in the workers states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Thirty-four *New Internationals*, in English, French, and Spanish, were sold.

The single most popular authors at the booth were Marx and Engels. Sixty-eight



More than 1 million people attended the 12th international book fair in Tehran May 4-14, organizers reported. The fair is a conquest of 1979 Iranian revolution.

books by or about them were purchased in addition to two sets of their 47-volume *Collected Works*, seven sets of *Capital*, and one set of their *Selected Works*. Also popular were *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.

A set of V.I. Lenin's *Collected Works* and one of Leon Trotsky's *Writings* were purchased. While university libraries and research centers bought some of these volumes, there was a noticeable number of young people buying Marxist classics as well. Two young women bought a set of *Capital* and explained they felt it was important today to study the fundamentals of Marxism.

Seventy-three books by and about lead-

ers of the Cuban revolution were sold. The top sellers in this category were the pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Imperialist Reality* by Mary-Alice Waters and *New International* no. 8, on the theme "Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism." Many youth identified with Cuba as a country standing up to imperialism.

Quite a few people were attracted to the stand because they saw pictures of Guevara. Several young people gathered around a copy of Guevara's *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. They were studying a photo of him performing volunteer construction labor while serving as a government minister. Others noted that the Cuban leadership is different from that recently overturned in the

Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. One older man explained that he had once visited Cuba and was struck by the mass support displayed there for Fidel Castro.

As sales of *Capitalism's World Disorder* showed, substantial numbers of those visiting the stand were interested in learning more about U.S. politics. Six people bought *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, in English, French, or Spanish. A similar number picked up books by Socialist Workers Party leader James P. Cannon on building a revolutionary party in the United States. Three young men from Qom, the nation's religious center, bought *Genocide against the Indians*, *A Packinghouse Worker's Fight for Justice*, and *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota*.

Titles by Malcolm X were also popular. One man said he was pleased that Pathfinder publishes Malcolm's books: "I see you don't discriminate against Muslims."

Dozens of Pathfinder titles on the Palestinian struggle, Israel, and the Jewish question were sold. Ten people bought copies of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. Books by George Novack, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, were also popular, with 49 copies sold.

Meanwhile, on sale in the Farsi area of the book fair were five Pathfinder titles translated into Farsi by Talaye Porsoo, a Tehran-based publisher. These included one new book, *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, which sold 25 copies. The leading sellers in Farsi were *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara, 62 copies, and Thomas Sankara's *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, 42 copies. Also sold were 13 copies of *Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War* and 5 copies of *Opening Guns of World War III*.

Communist League candidate in Toronto denounces U.S.-Canada-NATO war

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — "I am campaigning to get the truth out about NATO's war against the people of Yugoslavia and the Canadian government's participation in it," said Rosemary Ray, speaking at a campaign rally here May 29. Ray is an auto parts worker and member of the United Steelworkers of America. She is the candidate for the Communist League in the York West constituency in the June 3, Ontario Provincial Elections.

"Many people who stopped by my campaign table expressed the view that Ottawa, even though it is participating in the bombings, is at least trying to help by bringing 5,000 people from Kosova here," she said.

"I explained that this government's so-called humanitarian efforts are just a cover for a war that is only in the interests of the employers here, in the United States, and in other imperialist countries."

"Workers from around the world passed by the table. A good number said there are more rights for people in Canada, because Canada is a 'multicultural country.' I explained that Canada, like the United States, is ruled by a small class of wealthy capitalist families and that Ottawa's official multiculturalism was used to hide this reality."

Ray reported that five people picked up copies of the *Militant* that day and one bought *New International* No. 8, which discusses the political contributions of Cuban leader Che Guevara to that country's socialist revolution. Several people left their names and phone numbers for possible subscriptions.

Polls suggest that Conservative premier Michael Harris will be returned for a second term in office. Elected four years ago under the banner of his right-wing "Common Sense Revolution," the Harris government has led a massive assault on the social wage of working people, cutting health care, education, and other social services needed by working people and restricting the rights of workers to unionize and strike. Opposition to Harris is divided between those voting for the Liberals — a capitalist party — and those voting for the New Democratic Party (NDP), a social democratic party with links to the unions.

In a taped session to be aired on Rogers Cable TV, Ray responded to questions dealing with health care, education, and other questions being addressed by her campaign.

"For working people, public education and free, quality health care should be right," said Ray. "We see this in practice in revolutionary Cuba today where the government defends the interests of workers and farmers. The Saskatchewan nurses showed the way to defend our rights in their recent strike. They defied back-to-work legislation and court injunctions, and they are ready to walk out again against the NDP government in that province

to defend their union and health care."

Ray also underlined the importance of the fight against the U.S.-led NATO war against the people of Yugoslavia. This war is the flip side of the employers' war against working people at home, Ray explained. "The aim of Washington and its allies is to impose the capitalist profit system on the working people of Yugoslavia by force. We should fight to get Canada's CF-18 bombers and all of NATO out of Yugoslavia, and support the struggle for self-determination for the people of Kosova," she said.

At a May 15 Militant Labor Forum where Ray launched her campaign, one worker asked why her campaign doesn't support the "strategic voting" tactic being advanced by a wing of the union officialdom. Ray explained that officials of the Canadian Auto Workers union, teachers, nurses, and other public sector unions are telling working people to vote for either NDP or Liberal candidates, whoever has the best chance of defeating the Conservatives. Officials of the Steelworkers, United Food and Commercial Workers, and other unions are urging a straight NDP vote.

"The Communist League does not think that the governments of any of these parties, including the NDP, will defend the interests of working people," said Ray. "But where workers cannot vote for the Communist League, if they do vote, they can vote against the Liberal and Conservative boss parties by voting for the NDP because it is organizationally linked to our unions."

The defense of workers' rights takes place on the picket lines and in the streets, Ray explained. "This is why I joined the picket line of the National Steel Car strikers in Hamilton. I invite you to participate in the Communist League campaign along with the Young Socialists by getting the *Militant* newspaper into the hands of fighting workers and youth and also convincing them to buy and read Pathfinder's latest book *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, which explains that capitalism is the root cause of the crisis working people face and how we can organize to get rid of this system."

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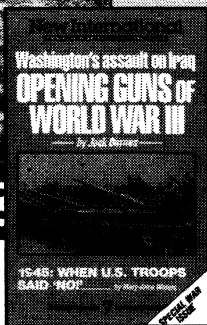
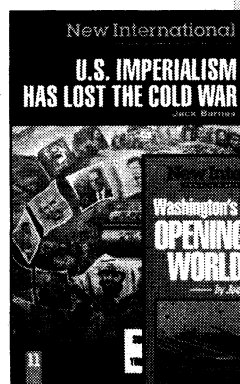
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U.S. 'mock invasion'

Continued from front page

was that the exercise had already taken place.

Brig. Gen. William Leszczynski testified that the army was given permission by Robert Bettelli, director of technical services for the CHA. Bettelli said he hadn't notified his boss because he had signed a secrecy oath.

The June 1 march, as well as an earlier picket line, targeted Chester mayor Dominic Pileggi, who also gave his permission for the assault.

Residents of the 500 block of Fairview Avenue in Camden, New Jersey, are also outraged by the May 13 U.S. Army "invasion" of their community.

Residents watched in bewilderment as dozens of men in black combat dress sprinted into an abandoned building across a narrow street from their homes. The residents report that the detonation of explosives and gunfire shook the neighborhood until 1:00 a.m. Windows in an adjacent abandoned building shattered from the blasts.

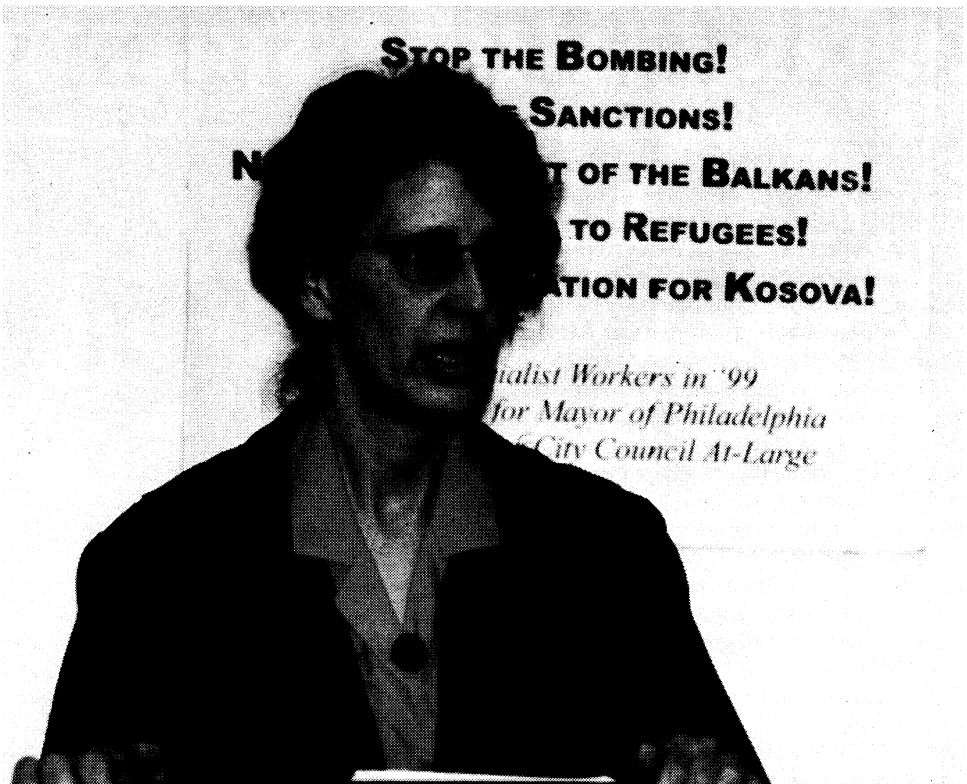
Mendingo Williams, whose home is directly opposite the invasion site, told *Militant* reporters that a Camden police officer on the scene told Williams he "was not obligated to tell me" what was going on.

Williams was not surprised that the army chose his neighborhood for the training exercise. "They could have done this where no one would see it," he said. "It was a fear tactic. They weren't hiding it. They are letting you know what they can do."

The Camden fire chief told the media that he was informed that operations were to prepare for the Republican Party convention, which will be held in Philadelphia in the year 2000. Army spokesmen denied this, stating that the training was for fighting "urban terrorism" in other countries.

"Exercise Roller Ghost" was part of national "counter-terrorism exercises" carried out by the U.S. Army in more than 20 other urban areas of since 1994. These include "Operation Urban Warrior" in the San Francisco Bay Area in March of this year. That exercise included "enemies" — actors portraying rioters, people said to be sheltering terrorists, and hungry earthquake victims. Similar exercises have been cut short in Houston, Pittsburgh, and Charlotte, North Carolina, after residents protested.

James McFadden contributed to this article.



Militant/Nancy Cole
Socialist Workers candidate for Philadelphia mayor Connie Allen denounced mock invasions by U.S. forces at May 28 Militant Labor Forum. (See statement on page 14.)

'Support is overwhelming' for shipyard strike

Continued from front page

\$1.90 in wage increases and \$30 in insurance increases. "This company is trying to do the same thing as Newport News" is trying, said Jack Beard, a member of Boilermakers Local 693, commenting on the offer June 3. "If they can stay out, so can we."

"The longer we stay out the stronger we are. In two weeks we can get anything we want," added Teresa Nelson of Pipefitters Local 436. Workers are voting June 3 and 4.

"The company has got the money," emphasized Cox in the earlier interview. "They say they're going to buy Newport News, so they've got the money." Cox was especially angered by the company's demand to increase strikers' medical costs. "This is a company-owned medical insurance company. Last year the company made millions in profits, and now they want us to pay more for medical coverage!"

Ingalls Shipbuilding constructs U.S. Navy missile destroyer and amphibious assault ships, as well as container ships and oil tankers. The Pascagoula shipyard is owned by Litton Industries Inc., which is bidding to buy the Avondale Shipyards in New Orleans and the Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia for \$529 million. Ingalls is Mississippi's largest private employer, with annual sales of \$1 billion, plus a \$4 billion backlog of ships to build and contracts to fulfill.

The strike began May 16 when members of the smallest union at the yard, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1133 with a few dozen members, set up pickets. None of the other 12 unions had sanctioned the strike. But by the next morning at 7:00 a.m. what started as an IAM picket line had grown to more than 2,000 workers. By the end of that day the entire yard was on strike. Recalling how the strike

unfolded, Fantroy said, "Thirty-four people got 8,000 on strike. Think about how important what you do can be. Everybody out there just refused to cross the line."

Workers organized expanded picket lines over the next several days. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers with 1,200 members declared they were on strike May 19. The next day the Metal Trades Council, with 6,500 members in nine unions followed suit. Office and security workers accepted the company's offer and continue to work.

According to James Lankford, 46, an IAM member with 21 years at the yard, the first mass picket line was "awesome. When the IAM struck in '96, we got walked over and the strike lasted two and a half days. This is different. People were watching and waiting for a strike. Solidarity took the cake. I felt pretty sure it would turn out this way."

Strikers have gained confidence from their actions. John Hall, a pipefitter, said, "The support this time is overwhelming." Out of 8,000 workers, the highest estimate is that 50 have crossed the picketline. Striker Greg Perry reported that "Ingalls sent out a letter saying, 'Let's go to work day by day, let the IAM work out its problems.' But as a union man I couldn't do that."

Strikers are also discussing the challenges in maintaining and strengthening their strike. They report, for example, that the company has already contracted out to Friede Goldman, a non-union shipyard in Pascagoula, the completion of the commercial drill ship *Discovery Enterprise*. These workers are entering the Ingalls yard from an old Navy entrance. Other Gulf shipyards have succeeded so far in keeping the unions out by paying wages a couple of dollars higher than Ingalls.

Alvin Wiley, who works as a joiner with

20 years on the job, said that at a meeting of Boilermakers Local 693 May 27 "a chart was presented projecting how much we were losing by the day, by the week, by the month, while we are out on strike." Wiley added, "A guy got up and said, 'You're showing what we're going to lose, but how about the effect we're having on the company? How much are we hurting them?' There was a roar of applause in support."

In an attempt to turn other working people in the Mississippi Gulf coast against the strike, the local *Sun Herald* newspaper is playing up statements by members of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce who "are voicing concern" that the strike will "hurt area retailers," and "reduce county and city tax revenues," as well as "hurt statewide efforts to attract new manufacturers." Mississippi senator Trent Lott also got in the act, warning that by jeopardizing Litton's buy-out of the Newport News and Avondale shipyard, the strike would hurt "the future of our Navy and our country."

Many small businesses in the area are contributing to the strike effort. Tapping into this support IAM Local 1133 and IBEW Local 733 have set up food banks. Food is prepared at the IBEW hall and taken out to union members on the line. According to striker James Lankford, "Our strike has made the Gulf coast a family. The merchants appreciate us for being workers. The strike has even brought some prices down."

Mike Italie is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and Arlene Rubinstein is a member of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association in Atlanta. Robert Shields, a member of United Auto Workers, contributed to this article.

Machinists at Trans World Airlines face strike vote

BY ERNIE MAILHOT AND NANCY ROSENSTOCK

ST. LOUIS — In the midst of a 30-day government-imposed "cooling off" period that could lead to a strike, members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Trans World Airlines (TWA) learned May 28 of the company's latest "best and final" offer. In early May, government mediators had ruled that the company and IAM negotiators had reached an impasse, setting off the "cooling off" period. The union cannot "legally" strike until the end of this period, which is 12:01 a.m. June 10. Union members have been working under the old contract, which expired in August 1997.

The IAM represents 16,000 flight attendants, ramp workers, mechanics, and passenger service workers out of 21,000 at TWA.

While union officials have yet to release details on the contents of the latest contract offer, they have called for its rejection. The IAM is expected to hold a strike vote and a vote on the latest company offer before the end of the 30-day "cooling off" period.

About half of the TWA workers are here in St. Louis, the company's main hub, where TWA accounts for 75 percent of the passengers out of Lambert Field. Workers here expressed different views on the company offer. Some echoed the company and media reports that TWA would fold if there was a strike and said the company offer should be accepted. Others, citing the years of concessions wrung from the IAM membership, called for rejecting the contract offer.

One IAM ramp worker at TWA, who requested that his name not be used, said, "TWA does not respect us. We are the ones who make the company what it is. We have been giving and giving and now we should get more back."

The company's proposal has been reported in the media here and is being widely discussed by TWA workers. The St. Louis

Post Dispatch reported May 29 that the proposed contract includes a further 1 percent raise for mechanics, ramp workers, and passenger service workers over what they had been previously offered. Flight attendants are to get a larger percentage increase as well. The company and media reports agree that these raises would still leave workers at TWA well below the industry standard.

Lump-sum payments are also being offered, ranging from \$2,100 to \$5,000, and TWA has reportedly dropped its demand for work-rule changes that would have intensified work and squeezed greater productivity from IAM members. One of the previous proposals reported to be dropped is that ramp workers, instead of mechanics who are higher paid, direct planes to and from gates. In addition, TWA also ended its demand to contract out of work at 16 smaller airports, according to the *Post Dispatch*. Both of these earlier proposals by the company would have resulted in cutbacks in the IAM workforce.

At the same time, IAM members at TWA here said the company is still demanding the closing a hangar and a terminal at JFK International Airport in New York.

Among the central issues for the members of the IAM at TWA are the pay scales. In recent weeks TWA has offered three pay packages that have all been rejected by the IAM. The lower-than-industry-standard wages and benefits, including low retirement pay, are due to cuts the union agreed to in recent years when TWA management twice took the company into bankruptcy. Over the past decade concessions from TWA workers have handed over \$4 billion to the company. This includes no pay raises for eight years, reduced vacation time, frozen pensions, and cuts in crew sizes.

Ernie Mailhot is a member of IAM Local 1126 in Miami. Nancy Rosenstock is a former IAM member at TWA from New York.

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Coastal Berry farm workers vote on union

BY KAREN RAY

WATSONVILLE, California — The California Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) is holding a runoff representation vote by farm workers at Coastal Berry, the largest strawberry grower in the country. The voting is scheduled for June 3 at the company's Oxnard farm and June 4 at Watsonville-area ranches. The first round of voting took place May 25-26.

The announcement came after a tense five days, as totals showed the United Farm Workers (UFW) union trailing the pro-company outfit Coastal Berry of California Farm Worker Committee. There were 60 challenged ballots that would determine whether there would be a runoff or if the Coastal Berry Farm Worker Committee would take the election. The ALRB final total was 589 votes for the UFW, 670 for the Committee, and 83 for no union.

A majority would have been 675 votes. Farm workers from Coastal Berry met at the UFW headquarters here in the evening June 1 to map out how to get out the vote for the June 3-4 election. Following the meeting about two dozen workers organized to go into the surrounding community, going door-to-door to talk to workers about the UFW.

"We will continue the fight for the union at Coastal Berry," explained Rubén Nieto, a Coastal Berry worker who came to the union offices here.

UFW president Arturo Rodríguez told a telephone news conference May 27, "We knew we were fighting one of the strongest companies in the industry. We are not at all surprised and don't anticipate this being over." He described the history of intimidation by the company and the pro-company outfit.

On the day of the voting at the Oxnard farm, in Ventura County, an unsigned leaflet was handed out listing more than 90 names of farm workers it said were the only ones who signed for the UFW. The leaflet, which was in broken Spanish, warned, "We ranchers from Oxnard have been watching this for many months. We know who has been supporting the UFW. We have many years of dealing with the UFW and have seen how they destroy companies. You receive good pay and good benefits without the union, without dues out of your pockets, don't let the UFW ruin your company Coastal Berry."

The vote at the Oxnard ranch, one of the three locations where voting took place, was 309 for the UFW, 230 for the Coastal Berry Farm Workers Committee, and 37 for no union. Workers at the ranches in Watsonville and Salinas voted 268 for the UFW, 416 for the Committee, and 42 for no union.

Rodríguez said the Oxnard ranch just started this year, so that the workers had not been subjected to the three-year antiunion campaign as the workers in Watsonville and Salinas had been. The season is winding down



Militant/Osborne Hart

Supporters of United Farm Workers picket offices of Driscoll ranches in Watsonville, California, July 1997, as part of strawberry workers organizing drive.

at Oxnard and many of the workers have now left to work the cherry crops, which means they will not be voting in the runoff.

UFW supporter Isabel Rendon, who was injured last July when company thugs toppled a stack of boxes on her, accused supporters of the pro-company Committee of pressuring workers. "Before we voted, they were saying that those who don't vote for the Committee, or who vote for the UFW, could take their strawberry carts and leave."

While the farm workers met to map out the next couple of days' work, supporters from the Watsonville community also met to plan a press conference for June 3. The National Strawberry Commission for Workers Rights has 162 individuals and organizations, including area union locals, churches, and elected officials signed on in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties.

UFW organizing drive at Coastal Berry

The UFW began its organizing effort at Coastal Berry in 1996. The states \$600 million strawberry industry employs about 20,000 workers. The UFW holds one contract with a strawberry grower, a small organic farm that employs about 50 workers. In 1996 strawberry growers and the antiunion Pro Workers Committee,

which is now defunct, held a 5,000-person march in Salinas. The UFW won a suit in May exposing this and other pro-company outfits as funded by the Western Growers Association.

As the UFW was collecting cards for a union election in July 1998, foreman and supervisory company thugs staged a riot in the Coastal Berry fields near Watsonville. A large anti-union mob attacked UFW supporters and seriously injured three workers.

In the following few weeks, the anti-UFW foreman went crew to crew forcing pickers to sign petitions for a union election of the just-formed Coastal Berry Farm Workers Committee. Pickers who didn't sign were threatened with violence and losing their jobs. The president of this so-called union is José Fernández, a foreman who was eventually fired for the July 1998 attack on the farm workers.

On July 23, 1998, the ALRB conducted an election at Coastal Berry. The UFW objected and boycotted the election calling it a "sham." The Coastal Berry Farm Workers Committee won the election by 113 votes. In November 1998 an ALRB administrative judge invalidated the election based on the fact that workers in Oxnard were not notified of the vote. This was upheld by the ALRB. On May 21 the UFW turned in union authorization cards signed by more than half of the workers at Coastal Berry.

Since the start of the picking season here the UFW has been preparing for this vote. On April 18, the UFW held a successful march of 600 in Salinas in a show of support for the union. As a result of the organizing efforts over the last three years, farm workers in the strawberry industry have seen a modest raise in wages. At Coastal Berry workers receive between \$7.00 and \$8.50 an hour and now receive some medical benefits and a pension.

Final election results should be known late on June 4.

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Ho ho — John Stone, sheriff in Jefferson County, Colorado, wants inmates to pay at least part of the cost of holding them. Apparently of a humorous bent, he speculates on



Harry Ring

using a lighter touch. Like, "We could have a little vacancy sign that says, 'Yes, we are open.'"

It figures — A Dutch parliamen-

tary panel confirmed that many severe illnesses were linked to the 1992 crash of an Israeli EIAI cargo plane in Amsterdam. Initially, Dutch politicians said the plane was carrying flowers and perfume. Actually, the cargo was a host of dangerous chemicals.

At least 43 people were killed in the area where the plane crashed. But figures are incomplete since many of the area residents are unregistered, undocumented immigrants.

Dim outlook — India's government-owned power company issued June 1 disconnect notices to five states and the city of New

Delhi, which reportedly has bills due totaling some \$450 million.

bankbilge.com — With a growing number of people creating web sites to vent their anger at big companies, some of the targets are trying to fend off the attacks by dreaming up site names and getting a copyright on them. Chase Manhattan Bank, a popular target, owns: ihatechase.com; chasesucks.com; chasestinks.com.

Guaranteed, no tickets? — Those fortunate enough to live and drive in California, for 50 bucks, will likely be able to get a license plate sporting a likeness of Ronald

Reagan in a cowboy hat. A bill, already okayed by the state assembly, provides that any surplus from the sale of the plates will go to the Reagan library.

Check it out — In anticipation of further cloning developments, you can have the DNA of your pet pooch, pussy or piglet frozen and stored. \$1,000 plus \$100 annual storage fee. Available from the PerPETuate (get it?) company. But act now. Already in the past seven months, six people have signed up.

Simple ideas for simple minds — An outfit offering "how to" material for management has a

\$69 tape on boosting productivity. For instance: "Overcome the 'us' vs. 'them' mentality between some employees and managers"

Just let the kids meet him — Dan DeRose is racking it up persuading financially beleaguered school systems to accept a fee from soft drink companies to have exclusive rights to peddle their products on school grounds. Rebutting concerns about product advertising in the schools, he says it helps make them more realistic. "If you have no advertising in schools at all," he observes, "you aren't giving our young people an accurate picture of our society."

Why China is target of U.S. imperialism today

From the recent nuclear weapons "spy-scare" to the continued conflicts over trade, the workers state in China is a central target of U.S. imperialism today. The following excerpts from *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* help to explain why.

The selections are from the second chapter, which is based on a talk and closing presentation to a regional socialist educational conference held in Los Angeles, California, over the 1994-95 New Year's weekend. *Capitalism's World Disorder* is copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

from the pages of Capitalism's World Disorder

BY JACK BARNES

The Chinese revolution shattered racist lies and assumptions about the oppressed peoples of color that had been perpetuated for centuries by the major colonial and then imperialist ruling classes of Europe and North America. Malcolm X deeply appreciated what that revolution meant to oppressed and exploited peoples around the world. He had many wonderful things to say about it during the last year of his life.

"There was a time in this country when they used to use the expression about Chinese, 'He doesn't have a Chinaman's chance,'" Malcolm told a rally in Harlem in November 1964, just after returning from a trip to Africa and the Middle East. "Remember when they used to say that about the Chinese? You don't hear them saying that nowadays. Because the Chinaman has more chance now than they do.... It was not until China became independent and strong that Chinese people all over the world became respected.... It's the same way with you and me."¹

I vividly remember sitting with some other comrades in the King Solomon Baptist Church in Detroit earlier where Malcolm was

¹ "The Homecoming Rally of the OAAU" in Malcolm X, *By Any Means Necessary* (New York: Pathfinder, 1970, 1992), p. 136.

speaking and hearing him say that what frightened Washington the most about the Chinese getting the atomic bomb was not that they might develop advanced missiles, but the knowledge that hundreds of millions were ready to hand-carry the bomb if need be to defend their revolution.

But the Stalinist regime headed by Mao Zedong made it impossible for the Chinese toilers to become as powerful a force as they could have been to advance the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Asia and throughout the world. To the degree the Maoist regime did influence fighters, it turned them away from proletarian internationalism toward petty-bourgeois nationalism. Nowhere was there a greater gap than in China between what the working class and peasantry had shown themselves capable of accomplishing and what they were blocked from doing by Stalinism. The Stalinist apparatus in China is still in place today, but the influence of the Beijing variant of Stalinism is qualitatively weaker in the workers movement in Asia than at any time since the 1950s.

A friend from Minnesota recently sent me an article that first appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* and then in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. It reports that the percentage of China's population living in rural areas has declined by 20 percent just in the past fifteen years — that is, a shift of some 200 million people. Almost as large as the entire population of the United States!

Some 80 million of these former peasants, the article says, have migrated to big cities, especially along the coast, where many live in wretched conditions. In search of a livelihood, millions of toilers from the countryside in China continue to head toward the cities, to head toward the small towns, to head toward the factories and manufacturing establishments large and small.² What is happening to them is comparable in many ways to what happened to those pushed off the land in England several hundred years ago, described by Marx.

Because of the Stalinist "population policies" imposed in China, working people there are required to carry ID cards and are supposed to seek permission before moving. As a result, the article reports that many of the rural toilers who have migrated to urban areas are denied legal residence in the cities and thus are not able to send their children to school or to use public health facilities. (These reactionary population measures also include forced sterilization and abortions, as well as economic and other penalties against families with more than one child.)

² The estimated number of migrants reached 100 million by late 1998.



Peasants in Shanghai, China, burn deeds of former landlords, 1951.

Horrible living and working conditions are being created in the swelling proletarian neighborhoods and in both the huge state-owned enterprises and rapidly expanding capitalist-owned factories in China today. Workers face low wages, extremely long hours, and often appalling health and safety conditions.

Because of the socialist revolution, however, workers and peasants in China have a different view of themselves, of what they are capable of, and of their social rights earned as part of the working class. Toilers in China have a different attitude toward their right to land; their right to a job; their right to a certain level of education and health care; their right to a place to live at a payable rent; their right to jobless benefits

armed forces officer corps, are determined to maintain centralization and control over the departments and state enterprises from which they derive their power and privileges. This brings them into conflict not only with workers in these enterprises, but also with other sections of the bureaucracy trying to open up China more to capitalist relations and foreign investment.

Giant struggles are coming in China. And given the massive urban migrations, the coming history of the countryside there will be settled more than ever by what happens in the cities, not vice versa.

For communists, it will be a great pleasure to be part of the changes that hundreds of millions of Chinese workers on the march will bring to the world working-class movement.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



June 14, 1974
NEW YORK — The skyrocketing cost of living is the main reason 110,000 members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers went on strike June 1 in the union's first industry-wide walkout since 1921.

When the previous contract expired May 31, clothing manufacturers refused to meet the union's demands for a cost-of-living escalator clause, an average of \$1.10 an hour wage increase over the next three years, and improved pensions and other benefits.

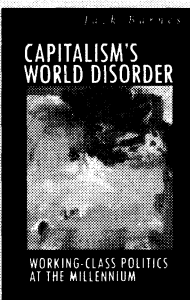
The strike has shut down 750 manufacturers of men's and boy's wear. The biggest concentration of strikers are in New York City and Philadelphia; there are also significant numbers in Illinois, Virginia, Missouri, Kentucky, and New Jersey.



June 13, 1949
The heroic strike of the Canadian Seamen's Union, entering its third month, is reaching into ports of every major country despite blows from all sides. Government terror, organized scabbery, the strikebreaking orders issued by British trade union bureaucrats, and now a stab in the back by the Trades and Labor Council of Canada, have failed to intimidate the strikers.

The CSU struck to fight for its very existence, against violent assaults by the shipowners and their many stooges. Not only did the government provide troops to protect scabs and fight strikers, as it did in the similar struggle on the Great Lakes last summer, this time it hired scab crews itself, to oust the legally-recognized CSU.

Capitalism's World Disorder
Working-Class Politics at the Millennium
Jack Barnes



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

— *A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics*
Jack Barnes, December 1998

\$20 Special offer through June 27
Available from bookstores listed on page 12. Regular price \$23.95.

Defend the Yugoslav federation!

Continued from front page
kans and reimpose capitalist rule.

The Yugoslavia the imperialists want to cut apart was forged in the 1942-45 revolution, brought to victory by the Partisan movement. Workers and peasants of all nationalities united in this struggle against the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia during World War II. The Partisans' program called for equality and respect of all nationalities and religious beliefs, and opposed chauvinism and domination of one nation by another. This was a major factor in the victory of the antifascist movement. Working people then turned the victory against the Nazis into a social revolution that abolished capitalist property relations and established a workers state, even though it was deformed at birth because of domination by the Stalinist misleadership of Josip Broz (Tito).

Over the following decades, Albanians and others were recognized as oppressed nationalities and granted rights, such as recognition of their language and culture, that began to narrow discrimination. At the same time, the bureaucratic regime that crystallized under Tito carried out policies that produced an economic crisis that disproportionately affected less developed regions, eroding the initial affirmative action measures of the revolution.

In Kosova, 50,000 Albanians joined the Partisan struggle prior to the revolution, partly on the basis of Tito's promise that Kosovars would have the right to self-determination "up to secession." But following the victory of the antifascist struggle, Tito's armies drowned a rebellion by Albanian partisans in blood when they tried to carry out this agreement. The struggle for a republic in Kosova, equal to the six other republics that made up the Yugoslav federation — Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia — dates back to those days.

As a result of their fight for self-determination, working people in Kosova won autonomy in 1974. The Yugoslav constitution was revised twice, however, first in 1986, abolishing the territorial defense units in Kosova that were made up overwhelmingly of Albanians. In 1989, Milosevic revoked the region's autonomous status altogether. In the next couple of years Belgrade closed the Albanian-language schools in Kosova and fired the majority of Albanians from their jobs. This was part of the Milosevic regime's moves

to whip up Serbian chauvinism to justify attacks on working people resisting its austerity measures and land grabs against rivals in the other Yugoslav republics. The recent mass "ethnic cleansing" of Kosova makes it clear that anyone who looks to the Milosevic government to lead the people of Yugoslavia to resist imperialist assault is setting themselves up for some demoralizing blows.

Washington and the other imperialist powers have seized on the war between rival gangs of the ruling bureaucracies as a pretext for intervention in Yugoslavia, including the occupation of Bosnia. Opposing their latest moves to occupy Kosova — whether under the UN banner or NATO's — and engineer the break off of Montenegro from what remains of the Yugoslav federation, is at the center of opposing imperialism's designs against Yugoslavia today.

Championing the right to self-determination of the Albanian majority in Kosova is an essential part of defending Yugoslavia against imperialist assault and against the reactionary line and actions of Belgrade that have opened the door for Washington to intervene. It is key to winning working people of all nationalities to the fight for Yugoslavia, as a voluntary federation based on the equality of all nations.

Even if the agreement Belgrade subscribed to goes through and a NATO-dominated occupation force enters Kosova, this is not a settled question. The working class in Yugoslavia has been dealt blows by the imperialist bombardment and by the Yugoslav government, but it is far from crushed. Many people throughout the republics still consider themselves Yugoslav, and aren't about to give that up. And a significant number of Serbs have a record of attempting alliances with fellow toilers among Kosovar Albanians, including supporting self-determination.

The *Militant* urges our readers to get out the truth about Yugoslavia, especially reaching out to workers in battle, from the Newport News shipyard in Virginia, to the Kaiser Aluminum picket lines in Spokane, to airports across the United States where workers at TWA and Northwest Airlines face possible strike battles. Use the book *Capitalism's World Disorder* and the *Militant* newspaper to help workers get these facts. And join with others in demanding: Stop the bombing now! All U.S. and NATO troops out of the Balkans! Defend the Yugoslav federation! Self-determination for Kosova!

Workers are target of army 'drills'

The following statement was issued by Socialist Workers candidates Connie Allen for mayor in Philadelphia and Ellie Garcia for state senate, 29th district, in New Jersey.

As U.S.-NATO bombs rain down on working people in Yugoslavia, the U.S. rulers are ratcheting up their attacks on working people at home. "Exercise Roller Ghost" — the May 11-16 mock invasions by U.S. Army forces in Philadelphia; Camden, New Jersey; and Chester, Pennsylvania — are a case in point.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign joined others in Chester June 1 to protest these maneuvers. Outraged residents there described how they were subjected to hours of bombs and gunfire just across the street from their homes. One Camden resident who Socialist Workers campaign supporters spoke with had the U.S. military pegged. "They could have done this where no one would see it," he said. "It was a fear tactic. They weren't hiding it. They are letting you know what they can do."

These military demonstrations are of a piece with other measures by Washington and by state and local governments to increase the repressive apparatus of the state — the growing police brutality, longer jail sentences, accelerated executions, and "profiling" of those they define as criminals. This "antiterrorism campaign" is an attempt to

gain acquiescence for the eventual use of military force against all working people who stand up against the employers and the government that serves them.

These drills come at time when working people are stepping up resistance to the bosses' attacks on our standard of living and safety and working conditions on the job. More than 8,000 shipyard workers on strike in Newport News have been joined by 8,000 Mississippi shipyard workers. Our campaign is about joining and championing these struggles.

Among the targets of Washington's "antiterror" campaign will be those who protest the continued U.S. military occupation of Vieques and support independence for Puerto Rico, such as José Solís, who was recently convicted on fabricated "terrorism" charges by the FBI in Chicago. Our campaign demands 'Free José Solís and all the Puerto Rican political prisoners!' We urge others to join us in protests across the United States July 7 demanding his release, and to go to Washington, D.C., July 24 to demand freedom for all Puerto Rican political prisoners.

The Socialist Workers campaign says we need a workers and farmers government that fights to put the interests of the great mass of humanity, whose labor produces everything of value, ahead of profits for a tiny minority of wealthy families. We demand an immediate cessation of any military maneuvers in our neighborhoods.

No to Swedish imperialism

The following are excerpts of a statement issued by Catharina Tirsén, the candidate for the European parliament of the Communist League in Sweden. Tirsén is a metalworker in Stockholm.

The Communist League opposes all imperialist intervention in Yugoslavia, be it in the name of the United Nations, European Union, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or NATO. The social democratic government of Sweden, although not a member of NATO, gives its support to the NATO-led war against Yugoslavia. The Swedish rulers have been deeply involved in the imperialist military intervention there since the early 1990s, operating through the UN, EU, or OSCE.

The war in Yugoslavia heightens the tensions between the Washington and the EU, but also between the European imperialist powers in Paris, London, and Bonn. They all want to change, by military force, the social relations created by the 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia and after World War II by the revolutions in China, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. But with their pragmatic and short-sighted actions, they constantly come into conflict with each other.

Paris is now taking the lead in trying to counter the

military dominance of Washington, by demanding that the United Nations, not NATO, be in charge of a future military occupation force in Kosova. A French-British initiative on joint European military forces is now gaining support in EU. Swedish imperialism is also on the offensive to safeguard their interests in the war in Yugoslavia by supporting Paris's demand that Kosova be occupied under the UN flag. Carl Bildt, one of Sweden's most well known politician internationally, has been encouraged to take the offer to become the UN emissary to the Balkans.

The "left" and the union bureaucracy rallying behind Swedish imperialism's call for UN intervention in Yugoslavia and supporting Swedish capitalists against the bosses in other countries, opens up space for right-wing extremists who also drape themselves in the Swedish flag.

The election campaign of the Communist League fights against chauvinist nationalism, especially the Swedish variety. We firmly stand up for the rights of oppressed nations and nationalities, like the rights of the Sami people and immigrants in Sweden. We demand that Sweden leave the EU. We are opposed to any state becoming a member of the EU or NATO, and call for those imperialist blocks and others like them to be dissolved.

U.S. gov't uses 'spy' claims to attack China

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. rulers have stepped up their spy claims against Beijing in a campaign that deepens Washington's preparations for military confrontation with the Chinese workers state, while curtailing the democratic rights of working people in the United States.

A Congressional committee chaired by Rep. Christopher Cox accused Beijing of using "nuclear espionage" to obtain "design information on the United States' most advanced thermonuclear weapons." The committee released its report May 25 following a deluge of articles in the capitalist media whipping up the spy scare. "China is installing a warhead said to be based on U.S. secrets," exclaimed a headline in the May 14 *New York Times*.

"Performance data about various types of nuclear warheads... can easily be found on the Internet," countered Zhao Qizeng, spokesman for China's State Council. "They are no longer secrets, so there is nothing to steal." He said China needed no help from the United States to make its own bombs and missiles.

U.S. Energy Secretary William Richardson himself noted that the charge that information was stolen from a nuclear lab "is based on one piece of intelligence reporting, and the FBI has been unable to identify a logical suspect."

Without presenting any concrete evidence to substantiate the espionage charges, the Cox report claims a Chinese spy turned over several "secret" documents that detail how Beijing supposedly obtained technical information on U.S. nuclear warheads. The report, released on May 25, said the anonymous agent was "secretly under the direction" of China's intelligence services.

The allegations also include claims that the Chinese government has set up 3,000 "front" companies that are used for espionage, opening up hundreds of thousands of people of Chinese origin to be targeted on accusations of spying, regardless of evidence.

Among the cases that have been played up in the press is that of Ben Wu, a philosophy professor who was accused of smuggling outdated night-vision equipment to China and jailed in 1993. More recently, scientist Wen Ho Lee was fired from his job at the Los Alamos National Laboratory March 8, based on allegations he gave nuclear weapons secrets to China. Lee has not been charged with any crime, and government officials at Los Alamos and in Washington admit they have no evidence against him.

'A new-style NATO'

In an unambiguous threat to the Chinese workers state, the Congressional report complains of Beijing's "territorial claims against other Southeast Asian nations and Japan." These goals "conflict with current U.S. interests in Asia and the Pacific and the possibility of a U.S.-[China] confrontation cannot be dismissed."

In 1996 Beijing conducted military exercises off the coast of Taiwan, reaffirming its right to reunite with the island. In response, the Clinton administration sent a U.S. navy warship passing through the Taiwan Strait. The regime in Taiwan was set up by the former Chinese ruling class that fled following the victorious revolution by workers and farmers there in 1949.

Tensions have escalated between Washington and Beijing, compounded by the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia and the Clinton administration's announced plans to deploy a "missile shield" in countries that surround China's southern flank, including Japan, south Korea, and Taiwan. Washington claims the missile system is needed to protect the 45,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan and the 37,000 in south Korea from "rogue states" such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The imperialist encirclement of China has been tightened with the recent strengthening of the military alliance between Washington and Tokyo. The Japanese Parliament approved plans May 24 to provide more military support for U.S. soldiers in Asia and give Washington more access to its seaports and airports. The clamor over "human rights" violations in Tibet could serve as a pretext for Washington to launch a military assault on China, London's *Financial Times* reported May 26. The big-business class in Japan and the United States are preparing for the day when they will attempt to use military force to reimpose capitalist property relations as the dominant social system in China and north Korea.

More military pressure was exerted against China when a Chinese fishing boat sunk May 24 after colliding with a Philippine naval patrol vessel in a region claimed by Manila and Beijing. The incident occurred on the eve of a vote by the Philippine Senate on bolstering military ties with Washington. Philippine president Joseph Estrada has called for U.S. military support in his government's dispute with Beijing over the Spratly Islands.

The Chinese government responded to the recent imperialist aggression by banning U.S. warships from docking in Hong Kong, canceling military exchanges, and ending talks with Washington on "human rights." Beijing also issued a warning to Tokyo and Washington May 25 to keep out of any conflict involving Taiwan.

Pennsylvania: workers strike potato chip plant over union rights

BY LINN HAMILTON AND TONY LANE

BERLIN, Pennsylvania — Members of Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) Local 1718 in Berlin, Pennsylvania, May 29 rejected their employer's latest offer by a 81 to 47 vote and decided to remain on strike at the Snyder Potato Chip plant. Mark Werner, president of Local 1718 stated, "If the union is going to go down, it would be better if the union went down fighting." This was a common sentiment that was often expressed by many members of the local union.

Some 165 workers put up picket lines at the Snyder of Berlin potato chip plant here April 12. Workers reported that the company is threatening to restart production on June 1. Agrilink, which manages the plant for Pro-Fac, a farmers' cooperative, offered the workers a \$1.60-per-hour raise over three years. Workers rejected the initial contract by 80 percent.

Rick Decker, vice president of Local 1718, said the latest offer made by Agrilink in a late night session on May 27 held little advantage for workers but a bundle of concessions for the company. Decker said, "The total package was equal to what the company had been paying in the past when the wage increases and the health plan give backs were balanced." He added, "The main problem with the company's offer was that the union was being asked to make 20 concessions and these would virtually eliminate overtime pay, which would spell big losses for the workers and make big profits for the company." In addition, he said, the company would institute flex-time hours and be able

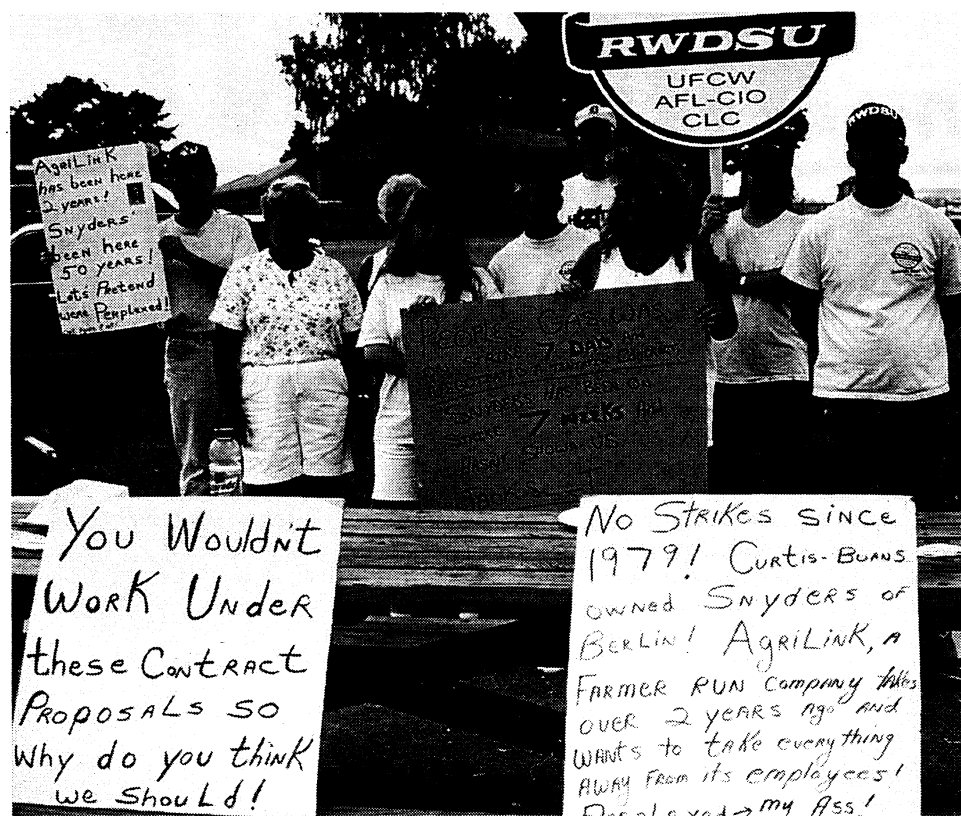
to bring in new automation without any union input on the subject.

Ken Thomas, a worker on the picket line, expressed his disbelief that the Agrilink management would not bargain in good faith with the workers who had been so loyal to the plant over the last 20 years. "The new management team of Agrilink has an entirely different attitude towards the workers. It is like a war in there between management and the worker," Thomas said.

Community support for the strike was evident when these reporters visited the dozen or so picketers on the line. Support has also been shown through two gatherings, including a rally of 100 people May 8. Members of the local teachers union, nurses union, and three workers from a plant organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) in Salisbury, Pennsylvania, took part in the event. Workers reported to the *Militant* that two RWDSU members from Michigan had driven eight hours to show their support.

Workers on the picket line said the new employers installed obsolete equipment that produced mediocre chips. The workers objected when the bosses put in this inferior equipment.

Strikers also showed *Militant* reporters an editorial in *The Daily American*, a Somerset, Pennsylvania, newspaper, with the headline: "Strike at Snyder plant must end." The editorial floated the bosses' threat of closing the plant and attempted to drive a wedge between the strikers and farmers. "The loss of hundreds of jobs would be devastating



Striking workers on picket line at Berlin, Pennsylvania, potato chip factory, May 29.

not only to the community of Berlin but also to the rest of the county ... and would also affect the farmers who raise potatoes."

The union has reached out to some of the local farmers involved in the cooperative. The cooperative, Pro-Fac, consists of more than 100 farmers from Florida to Michigan, and some as far away as Washington State. These farmers grow potatoes, fruits, and vegetables, which are processed by the cooperative. Around 20 farmers provide potatoes for the Berlin plant. Pro-Fac also owns the Berlin plant and all its machinery. Pro-Fac has contracts with the individual farmers for their potatoes. We spoke with Tom Croner, one of three local potato farmers who send their produce to the plant. He opposed the strike, arguing that it has to be

settled quickly or the potato farmers will have no local market. The 1999 potato crop is covered by contracts, but if these potatoes are not marketed the plant may go under. Croner stated that if the management gives the workers what they are requesting, the plant would go out of business.

The viewpoint of working farmers was reflected by two strikers with ties to the land who the *Militant* spoke to on the picket line. One said she and her husband had to sell their dairy herd in 1997. In addition to raising dairy heifers on the farm, she now works in the plant to help with the family income. A second picket stated that she and her husband sold their dairy herd in a government buyout in 1987, and now she works at the chip factory.

Montreal Steelworkers hold off takebacks

BY MARIE-CLAIRE DAVID AND ALEXANDRE GEOFFROY

MONTREAL, Quebec — Around 250 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 7625 in Montreal ended a five-week strike to defend their union against Cari-All, the biggest manufacturer of grocery carts in Canada.

"It's a victory even though we didn't make big gains — the employer didn't get what he wanted," said Voltaire Rosemond, who has been working at Cari-All for over 10 years. "We were able to preserve the gains we have made over the years."

Workers won a pension plan paid by the company of 1 percent of the annual pay. The bosses tried to eliminate the right of workers to have their shop steward with them in confrontations with the supervisor and to re-

strict seniority to each department instead of maintaining it throughout the plant. The employer lost on both counts. But workers will have to work at least four hours to be paid at a higher classification rate. Before they were paid the new rate as soon as they started to work on a different classification. Charges filed against a striker related to an incident on the picket line have been dropped.

This is the third strike at Cari-All since 1988. This time they faced many attempts by the bosses to break their strike. Company goons destroyed the union local's door and some union documents. They hired security guards and were granted an injunction to prevent the strikers from stopping company trucks entering and leaving the plant, which the antiriot squad enforced. The bosses also

used the local newspaper to campaign against the strike.

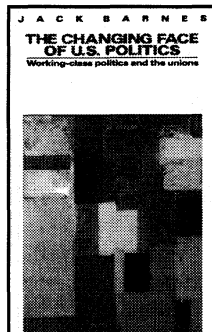
On May 12 the company organized office workers, foremen, and some scabs in a counter-demonstration. This did not provoke strikers on the picket line who explained to *Militant* reporters what was happening. The workers said several strikers had their tires punctured that morning by nails laid out along the area in front of the plant where the strikers always park their cars.

Solidarity was welcomed during the strike. A few workers participated in the May Day demonstration and the strikers organized a hot-dog lunch on the picket line to publicize their struggle.

Alexandre Geoffroy is a member of the United Steelworkers of America.

from Pathfinder

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics



WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Jack Barnes \$19.95.

Also available in French and Spanish. \$21.95.

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

LETTERS

Inaccurate title

The title "Child-care workers walk out in British Columbia" chosen for my article in issue 21 of the *Militant* on the social service workers strike is inaccurate. It leaves the impression that only child-care workers are involved in this fight and creates the impression that the *Militant* is not knowledgeable or on top of this important strike. For example, the first sentence claiming that some 10,000 child-care workers are on strike is misleading. It will be important to explain to people that this is an editorial error and not the error of the unionist writing the item, who has been involved in picket line activity, gone to rallies, and interviewed several strikers. Ten thousand social service workers are on strike in British Columbia. A small proportion of these workers are child-care workers. The workers on strike are in four unions and work in transition houses, homes for battered women, in infant development programs, 24-hour live-in homes, homes for mentally and physically disabled, in juvenile services, etc. One of the key issues that sparked the strike is

the fact that the employers had no money for child care and because of this all the workers decided to strike in solidarity. Other issues such as pensions, benefits, 24-hour live-in allowances are unresolved. Ned Dmytryshyn
British Columbia, Vancouver

Another correction

The article I wrote in the May 24, 1999, issue of the *Militant* [U.S. federal court threatens deportation of Irish nationalist] contains a factual error. In it I stated that Noel Cassidy, who is facing deportation, was a hunger striker while in Long Kesh prison. This is not the case. While Noel was a part of the blanket protest during his imprisonment he was not one of the men on the hunger strike.

The blanket protest and the hunger strike were an important part of Irish resistance to British rule. All the blanketmen were nationalists tried by juryless courts and sentenced to long prison terms. Countering the incessant abuse and beatings at the hands of guards and fighting for their recognition as political

prisoners were the immediate demands. Bobby Sands best articulated their approach to the fight:

"I am dying not just to end the barbarity of the H-Blocks, or to gain rightful recognition as a political prisoner, but primarily because what is lost in here is lost for the Republic and those wretched oppressed whom I am proud to know as the 'risen people.'"

Prisoners, as well as their supporters outside Long Kesh, worked for months to carefully preparations for the campaign. Participants in the hunger strike were carefully selected from among the more than 500 blanketmen by the prisoners' leadership. Seven fighters in the H-Blocks began the protest on Oct. 27, 1980. On December 1, they were joined by three women prisoners in Armagh, and two weeks later by another 30 Long Kesh men.

The first strike ended Dec. 18, 1980, after 53 days when promises were made by the British government to implement a formula to end the hunger strike and blanket protest. After months of double-talk from London, a second hunger strike began on March 1, 1981. It

was during this strike that British colonial policy led directly to the deaths of Bobby Sands and nine other republican fighters.

Their resistance and sacrifice in the face of overwhelming forces, which sought to break them, will always stand as an inspiration to fighters the world over. I urge readers to learn more about this important chapter in history. An excellent book is *Nor Meekly Serve My Time* by Brian Campbell (Beyond the Pale Publications, Brian Campbell, et al, Belfast, 1998, \$20). This is the record of the struggle in the H-Blocks from 1976-81 in the form of excerpts from accounts by prisoners. It is available from Home Front Library, Irish Northern Aid, 363 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001.

Steve Warshell
Cleveland, Ohio

Confused about the war

Please place my name on your list for a subscription, so I may learn what the war in Kosovo is all about. Both of my brothers are officers in the U.S. Marine Corps and both are

presently sent to the war in Kosovo. One is in charge of commandos in Kosovo of locating targets and helping the U.S. Air Force to bomb those targets while not being detected. I'm confused and don't understand why they are there. I thought the *Militant* would help in letting me know.

A prisoner
Beaumont, Texas

Newsweekly is shared

I direct this letter to your office to request renewal of my prisoner's subscription to the *Militant*. I am indigent, however, my hope is that my subscription can be renewed without interruption. Your newsweekly is shared among many men here, we look forward to receiving it.

A prisoner
Hagerstown, Maryland

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.

Vermont farmers fight gov't foreclosures

BY ANDREA MORELL

HARDWICK, Vermont — Robert Houriet is struggling to hold onto his land. He is one of many farmers fighting against foreclosures in this dairy state. Family farms have long been the backbone of agricultural production here, but now dairy farmers are hard hit by falling milk prices that don't keep up with production costs. Houriet estimates as many as 200 are facing the loss of their land and livelihood over the next year.

Houriet invited *Militant* reporters to his 55-acre organic vegetable farm, which is being foreclosed on by the federal Farm Services Agency (FSA), to discuss the fight of working farmers in Vermont. A group of them are taking aim at the FSA, a subdivision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), whose policies they say force farmers into foreclosure. The FSA makes loans to farmers refused credit by banks and other lending agencies. But, says Houriet, "the FSA functions largely as a collection agency for loans it wants to liquidate, and for farmers who are increasingly viewed as 'marginal' to global agribusiness."

Farmers threw a spotlight onto practices of the FSA in testimony before the state legislature's House Committee on Agriculture April 29 in Montpelier. The hearing was held in response to demands by Houriet and others that they be allowed to rebut remarks made at a committee hearing February 11 by Ronald Albee, the FSA state director. Albee testified against a bill that would allow a farmer who has been foreclosed to buy back his farm at the selling price and develop a new plan to pay off the old debt while continuing to work the land. The FSA opposes the bill. Albee outraged Houriet and others by implying that debt-ridden farmers are bad managers who are asking for a government handout.

Much of the hearing focused on Randall Munger, a dairy farmer whose nearly decade-long fight to save his farm has won him public support. His attorney, Edwin Hobson, helped draft the proposed legislation.

Munger's problems began in 1980 when stray voltage from electrical power lines owned by Central Vermont Public Service Corporation began to strike his cows, disrupting their ability to drink or graze properly. Eventually Munger's herd of 70 Holsteins was reduced to 26.

Dogged by low milk yield, Munger was driven deeper into debt to the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA, the predecessor to the FSA till 1994), which held the mortgage on his farm. When his house caught fire in 1988, the FmHA took the fire insurance money for partial payment on the loan. The house remains in ruins.

In 1992 Munger was presented with formal foreclosure proceedings and given 60 days to file an appeal requiring completion



Dairy farmer Randall Munger stands near foreclosure auction sign on farm he works in Shoreham, Vermont. He is one of many farmers there fighting to keep their land.

of vast and complex forms. On day 59, the farmer was told time was up and payment due. Munger's appeal of this abrogation of his rights was upheld, but nine months later the agency notified him they were now restoring the one day. They demanded he produce all his records, current within 90 days, in just 24 hours. This bureaucratic maneuver was stopped but has never been fully reviewed, stated Hobson at the hearing.

Inspired by Black farmers' fight

After southern farmers who are Black filed a nationally known civil rights law suit charging racial discrimination by the USDA, Munger appealed his case to the USDA civil rights office, saying he was being discriminated against by the agency as a small farmer. When the agency ruled small farmers are not a legally protected category, FSA foreclosure proceedings against him resumed. Munger went into federal court against the agency where he recently lost a key ruling.

Patrick Freeman, the FSA's chief loan officer in Vermont was present April 29 to defend the agency's record of dealing with Munger. He summed up the FSA stance by opining, "The only thing that will sustain a farm is profit. There are some major, major management problems here."

Several other farmers told their stories, showing that Munger is by no means alone. Fred Flint, a farmer from Braintree, detailed his experiences with the FSA appeals process. Flint said that when he received the packet of forms from the FSA on which to formulate his appeal he was "depressed and bedridden for a week. I did not feel I was getting help, only paperwork."

Two attorneys present, including one expert on federal agriculture law said the FSA rules are too difficult for farmers, and many lawyers, to understand.

Flint has spent two decades struggling to save the farm he bought from his parents in the 1970s. He said he and his family receive food stamps, which he had been reluctant

to accept because he "did not think a farmer should have to."

Jerry Kill of Middlesex said he lost his farm to the federal agency, even though he had never missed a loan payment. He was working three jobs to keep the farm but was defeated by a succession of appraisals that valued the farm way below his outstanding loans. He now rents a farm.

Belinda Blass, in her 20s, described herself as having been a farmer until May 23, 1997. Her family's herd was taken from them after an FSA inspector and sheriff department cops suddenly showed up at her farm that morning at 5:30 a.m., announcing they were acting on a tip that her cows were being underfed. After refusing all her entreaties to let her keep the cows and respect them in a few months, the FSA bought them from her for \$10,000. Ten days later, the government agency sold the same herd at auction for \$20,000.

Karen Shaw told committee members the FSA is "antagonistic" to farmers. She testified that FSA had once held up her loan servicing trying to coerce her and her husband, both of whom are dairy farmers, to plant soft wood trees on their land. Shaw protested to the committee that the government "has money for the International Monetary Fund to bail out Mexico and Brazil, and bombs for Clinton's little war in Yugoslavia," while frustrating financing for small farmers whom she termed "socially disadvantaged" as a class.

Shaw and dairy farmer Sherry Kawecki coedit a newsletter called "Farm Connection," which they project as a forum by and for small farmers. In it they expose environmentally unsafe practices by agribusiness and the production of adulterated food products harmful to consumers.

Houriet said he regards the bill as a modest step and one that by itself would not necessarily save many farms. He thinks more public, visible actions by farmers and their supporters will be needed.

Andrea Morell is a member of United Transportation Union Local 898.

Sweden: Sami people fight frame-ups

BY DANIEL AHL AND DAG TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — "They took me because I'm a Sami and a reindeer keeper," said Sami leader Lars Jon Allas, vice president of the *Sámediggi* or Sami parliament. He was arrested along with a friend by Kiruna cops May 10, accused of killing and decapitating three bears north of Kiruna the previous week.

"This is made up by the Great Swedes to

slander us Sami," said a friend of Allas quoted in the press. Allas went on a hunger strike that lasted until the two were released three days later. Their homes and camp sites in the mountains were searched during the confinement. Although the cops found no evidence whatsoever, local prosecutor Bertil Isaksson declared that charges of "grave unlawful hunting" have not been dropped. In 1987 Isaksson led an investigation against current Sami parliament president, Lars Wilhelm Svonni, and jailed him for one year on charges of illegal hunting.

"I know my people," Svonni said when he was informed of the arrest of Allas and his friend. "No Sami would ever decapitate an animal." On May 12, the front page of the liberal daily *Expressen* featured a picture of Allas in traditional Sami clothing along with the headline "Sami leader arrested for the bear slaughter." Later that day, a death threat directed against Allas was received by the *Samefolket* (Sami People) newspaper.

This is less than a month after the attempted cop frame-up of Sami leader Olof T Johansson (see the April 19 *Militant*). Allas and Johansson are both outspoken fighters for the rights of Talma and Tossásen, their respective Sami villages. Each village is made up of a group of Sami families that collectively organizes the reindeer keeping, with each family owning their own animals. Recently, Allas was involved in a trial that won the right for his village to control a large part of the hunting of elk within its boundaries, provoking fury among members of the Swedish Hunter's Association.

Hunting rights is an important issue for the Sami communities, where some 3,000 reindeer keepers today see their livelihood threatened by the increasing number of big carnivores such as bear, wolf, and wolverine. The southern Sami communities are

fighting for their grazing rights in conflict with Swedish capitalist forest owners.

The Sami (sometimes called "Laps" by Swedish chauvinists) are the indigenous people of northern Scandinavia, which they call *Sápmi*. Some 77,000 Sami live in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. Institutionalized racism in the Swedish part of *Sápmi* often portrays the existing land rights of the Sami nationality as "privileges."

"We think we're the ones best suited to estimate the number of carnivores in our area," said Allas in a phone interview with the *Militant* May 18. "The authorities' policies have led to a big concentration of carnivores in areas where our reindeers are."

Recently, the Swedish government threw gasoline on the fire when it stopped a joint proposal by Sami and government representatives to compensate reindeer owners for killed reindeer. This makes it easier to put the blame for illegal hunting on reindeer-keeping Sami instead of Swedish hunters on Sami territory. (A single bear skin can be sold for 10,000 crowns.)

"Earlier the restriction on our hunting carnivores wasn't implemented very closely, but modern technology, like helicopters and snow-scooters, has changed the situation," Allas said. "When the Swedish Hunter's Association put a prize of 100,000 Swedish crowns for catching an illegal hunter, and local Social Democratic politicians gave statements about the need to 'keep watch over the Sami,' we feel like we're the target of bounty hunters. We're being watched day and night."

Allas concluded that the recent arrests of him and other Sami have not been caused by harsher government attacks, which have been going on for a long time, but the fact that "now we won't accept it anymore and fight for our rights."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

Thurs., June 10
End of 'cooling off' period for Machinists at Trans World Airlines

Fri.-Sat., June 11-12
National Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association meeting
Tillery, North Carolina
For more information, call: (252) 826-3017.

Fri.-Sun., June 25-27
21st National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters
Des Moines, Iowa
Savery Hotel and Spa
Sponsor: Coal Employment Project

Sun., June 27, 2:00 p.m.
Steelworkers for Justice Rally — Support locked-out workers

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

Wed., July 7
Protest the frame-up of Dr. José Solís Jordán
Federal Buildings across U.S.
Sponsor: Committee in Solidarity with Dr. José Solís Jordán. For more information, call: (312) 409-0801.

Thurs.-Sun., July 22-25
All Out to Washington, D.C. It's time to bring Puerto Rican Prisoners home!
Washington, D.C.; Nat'l march Sat., July 24
For more information, call: (773) 278-0885 or (212) 927-9065.