

THE MILITANT

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Communist League in France
holds founding convention
— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Build July actions to free Puerto Rican political prisoners

Workers, farmers, opponents of imperialist war, and battlers for social justice — the place to be July 24 is in Washington, D.C., to march and demand independence for the sovereign isle of Puerto Rico and the release of all Puerto Rican independence fighters locked up in

EDITORIAL

U.S. jails.

Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States government. In 1898 Washington rose to become an imperialist power with the bloody seizure of Puerto Rico along with Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam. At home the U.S. government was carrying out a brutal campaign

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Buy book to understand what's behind Yugoslav war

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PITTSBURGH — “A few minutes of serious discussion were key to selling the book,” said Norton Sandler, who sold five copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* at the June 5 demonstration against the U.S.-NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in San Francisco.

“Though angered by the relentless weeks of bombing, many demonstrators were somewhat stunned by the war,” said Sandler, a leader of the trade union work of the Socialist Workers Party. Some of the protesters said they thought Washington was achieving its goals in the war. “I urged them to read *Capitalism's World Disorder*, and emphasized that the war

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NATO force in Kosova targets working people

‘Peace’ plan registers blow to self-determination

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

After 78 days of incessant bombing of Yugoslavia, Washington and its imperialist allies got Moscow's acquiescence and then Belgrade's final nod to allow the deployment of a NATO-led occupation force in Kosova for an indefinite period. The deal codifies a blow to the right to self-determination of Kosovars and to the Yugoslav federation.

Officers of Belgrade's army announced, “The war has ended,” after signing a military agreement with NATO commanders at Kumanovo, Macedonia, June 9. The pact outlines how Serb military and police forces will leave Kosova within 11 days. U.S. government officials ordered the suspension of the bombing the next day, after NATO verified Belgrade's withdrawal had begun.

The military agreement was reached a day after the government of Russia agreed with representatives of the so-called G-7 countries — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and the United States — on the text of a resolution for the United Nations Security Council. After much fretting and bluster at the negotiations in Cologne, Germany, Moscow basically co-signed NATO's terms. The 15-member UN Security Council passed the resolution authorizing the immediate deployment of an occupation force in Kosova June 10, by a 14-0 vote. The government of China abstained.

“The common opinion here is that the agreement is as bad or worse than the one at Rambouillet the government in Belgrade refused to sign three months ago,” said Natasa Pantic, a journalism student at

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Militant/John Sarge

Some 5,000 people rallied in Washington, D.C., June 5 against bombing of Yugoslavia.

Thousands demand: Stop the U.S. war!

BY PETE SEIDMAN
AND ROSE ANA BERBEO

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 5,000 people marched and rallied here June 5 demanding: “Stop the Bombing of Yugoslavia! Jobs, Education, Health Care — Not War!” The action began with a rally near

the Vietnam War Memorial from where demonstrators marched to the Pentagon for a closing rally.

Many demonstrators carried Serbian and Greek flags, quite a few of whom wore buttons saying “Proud to be Serbian” and stickers

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Newport News strikers ‘remain strong’

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia — As the Steelworkers' strike here enters its third month, federally mediated talks between United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 8888 and Newport News Shipbuilding collapsed June 7. Using a little-known provision

of the antiunion Taft-Hartley Act, federal mediators had stepped in and ordered both sides back to the bargaining table on May 24. Over the next two weeks, the mediators met alone with the company two times and the union three.

“We're remaining strong,” stated Wanda Walters, a top-grade welder with 26 years at the yard. “Eventually, they'll have to give in. There's no question we can hold out as long as we need to.”

“We were down very low in union members, but we started about two and a half years ago, before the strike, to sign up new members,” said Jerry Goode, the chairman of the volunteer organizing committee in the yard. “By the time the contract expired, we were up to 90 percent in the union. The company didn't take us seriously. Now they do.”

“We're still fighting for the same things for as long as it takes,” said Elaine Utterback, a pipefitter with 24 years' seniority. “We're just not going to give up.”

USWA Local 8888, which represents 9,200 hourly workers, struck the shipyard on April 5 after rejecting the company's “final offer” of \$1.50 in raises over 47 months, plus a pay-for-performance package that could add up to another dollar for some of the workers. The last raise at the shipyard was in 1993. The union has been demanding a \$3.95 wage increase over three years and a hefty increase in pen-

sions from \$500 a month to \$900 for workers with 30 years of service.

On the first day of mediated talks the union offered to reduce its proposed across-the-board wage increase by 25 cents to \$3.70 per hour over 36 months. This would raise top hourly

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Special offer good through June 27

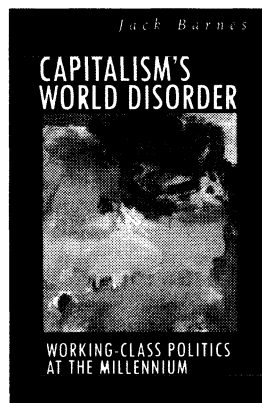
Capitalism's World Disorder Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

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.”

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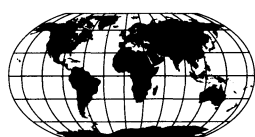
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Militant/Susan LaMont

“We can hold out as long as needed,” said Wanda Walters, a welder with 26 years at the shipyard.

Century Aluminum workers prepare for a fight — page 11



Moscow skips debt payment

The Russian government balked at paying \$908 million in interest payments that were due June 2 to the London Club, a group of commercial creditors. The credit rating agency Fitch IBCA said the Kremlin, which has already defaulted on \$22.4 billion of the principal on the London Club debt, will probably default on the interest payments. Last year the Yeltsin government defaulted on \$40 billion in domestic debt.

The London Club investors are trying to squeeze interest payments on some \$26 billion in debt imposed on Russia that was accumulated by the regime of the former Soviet Union. "[Russia's] 1999 budget makes no allowance on Soviet-era external debt," said a Fitch IBCA official. Meanwhile, capitalist investors in the rival Paris Club are demanding that the London Club not negotiate a payment plan with Moscow until they are consulted. Foreign direct investment in Russia dropped sharply in 1998, from \$6.2 billion in 1997 to \$2.2 billion, according to recent figures from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Brazilian state defaults on debt

Brazil's central bank declared the northeastern state of Pernambuco to be in default after its government said it would not honor bonds held by Banco Bradesco, the country's largest private bank. The Pernambuco government refused payments on its \$148.6 million debt in state bonds, marking the third time this year that a Brazilian state halted its debt payments. In January the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Minas Gerais suspended payments to the federal government and imperialist creditors, sparking a crisis that forced the national government to devalue its currency nearly 40 percent. The drop in prices for Brazil's commodities, a result of the currency devaluation, has provoked frictions among its Mercosur trading bloc partners in Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Palestinians protest Zionist land grabs in 'days of rage'

Thousands of Palestinians marched against Zionist settlement expansions in the West Bank and Gaza in three "days of rage" protests June 3-5. In Jerusalem Palestinian



Workers fight cutbacks in Hong Kong
Hundreds of civil service workers march in Hong Kong in early June to defend job security, pay, and pensions that are under assault by bosses there. Bus drivers drove slowly through the city in solidarity with the demonstration. Meanwhile, pilots at Cathay Pacific Airways forced the employers to cancel flights May 6 as pilots called in sick for the 10th day in a row to protest proposed wage cuts. Hong Kong's economy shrank 5.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 1998 and it has been mired in its worst recession since World War II.

merchants held a general strike; in Gaza, Palestinians blocked the main road near a junction with an Israeli settlement. In the village of Deir Qaddis, West Bank, a crowd of protesters marched to a hilltop chanting, "We are the sons of this land and we will resist."

There is smoldering outrage against the rightist settlers, who have been grabbing as much territory as possible before new "peace accords" are adopted. "The settlers in Hebron are now taking over whatever land they want," said Saeb Erekat, a central Palestinian negotiator. "There will be an explosion. Palestinians cannot keep silent as their land is being stolen."

Telefonica of Spain to cut 10,000

Telefonica SA in Spain is planning to get

rid of 10,000 employees — 20 percent of its workforce. The telephone bosses seek to buy out workers with lump sums and early retirement plans, and plan to pile the extra work on those who remain. For example, they will try to increase the ratio of lines per employee from 320 to 425 by December 2000. Company officials describe the plan as "supporting the workers," but unionists there don't think so. "It doesn't answer our demands," said Alejandro de Llano, spokesman for the General Workers Union. Workers are demanding better working conditions and a say in who is laid off. The government has given the company and union officials 30 days to come up with a plan for the job cuts.

U.S., EU open battle on wheat...

The European Commission spoke harshly against Washington's scaling back of EU wheat gluten imports. The U.S. government announced it is cutting its annual quota by more than 5,000 tons — a 20 percent reduction. EU farm commissioner Franz Fischler said the move was "precipitate and unnecessary." Washington claims the cut was made to offset an overshoot of wheat gluten the previous year.

... clash on poultry, pork, beef

Washington banned imports of pork and poultry products from countries in the European Union after the government of Belgium announced it was investigating whether pigs, cattle, and chickens were being given feed

contaminated by the carcinogenic chemical dioxin. The European Commission ordered governments in Europe to track down and destroy all Belgian poultry products that may contain the chemical.

The U.S. and Canadian government won approval June 3 from the World Trade Organization to impose trade sanctions of \$253 million on EU exports. Washington and Ottawa pushed for the measures in the name of compensating for claims of lost trade because of the EU ban on hormone-treated beef products from North America. "They haven't suffered that amount," argued European Trade Commissioner Leon Brittan, who called the figure "grossly excessive." U.S. envoy Rita Hayes asserted the tariffs "represents the amount of damages we are looking for."

El Salvador bus drivers strike

Public busses in El Salvador sat idle June 3 as drivers went on a one-day strike to protest the government's demand that they pay a total of \$28 million in traffic fines. The strike crippled transportation. Army trucks were deployed as scabs to offer free rides. The fines were accumulated by at least 7,000 drivers who have been ticketed for alleged violations over the past seven years.

Tokyo pushes for wiretap law

The lower house of parliament in Japan approved bills June 1 that would give cop agencies powers to conduct wiretaps, ostensibly for investigations involving organized crime. The law drew dissent from opposition parties, supporters of civil liberties, and others in Japan. Police engaged in four broad categories of investigation — narcotics, guns, gang-related killings, and smuggling of undocumented workers into Japan — will have authorization to carry out the electronic snooping.

Cops kill on New Jersey highway

Two New Jersey state troopers and two local cops fired a barrage of 27 bullets June 2 after chasing Stanton Crew on a highway for 15 miles. Crew, an unarmed 31-year-old Black man, was killed as the hail of gunfire hit his stopped car. The next day some 100 people, including friends and relatives, gathered outside Crew's home in Morristown, New Jersey, where he lived with his mother. "We just want justice for my son," declared Lillian Crew.

Meanwhile, a grand jury has indicted James Kenna and John Hogan, two state patrol cops who fired 11 shots into a van they had stopped on the New Jersey turnpike last year. They are accused of reporting the race of Blacks they pulled over on the highway as white on their logbooks in an attempt cover up targeting Blacks and Latinos to stop and search. On May 26 a New Jersey Superior Court judge threw out the convictions of 24 people who had been arrested by Kenna and Hogan on the New Jersey highways.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS
AND BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

Class struggle deepens in S. Africa

The recent vote in South Africa reflects the millions of working people who are advancing the fight for affirmative action, land reform, and other social measures to eliminate the country's racist legacy. The 'Militant' gives you the facts as working people push to extend the gains of the democratic revolution. Don't miss a single issue.



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Ohio cops rough up Kaiser Aluminum worker on picket duty

BY TONY LANE
AND HENRY HILLENBRAND

HEATH, Ohio — A locked-out Kaiser Aluminum worker was roughed up and had his teeth knocked out by two cops while doing picket duty June 5. After being arrested he was taken to a hospital for medical treatment.

The company has hired off-duty Heath cops to guard the company side of the picket line at the main gate. In addition, the company has installed security cameras. Members of the United Steelworkers of America here and in Louisiana and Washington struck Kaiser Aluminum in October 1998, and have been locked out since early this year.

The worker, Steve Smyers, told the *Militant* that one of the cops came up to him and asked him to go to the police car parked on company property. Smyers replied that he was "not crossing the picket line." The cop

then arrested him, handcuffed him, and with the other officer started moving him in the direction of the police car, Smyers recounted.

As the cops shoved him toward their car, Smyers said, one of them tripped him up. They pushed him to the asphalt and the two cops landed on Smyers.

Two of Smyers's front teeth were knocked out, a third tooth was broken. He needed nine stitches for cuts on his lip and chin. The cops charged him with resisting arrest and criminal damaging, claiming he kicked a scab's car.

On the picket line June 7 workers had added another sign, "Fight Police Brutality," to their display. Tracy Van Meter told the *Militant* he "didn't think two police officers should be slamming people to the cement." Referring to the scabs, Van Meter said, "Guys come in and out spitting and fingering us," and the cops don't do anything. But they "treat us as com-



Militant/Tony Lane

USWA members on picket line with new sign since one worker was beaten by two cops

mon criminals." The cops, he said, "are there to protect the rich."

Annette Lindsay, another Kaiser worker on the picket line, said, "Maybe this is for intimidation. They want to discourage us from

picketing." She said both the company and cops should be held accountable.

Tony Lane and Henry Hillenbrand are members of United Steelworkers of America.

Second N.Y. cop convicted of beating Louima, three acquitted

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

New York cop Charles Schwarz was convicted by a federal jury June 8 of joining in the 1997 torture of Abner Louima. The jury acquitted three other cops — Thomas Wiese, Thomas Bruder, and Sgt. Michael Bellamo — involved in the beating and cover-up, despite evidence of Louima's blood in Wiese's patrol car.

Schwarz and Justin Volpe, who earlier pled guilty to abusing Louima, face possible life sentences in prison. Bruder, Wiese, and Schwarz face additional charges — still to be tried — of conspiring to obstruct justice by

attempting hide Schwarz's role in the torture case. Bellamo was acquitted of lying to cover up the cops' barbarism against Louima, and Volpe's assault on another man, Patrick Antoine, on the night of the incident. None of the cops took the witness stand to testify in their own defense.

The verdict was delivered two weeks after Volpe admitted he shoved a wooden stick into Louima's rectum inside the New York Police Department 70th Precinct bathroom. Volpe bragged that he "took a man down tonight" while brandishing the blood- and feces-stained

stick among his colleagues at the station, inviting them to examine it. The cop threatened to kill Louima if he told anyone and claimed innocence until May 25, in the third week of his trial, when it became clear he would not get off.

Under the pressure of working-class mobilizations against the brutal cop killing of Amadou Diallo earlier this year and simmering outrage over the torture of Louima, four cops testified they had seen Schwarz take the handcuffed Louima into the bathroom or heard Volpe boast about his deeds afterward.

Louima said that Volpe, Schwarz, Bruder, and Wiese took turns beating him after stopping the cop car twice en route to the police precinct. He had been arrested after protesting the cops' abuse of people after two patrons got into a scuffle outside a nightclub in Brooklyn.

Antoine, a passerby, was also assaulted by the cops and arrested. Antoine testified in court that he saw Volpe put Louima, who was partially nude and moaning in pain, into a holding cell at the 70th Precinct that night. The police initially accused Antoine and Louima of attacking them, then dropped the charges.

The cops were not charged with beating Antoine. Bellamo, who was charged with depriving Antoine of his civil rights by arresting him without probable cause, was acquitted.

Seeking to whitewash the battered credibility of the police department, New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani argued that the trial's results prove there is no "blue wall of silence" by the cops. Police Commissioner Howard Safir said the decision proved "that the criminal justice system works."

Meanwhile, a federal grand jury is conducting an investigation of the NYPD to supposedly "break down the wall, piece by piece," the *New York Post* reported June 9.

While the big-business media proclaims the capitalist court system forced the cops to break their "code of silence," it was the nurses at Coney Island Hospital who treated Louima's injuries who refused to cooperate with the cover-up. They exposed the police torture, which sparked outrage among working people and demonstrations of 7,000 and 15,000 people in August 1997.

Party-Building Fund on final stretch

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

In the final stretch of the 1999 Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund, contributors sent in more than \$19,000 — the largest collection yet. With \$57,005 in hand, supporters can build on this momentum to collect the nearly \$30,000 in outstanding quotas pledged to bring the fund home well over the initial \$75,000 goal.

Supporters from the Boston blasted past their goal this week, sending in \$2,295 — more than two-thirds of their quota. They now stand at \$3,295, nearly \$300 over. Half of that amount was raised at a May 29 meeting where social-

ist airline worker Mary Martin gave a talk that included her experiences on the picket lines with striking shipyard workers in Newport News, Virginia.

In Los Angeles, supporters collected \$2,600 last week, putting them just shy of their goal. And they have organized a final meeting for June 12 where the editor of *New International* magazine, Mary-Alice Waters, will speak on 40 years of the Cuban revolution. Waters just returned from a *Militant* reporting team to Cuba that covered the celebrations of the May 1959 agrarian reform, a defining act of the Cuban revolution. Building this special event among workers, rural toilers, and others in the area should help put fund supporters in Los Angeles over the top.

In Washington, D.C., supporters held a particularly timely event hours after the demonstration there protesting the U.S.-led war on the people of Yugoslavia, June 5. Argiris Malapanis, who recently returned from a *Militant* reporting team in Yugoslavia, spoke to about 60 people, including a few who learned about the meeting from a flyer at the protest earlier that day. The event netted \$1,795, including a few new contributions from these anti-imperialist protesters.

Fund committees in a couple of cities have raised their local goals. Atlanta fund supporters upped their goal from \$3,000 to \$3,400, "which we will certainly make!" read a short note sent by Floyd Fowler, a fund organizer there. Patrons of the fund in Detroit, who have been at the top of the chart for much of the campaign, raised their goal from \$4,500 to \$5,500. This is the spirit that will keep supporters collecting pledges and winning new contributions 'til the end.

At the June 5 fund meeting in Detroit, where *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martin Koppel spoke on his recent reporting trip to Cuba, 17-year-old Young Socialists member Bill Schmitt made an appeal for the fund. He began by describing how U.S. imperialism's war in Yugoslavia has impacted a layer of youth who don't want to be drafted. "They talk about how you used to be able to run to Canada to escape a draft, but not anymore," he said, noting that Ottawa is participating in the NATO assault on Yugoslavia. "This just points to the fact that you gotta stand and fight imperialism, and you must have a combat party like the Socialist Workers Party to do it," Schmitt said. He spoke of more workers getting involved in battles and the party going to join them. "This is what attracted me," said Schmitt. As the party, together with the YS, field more teams to reach out to vanguard workers and farmers "this will take a bit of money," Schmitt concluded.

Houston supporters sent in \$2,115 this week. Correspondent Jerry Freiworth reported they held a panel discussion June 5 that including activists demanding justice Pedro Oregon, a Mexican immigrant killed by cops; locked-out Crown worker Dean Cook; Dave Ferguson, a socialist worker who has been leading teams to reach out to mine workers; and SWP leader Frank Forrester.

Cook noted how he kept running into socialist workers armed with the *Militant* and Pathfinder books as he and other unionists join struggles. He explained these books are valuable to fighters trying to figure out why the bosses and the cops act against them.

Cook invited all interested to join him in a caravan to the August 5-7 Active Workers Conference (see page 11 for more information).

Supporters in almost every city are within striking distance of meeting the quotas they have adopted. Close attention to detail by local fund committees following through on collecting pledges will make or break the fund. The deadline for receiving all contributions is Tuesday, June 15, at noon.

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

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY-BUILDING FUND

City	Goal	Collected	%
Boston	3,000	3,295	110%
Los Angeles	6,000	5,700	95%
Atlanta*	3,400	2,815	83%
Detroit*	5,500	4,400	80%
Washington, D.C.	4,200	3,310	79%
Birmingham	2,250	1,740	77%
Miami	3,000	2,110	70%
San Francisco	9,000	5,975	66%
Houston	5,000	3,275	66%
Chicago	5,000	3,225	65%
Philadelphia	3,000	1,765	59%
New York	10,000	5,873	59%
Twin Cities	5,000	2,699	54%
Seattle	7,000	3,762	54%
Cleveland	3,000	1,566	52%
Des Moines	2,600	1,000	38%
Newark	6,500	2,475	38%
Pittsburgh	3,250	960	30%
Other		1,060	
Total	86,700	57,005	76%
Goal/should be	75,000	66,000	88%

'MILITANT' ANNOUNCES SUMMER PRINTING SCHEDULE

With this issue, printed June 10, the *Militant* is beginning its summer publication schedule. The next issue, no. 25, will be printed in two weeks, on June 24. Issue no. 26 will be printed a week later, on July 1.

The paper will be published biweekly through August, printing on July 15, July 29, August 12, and August 26. After that we will resume weekly printing.

YS: 'U.S., NATO out of Yugoslavia!'

California chapters join march, raise funds, launch socialist summer schools

BY DAVID ARGÜELLO

SAN FRANCISCO — The Young Socialists chapters from San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and Los Angeles participated in a number of activities here over the June 5-6 weekend. With banners demanding, "U.S.-NATO out of the Yugoslavia!" and championing "Self-Determination for Kosova!" we marched in the 4,000-person-strong June 5 demonstration protesting the U.S.-NATO war against Yugoslavia.

Youth came from the Bay Area and from as far as Los Angeles, San Diego, and Eureka, California.

At the demonstration we built that night's Militant Labor Forum, a special program cosponsored by the Young Socialists on "Youth and the Political Struggles of Today." Four YS members and two other young fighters spoke on the platform there.

YS members from Los Angeles discussed their involvement in the fight against police brutality, and in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence and the release of the *independentistas* held in U.S. jails.

YSers from Santa Cruz also presented the various struggles they've been involved in. These included the United Farm Workers unionization campaign among the 1,400 strawberry workers at farms owned by Coastal Berry Company; the coal miners strike against unfair labor practices at the Deserado mine in Colorado; and actions in defense of the Cuban revolution. The Santa Cruz YS helped to organize a large meeting at the University of California at Santa Cruz with two youth leaders from Cuba in late April. And it supported the political, diplomatic, and athletic victory by the Cuban National Baseball team in their match with the Baltimore Orioles in early May.

San Francisco YS members described their participation in the Cuban youth tour, the response of coal miners to the *Militant*, and actions against the U.S.-NATO imperialist assault that targets workers throughout Yugoslavia.

The day's events ended with a party to raise money for the national fund drive. Between the forum and party, we raised \$325, including pledges by those in attendance at the forum.

The next day Young Socialists, members of the Socialist Workers Party, and support-

ers young and old kicked off a Socialist Summer School.

The first class was on the preface written by Mary-Alice Waters to *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* and on the book's first chapter, "A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics" by Jack Barnes. The summer school will continue with classes in San Francisco and Los Angeles, as well as several more statewide weekends, and end with caravans to the August 5-7 Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio.

BY LEA KNOWLES

SEATTLE — Students, professors, and others gathered at Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) May 28 to hear a presentation entitled "Eyewitness Report from Yugoslavia." The speaker was Argiris Malapanis, a staff writer for the *Militant* newspaper and co-author of *The Truth about Yugoslavia*. The event was sponsored by the Student Leadership, the Middle Eastern Student Organization, and the Central Students Against War. It was built broadly on campus by the sponsoring organizations and professors, as well as through several literature tables on the campus staffed by members of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party. More than 30 people attended.

Dick Burton, a professor at SCCC who helped to publicize the meeting on campus, welcomed people to the event.

In his presentation Malapanis outlined the roots of the conflict in Yugoslavia, as well as the devastation currently being wrought by the U.S.-led NATO bombing campaign. Malapanis exposed the reality behind the lies presented by U.S. imperialism to justify its assault on the working people of Yugoslavia by sharing what he learned through the dozens of interviews conducted with workers, farmers, and youth in Yugoslavia, Albania, and Macedonia.

A lively question-and-answer period followed. One participant asked if the motive behind U.S. intervention in Yugoslavia is to control the rich mineral deposits throughout Yugoslavia. Malapanis replied, "They're going after something much bigger: to dismember Yugoslavia and to bring the entire country under the domination of capitalism."

Another participant asked Malapanis to describe the "relationship between workers and capitalists" in Yugoslavia. Malapanis explained that the Yugoslav revolution that triumphed after World War II overturned capitalist property relations in Yugoslavia. Since the collapse of the Stalinist regimes throughout eastern and central Europe in 1989-90, a few capitalists, mainly from Europe, have been able to buy partial ownership in a handful of factories. But the fact remains that the vast majority of factories are nationalized and that there is no capitalist class in Yugoslavia to exploit workers and farmers. Workers in Yugoslavia have a history of resisting attempts to privatize factories, which continues to this day.

A June 5 march and rally in Seattle calling for "U.S./N.A.T.O. out of Yugoslavia" was announced at the meeting. Several young people stayed afterward to continue the discussion with Malapanis and others at the meeting. The Young Socialists had a table at the event, which included a range of Pathfinder books.

Later that evening Malapanis spoke at the Montlake Community Center to a meeting of more than 60 people. The event was organized to raise funds for the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund. Several carloads of people came from Vancouver, British Columbia, including members of the Young Socialists, and the Communist League, and a number of other young people and workers.



Militant/John Sarge

YS member Roberto Guerrero, right, sells socialist literature at a protest June 5 in Washington, D.C., against U.S.-NATO war on Yugoslavia.

BY OLGA RUSSI AND SHEM MORTON

LOS ANGELES — Young Socialists

here have participated in several demonstrations against the U.S.-led war in Yugoslavia. One of them was a May 23 protest organized by a young garment worker from East Los Angeles. A parade in honor of Andrew Ramirez, one of the three U.S. soldiers who had been captured and held by the Yugoslav government for several weeks, was planned that day in the predominantly Chicano working-class community, and the garment worker decided to call an action against the war there.

The parade was part of the campaign of the U.S. ruling class to create an atmosphere of patriotism in support of the war. It included soldiers from different divisions of the armed forces, ROTC regiments and marching bands from local schools, the Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera, the Los Angeles sheriff, other cops, Jesse Jackson, local politicians, and some groups of veterans.

"With all the soldiers and the police parading, they are trying to say that if you participate in this war you are an American hero, that the war is glamorous, but it is definitely a tragedy," said East Los Angeles high school student Eric Anderson, who participated in the protest along with a dozen other young people. Although it was small, the action was one of the most spirited protests against the war that we have participated in here.

"I feel really proud that I was part of this protest. To actually get out there is the only way that you can change things. I want to do it more often," Anderson said. We chanted continuously for at least two hours slogans like: "We don't want your bloody war!" and "End the bombing now!"

The YS also participated in a teach-in about the war called "Dissenting Voices" sponsored by a radio station on May 23. We set up a literature table where we sold 16 copies of *The Truth about Yugoslavia* and raised our demands of "U.S./NATO out of Yugoslavia" and "Self-determination for Kosova."

YS members also took part in a protest against the bombing called by several Chinese student organizations on May 12, where 400 people partici-

pated, and in a teach-in against the war at California State University-Northridge hosted by the Central American Students Association, who played an important role in the recent Cuban youth tour on that campus.

MILITANT PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL Subscription drive

MAY 1 - JUNE 27

	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Sweden*	16	9	56%	8	6	8	7
New Zealand							
Christchurch	16	9	56%	1	0	6	0
Auckland	30	11	37%	1	0	5	0
N.Z. total	46	20	43%	2	0	11	0
Canada							
Vancouver*	30	16	53%	3	1	15	6
Montreal	20	9	45%	10	4	30	8
Toronto*	35	10	29%	5	2	25	12
Canada total	85	35	41%	18	7	70	26
Iceland	8	3	38%			2	0
Australia	14	5	36%	3	0	12	1
United States							
Atlanta	28	19	68%	7	6	16	6
Los Angeles	65	34	52%	30	14	40	30
Seattle	45	20	44%	15	2	15	4
San Francisco	90	40	44%	40	5	40	10
Houston	35	15	43%	15	2	20	4
Philadelphia	32	13	41%	6	1	15	0
Washington, D.C.	50	20	40%	15	2	30	9
Birmingham, AL	35	14	40%	5	0	10	1
Miami	35	12	34%	15	5	20	11
Des Moines	40	13	33%	20	29	20	6
Detroit	35	11	31%	8	7	15	10
New York	120	36	30%	50	19	75	21
Cleveland	40	11	28%	8	0	10	2
Pittsburgh	30	8	27%	5	0	20	0
Newark, NJ	125	32	26%	50	13	60	16
Chicago	50	10	20%	15	3	30	8
Boston	35	7	20%	15	5	25	7
Twin Cities, MN	50	8	16%	12	10	15	1
Central Illinois	20	1	5%	4	0	7	0
So. Minnesota	8	0	0%		3		
U.S. total	968	324	33%	335	126	483	146
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	411	37%	379	140	655	198
Goal/Should be	1100	693	63%	350	221	600	378
* 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, NJ	200		0%
Philadelphia	50		0%
Springfield, IL	75		0%
Twin Cities, MN	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.

'Getting to more workers in struggle is key'

Continued from front page
in Yugoslavia is part of the lawful workings of capitalism.

"I placed the war in context of the drive to reestablish capitalism in Eastern Europe on the backs of the working class, and pointed out that Wall Street and the White House are a long way from achieving their goals," said Sandler.

Sandler also drew attention to the first chapter of the book, "The Sea Change in Working-Class Politics," which explains the far reaching changes going in the working class in this country and the deepening labor resistance. "If we focus our eyes on the working class from Newport News to Yugoslavia, it is easier to see why it is going to become increasingly difficult for the wealthy U.S. rulers to achieve any of their goals," he said.

Altogether, seven people bought *Capitalism's World Disorder* at the San Francisco action, and six others at a similar protest in Washington, D.C., where at least a dozen people decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

Getting into the serious discussions Sandler describes with many more workers and farmers for the next few weeks will be crucial to meeting the goals socialist workers have adopted for selling 1,500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and signing up 1,100 new readers to the *Militant* by June 27. For the last three weeks of the campaign, this means selling 226 copies of the book and 230 subscriptions weekly. There are similar challenges to meet the goals for subscriptions to the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* and copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. It's a lot, but can be done.

On the same day as the San Francisco demonstration, two auto workers from Detroit attended two protest meetings in Cincinnati against the bombing of Yugoslavia. One of these protests featured Anthony Benn, a Labour Party member of the United Kingdom parliament. While saying that the bombing of Yugoslavia by NATO forces was a crime, Benn supported a "peacekeeping" force in Kosova under the banner of the United Nations. He also argued against self-determination for Kosova, reported Frank Gorton, a member of the United Auto Workers in Detroit.

Some of the people attending the meeting were eager to get a different view than these pro-imperialist arguments. Three people bought *Capitalism's World Disorder* and two subscribed to the *Militant*. The following day another book was sold at the University of Cincinnati, plus 15 copies of the *Militant* and two subscriptions.

A supporter of the *Militant* in southern Indiana who has sold two copies of the book to co-workers, members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, organized a chance for the socialist workers from Detroit



Selling *Capitalism's World Disorder* to striking shipyard workers in Pascagoula, Mississippi, May 27.

to talk with one of his co-workers. The discussion focused on the bombing of Yugoslavia and the land reform carried out by workers and farmers in Cuba after they took power in 1959. The worker decided to get a copy of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* and *New International* no. 11, featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by Jack Barnes.

Central to these sales campaigns is the effort of socialist workers in the industrial unions to get these political tools into the hands of co-workers and other workers and farmers in their regions. Socialists in the unions have adopted quotas to sell 500 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* — one-third of the overall goal.

Arlene Rubinstein from Atlanta reports that two striking workers at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi, bought copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. The strike has now ended and workers went back to work June 7.

One striker who picked up the book reports he is reading it on breaks and at lunch. Two co-workers have already asked to borrow it when he is through. Instead, he encouraged them to buy it for themselves and volunteered to take orders. Future trips to Pascagoula are in the works.

Another report we received this week came from Jane Harris, a rail worker from New Jersey. Her report underscored the kind of steady range of work that needs to be organized in the coming weeks.

"I was able to sell one copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* and five *Militant* subscriptions last week," she said. One *Militant* subscription "came easy." The co-worker who bought it wanted to learn more about what was behind the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia.

"I put in a total of seven hours in the course of two evenings on a literature table at a PATH subway stop and picked up two subs. One subscription was the result of calling someone who expressed interest earlier in the week to another *Militant* supporter," said Harris.

"The fifth subscription I sold was to a young woman from Toledo, Ohio, who attended the demon-

stration against the bombing of Yugoslavia in Washington, D.C. She was thrilled by the offer," said Harris.

Harris sold a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* as a result of "my first commercial sales trip for Pathfinder to a bookstore in Montclair, New Jersey," she said. The buyer bought a total of 20 books, including titles by Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Fidel Castro, and Leon Trotsky. He asked Harris to come back in October for another order.

Karen Ray in San Francisco described a similar response from commercial bookstores there. Mary Lipman, who regularly sells Pathfinder books to stores in Santa Cruz, was in town for a week and helped Ray and others begin to organize these visits. "Our first visit was to a large store near the university campus in Berkeley," Ray said. She and Lipman met with three buyers there. "We began by giving everyone a catalog and a copy of *Capitalism's World Dis-*

order. This is our book about the millennium, which offers a hopeful perspective for the future, not one of doom and gloom that most other books offer. It is about how the working class is on the move. We showed them the photo signature, which does a great job of explaining the book.

"In the end they said they would order five copies and will feature it on the shelf with the cover facing out. This always gives a book more prominence."

Visiting another bookstore in Oakland that day, the team got an order for 26 titles — a total of 43 books — including two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, three of *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention*, and a copy of *New International* no. 7, featuring "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq."

Ruth Cheney, a member of the Pathfinder reprint project steering committee, turned in money June 9 for the third copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* she had sold in the last few weeks. Several Bay Area supporters of the SWP have copies of the book on consignment and are organizing to sell them by the end of the campaign.

CAMPAIGN TO SELL 'Capitalism's World Disorder'

April 1 — June 27

Country	Goal	Sold	%
New Zealand			
Auckland	20	22	110%
Christchurch	14	12	86%
N.Z. Total	34	34	100%
Iceland	4	4	100%
Sweden	6	5	83%
Canada			
Montreal	7	9	129%
Vancouver	21	25	119%
Toronto	50	30	60%
Canada Total	78	64	82%

United Kingdom			
London	41	31	76%
Manchester	17	5	29%
UK Total	58	36	62%

United States			
Washington, D.C.	60	51	85%
Atlanta	40	33	83%
Los Angeles	82	63	77%
Detroit	78	48	62%
Pittsburgh	40	24	60%
San Francisco	136	98	72%
Miami	45	24	53%
Seattle	50	25	50%
Houston	70	33	47%
C. Illinois	17	8	47%
Cleveland	60	24	40%
Chicago	75	31	41%
Des Moines	55	22	40%
Newark	150	60	40%
Twin Cities, MN	50	20	40%
Birmingham	60	23	38%
Boston	50	19	38%
New York	120	44	37%
Philadelphia	50	18	36%
S. Minnesota	14	1	7%
U.S. Total	1302	669	51%

Australia	20	9	45%
International total	1502	821	55%
Total goal/should be	1500	1170	78%

MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE In the unions

	Militant			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	4	80%			4	0
USWA	7	1	14%	1	1	6	0
UNITE	4	0	0%	1	1	6	0
Canada total	16	5	31%	2	2	16	0
United States							
USWA	35	10	29%	4	0	20	1
UTU	50	11	22%	5	1	20	1
UNITE	15	3	20%	20	3	12	1
UAW	40	8	20%	4	0	15	1
UFCW	35	5	14%	25	37	20	5
PACE (Houston)	7	1	14%	1	0	3	0
IAM	50	6	12%	12	0	20	2
U.S. total	232	44	19%	71	41	110	11
New Zealand							
EU	3	1	33%				
MWU	2	0	0%				
SFWU	2	0	0%				
N.Z. total	7	1	14%				

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

	Goals	Sold	%
New Zealand			
EU	2	2	100%
Total	2	2	100%
United States			
PACE (Houston)	15	17	113%
UTU	80	52	65%
UAW	75	42	56%
USWA	80	43	54%
IAM	110	50	45%
UFCW	80	26	33%
UNITE	70	15	21%
Total	510	245	48%
Should be	500	410	82%
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%
UNITE	3	0	0%
Canada total	20	8	40%
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

Communist League in France holds founding convention

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

PARIS — The founding convention of the Communist League in France was held in this city May 15-16. The six voting delegates discussed and adopted political and organizational reports, as well as elected an Executive Committee. Fraternal delegates from the Communist Leagues in Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom, as well as from the Socialist Workers Party in the United States were seated with voice and consultative vote under the main reports. Several supporters of the communist movement in France also attended the convention as observers.

"The formation of the Communist League in France is the result of a concerted effort initiated in October of last year," said Jean-Louis Sirois in his political report. "At that time a jobs search committee was established in Paris aimed at building concentrations — called fractions — of communist workers in the industrial trade unions organized to do the kind of political work described in Pathfinder's book, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes," the national secretary of the SWP. A collective study of the book was also organized parallel to this effort.

Progress has been made since October, with members of the jobs committee being hired in auto plants in the Paris area, including two in the same plant, as well as in aerospace. As Rafik Benali noted in his organizational report, this was possible because of the jobs committee's steps forward in timeliness and responsiveness to job openings.

"But now," said Sirois in his report, "the Communist League that we are founding is more than a jobs committee. It is a party of workers bolsheviks, whose aim is to build the kind of movement it will take to lead a revolution that can establish a workers and farmers government in France and join the international struggle for socialism."

"It is a party of industrial workers who are members of industrial unions. It functions on a weekly rhythm of political activity. Its organizational principles are based on revolutionary centralism necessary in the deepening class battles at the millennium. Its political milieu is the working class — employed and unemployed, native-born and immigrant, in the city and in the countryside."

French rulers' war at home and abroad

The founding of the Communist League comes at a time when French imperialism is

deeply engaged in a deadly war against the working people of Yugoslavia and increased attacks against workers and farmers in France.

The war puts enormous pressures on French imperialism, explained Sirois. Paris is trying to push its own military, diplomatic, and economic interests in a war initiated and led by its U.S. imperialist rivals through the NATO military alliance dominated by Washington. The French government has been among those pushing for a United Nations-brokered "peace" agreement or a "European" intervention force in Kosovo as a way to go around NATO. Paris has veto power at the UN Security Council, which it does not have in NATO.

At the time of the founding convention, French president Jacques Chirac had been traveling to Finland and Russia in an effort to win the governments of these countries to the course of Paris in the war. As a way to counter NATO as the dominant military force in Europe, Paris has been a driving force behind the proposal to merge the Western European Union (WEU) — a nominal military alliance of the 11 NATO members who are members of the European Union — with the EU.

The sharpening French-U.S. inter-imperialist competition is also reflected in the significant trade tensions over everything from bananas to hormone-treated beef.

As they go deeper into war in Yugoslavia, the French capitalists are trying to impose their so-called 35-hour law on working people in France. "This law introduced by the Socialist Party government of Lionel Jospin is a Trojan horse," said Sirois. "It is a cover to generalize what is really greater capitalist 'flexibility.' The French capitalists need to drive down working conditions in order to increase the rate of exploitation and to give them a sharper edge in competition with imperialist rivals in Europe and beyond. The 35-hour law allows the employers to spread the work hours over the year, instead of the week as it is now. This means the bosses will try to force workers to put in very long hours during peak production period and less during slower periods without any overtime pay."

The Socialist Party (SP) and Communist Party (CP) together hold a majority in the government, and the law has the support of officials in the main trade union federations, the CFDT and CGT. Nevertheless, the French bosses are meeting unexpected resistance from workers to this "annualization" of hours.

There have been a series of strikes and job actions by train drivers and airport workers. In some plants where there had not been struggles in years, especially in private industry, protests have broken out against "flexibility."

"This is a change," said Sirois, "from what we have seen over the last 15 years. Through that period of retreat, workers in private industry have been hit by major job cuts in steel, coal, textile, and chemical industries. Lower wages and temporary jobs have become generalized. Now, our class is regaining confidence and resisting. This is new, even from the 1995 rail-strike and social movement in defense of social security against an attack by the government of then Prime Minister Alain Juppé."

Since the election of an SP government two years ago, the traditional right remains divided in France. As in other imperialist countries, bourgeois politics is marked by the emergence of Bonapartist figures, the main one in France being former Interior Minister Charles Pasqua. Pasqua is heading a list for the June European election with Philippe de Villiers, a right-wing politician. Their main slogan is "Left, right, left, right, let's march for France," a militarist and nationalist way to present themselves as above class divisions and against any expansion of powers to the bodies of the



Militant/Nat London

Communist League in France is founded at a time when the working class "is regaining confidence and resisting." Above, thousands of workers march in Paris, January 1998, demanding jobs and unemployment benefits.

European Union.

Sirois concluded his report by stressing that, contrary to what the media and the petty-bourgeois left claim, the recent split in the fascist National Front between its two main leaders, Jean-Marie Le Pen and Bruno Mégret, does not mean the end of the fascist danger in France. "Fascist trends are bred by the conditions of the worldwide capitalist depression," said Sirois. "These conditions did not disappear. In fact they are getting deeper and sharper. Economic nationalism — that is the defense of France's economic interests against its capitalist rivals around the world — is strongly promoted inside the workers movement by union officials and the Socialist and Communist parties. This disarms the working class in the face of the ultraright."

In the discussion, one delegate stated that the 35-hour law represented a concession by the bosses under the pressure of the big labor battles at the end of 1995 and of growing concerns by workers for jobs in the face of a steady high level of unemployment.

Several delegates answered that the current labor resistance to the "flexibility" measures in the 35-hour law remains essentially defensive. The bosses have the initiative, taking advantage of the unemployment, of a real erosion of working and living conditions for working people in France over the last two decades, and of a social democratic government to push through their own agenda.

Delegates adopted unanimously a motion saying that communists are against this 35-hour law, which has nothing to do with a fight to create jobs.

Working-class voice in European vote

The delegates had a substantial discussion on their course in the upcoming June 13 election to the European parliament. The Communist League is prevented by undemocratic laws in France from running its own candidates — a party must run a full slate with dozens of candidates, or none at all. Despite this, delegates decided that they will campaign under their own banner and program against the parties of war, racism, and depression, going to pickets lines, campuses, and other protest actions explaining to fighting workers and revolutionary-minded youth what they would say and do if they had their own candidates. Their effort will include promoting the campaign of Catharina Tirsén, the Communist League candidate in Sweden and the only working-class voice in the European elections.

In that context, the delegates decided to urge workers who intend to cast a vote to express a class position against the bosses' parties in the June elections by voting for the Communist Party or Socialist Party candidates.

After some discussion, the convention delegates rejected calling for a vote for the slate of the centrist organizations Workers Struggle (LO) and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR). The basic difference between the CP and SP on the one hand and the LO and LCR on the other is not their program, despite the more radical sounding rhetoric of the latter. This is illustrated by the fact that in the Yugoslavia war, the most important question in the world today, all these organizations are either overtly supporting French imperialism as part of the French government (SP and CP), adapting to it by calling for a UN- or EU-sponsored imperialist intervention force in Kosovo (CP and LCR), or ignoring the war

altogether in a workerist, petty-bourgeois nationalist framework (LO).

The key difference between these parties is the fact that the CP and SP, the traditional mass working-class parties, still have strong ties with the main trade union organizations in France, which is not the case with LO and the LCR.

"The petty bourgeois centrist parties are not moving to the left under the pressure of a growing labor upsurge, but more and more to the right, behind their own bourgeoisie," said Sirois.

Involvement in working-class resistance

A special report was presented by Jacques Soulage on his experience in an auto plant where several hundred workers on his shift held a spontaneous walkout against the initial company proposal on the implementation of the 35-hour law in the plant. Soulage was involved in the job action initiated by rank-and-file workers — a vast majority of them nonunionized. The action ended after threats by managers combined with a modified proposal designed to muddy the waters. But out of these initial skirmishes, workers in the factory gained a level of unity and confidence they didn't have for more than 15 years.

The delegates discussed the crucial importance for the Communist League of being part of such resistance when it happens and to learn in practice how to do collective, centralized communist work, as part the vanguard of those who are fighting but not ahead of it. They discussed how officials of the CGT and other trade unions will try to draw in radical workers in this period as cover for their overall inaction in front of the company attack.

In the discussion under Benali's organizational report, the delegates made clear that their priority is to build trade union fractions in the CGT because it is the trade union confederation with the largest concentration and that has the most important base among industrial workers in France.

In this context they decided to build fractions in two different industrial federations that are part of the CGT in the auto industry and in transportation, either rail or at airports.

They also decided to immediately establish a fraction comprised of the two members working in the same auto plant, even if one of them is still working under a temporary contract. The latter has become the common form of probation in industry in France. The fraction goal is to institutionalize collective political work by two communist workers who are in the same plant, one of whom is a CGT member and the other having as his priority being hired in a permanent job allowing him to also become a member of the CGT.

The delegates concretized plans to have a public presence in Paris, including establishing a Pathfinder bookstore, which will also host the current biweekly Militant Labor Forum and the Marxist summer school that the delegates decided to launch around the study of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes.

The convention delegates also decided to launch an effort aimed at bringing the largest delegation possible of workers and youth to the international Active Workers Conference that will be held in August in Ohio (see ad on page 11).

A Militant Labor Forum titled "Ours is the Epoch of World Revolution" was attended by 28 people on the Saturday evening of the founding congress.

FROM PATHFINDER

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

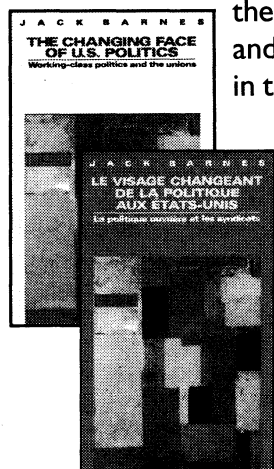
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Jack Barnes

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African National Congress wins big victory, broadens support in S. African elections

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa — With the support of working people in city and countryside, the African National Congress scored a big victory in South Africa's second democratic, nonracial election June 2, winning 66.35 percent of the vote, or 266 of the 400 seats in the National Assembly.

"The people have unequivocally said the ANC leads!" African National Congress president Thabo Mbeki told a celebration on June 3. "In their millions and without hesitation, the people of South Africa have renewed the mandate of the ANC to govern our country. The poorest of the poor have said they trust the ANC to help them out of their conditions of misery.... Our people, both black and white, have mandated us to remain firm in the pursuit of our vision of a nonracial society and the important goal of national reconciliation."

Working people were determined to put their stamp on the outcome of the election and prevent any erosion of the democratic gains they won in struggle against the racist system of apartheid. In interviews, person after person pointed to these newly won rights, as well as efforts by the ANC government to provide water, electricity, telephones, and housing to the black majority. They also said that a crucial issue was creating employment in a country where the official rate of joblessness hovers around 35 percent.

'We have a right to move'

"We have a right to move. There is no question of passes. There are no obstacles. We are free," said Reuben Thabusa, one of the 85,000 people who turned out for a May 30 ANC rally in Soweto. Many workers and peasants, particularly older generations who bore the brunt of apartheid, expressed similar sentiments. The hated pass system for decades dictated where blacks could live, work, and even walk.

"I'm very happy to be voting because this is only my second vote," said Windy Tlaka, 62, at a voting station in Mamelodi township outside Pretoria. "The new government is going to help me with getting a pension fund. They are doing a good job. I can enter places I could not enter before. There are no more passes and younger people are staying in town."

Lawrence Mphasga also voted in Mamelodi. "Many things have changed since 1994," he said. "There are new roads and houses. There are parties saying that nothing has changed in the past five years, but it's not true. You can't change things in five years that were done over hundreds of years."

Pamela Sambo, 20, said she voted for the ANC. But, "there has been no change over the past five years — it's all the same."

Thabo Kola, 20, studies computer programming at Intel College in Pretoria. "There is still a lot of work to be done," he emphasized. "But these changes will take time. A few years ago some white students were calling me 'kaffir,' a racist epithet. 'Now many of them are nice,' Kola continued. "A white friend slept at my house in Mamelodi. Those whites in my generation haven't had a chance to be like their fathers — they don't brutalize black people."



Newly elected South African president Thabo Mbeki said, "Our people, both black and white, have mandated us to remain firm in the pursuit of a nonracial society and the important goal of national reconciliation." Above, Mbeki (left) at May campaign rally.

We can and we will build this country together because we are like each other. The only difference is color."

Opposition parties

Nearly 16 million people voted — an 89 percent turnout. Many people began lining up from 4:00 a.m. in the winter cold at polling stations that did not open until 7:00 a.m. Some waited for up to eight hours to make sure they could vote, in lines that extended

for nearly one mile. Some stations, where thousands of people were still lined up at the official 9:00 p.m. closing time, stayed open until 3:00 a.m.

A dozen other parties will hold seats in the National Assembly: the African Christian Democratic Party (6), Afrikaner Unity Movement (1), Azapo (1), Democratic Party (38), Freedom Alliance (2), Freedom Front (3), Inkatha Freedom Party (34), Minority Front (1), New National Party (28), Pan

Africanist Congress (3), United Christian Democratic Party (3), and United Democratic Movement (14).

The ANC won large absolute majorities in seven of South Africa's nine provinces. In the Western Cape province, until now run by the New National Party (NNP), the ANC was the biggest single recipient of votes at 42.7 percent, with the NNP second at 34.2 percent. In KwaZulu-Natal the ANC won 32 seats in the provincial parliament to Inkatha's 34 seats. In both of these provinces the ANC has begun discussions with other parties about forming coalition governments.

At a national level, the ANC is likely to invite Inkatha leaders to take positions in the new cabinet.

Support for the New National Party, which without the "new" label ran the apartheid regime for decades, plummeted to 6.9 percent from more than 20 percent in 1994. Much of its middle-class support went to the Democratic Party, which has staked out a position as the foremost defender of class privilege accorded to whites. It will be the biggest opposition party in parliament, having polled just under 10 percent.

Support for parties that claimed to speak on behalf of Afrikaners — descendants of the Dutch colonists — also declined. The Freedom Front and Afrikaner Unity Movement will have a combined total of only four seats in the National Assembly.

A larger number of working people formerly classified as "colored" voted for the ANC than before in both the Western and Northern Cape provinces.

Thabo Mbeki is to be inaugurated president on June 16 in Pretoria.

Ingalls shipyard strikers approve contract, go back to work stronger

BY KRISTIN MERIAM

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Members of 11 unions at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi, voted June 3 and 4 to accept a contract proposal and return to work June 7 after three weeks on strike.

Journeymen will receive an immediate wage increase of \$1 per hour, a 60-cent raise after 14 months, and a 70-cent raise 15 months later, a total of \$2.30 over the 45-month pact.

Workers in lower labor grades will receive a percentage of that pay hike. Those with perfect attendance for 40 scheduled work days will receive a 37-cent-per-hour bonus. An additional vacation day was also included in the contract in lieu of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday some workers sought.

Employees' health insurance payments will increase by \$5 per month three times over the life of the contract. Ingalls originally demanded three \$10 increases.

The contract was approved by about a two-thirds majority, according to strikers Teresa Nelson and Paul Ray. The Pascagoula Metal Trades Council, which includes nine of the striking unions representing 6,500

strikers, did not publicly release its vote totals. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 733, which represents 1,200 Ingalls employees, approved the contract by a vote of 286-175. International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local 1133 also approved the contract.

Many strikers who spoke to the *Militant* thought they could have done better if they'd stayed out longer and were disappointed with the outcome of the vote. But, they agreed, the workers are going back to work stronger than they were before.

"We didn't get everything we wanted but majority rules so we'll just have to work with it," Ray, a Machinist, told the *Militant* in a phone interview June 6. "We showed the company we're tired of being pushed around."

"We made a stand. We let the company know they couldn't run us over," said Nelson. "A lot of young people had never been on a strike. They got a chance to experience it. We showed them what it was all about. Some older workers thought the young people would take whatever was offered, but they came out too. I'm very proud of that." Nelson, a member of Pipefitters Local 436, is a veteran of the Ingalls strike of 1974.

She concluded, "We've got 45 months to get ourselves in a situation where we can stay out longer and make a bold statement, like Newport News, and stay out for the duration."

Kristin Meriam is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 12014 in Birmingham.

'No to health care cuts!' say Rockwell workers in Milwaukee

BY DIANE GROTH

MILWAUKEE — More than 300 members and retirees of United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) Local 1111 turned out for a June 2 lunchtime picket at the headquarters of Rockwell Automation/Allen-Bradley. Workers carrying signs demanding a decent contract, no cut in health care, and better pensions chanted, "No cutbacks — No way!"

The informational picket line was called to protest the company's plans to drastically cut the work force and to press the union's demands in contract negotiations.

On March 15 the company announced its intention to relocate and outsource more than 300 jobs. This is part of restructuring announced last July that will cut 3,000 jobs internationally. According to a flyer distributed by the union, the move could have a ripple effect at the plant leading to between 500 and 600 layoffs out of the 1,400 union jobs.

Rockwell Automation employs about 5,000 workers in the Milwaukee area, including those at its main plant and at a non-union plant in nearby Mequon.

Much of the work will be sent to other

Rockwell automation plants that are nonunion, such as those in Eau Claire, Ladysmith, Rhinelander, and Richland Center, Wisconsin.

On Oct. 5, 1998, the company laid off 105 people. In violation of the contract the company retained 58 electricians, machine repair people, and punch-press operators out of seniority order. After the union and the company reached an impasse in the grievance procedure the union members voted to take the issue to arbitration.

Last February, union members voted 288-208 to continue to arbitrate, despite the company's threats to immediately lay off the 58 workers unless the union accepted the bosses' terms. The employers then threatened in March to eliminate 330 jobs, unless the union agreed to major concessions. In April the company proposed and the union accepted the early opening of upcoming contract negotiations.

Workers plan to wear union T-shirts and buttons June 9 to show their determination. A contract vote is scheduled for June 13.

Dianne Groth is a member of UE Local 1111. Cappy Kidd from Chicago contributed to this article.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Labor and Farm Actions

Fri.—Sun., June 25–27

21st National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters

Des Moines, Iowa

Savory 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.

NATO force deployed in Kosova is aimed

Continued from front page

Belgrade University, in a June 9 telephone interview. "All the destruction, so many people killed, was for nothing." He was referring to the accord on Kosova crafted by U.S. government officials at Rambouillet, France, in March, which set the stage for launching the U.S.-NATO assault.

"There's no peace," said Branislav Canak, in a phone interview the morning of June 10. Canak is the president of Nezavisnost, the trade union federation in Serbia independent of government control. "We only have the complete capitulation of the regime, in a typical fashion, after the working class in Serbia has paid an enormous price. And in Kosova, people, those who return, will find a devastated area both from the NATO bombing and the looting of whole villages by those who carried out the 'ethnic cleansing.' They won't be able even to consider their right to self-determination. They will be a protectorate of the UN, better said NATO."

Terms of deal

Under the terms of the military agreement, Belgrade's forces in Kosova must declare an immediate cease-fire, ground their airplanes, cease using all their air defense systems within 24 hours, mark minefields, and provide maps of them to the NATO forces as they withdraw. Once out of Kosova, they are supposed to remain behind a 3- to 15-mile-wide "buffer zone" around the province. NATO troops — led by British and U.S. units — will begin entering Kosova within a day or two from the start of Serb withdrawal. More than 50,000 "peacekeepers" will be deployed, about the same number as in Bosnia, which is a much larger and more populated area. They will control not only the ground but the air space over Kosova and over the adjacent buffer zone. NATO will not declare an end to the air strikes until all Serb military, police, and paramilitary forces have completely pulled out of Kosova. British Gen. Michael Jackson, who will command the international occupation force, referred to as KFOR, will have final authority regarding interpretation of the agreement.

After the pullout is complete, Belgrade is supposed to be allowed to send several hundred troops to Kosova to serve as liaisons with the foreign occupation force, mark and clear



Last three major U.S.-NATO bombing raids on Yugoslavia before June 10 suspension of air strikes. Above, residents of Pancevo, an industrial center north of Belgrade, flee to avoid toxic smoke from June 8 attack on oil refinery. Left, suburb of Belgrade is hit the same day. Below, residents of Novi Sad, the capital of Vojvodina, cross Danube river on floating bridge as oil refinery on outskirts of city burns. The June 8 strike on that facility with 10 missiles hit the nearby residential area of Sangaj, killing one person, Milan Bajic, 37, and seriously wounding eight others.

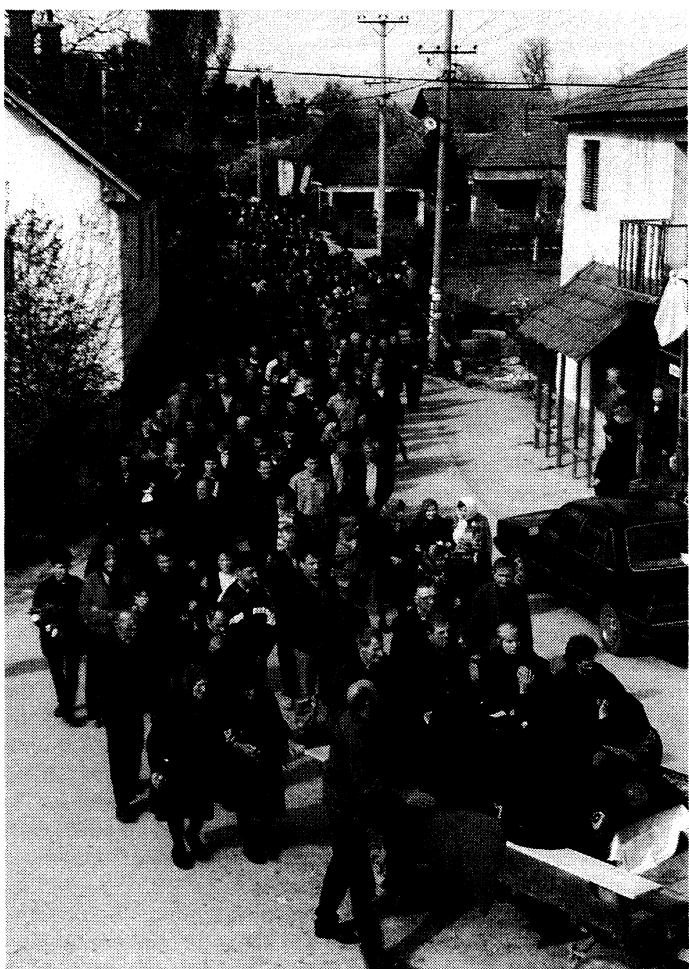


minefields, and maintain a presence at sites such as churches and monasteries that Belgrade describes as "Serb patrimony," and at key border crossings.

The resolution submitted to the UN Security Council states that the "international security presence with substantial NATO participation must be deployed under unified command and control." Washington, the power behind NATO, will be calling the shots. U.S. president William Clinton said KFOR will have "NATO at its core, which means a unified NATO chain of command."

Kosova will be divided into five sectors, each controlled by U.S., British, French, German, and Italian forces — much like the imperialist powers have carved up military control of Bosnia since 1995. The government of Russia has pledged to send 10,000 troops to Kosova and has stated it will not place its forces under NATO command. Washington and its imperialist allies rejected out of hand Moscow's earlier demand that its troops be given exclusive control of a portion of Kosova. NATO officials say they will find a face-saving solution for Moscow to deploy its forces.

The UN Security Council is to decide on an interim administration of Kosova and all those expelled are supposed to be allowed to return. It is unclear how this will be done, however, since Belgrade authorities took away or destroyed passports and ID cards from many of the deportees. Yugoslav customs agents are slated to maintain a symbolic presence at border crossings, but will be supervised by the foreign occupying forces. The province is slated to remain under the formal sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with "substantial autonomy." Under the terms of the "peace" plan, however, Yugoslav



M. Despotovic

Funeral of one of the first victims of the bombing, a worker in machine tool factory, who was killed early April in Nis.

column in the March 30 *New York Times*, prominent liberal columnist Thomas Friedman said the U.S. rulers "have neither a moral nor a strategic interest in the independence of Kosova.... Our strategic interest is that Kosova *not* be independent." Friedman said he was opposed to the implicit pledge in the Rambouillet accord for Kosovars to decide their future within three years "because it would send an unrealistic message to Basques, Kurds and other aggrieved groups that we will support their independence, and because Albania is already a failed state. It doesn't need a twin in Kosovo."

Instead, Washington and its imperialist allies are planning an open-ended occupation of Kosova as they've done in Bosnia. The UN Security Council resolution on Kosova says that the "civil and security presences are established for an initial period of 12 months to continue thereafter unless the Security Council decides otherwise."

Reactions in Serbia

"Under the NATO protectorate, Kosovar Albanians won't rule Kosova," said Canak. "They will be under a governor imposed by the foreign troops. The rights of working people will be diminished. In addition, the homes and other property of hundreds of thousands are destroyed and many Albanian people will be facing abject poverty. There is no self-determination under these conditions."

Canak and Nezavisnost — which organized nearly 25 percent of the 3 million wage workers in Serbia prior to the war — have recently been advocating self-determination for Kosova as a concrete way to undercut both the reactionary line and course of the Milosevic regime and the imperialist designs to dismember Yugoslavia and reestablish the domination of capitalist social relations there.

Nezavisnost, along with the Students Union of Yugoslavia and other organizations, was in the forefront of massive protests two years ago that forced the Milosevic regime to back off from annulling municipal election results unfavorable to the ruling party. The trade union federation has also taken part or initiated actions opposing Belgrade's war in Croatia and Bosnia and the repression and denial of national rights of Kosovar Albanians.

The social cohesion of hundreds of thousands of people has been and is being destroyed by NATO's course and the actions of the Milosevic regime, Canak and others said. "It will take time and a great deal of effort to rebuild political and social organizations in Kosova. Houses are burned and entire villages have been erased."

"The agreement is not about repatriation of the refugees," said Martina Vukasovic, a mathematics student at Belgrade University and an activist in the Students Union of Yugoslavia. She also supports self-determination for Kosova. Last year she participated with dozens of other students in antiwar canvassing throughout Serbia to build opposition to Belgrade's repressive policies in Kosova. "They are trying to divide further the people of Yugoslavia. Tens of thousands of Serbs left Kosova because they were opposed to the 'ethnic cleansing' by the paramilitary gangs and special police or they were afraid for their lives because of the NATO bombing. There's no talk about their right to return. In fact many of the Serbs who are still in Kosova are getting ready to flee. And the Kosova Liberation Army won't be disarmed."

Washington has indicated it intends to use fighters of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) to build a local police force in Kosova. The deal Belgrade was forced to accept calls for the "demilitarization" of the KLA. Gen. Wesley Clark, NATO's commander in Europe, said this means the group has to dissolve its military structures but the NATO forces entering Kosova will not attempt to disarm the group. The KLA, a guerrilla group that has waged an armed struggle for independence, has turned increasingly into Washington's tool. In the camps for expelled Kosovars in Albania, KLA members have functioned in a thug-

sovereignty will in fact be nothing more than a formality.

The occupying troops will be followed quickly by investigators of the imperialist "war crimes" tribunal in The Hague that will be used to bring additional indictments against Yugoslav government officials. The tribunal has already indicted Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and five other top officials in his administration on such charges. These indictments can be used as further pretext for military intervention into Yugoslavia, as NATO troops in Kosova may be asked to arrest the accused. The UN Security Council resolution "demands full cooperation by all concerned, including the international security presence, with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia."

Imperialists reinforce divisions

Washington and its imperialist allies boast that the deal will guarantee the return of the nearly 900,000 deported Albanians and claim their forces will enable all inhabitants of Kosova to live in peace. But they are already doing their utmost to reinforce divisions between Albanians and Serbs and to deny the people of Kosova the right to decide their future.

Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon has stated repeatedly in the media that Kosova will be "an uncomfortable place for Serbs" under the NATO-led occupation.

The Clinton administration and other imperialist governments have stated repeatedly they are opposed to self-determination for Kosova. Many politicians and pundits in the United States and the United Kingdom have explained from the beginning of the U.S.-NATO assault their opposition to self-determination or independence for Kosova. In a

against working people

gish manner. They cut off discussion when fellow Albanians raised opposition to the U.S.-NATO bombing of Yugoslavia during visits by *Militant* reporters in April and May. The KLA will now be used to police Albanians inside Kosova who don't kowtow to NATO's dictates.

'There's nothing to celebrate'

"There's nothing to celebrate with the signing of the accord," said Branislav Canak, pointing to reports in the media that many people in Belgrade fired guns in the streets and drove cars honking horns as news broke out that the war ended. "Some people buy Milosevic's lie that the deal somehow represents a victory for Yugoslavia. But most working people will soon realize that the destruction of our country was unnecessary. It was the policies of the regime

be in a better position to resume political activities and protests and, who knows, down the road get rid of Milosevic."

To justify its course of action, Belgrade boasted that the deal it accepted recognizes Yugoslav sovereignty and does not contain the Rambouillet clause calling for a referendum on Kosova's status within three years. "They also lied by telling people through state TV and radio that army generals were negotiating with UN officials in Macedonia, rather than NATO commanders," said Vukasovic.

Vukasovic, Petrovic, Canak, and others interviewed pointed to the tremendous toll the U.S.-NATO assault has exacted on the working class throughout Yugoslavia. Bombings that were widespread through June 8, have destroyed hundreds of factories and much of

ation is depressed, said Christina Ranic, a member of the metal workers union who worked in the plant. Most workers survive by humanitarian aid from trade unions and others from abroad and food from relatives in the countryside. "We were owed months of back wages, and last week we started to get some of that," Ranic said. "We get 20 deutch marks per month. That's barely enough for bread and milk. NATO doesn't even mention what workers face throughout Yugoslavia. It's as if we disappeared from the face of the earth."

On the corpses of the people of Yugoslavia, the U.S. rulers are using their military power to further advance their dominance as the number one military and economic power in Europe and tighten the encirclement of the workers state in Russia and other former Soviet republics.

Interimperialist rivalries

"We had a very good day," boasted U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright June 8, after extracting Moscow's agreement on virtually all of NATO's terms.

Two days later, about 2,000 U.S. Marines were landing at a port in northern Greece, on their way to Macedonia. There they will join 1,700 U.S. troops coming from Albania along with Cobra and Apache attack helicopters. Together with additional U.S. forces from Germany, these units will be among the first to enter Kosova behind the British-led force of more than 17,000 NATO troops already in Macedonia. London was the most vocal backer of the White House course, clinging more firmly on its "special relationship" with Washington as a club against the UK rivals in the European Union.

In a sign of the inter-imperialist rivalries that have come more to the fore during the Yugoslavia wars, the government of Greece prevented for a few days U.S. ships carrying the Marines destined for Kosova from docking at the port of Thessaloniki. Athens, Rome, and Bonn had repeatedly called for a temporary halt to the NATO bombing to advance diplomacy. The German government, in particular, took the lead in vehemently opposing a ground invasion of Kosova if an agreement with Belgrade was not reached when Washington and London began pushing that option.



Militant
Turbine section of Zastava car-manufacturing complex in Kragujevac, Serbia, destroyed in series of NATO air strikes beginning April 9. It used to employ 38,000 workers, now out of a job.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
U.S. troops on outskirts of Tirana, Albania, May 5. About 1,700 have now been redeployed to Macedonia along with Apache attack helicopters, among the first to enter Kosova.

and its nationalism, which virtually all opposition parties embraced, that opened the door to the United States to intervene."

While many people in the streets on the night of June 9 cheered when street lights came on after weeks of darkness due to the destruction NATO air strikes inflicted on the power grid, for most it was a sense of relief the bombing is over.

the country's infrastructure — including, railways, bridges, hospitals, and schools. According to official statistics, more than 2,000 civilians were killed and 5,000 wounded as a direct result of the air strikes. A similar number of casualties were inflicted Yugoslav army soldiers.

Unemployment has reached 90 percent among the country's 3 million wage workers.

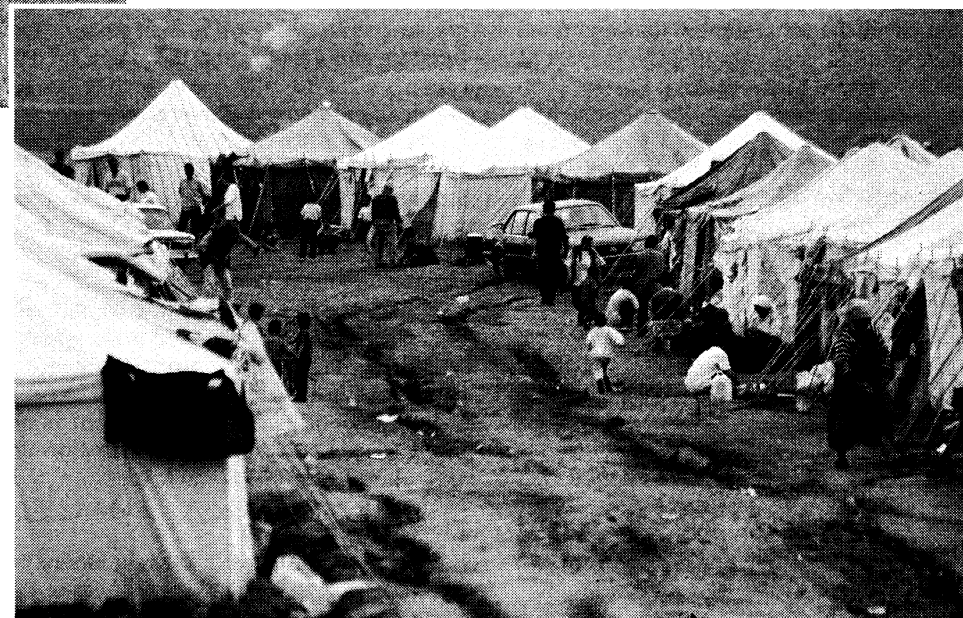


Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Operators at Ballshi oil refinery in southern Albania, May 3. At right is Sali Saliu who opposed government attempts to privatize the facility, laying off many workers in the process. He was also against the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia. "Their plans for foreign investment are OK, if it means improving technology and production," he said. "But the union won't accept layoff of two-thirds of the workforce that an Australian company wanted." These workers and their stance seem to have kept capitalists away from any large-scale investments in the Albanian workers state. Among these workers in south Albania *Militant* reporters found the strongest opposition to U.S.-led assault on fellow toilers in Yugoslavia.

In Nis, Serbia's second-largest city and among the most important industrial centers that suffered a disproportionate share of the bombing, thousands of people walked in the streets late into the night on June 9, said Duci Petrovic, a leader of the Students Union there. "Many sang songs. But for most people it was releasing the tremendous stress from nearly three months of war. Very few had any sense of victory. The only good thing is we may soon

Many of Yugoslavia's heating plants and power stations have been destroyed. Electricity is rationed in four- to six-hour shifts in much of Belgrade now. "But that's only because not a single factory is working in the capital," Canak said.

In Kragujevac, where most people depended on jobs at Zastava, the largest car manufacturing plant in the Balkans that used to employ 38,000 workers and was destroyed by the NATO bombing, the economic and social situ-



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Camp for Albanians expelled from Kosova, at Kukes, Albania, May 2. "Even though NATO will try to prevent us, we'll rebuild bridges with working people in Kosova," said Canak.

Lessons from the Iranian revolution

Twenty years ago, working people in Iran threw out the shah — the U.S.-backed monarch — in a massive social revolution. It was an act the imperialist rulers in Washington have never forgiven. Below are major excerpts of "Iranian Masses Show the Way for Workers Around the World," a statement issued by the Socialist Workers Party on Feb. 14, 1979, and published in the Feb. 23, 1979 issue of the *Militant*.

Revolution strips away the layers of falsehood that disguise the relations between classes; it reveals the real foundations of society. So it has been in Iran.

From February 9 to 12, the old regime crumbled under the blows of a popular insurrection. Ministers and generals fled into hiding. Discipline over the ranks of the army disintegrated. Governmental power had disappeared.

The workers, peasants, and soldiers were in an unparalleled position to organize their own government and begin reconstructing Iranian society.

Committees arose spontaneously and in many areas took over the direction of traffic, the evacuation of those wounded in the fighting, and the maintenance of public services in Tehran — a city of 5 million.

Popular defense guards, or "Islamic marshals," were also in control of the major cities of Isfahan, Mashad, Qum, Kermanshah, and Shiraz, as well as dozens of smaller towns and villages throughout the country.

Insurgent soldiers began to elect their own officers. They joined with workers to disarm the few elite military units loyal to the monarchy. Meanwhile, popular committees directed the process of arming the masses, cleaning out police stations, rounding up SAVAK agents, and breaking open the shah's prisons.

Workers in rifle assembly plants ended their strike to assemble weapons for the workers.

Workers took over some key installations and communications centers and used them to help organize the uprising.

Workers committees had already been running Iran's giant refineries and oil fields — the country's main industry — for weeks. They needed no help from executives of the imperialist oil cartel nor from bureaucrats appointed in Tehran.

The Iranian revolution demonstrated that the working masses do not need bosses or bankers, they do not need officers or cops, they do not need capitalists or landlords in order for society to function.

The overthrow of the shah's monarchy is a victory for the American workers no less than for the people of Iran.

It is a victory for working people all over the world, who will be encouraged in their struggles and heartened with the knowledge that what the Iranian people did, we can do as well.

Only one thing was lacking in Iran. Only one thing has prevented the working masses from completing their victory by taking power into their own hands.

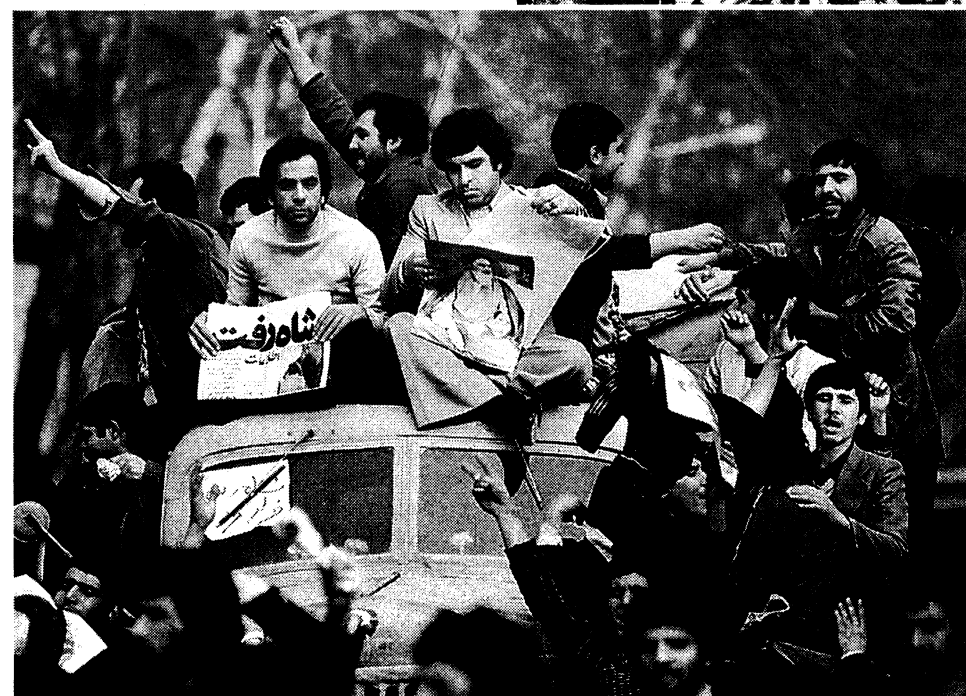
Revolutionary Party

There was no revolutionary party, composed in its big majority of workers, experienced in the struggles of the oppressed and exploited, and enjoying the respect of

the masses.

Such a party would be the clearest voice explaining the need for the toilers to extend throughout the country their own independent organizations — in the factories, barracks, and villages — and to declare them to be the workers and peasants republic of Iran.

The Trotskyist forces, most of whom have recently returned to Iran from forced exile, are now unified in the Hezbe Kargarane Sosialist — the Socialist Workers Party of Iran — and have set out to build such a party.



The bourgeois forces — organized around Ayatollah Khomeini, and led by Mehdi Bazargan and Karim Sanjabi of the National Front — are now racing to establish a stable capitalist regime. They have declared — from above — a provisional government. They are desperately trying to get the workers to give up their arms, get off the streets and back to work. Their efforts are being backed by the Carter administration.

Explaining Washington's fears, *New York Times* reporter Nicholas Gage noted February 13 that "nearly every young man on the street is now armed."

"The possession of such weapons has given the people a sense of personal power that is the opposite of their earlier experience, and they seem unlikely to put down their weapons easily to return to the routine of daily life."

Furthermore, "Once these radicalized young people and workers do go back to their factories and schools, they will be ripe for overtures from the Communists, especially if they feel the new Government's many promises to them are not being fulfilled quickly and completely..."

Mohammed Ali Nowruz, the deputy chief of police under the shah, has been appointed acting chief of police by Bazargan.

But the shah's executioners have not changed their spots, and the Iranian masses know it. That is why they have responded so reluctantly — and sometimes not at all — to repeated appeals to turn in their arms.

Orders from officials handpicked by Khomeini or anyone else will not help the masses to move forward in their struggle for freedom and a better life. What will be decisive is what the masses can do to organize politically in their own interests.

The strike committees and neighborhood committees that are already running many industries and some towns can take responsibility for distributing food and fuel as well as other consumer goods, and for organizing production.

If these tasks are left to the capitalists, they will make sure the result is shortages, unemployment, speculation in essential goods, and inflation.

In the countryside, committees of poor peasants can organize the distribution of agricultural equipment and land.

Elected Committees

Elected committees of the revolutionary masses are not new to Iran. Known as *anjomans*, such committees sprang up during the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and again in the revolutionary upsurge during and after World War II. Similar committees were called *soviets* (councils) when



Above, anti-imperialist march in Tehran. Left, soldiers celebrate the 1979 overthrow of the shah of Iran. "Insurgent soldiers began to elect their own officers. They joined with workers to disarm the few elite military units loyal to the monarchy.... Guns and tanks, after all, no matter how sophisticated, are only as reliable as the hands that fire them. And these are the hands of workers and peasants in uniform, not the employers or their cops."

turers, and his U.S.-trained and U.S.-armed military machine. The shah who outlawed democratic trade unions, filled the jails with political prisoners, denied equality to women, and trampled on the rights of the oppressed nationalities....

A second lesson of the Iranian revolution also applies to the United States, no less than to Iran: *the capitalist class is a lot weaker than it looks.*

What Iranians Faced

Just look at what the Iranian people faced. The shah's secret police operated in every factory, every college, and every neighborhood. People were imprisoned and tortured merely for reading "suspicious" books.

Behind the secret police stood a 430,000-strong military establishment armed with billions of dollars worth of the most modern weapons the Pentagon could provide.

Not only did the shah have the support of every imperialist government, he could also count on friendly relations with both Moscow and Peking.

Finally, the shah had control of billions of dollars in oil money and was promising rapid economic progress.

But all the things that looked to rulers around the world like the basis for stability in Iran turned into their opposite with a speed that took the shah and his supporters completely by surprise.

As one of the leading mouthpieces for U.S. imperialism, the *New York Times* declared in a February 13 editorial, "It ended up taking only three months for events in Iran to go from the unthinkable to the inevitable."

The shah's petrodollars and the economic expansion they fueled turned into a trap for the regime. Millions of peasants, driven out of the countryside and into the cities by economic pressure, swelled the ranks of the working class and the urban poor.

The giant arms budget and the shah's imperialist advisers became a point of resentment and anger instead of a prop for the peacock throne. In the last analysis, the shah's tyranny rested not on its repressive apparatus but on the illusion among the masses that they had to bow to the regime. Once the vast majority of society had shed that illusion — through months of determined and self-sacrificing struggle — no amount of arms could stop them.

Guns and tanks, after all, no matter how sophisticated, are only as reliable as the hands that fire them. And these are the hands of workers and peasants in uniform, not the employers or their cops. When the ranks of the army came over to the revolution, the fate of the shah's regime was sealed....

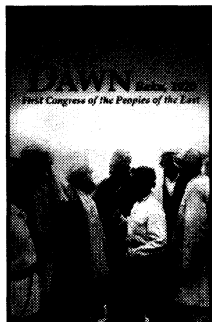
Through their revolution, the Iranian people have shown how quickly that illusion can crumble, how quickly the working class can sweep the exploiters aside. The same thing can happen here once the workers see a leadership that rejects collaboration and stands for struggle against the exploiters on every level.

The Iranian insurrection has once again shown the necessity of building a revolutionary socialist party here in the United States — a party composed of workers who have absorbed the lessons of previous struggles and can help lead our class to political power in the stronghold of world imperialism.

TO SEE THE DAWN

BAKU, 1920—FIRST CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST

How can peasants and workers in the colonial world achieve freedom from imperialist exploitation? By what means can working people overcome divisions incited by their national ruling classes and act together for their common class interests? These questions were addressed by 2,000 delegates to the 1920 Congress of the Peoples of the East. \$19.95



At bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

Century Aluminum workers prepare fight

BY SALM KOLIS

RAVENSWOOD, West Virginia — Driving into Ravenswood on Route 2, it's immediately clear that a labor dispute is brewing. In front of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 5668 union hall is a big wooden sign — flanked by fire-barrels and wood — that reads "Vote No on the contract."

As you continue down the road, you begin noticing "Vote No" spray-painted on the pavement with increasing frequency as you approach the Century Aluminum plant, formerly Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. There are "Vote NO" signs on workers' lawns. One truck in the union parking lot had a sign in the window that read, "I survived the battle of Fort RAC," referring to the 1990-92 lockout of steelworkers by Ravenswood Aluminum. "I am ready for the battle of the Century." There's no mistaking that Steelworkers here are preparing for a fight.

At a series of union meetings in May and June, workers reviewed the status of contract negotiations and the company's final offer, which was rejected unanimously by the union negotiating committee. At the insistence of International union officials, a mail-in vote is being conducted on the proposed contract. Meanwhile, the previous contract has been extended and the union has agreed to continue working until the ballots are counted, probably by June 11.

The company's offer is a four-year contract, with a 35-cent hourly raise each year, a \$1,000 signing bonus, and a 25 percent increase in the factor used to calculate pensions. The major objection by unionists to the contract is a drastic increase in the cost of medical care. The amount of out-of-pocket expenses would rise to \$1,700 for an individual or \$3,400 for a family.

Brad Warner, who works in the reduction facility, said, "The conditions we work under are trying. Especially in the reduction end, they are hot and stressful. We are entitled to keep what we have. The union distributed information on the salaries and benefits of Century's executives. The top man made \$500,000 last year in bonuses. But it's the workers on the floor who get the job done, we're the one's they come to when they have to solve a production problem. I'm tired of getting walked on. Sometimes you just have to draw the line."

Workers are angry about a recent article that appeared in the Charleston, West Virginia, *Daily Mail* entitled, "Plant awaits contract: Ravenswood facility may close if deal is not OK'd."

"This is the company trying to pressure us to vote 'yes.' They are trying to scare workers and businesses in the area with the memory of the lockout," explained Tim Schumaker. "But I'm not going to be intimidated."

The article also quotes Tim Dean, a servicing staff representative of the USWA International, saying the proposed health plan is "probably better than 95 percent of the



Militant photos: top/Stefanie Swenko; right/Tom Nichols
Above, signs calling for a 'No' vote on Century Aluminum's proposed contract adorn USWA union hall and many other sites. Right, Ravenswood workers returning to their jobs in 1992 after 20-month lockout.

folks we represent in West Virginia." Dean goes on to say he believes the company's statements about its financial straits. The company claims customers have canceled orders and a bank has threatened to cut off a line of credit due to the possibility of a strike.

"He sounds like a company man!" exclaimed Warner. International union officials met with the local negotiating committee June 1 and said that if the contract is rejected, talks will continue. Two buses of Steelworkers traveled to Pittsburgh June 3, and they planned to hold an informational picket at the USWA's international offices to show their opposition to the contract proposal. Instead, they met with officials at the local hotel. Unionists returned feeling confident they had made their point.

Company threats and intimidation

Coming out of a June 1 union meeting, Doug Wilson was carrying a new union hat and T-shirt. When he saw the *Militant* newspaper he said, "Militant — great, that's for me!" Like many other workers, Wilson was outraged that the company printed a message on workers' last pay stub encouraging them to vote yes on the new contract. "This is a violation of the labor laws," he said. "I went up to payroll and demanded a new pay stub. Finally, one of the clerks whited out the company's message and copied my pay stub and gave me the copy without the 'vote yes' message. I felt I had to make my point."

Many other workers agreed, and dozens have filed individual grievances protesting this company intimidation.

"Vote No" signs are all over the plant, on the walls, on hard-hat stickers, on forklifts, even on ingots going down the line," Wilson reported. "I brought my ballot into the lunchroom so everyone could see me

vote 'no.' Then I made a copy and put it up on the bulletin board."

Workers pointed out that while the company tries to cut its spending on their medical coverage, there is money for improvement in the plant and new equipment. "They just bought a new metal carrier with a rotating cab for \$243,000. And I know that's what they paid for it, because I took the sticker off it!" exclaimed Roy Headley. "This plant is a money-maker. It's one of the few integrated facilities in the country, and some of the equipment they have allows them to produce products that other plants can't." During the 1990-92 lockout, Headley refused to cross the picket line and take a job at the plant. "They told me then I'd never work here, but here I am and I'm ready to strike if that's what it takes."

"This is the most productive aluminum plant in the country, and they want to take back what we already have. I say no!" declared Schumaker.

Veterans of the 1990 lockout are particularly heartened to see the response of the younger workers. "At the meetings discussing the company's proposal, it was the workers in their 20s and 30s who were doing the hollering," noted one veteran of the lockout.

The Ravenswood plant used to be owned by Kaiser Aluminum Corp. Workers explain that many of the same people sit on the board of directors of both companies, so they are watching the tough stand the company is taking in the lockout at Kaiser plants in three states. That fight began as a strike last October and became a lockout in January when Kaiser refused to accept the USWA's offer

to return to work under the old contract while continuing negotiations.

To prepare for the contract fight with Century Aluminum, the local organized informational picketing outside the company's offices several months ago. More than 100 unionists and their supporters picketed in the morning and afternoon for three days.

The event was well covered on local television stations and helped put the company



on notice that the union was preparing for a struggle.

1990-92 battle of 'Fort RAC'

In November 1990, just as their contract was set to expire, workers at Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. (RAC) were locked-out. Because the company fortified the plant with big fences, barbed wire, Vance security guards, and a helicopter pad, workers referred to it as "Fort RAC."

Their fight for a contract and to return to work took 20 months, and in the course of their struggle Steelworkers here reached out for support from workers on strike against the *Daily News* in New York City, metalworkers in Europe, and many others. Through these activities the ranks transformed what was officially a lockout into a strike that was effective enough to win.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were donated to the local to keep up the fight. Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), fresh from their victory against the Pittston Coal Co., organized bucket collections for the Ravenswood workers at mine bathhouses and in dozens of coal mining communities across southern West Virginia.

The Steelworkers returned to work under a contract that allowed the company to combine jobs; change seniority rights like taking away the right of older workers to refuse overtime; and rehire some of the scabs. Nevertheless, Steelworkers returned to work with their union stronger because of the fight waged by the members of Local 5668 and

Continued on Page 14

Newport News strike

Continued from front page

pay at the yard by 25.5 percent, and the lower pay grades by a larger percentage. The company offered nothing new. Yard spokesman Jerri Dickeski insisted that the union's proposal "came nowhere near to what we'd consider within a competitive framework." Instead, the yard has teamed up with the U.S. Navy brass in a scheme to cut an additional \$360 million in labor costs and materials over the next five years. Most of Newport News Shipbuilding's contracts are with the Navy.

"We don't buy their argument about keeping labor costs low," stated Brian Riblett, who has been at the yard 22 years. "If that was true, then why do they have 17 vice presidents, each with six- or seven-figure salaries once you include bonuses and stock options? They even have a vice president of commercial shipbuilding, even though they don't do commercial shipbuilding."

"Most people, after being out this long, don't miss the shipyard," continued Riblett. "The work is hot, dirty, and can be dangerous. We don't miss that. We just miss our paychecks. But we will not go back without something decent. We didn't want the shipyard's offer two months ago. We certainly don't want it now."

A recent article in the Newport News

Daily Press pointed out, "The yard has maintained throughout negotiations, which began in January and initially broke off March 30, that its contract offer is the best in the industry. That's no longer the case, following the resolution Saturday [June 5] of a three-week-old strike by hourly workers in Ingalls Shipbuilding, another of the country's six biggest shipbuilders." Nearly 8,000 workers at the shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, ratified a contract that increases wages 16.3 percent (see article on page 11).

"I'm glad for them," stated Utterback. "Anybody else who would go out makes us feel good. When we get a big group to go out like us then maybe we can do something for the people of tomorrow."

In another development, Litton Industries, which owns Ingalls, is acquiring the Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana for \$529 million in cash. In January Newport News announced plans to acquire Avondale in a stock deal then valued at \$470 million. Avondale, however, opted for the larger cash offer so terminated its planned merger with Newport News.

Brian Williams is a member of the USWA in Sparrows Point, Maryland. Susan LaMont, a member of the USWA in Birmingham, Alabama, contributed to this article.

COME TO AND BUILD AN

Active Workers Conference

August 5-7, 1999

Growing numbers of working people are reaching out to others in struggle, as the employers and their government deepen their offensive against toilers around the globe. This conference will be an opportunity for workers, farmers, and young people involved in such social struggles to exchange experiences and learn from each other, and from the past lessons of the workers movement. It will be a place to gain information needed to broaden solidarity with others whose struggles are charting a way forward for working people in the United States and internationally.

Workshops ♦ Classes ♦ Feature Reports ♦ Books & Pamphlets
♦ Information Tables ♦ Recreation ♦ Socials & Fun

DISCUSSIONS WILL INCLUDE:

Labor Battles ♦ Farmers' Struggles ♦ Actions Against Police Brutality ♦ Women in Industry ♦ The Fight for National Self-Determination and Against Imperialism and War ♦ The Continuity of the Communist Movement and the Fight for Socialism ♦ The Cuban Revolution ♦ Building an Alliance of Workers and Farmers

The conference will be held on the Oberlin College campus, Oberlin, Ohio.

Sponsored by:
Socialist Workers Party
Young Socialists

For more information, see page 12.

'No to bombing'

Continued from front page

similar to the targets worn by protesters in Belgrade, Yugoslavia — a smaller number wearing buttons reading "Kosova is Serbia."

All but a handful of the speakers concentrated their remarks on condemning the NATO-U.S. bombing of Yugoslavia while avoiding any discussion of the anti-working class policies, including "ethnic cleansing," carried out by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

Many participants in the march and rally, however, including many wearing buttons and signs identifying themselves as Serbian, were eager to discuss this with supporters of the *Militant* newspaper there.

Yasmina Draskovic, an archeologist originally from Belgrade, told the *Militant*, "The whole thing is a farce. Everything has been planned since the big Yugoslavia fell apart — to break up the former Soviet Union so the United States can take over the world. The Kosovar Albanians have been used. What are they going to go back to? It's devastated. If anything happens, it's going to be the occupation of Serbia and Yugoslavia. All of my life I've been a Yugoslav. I've had to become a Serb under pressure because of what they've done to my people."

Kadira Belynné, a 42-year-old teacher who drove to the march with a carload from Tennessee, said, "It's the right of the people of Kosova to determine their future. I don't think what the United States and NATO are doing is promoting human rights." Referring to the struggle of Native Americans for their rights on coal-rich land in the western United States, she added if Washington really "cared about human rights, they would not be persecuting the Diné people on Big Mountain. Our government is in collusion with Peabody Coal to drive them off the mountain. That hypocrisy just burns me up."

Charlie Rothwell, a 25-year-old worker who attends community college part-time in Three Rivers, Michigan, said he and some friends started a group called Protest Against Violence and eight of them had flown out to Washington for a demonstration of their own the previous day. That's when they found out about the national march and decided to take part. Rothwell thinks "the U.S. is there to protect their own interests, for money and power. It's part of them repressing us, the underclass, so they can get rich."

The protest was initiated by the International Action Center in New York. Other national organizations that participated in the demonstration included the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Veterans for Peace, Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Bruderhof Religious community, the Congress for Korean Reunification, National Peace Action, Pastors for Peace, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Green Party, Workers World Party,

Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and Young Socialists.

The rally was broadcast live on CSPAN.

BY MARGARET WILSON AND DEBORAH LIATOS

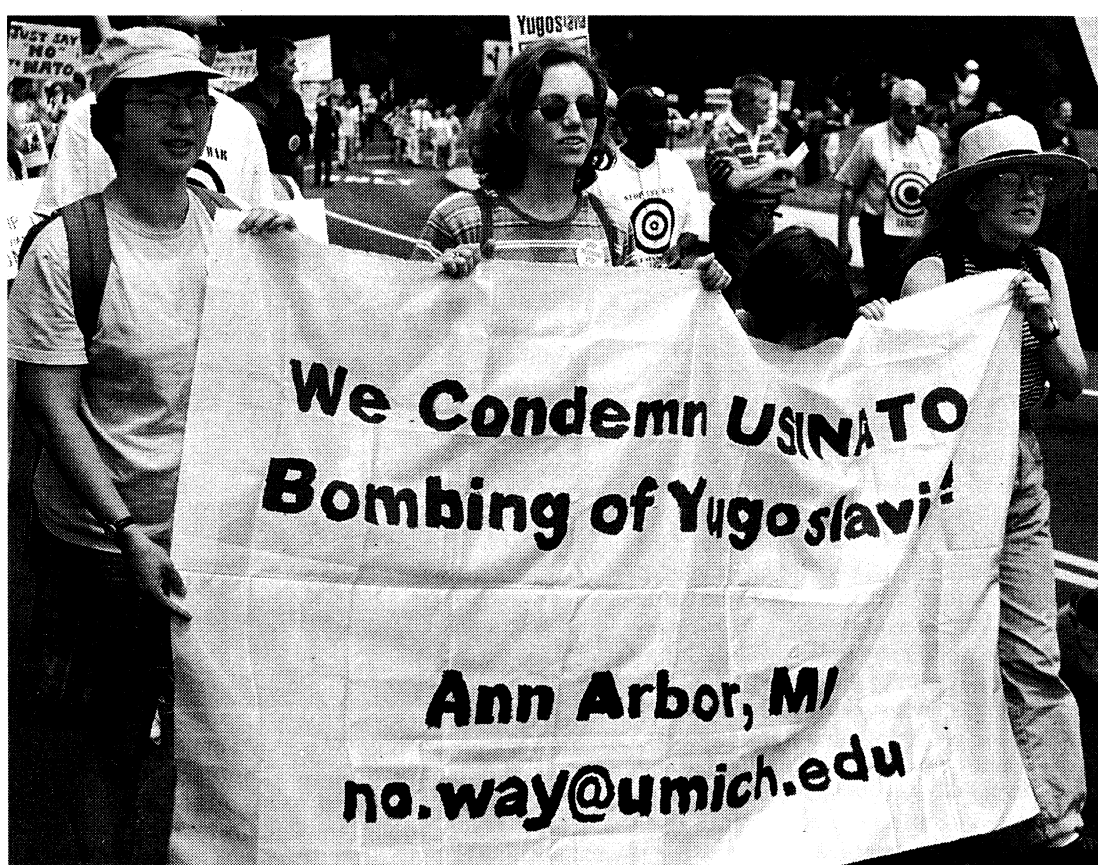
SAN FRANCISCO — More than 3,000 people turned out here for the June 5 march and rally to protest the U.S.-NATO war in Yugoslavia. Participants came from Los Angeles, San Diego, Arcata, Davis, Sacramento, and other areas around California, and expressed a wide range of views.

Mike Schwartz from Los Angeles, told the *Militant* that he doesn't "buy the so-called peace agreement. It will just lead to more ground troops. Self-determination [for the Albanians in Kosova] is very important, but the U.S. can't give it to them."

When asked by the *Militant* what he thought of the "peace agreement," 22-year-old Ryan Crewe shook his head and said, "The only solution is among the people themselves. The peace is a false peace." Crewe said he believes that autonomy for the Albanians in Kosova is necessary within the Yugoslav federation, that there should be a peaceful solution and equal debate. Once the bombs stop, this will be more possible.

Jennifer Wilkie came to the demonstration with about 20 other students from the UC Berkeley Coalition to Stop the War in the Balkans. This coalition has organized rallies and teach-ins as well as gone to Berkeley High School to speak to students there.

Nineteen-year-old Meghan Toscano, a student at the University of California at Santa Cruz, said, "I came here to learn more about what is going on. I don't feel I can make an



Some 5,000 people marched in Washington, D.C., June 5 to protest U.S.-NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Militant/John Sarge

accurate decision about what I think because of all the media and propaganda that I see everyday in the newspapers."

"I believe self-determination of Kosova is necessary, Toscano added.

Other participants expressed Serbian chauvinism. One young man who was raised in Croatia and is now living in Los Angeles said, "Personally, I'm for Serbs to control everything, but we can't against the U.S. so I'm for UN troops to monitor peace with Serbian and Yugoslavian troops to monitor the border to monitor illegals."

One woman, born in Belgrade, Serbia said, "The U.S. is trying to divide up the country to control it. All nationalities and religions lived in peace before. I don't know about now. I don't

support Milosevic; we've been fighting him a long time. I think he's concerned about his power. I was demonstrating against Milosevic and his attacks on demonstrations and for democracy."

Several other local protests against the U.S.-NATO assault on Yugoslavia took place across the United States that day. In Seattle, about 150 demonstrators marched through downtown. More than 60 people picketed outside the main gate at the MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, and then had an open microphone speakout. More than 40 people took part in a June 4 candlelight vigil in Houston, and some 60 protesters turned out the next day for a march and rally there.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA Los Angeles

Youth in Struggle. Reports from a panel of young participants in struggles against U.S./NATO war on Yugoslavia, for self-determination for Kosovo, against police brutality, and for defense of the Cuban Revolution. Fri., June 18, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6 p.m. Auspices of Young Socialists. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (1 1/2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5. (323) 380-9460.

MASSACHUSETTS Boston

Grand Opening of Pathfinder Bookstore. Sat., June 19. Open house, Noon to 7 p.m. Program 4:30 p.m. Twenty percent off on all Pathfinder titles all day. 683 Washington St. (Two blocks south of Codman Square). Tel: (617) 282-2254.

BRITAIN London

Kashmir and the India-Pakistan Military Conflict: Capitalist Crisis and Imperialist Domination in the Indian Sub-continent. Fri., June 18, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-928-7993.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Hands Off Yugoslavia! U.S.-NATO Troops out of the Balkans! Self-Determination for Kosova! Fri., June 18, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 379-3075.

Christchurch

The Fiji Elections: A Step Forward for Working People? Speaker: Ruth Gray, Communist League. Fri., June 18, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Donation \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055

UK farmers

Continued from page 16

for the government to stop "cheap foreign imports," plays into the hands of the big capitalist farmers, the mass marketing food distributors, and those who own supermarket chains. Such a campaign feeds the national chauvinism perpetrated by all the major political parties as well as the fascist-type organizations like the British National Party.

The BNP has recently started publishing *The British Countryman*, a newspaper aimed at small farmers and agricultural workers.

A recent BNP leaflet titled *Who Is Culling Britain's Farmers?* demagogically claims to defend the family farms and attacks the NFU bureaucracy. It targets the politicians, supermarkets, advocates of "free trade," and large landowners as being at the root cause of the crisis in the countryside. The BNP is running several candidates in the June 10 European Union elections.

This rightist propaganda, which NFU leaders buy into, pits working farmers in this country against their counterparts abroad. For example, some UK farmers have attacked trucks loaded with Irish beef and on one occasion dumped part of the produce into the sea.

The crisis facing working farmers is acute and no one expects things will get better in the immediate future. Some, like David and Sue Maddocks, are reaching toward solidarity with other exploited producers around the world.

Shellia Kennedy is a member of the Rail, Maritime, and Transportation Union.

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

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NEW YORK: New York City: 59 4th Avenue (corner of Bergen) Brooklyn, NY Zip: 11217. Tel: (718) 399-7257. Compuserve: 102064,2642 ; 167 Charles St., Manhattan, NY. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

OHIO: Cleveland: 1832 Euclid. Zip: 44115. Tel: (216) 861-6150. Compuserve: 103253,1111

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8218. Compuserve: 104502,1757 **Pittsburgh:** 1103 E. Carson St. Zip 15203. Tel: (412) 381-9785. Compuserve: 103122,720

TEXAS: Houston: 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 380. Zip: 77087. Tel: (713) 847-0704. Compuserve: 102527,2271

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 1930 18th St. N.W. Suite #3 (Entrance on Florida Ave.) Zip: 20009. Tel: (202) 387-2185. Compuserve: 75407,3345.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Compuserve: 74461,2544.

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Vancouver: 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343. Compuserve: 103430,1552

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Paris: Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. Compuserve: 73504,442

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Christchurch: 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

Buy the best — General Motors is recalling 35,000 Cadillac Sevelles because of an electrical short problem that could cause fires even with



Harry Ring

the engine off and the ignition key removed. GM strongly urged that they not be parked in enclosed areas, like garages.

Sheer coincidence — The

American Civil Liberties Union published a study of four Ohio cities — Akron, Toledo, Dayton, and Columbus — found that motorists who are Black get twice as many traffic tickets as other drivers. Police officials were dubious of the findings. Inquired one: "Is this a professor with an agenda?"

Be well — With HMOs steadily trimming the amount of care provided, the hardest hit are those who need treatment for mental illnesses and drug addiction. One study shows that from 1988 to 1997, the amount spent to provide general care was cut back 7.4 percent. For those with mental health or drug

problems it was cut 54.1 percent

Kind of a memorial — The Army shipped 2,200 tons of radioactive material to a Safety-Kleen waste dump in central California. The depository sits atop ground water that is recycled for drinking. The poisonous debris is the cement and wood of a facility used to process uranium for the two atom bombs dropped on Japan in WWII.

Big-time petty crooks — Exide, the world's largest auto battery maker, will pay the state of Florida \$2.75 million to halt a probe of its sale of used and defective batteries.

It promised not to do it any more and to establish a corporate ethics program. Exide stock went up \$1.69 a share.

Nothing like a border — "In a report from a village on the Austrian-Hungarian border on what has changed since the fall of the Iron Curtain, a Hungarian customs agent told the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* [a German daily], 'What has changed? Actually nothing. We used to watch like crazy to make sure no one went over. Now the Austrians do it.'" — news item.

Really? — Explore, a tour agency, specializes in customized

African safaris. Spend your days in the bush and nights in deluxe hotels. A five-day tour is up to \$6,000 a person. An Explore staffer says, "Mostly we cater to high-end clientele."

Ask Argentina or the Irish — "We are not at war. In order to be at war, it would require a formal declaration by at least one side and probably both. Legally, there have been no wars since 1945." — A United Kingdom foreign office spokesperson, correcting Labour prime minister Anthony Blair who slipped and called the assault on Yugoslavia a war.

Expanding capitalist 'European union' is a myth

The imperialist powers that make up the European Union announced June 3 plans to form a common military policy that could be a counterweight to the U.S.-dominated NATO alliance. At the same time the euro, the attempt at a common European currency, is in decline and trade conflicts between the EU and Washington are intensifying. The speeches that make up *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes help explain why Europe is farther from "unity" than ever. Several

from the pages of Capitalism's World Disorder

excerpts, from talks given between 1992 and 1994, are reprinted below. The book is copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press, and reprinted with permission.

BY JACK BARNES

National boundaries are more important to the bourgeoisie today than at any time in history, just as they are becoming more porous than ever before. Forget the hoopla about European unity, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the World Trade Organization, and the United Nations. To the most powerful ruling families of world finance capital, borders are becoming more important, not less.

Why? Because national boundaries mark off two things the capitalist rulers need in order to maximize their wealth and protect it in face of rising competition.

One, boundaries define currencies. The borders of France define the area in which the franc is legal tender, backed by the full faith and credit of the state. The French bourgeoisie's effort to keep the franc strong is important if they are to keep capital flowing into their coffers, not out.

Second, boundaries define the home base of the bourgeoisies' armed forces. The French army stands behind the franc; that is the power that makes the franc more than a piece of paper when push comes to shove. French bankers do not want a devalued franc when it comes time to collect on their loans; the bourgeois state and its armed forces are the ultimate collection agency. It defends French finance capital against its rivals around the world and against the effrontery of working people from Paris to Rwanda, from Lyons to Martinique and Guadeloupe, and from New Caledonia to Marseilles.

The greatest single contradiction in world politics is the internationalization of both capital and labor, on the one hand, and, on the other, the growing conflicts among the most powerfully armed nation-states as a result of intensifying competition for profits. Marx and Engels explained this fundamental contradiction of capitalism many years ago, and Lenin and the Bolsheviks taught us why these conflicts are much more explosive and much more devastating for working people in the imperialist epoch.

Communists often explain that there is no "Europe"; there are only a number of capitalist states and their rival national ruling classes. That is true, but I have learned that leaving it at that is not the best way to help people understand the political point



"Our Europe is slowly coming into being." Above, some 220,000 auto workers in IG Metall union in Bremen, Germany, joined a wave of "warning strikes" at 652 plants in January.

we are making. It is more accurate to say that *their* Europe is *disappearing* — the capitalists' Europe. Their idea of a Europe of a single currency, of a single fiscal and monetary policy, of converging or at least compatible foreign military policies — all of this still widely talked about in ruling circles in Europe — is a bourgeois utopia.¹

Our Europe is slowly coming into being, however. Think about the expansion of intra-European travel. What comes along with expanded flows of capital and commodities worldwide is greater migration by workers to get jobs. In every single capitalist country in Europe today there is a higher percentage than ever before of workers from other countries and other nationalities who are part of the working class. The working class in every imperialist country — and this will even begin to include Japan — is more multinational than at any time in its modern history.

The war in Yugoslavia sharpens interimperialist conflicts. It sharpens the divisions between the United States and Europe, as well as divisions within Europe itself.

Margaret Thatcher — "retired" against her will as prime minister of the United Kingdom, but also freed from some of the diplomatic niceties required while serving at that post — is wagging a finger at her successor John Major, warning that the dream of a stable, prosperous, reunified, and peaceful Germany at the heart of Europe is a lie. Major's signing of the Maastricht treaty last year, outlining plans for greater European economic and political in-

¹ On January 1, 1999, eleven governments in Europe did begin using a common currency — the "euro" — to denominate stock, bond, and banking transactions. Actual "euro" notes are to replace German marks, French francs, and other national currencies in circulation in 2002. Compared to its eleven separate predecessors, the euro will put up stiffer competition to a relatively weakened U.S. dollar as a store of value in national treasuries around the world, and later perhaps even as a unit of account. From birth, however, the euro's stability was undermined by the conflicting interests of the rival imperialist bourgeoisies it pretends to yoke together. As the onerous effects of capitalist overproduction bear down in differential ways on countries and regions across Europe — and working people press demands for jobs, against farm foreclosures, and for livable wages and government-funded social benefits — the fissures in the new currency union will widen.

tegration, including a common currency, endangers Britain's capitalist rulers, Thatcher scolds. "A reunited Germany cannot and won't subordinate its national interests in economic or in foreign policy to those of the [European] community indefinitely," she warned in a widely publicized speech in the Netherlands last month [May 1992]. "Germany's power is a problem — as much for the Germans as for the rest of Europe."...

Trying to maintain a "special relationship" with Washington is becoming more necessary than ever for the British bourgeoisie, and not just for them alone. The capitalist rulers in Scandinavia and elsewhere are also sidling up to the Yankees,

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
June 21, 1974

OXNARD, California — The militant strike here of strawberry pickers, mostly Chicanos, is 80 percent effective, despite police attacks and attempted intimidation. It is estimated that growers are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars because of the walkout.

The strike began May 24 when the entire crew of 80 workers at American Food Company left the fields in protest over low wages and poor working conditions. By June 7, the strike had spread to all 23 of the area's strawberry ranches. At this point in the harvest, 5,000 workers are needed to pick the crops. Only an estimated 750 remain in the fields.

On May 31 police and deputies arrested 31 people for allegedly violating the injunction. Roberto Garcia, UFW [United Farm Workers] coordinator for the strike, pointed out how blatantly illegal the arrests were. Some of those picked up had just arrived at the picket line and were arrested before they even got out of their cars.

More than 3,000 workers and supporters marched through Oxnard's barrio June 1 to protest the arrests. The police attacks have strengthened the resolve of the strikers to fight until they win a UFW contract. Garcia said that if the growers refuse to sign a contract this year, the UFW will return next season to continue the struggle.

THE MILITANT

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

June 20, 1949

The curtain was lifted on a small corner of the FBI's secret political activities when a judge permitted the introduction of several FBI reports as evidence at the Coplon spy trial in Washington on June 8. It showed that America is rapidly becoming the land of the police spy and the home of the stoolpigeon.

For several days the government fought heatedly to prevent the reading of these documents. To do so, claimed the prosecutor, would "endanger the national security" and confront the government with the "sad choice of exposing vital secrets" or dropping its case against Judith Coplon, former Department of Justice employee being tried for alleged theft of these and other government secrets in order to aid the Soviet Union.

To make matters still worse, Congress has just passed a bill establishing a Central Intelligence Agency, most of whose provisions are a secret not only to the public but to the members of Congress who voted for it. No one outside this new agency's administrators will have any knowledge of its activities or any authority over them. Again, of course, the pretext is the protection of "vital secrets." But again the curtain has slipped a little and we are permitted to know that the Intelligence Agency has the power "to assign its agents to schools, industrial organizations, labor unions and other groups in this country."

U.S.-NATO out of the Balkans!

The agreement reached between Belgrade and the U.S.-led NATO military alliance registers a major blow to the Yugoslav federation and the fight for self-determination for Kosova. It marks another step in the imperialist campaign to dismember Yugoslavia. Working-class fighters should campaign to get out the truth about the imperialist intervention through public forums and protest actions demanding that the U.S.-NATO forces get out of the Balkans. Selling and studying books like *Capitalism's World Disorder* is an integral part of such activity.

The NATO bombing was aimed at workers and farmers throughout Yugoslavia. The reactionary line and course of the Milosevic regime — whipping up Serb chauvinism to repress the Albanian struggle for self-determination and dampen working-class opposition to his austerity and anti-democratic policies — opened the door to the imperialist intervention that has battered the social cohesion of Yugoslavia.

The accord institutionalizes this assault on the Yugoslav workers state. It codifies the plans of Washington and its imperialist allies, who are also rivals, to impose a protectorate on Kosova similar to their military occupation of Bosnia. The "peace plan" will give "sweeping powers" to the NATO general who will command the occupation force there and the imperialists will also gain control over Kosova's territory, air space, and borders.

In carrying out its course, Washington will use the Kosova Liberation Army most likely as a police force to help impose imperialist dictates. They will be used against Albanian workers and peasants who are fighting for self-determination and are refusing to bow to the U.S. rulers.

As Washington sinks its roots deeper in the Balkans powder keg, it is cold-bloodedly preparing, step by step, for what the U.S. rulers are convinced must be done to achieve their goal of reimposing capitalism there. The U.S.-NATO war was ultimately aimed at demoralizing Yugoslav workers and peasants, who the imperialists must defeat in battles ahead. That's why NATO bombs targeted factories, schools, roads, and bridges.

The imperialist campaign to impose a NATO occupation army in Kosova has nothing to do with defending Albanians who were expelled en masse or guaranteeing the safe return of all the refugees. Washington's opposi-

tion to the right of Kosovars to decide their future, the imperial removal of Kosovar negotiators who refused to sign the U.S. draft of the Rambouillet accord, and the refusal of the imperialist powers to open their borders to the refugees for weeks and weeks are a few examples of that. To justify the military intervention, the U.S. rulers and press are painting a picture of deep "ethnic hatred." All Kosovar Albanians now hate all Serbs, they say. All people of Serbian origin will not live in peace next to Albanians. The only way to hold these tensions at bay is through imperial might.

But the reality they try to hide is that many people still consider themselves Yugoslav, and are seeking ways to defend the Yugoslavia that came together in the 1942-45 revolution. Working people of all nationalities forged unity in the revolutionary struggle against the fascist occupation of Yugoslavia, and the subsequent overturn of capitalist property relations there.

Since the late 1980s, the Milosevic regime and other contending gangs in Yugoslavia have draped themselves in different nationalist flags as they fought among themselves to maximize the territory and resources under their control to maintain their parasitic existence. The NATO "peacekeepers" will simply reinforce these divisions, setting the stage for more conflicts. Already the big-business press points to Montenegro and Vojvodina as the next possible arenas.

The fact that many people throughout Yugoslavia still reject this course and seek ways to fight for solidarity — including a number who support the right to self-determination for Kosova as the only road forward to a union of equals — testifies to the rich revolutionary legacy that is not dead and can be reknit.

Class-conscious fighters should call for joining forces with Yugoslavs who oppose the NATO occupation force preparing to invade their country. Workers and farmers around the world should throw their weight behind those opposing the Milosevic regime and who embrace the Kosovar Albanians struggle for self-determination. We should demand:

Imperialist troops out of the Balkans!
No to the dismemberment of Yugoslavia!
Self-determination for Kosova!

Build Puerto Rico demonstrations

Continued from front page

against freed men and women who were Black, imposing Jim Crow segregation, first by the whip and the noose of government-backed white supremacist groups and then codified through racist legislation.

Today, the same capitalists who are draining the natural resources and wealth out of Puerto Rico are also deepening their attacks on the wages, working conditions, and social gains of workers in the United States. Every Puerto Rican independence fighter released is another gravedigger freed to bury the brutal profit-driven system of capitalism, and every victory won by workers and farmers in the United States weakens the empire's hold on Puerto Rico.

Washington has jailed and harassed many Puerto Rican *independentistas* with frame-up cases concocted by police spying, lies, and FBI harassment of unionists and others. Most of the 17 Puerto Rican political prisoners in U.S. jails today received prison terms 19 times longer than the average sentence given out the same year. Only 13 percent of all federal prisoners are serving sentences of more than 20 years. Yet 10 of the 14 Puerto Rican fighters arrested between 1980 and 1983 got sentences of between 50 and 90 years.

These same methods of intimidation and prevarication are used against others who stand up to the employers and their government, from Mumia Abu-Jamal, an outspoken opponent of the death penalty on death row in Pennsylvania, to Steve Smyers, a locked-out Kaiser Aluminum worker who was beaten by cops on the picket line June 5.

This is why trade unionists and working farmers should make the July 24 action theirs, and why fighters for independence should join the picket lines of Newport News strikers, visit Century Aluminum workers preparing for a fight, and reach out to farmers who are battling the worst economic crisis in decades to win support.

Washington has wreaked massive destruction on the working people of Yugoslavia, and is now preparing to occupy Kosova to deal a further blow to the Yugoslav federation and to the right to self-determination of the Kosovar Albanians. U.S. imperialist forces have bombed Iraq in-

cessantly for nearly six months. And Puerto Rico is used as their training ground to prepare these assaults. Residents of Vieques are the victims of their target practice.

A deep hatred for U.S. imperialism is growing in Puerto Rico. Last July half a million workers and youth poured into the streets of that Caribbean island to protest the sell-off of their national telephone company and declared, "Puerto Rico is not for sale." This mood is also reflected in the bubbling anger at the continued U.S. Navy occupation of Vieques, especially following the death of a Puerto Rican resident who was bombed by the Navy, and high rate of cancer deaths due in part to carcinogenic uranium bullets supposedly shot off mistakenly. Some of these protesters have come to oppose Washington's war in Yugoslavia by seeing imperialism's utter disregard for Puerto Rican lives.

Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans are an integral component of the working class in the United States. As a nationally oppressed group, they feel the brunt of the capitalist crisis more acutely and, like workers who are Black, will make up a large part of the vanguard in workers' battles against the bosses. Puerto Ricans are also of the greatest allies to the working class because, through their fight to shove off imperialist domination, they bring the politics of that social struggle to their co-workers, to the unions, forcing our class to think and act on broader social issues — one of the initial steps to building a class-struggle nucleus of workers and farmers crucial in leading toilers to power.

The struggle for Puerto Rico's independence from colonial domination and to free the jailed patriots is a blow to the U.S. capitalist class. This struggle directly strengthens those fighting the same bosses, that same government, that same enemy — capitalism — within the United States.

That's why workers, farmers, and youth of all nationalities should turn out in big numbers in Washington July 24 with union signs, banners, and buttons representing many battles against exploitation and oppression to demand: Independence for Puerto Rico! Free all Puerto Rican political prisoners!

'Free Puerto Rican political prisoners!'

BY JOSHUA CARROLL

CHICAGO—Puerto Rican independence activists and defenders of democratic rights are organizing a march and rally in Washington, D.C., July 24 to demand freedom for all the Puerto Rican political prisoners. There are currently 17 Puerto Rican patriots held in U.S. jails, with sentences ranging from 15 to 98 years. Starting July 22, there will be four days of actions aimed at winning their release. These actions are being organized by the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, Pro-LIBERTAD, the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project, and the Committee in Solidarity with José Solís Jordán.

Solís, who was convicted on false "terrorism" charges in federal court in Chicago on March 12, is the most recent independence activist to be framed up by the U.S. government. He was railroaded to jail in a trial typical of Washington's treatment of supporters of Puerto Rican independence. Three FBI agents and Rafael Marrero, a paid FBI snitch, provided the main testimony against him, bolstered by a fabricated confession admittedly written by one of the cops, and an alleged English translation of a largely inaudible tape of a conversation in Spanish.

Solís is scheduled to be sentenced on July 7 in Chicago. The groups organizing the Washington, D.C., actions are urging people to demonstrate at their local federal buildings on July 7 to protest the frame-up of Solís. "We want defenders of Solís to go to the July 7 protests that are being organized in their areas. Where there are not already protests called, people should get together to organize them," said Marcos Vilar, of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners.

There are currently demonstrations being planned at federal buildings in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Oakland, California; Minneapolis; Boston; Chicago; Miami and Orlando, Florida; Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia; Camden, New Jersey, among others.

"This attack on Solís opens the door for them to go after others" in the Puerto Rican nationalist community, explained Vilar, who reported that a federal grand jury on June 2 subpoenaed records from the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago to be turned over on June 18. The Cultural Center is a community organization associated with the Puerto Rican independence movement.

Records of *Vida SIDA*, a program of the Cultural Center, have also been subpoenaed. Vilar stressed the importance for defenders of democratic rights, in the face of these attacks, to participate in the planned actions.

On June 19 the Puerto Rican People's Parade in Chicago will be dedicated to José Solís and to the people of Vieques, an island of Puerto Rico two-thirds of which is occupied by a massive U.S. military base. There has been a decades-long movement by residents of Vieques and other nationalists throughout Puerto Rico against the U.S. military occupation.

Organizers of the parade will build both the July 7 and July 22-25 protests at the action. In New York, the Puerto Rican National Parade on June 13 is being dedicated to the release of all the political prisoners.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, *El Comité '98* is organizing a protest on July 7 at the federal building in Oakland from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. In Miami, a July 7 picket at the federal building at 5:00 p.m. has been called by the Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community, the Antonio Maceo Brigade, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Miami Coalition to End the Embargo of Cuba, according to Andrés Gómez, an organizer of the action.

Ravenswood

Continued from Page 11

the Women's Support Group.

Their battle continued on the shop floor after they returned to work, fighting against speedup and job eliminations and for safety. Close to 100 scabs were immediately rehired by the company.

Many of the veterans of the "Battle of Fort RAC" remain active in union solidarity actions. Karen Gorrell participated in solidarity actions with workers at Metalic Specialties, Inc., who recently won their first union contract after a 23-month strike. "That victory was so special to me, because many of those workers are young. It really inspired me to see them fight so hard and win," she said.

Johnny Lynch, who has retired from the plant, but not from the struggle, explained how the local's tradition of extending solidarity has continued since they returned to work in 1992. Solidarity collections are taken up in the plant every three months. The most recent went to the Kaiser Aluminum workers at an April 24 solidarity rally in Heath, Ohio.

Other workers in the region are watching the developing struggle. UMW member Danny Spurlock, a miner who works in southern Ohio, explained, "I have many friends that work for Century Aluminum. My union was strong for them during their lockout. We took up a bucket collection at my mine. I walked the picket line with them then and I'm ready to do it again."

Iowa protests: 'retrial for immigrant workers'

BY HEATHER WOOD
AND MYRNA TOWER

SIOUX CITY, Iowa—A protest was held June 6 at the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City, Iowa. The family of José and Gonzalo Ledesma along with packinghouse co-workers and supporters from the church organized the demonstration to protest the denial of a retrial by the Woodbury County District Court, which sentenced the Ledesmas to life imprisonment on charges of kidnapping and rape in 1994. They are currently incarcerated in the Fort Madison, Iowa, penitentiary at the opposite corner of the state from Sioux City.

The two brothers-in-law were tried together after a woman charged them with abducting her from a bar and forcing her to have sex. The Ledesmas acknowledge having relations with the woman, but insist it was consensual and no force was involved. Martín Ledesma, brother of José, and Martín's wife Sylvia, sister of Gonzalo, have carried out a campaign for justice since their brothers were charged in 1994.

The men's appeal for a retrial is based on the fact that they were advised by court-appointed attorneys to plead guilty and to ask for a bench trial instead of a jury trial; that their request for separate trials was denied; that their attorneys did not call them or supportive witnesses to the stand; and that the court interpreter, Ray Cota, a former cop, took their money to help do an investigation he assured them would help sway the judge. In addition, the court-appointed attorneys did not explain the possible consequences of the court proceedings, according to witnesses.

Witnesses from the bar where the Ledesmas and another man were drinking with the woman were not called to testify in the trial. These witnesses are prepared to testify that everyone was drunk and on friendly terms, and that no coercion was involved. Another witness from the convenience store where the brothers and the woman stopped was not called either, even though that person said he saw no evidence of violence or force.

Protests against the conviction held in Sioux City and in San Martín, Mexico, have pointed to the racist, anti-immigrant character of the sentencing. Both José and Gonzalo Ledesma, who are 28 now, were migrant poultry workers who had come to the United States without work permits.

The struggle for justice in the Ledesma case is taking place as the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is carrying out "Operation Vanguard." Through this campaign, the INS has subpoenaed personnel files from meatpacking companies throughout Nebraska. After reviewing the files, the INS announced a list of thousands of workers whose papers allegedly were out of order. Then the immigration cops went from plant to plant. At every plant workers who feared being deported fled. INS administrator Jerry Heinauer told reporters that 2,149 of the 3,135 workers on the INS list in Nebraska quit rather be interviewed. The immigration cops are now moving their operation into Iowa and South Dakota.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee for Human Rights in Marshalltown, Iowa, many of whom are workers at the Swift packinghouse there, organized a protest of 300 March 28 against Operation Vanguard, the deputization of local police with INS powers, and the "English as a common language" legislation then before the state legislature. The committee organized a car caravan to Sioux City for the June 6 protest and is publicizing the Ledesma case among packinghouse workers and others.

The popular TV program *Primer Impacto* on the Univision cable network recently aired a story on the Ledesma case that was broadcast throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

On June 6, more than 200 people marched from the Cathedral of the Epiphany in Sioux City to the county courthouse and back, demanding justice of the Ledesma brothers and protesting the denial of a retrial.

Twelve workers from elsewhere in Iowa and three from Minnesota came to the protest. Most were packinghouse workers and members of the UFCW. Some arrived as the

marchers were returning to the church, so those who could stay marched for a second time to the courthouse with those who had just arrived. Local television and newspaper reporters covered the event.

Participants in the march shared experiences of injustice of their own as well. Artemia Florez, a house cleaner and babysitter explained she has been fighting the juvenile court system for three years for custody of her four children. She is accused of child abuse after hitting her 11-year-old on the arm. "When the police came to check on me, Florez said, "they beat me and dragged me to the street, and now they want to deport all four of my kids to Mexico, although they are all U.S.-born citizens."

Maria Sanchez, a worker at the IBP plant in Dakota City, Nebraska, told of how her 29-year-old son has been sentenced to life in prison. He had lent his car to friends, Sanchez said, and they got arrested. Police say they found drugs in the car, so they arrested her son, who was convicted. Sanchez can't afford more than the \$8,000 she has already paid lawyers.

Sanchez was also concerned about 13 co-workers arrested by the INS May 18 when the immigration cops visited the plant as part of Operation Vanguard.

More than 100 workers on the INS list fled, but some were arrested.

One of those arrested, Sanchez explained, was Maria Patricia Gomez, a young woman who had come up from Kansas with her husband and 9-month-old baby to look for work. They went to IBP to apply for work and the INS took all of them. The husband was able to provide papers but the woman wasn't, so the INS is holding her in jail until they deport her. "The husband and the baby have been homeless and destitute until I met them while visiting my son and took them in."

After the march, the Ledesmas invited the supporters from Iowa and Minnesota to come to their home to discuss future activities. Marshalltown workers invited the Ledesmas to come to Marshalltown the following weekend to speak to a meeting on their brothers' case. A collection of \$80 was taken, and workers exchanged ideas for publicity and fund-raising for the case.

NORAIID plans campaigns for Irish political prisoners and freedom struggle

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — "As long as there is partition there will be [Irish] Northern Aid," said Gerry Coleman, the organization's political education director, in summing up the challenges before more than 100 people who gathered here May 21 and 22 for its Annual General Meeting.

Irish Northern Aid (NORAIID) is an organization that for the past 28 years has campaigned in the United States against the British occupation of Northern Ireland, for reunification of the country, and in defense of the Irish republican movement. Its central activity is raising funds to support the families of Irish political prisoners and now to help finance organizations working on the reintegration of political prisoners into the population. Coleman gave the report on political action at the meeting.

Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Féin, the largest Irish republican party in Ireland, sent greetings to the meeting describing how for two months the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the paramilitary police force in the British-controlled north of Ireland, had been sitting on a file of 150 names of nationalists targeted by loyalists (pro-British forces) for attack without informing them. He urged Irish Northern Aid to keep up its work in support of the Irish freedom struggle.

There was a lot of discussion on the present stage in the fight to implement the political settlement called the Good Friday Agreement. It was reached last year between the British government, Unionists (those who support continued British control of the six northern counties of Ireland), and nationalist forces who demand a British withdrawal.

Unionist forces sought to block the process, including trying to stall the release of political prisoners projected under the agreement.

Coleman pointed to the successful U.S. tour earlier this year of representatives of the South Armagh Farmers and Residents Committee and raised ideas for future tours by Irish nationalists. He described hearings held by a U.S. Congressional committee on abuses by the RUC and a follow-up hearing held at the Albany Law School in New York State, urging others to plan similar meetings.

Christy Ward reported on the campaign to protest the honorary Doctor of Letters degree being given to David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, by Boston College May 24. Trimble is a key figure in efforts to stop implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

In a report on Irish political prisoners, Rosaleen Doherty described the strides made over the last year in winning prisoner releases. Although many have been freed, she pointed out there are still more than 100 Irish political prisoners, 88 in the Long Kesh prison in Belfast, 22 in Portlaoise Prison, and Richard Johnson in the United States.

Johnson was just transferred to a halfway house in the Boston area to prepare for release. He has spent 10 years in U.S. prisons after being arrested in 1989 by the FBI for "conspiracy" to violate the Arms Control Act. He completes his sentence, in full, this fall.

Róisín Kelly a staff member of Tar Anall, a organization of former political prisoners, attended the gathering. She described how her organization sprang up to aid the released political prisoners fight discrimination and to get reestablished, as well as

working with other Irish republicans still incarcerated as they prepare for release. Kelly reported on the newly formed umbrella group, Coiste na nIarchimi, made up of 20 local ex-prisoners organizations.

Jack Kilroy spoke about attempts by the U.S. government to begin using secret "evidence" in deportation cases. NORAIID is asking that "no secret evidence be used in U.S. courts," he explained. The meeting got an update on one case where secret evidence was threatened but not used. Noel Cassidy, an Irish nationalist fighting deportation from the United States reported on the latest court ruling against him.

Adams's message and many reports stressed the importance of expanding the readership of the NORAIID newsletter and the *Irish People*, a weekly newspaper published in New York. NORAIID leaders reported that the organization has grown to about 55 local units, with new units springing up in traditional areas like northern New Jersey and in new cities such as Houston.

The organization also passed a resolution demanding an independent, international investigation into the murders of Irish civil rights lawyers Rosemary Nelson and Pat Finucane because of the evidence of RUC collusion in their deaths. Nelson was killed on March 15, 1999, by a car bomb and Finucane died a decade ago.

The gathering ended with a speech by Rita O'Hare, Sinn Féin representative in the United States. Next year's general meeting will take place in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

John Sarge is a member of the United Auto Workers and the Detroit Unit of NORAIID.

— LETTERS —

On Kosova independence

In your May 24 *Militant* you criticize the Workers World newspaper for describing those fighting for the independence of Kosovo, the KLA, or UCK, as a U.S.-backed "counter-revolutionary separatist guerrilla insurgency." Yet in your May 17 *Militant* (p. 8) states Washington's operations in Kosovo "are a central part of surrounding Yugoslavia with an imperialist military noose and trying to get the so-called frontline states neighboring Serbia and Montenegro in line behind NATO's course."

Towards this end, Washington is increasingly using the forces of the Kosovo Liberation Army.... The UCK, which for years has waged an armed struggle for independence of Kosovo, is turning into a tool to advance the aims of U.S. imperialism." "Frequently UCK members have little U.S. flags pinned or sewn on their uniforms next to Kosovo Liberation Army insignia." That sounds like an adequate definition

of a "counter-revolutionary separatist guerrilla insurgency!"

Certainly Workers World has never supported Kosovo independence. Yet Trotsky wrote in his article, "The Ukrainian Question": "Not the slightest compromise with imperialism, either fascist or democratic! Not the slightest concession to the Ukrainian nationalists, either clerical-reactionary or liberal-pacifist! No Peoples Fronts! The complete independence of the proletarian party as the vanguard of the toilers!" It is difficult to conclude from this that Trotsky himself would call for Kosovo independence at antiwar marches in the U.S. right now.

Stan Smith
Chicago, Illinois

Kosova II

In the May 24 edition of the *Militant* there was an article, "Castro: 'NATO is entangled in a great genocide,'" explaining the position of

the Cuban government toward the imperialist assault against the peoples of the Balkan region. However, why doesn't Fidel say a word about the struggle for self-determination of the Kosovars? Does the Cuban revolution support this struggle? Does the Cuban government fear political and economic conflicts with the Yugoslav regime if it shows support for the independence of Kosova? From my point of view, the internationalist character of the Cuban revolution should openly support the independence of Kosova.

Dimitris Fasfalis
La Pocatiere, Quebec

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.

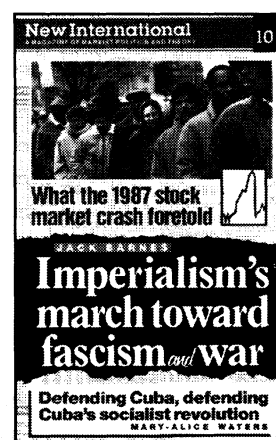
IMPERIALISM'S MARCH TOWARD FASCISM AND WAR

JACK BARNES

"There will be new Hitlers, new Mussolinis. That is inevitable. What is not inevitable is that they will triumph. The working-class vanguard will organize our class to fight back against the devastating toll we are made to pay for the capitalist crisis. The future of humanity will be decided in the contest between these contending class forces." Jack Barnes, "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War."
In New International no. 10. \$14.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

available from Pathfinder



Worldwide capitalist crisis puts squeeze on working farmers in UK

BY ALAN HARRIS
AND SHELLIA KENNEDY

CHEPSTOW, South Wales — “A few days ago I got £47.60 for one lamb, then it fell to £41.70, and now its £37.38” (£1 = \$1.60). This was one of several examples David Maddocks, a working farmer in South Wales, told the *Militant* to show how small farmers like him are facing severe economic conditions. David and his wife, Sue, grow wheat, oats, and barley. They also rear 170 cattle and 200 sheep on their 300-acre farm, which is medium-sized for this region.

They described how small farmers are hit with continual price increases for materials, pesticides, fuel, and equipment, while the prices received for what they produce continue to decline. David said there is no respite from the escalating costs. For example, they have recently had to pay £30,000 for a new tractor, and two other heavily used machines that needed replacing. The recent government-imposed hike in the price of red diesel fuel has added to the cost of running essential equipment such as tractors.

The Maddocks are not alone among working farmers in the United Kingdom. Real farm incomes have dropped by 75 percent in the past two years. And thousands of related jobs for veterinarians and in the feed and machinery industries have disappeared.

A *Financial Times* article explained, “At first it was red meat livestock, pigs and poultry farmers who suffered; now it is farmers in every sector.”

Milk prices drop 30 percent

An article in the current issue of the National Farmers Union paper *Farming Wales*, entitled “Grim Times for Dairy,” reports milk prices are almost 30 percent lower than two years ago and many farmers are receiving milk prices that are well below the cost of production.

Earlier this year hill farmer Jack Jones tried to sell 140 good quality four-year-old ewes to a sheep dealer and exporter. He offered to sell them at £40 for the lot, delivered, but the reply from the dealer was “you give me £40 and I’ll take them.”

Hill farmer, Hywel James Morris, told the *Guardian* that after paying the auction fees and the government tax, he got “less than a bag of chips” for each of his 44 ewes.

Brian Huxley, another sheep farmer, said, “Some hill farmers have been digging holes and burying them. They have even dumped them at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals offices in protest.”

Not only have the price farmers receive for lamb and mutton dropped drastically over the past months, but the bottom has dropped out of the wool market. Many sheep farmers will get 40 percent less for their wool than the previous year, and will not even cover the cost of shearing.

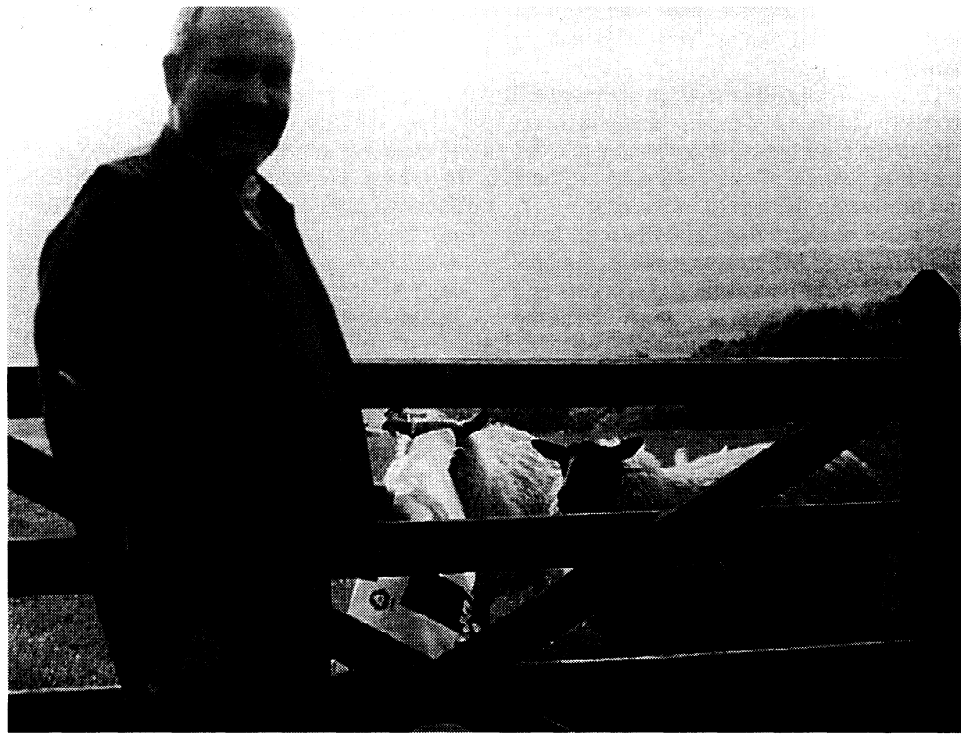
Russia had been a major purchaser of wool produced in Britain, but because of the economic crisis there, the orders have substantially stopped. This has contributed to the rise of large quantities of unsold fleece in Europe.

According to a report made last December by John Godfrey, chairman of the British Pig Association, pig farmers are losing about £20 on every pig they sell. They are not just losing money he pointed out, but they are unable to pay for their feed.

Farm crisis is worldwide

David Maddocks had just returned from a visit to France where he met and discussed with a number of farmers the situation they face and how they are coping. His opinion was working farmers in France fared better than their counterparts here due to the French government’s farming policy. He also said that the farming crisis is a global issue and that exploited farmers across Europe, and possibly the United States, would do well to get together in common action.

Farmers like David and Sue Maddocks



David Maddocks on his farm in Chepstow, South Wales.

pointed to the myriad of problems facing working farmers like themselves: the “strong” pound; high interest rates charged by the banks and mortgage companies that raise the cost of borrowing money; the high prices charged by the big chemical and oil multinationals for fertilizers and fuel; the huge dif-

ference between what farmers receive for their produce and what the big food conglomerates like Tesco and Sainsburys receive.

Many of these working farmers are forced to declare bankruptcy and sell part or all of their farms — often to rich city-based business people who buy in order to turn the farm

into a hobby or country retreat. The Maddocks also drew attention to the high rate of suicides among farmers, who are pressured by agencies of the UK government and the EU in Brussels. These institutions continue to pass more and more bureaucratic laws concerning the slaughtering of animals, their health and lineage, as well as increasing red tape governing the registration and exporting of livestock.

Many farmers are now discussing why their conditions are deteriorating, who is responsible, and what they can do to alleviate their worst problems.

The National Farmers Union, the principal farmers organization in Britain dominated by the wealthier farmers, projects a course that can only deepen the crisis.

NFU national president Ben Gill urged farmers attending the NFU Wales Council to continue to support the NFU’s campaign to “Keep Britain Farming.” “We must not flinch in putting across to the general public that British food is best,” he said. He explained that he was appalled to hear demands that supermarket prices should be reduced, claiming, “What we need as farmers is more of the end price.”

British chauvinist campaign

Toward this end, the NFU have produced car stickers and other publicity stating “I Love British Beef,” “Proud to Serve British Beef,” “Buy British,” and “Keep Britain Farming.” This campaign, which also includes demands

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Makah whale hunt scores victory for rights of indigenous peoples

BY LIEFF GUTTHIUDASCHMITT

NEAH BAY, Washington — Native American peoples and supporters of indigenous rights all over the world celebrated the victory of the Makah Nation in their successful hunt of a gray whale here on May 17. Nine months ago the Makah decided to reinstate the whale hunt as part of the fight to keep their culture alive and instill pride among their youth. For the past nine months, the tribe defended themselves against efforts by some environmental and animal rights groups, such as the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, to physically prevent them from carrying out their hunt. The whale hunt has become a symbol of the Makahs’ fight against the anti-Native propaganda pushed by these groups and open racism on the part of rightists.

The controversy surrounding the Makah whale hunt is an important manifestation of the cultural war led by rightist forces against the oppressed, which aims to reverse gains they have won through decades of struggle and to divide and weaken the working class as a whole. Rightists seek to foster resentment of the gains won by the oppressed portraying them as a threat to the jobs and rights of other workers. Makah leaders have received death threats, and anti-whaling protesters have invited people to “Save a whale, harpoon a Makah.”

The May 23 issue of the *Seattle Times-Post Intelligencer* carried some letters that demonstrate the blatant racism behind the attacks on their treaty rights. “These people want to rekindle their traditional way of life by killing an animal that has probably twice the mental capacity they have,” read one letter. “These idiots need to use what little brains they have to do something productive besides getting drunk and spending federal funds to live on.”

Another reader wrote, “They are a modernized welfare race. I personally hate the Makah Tribe. I hope and pray for a terrible end to the

Makah Tribe, very slow and painful.”

Similar anti-Native opinions were expressed in Canada, particularly in British Columbia where tribes related to the Makah have also insisted on their right to hunt whales. Tom Happynook, treaty negotiator for one of these tribes on Vancouver Island, the Huu-ay-aht, told the media that indigenous groups like his own should be able to resume their traditional lifestyle of sustainable whaling.

Provincial premier Glen Clark of the New Democratic Party declared he would not support any aboriginal treaty that included whaling rights. It is the federal government in Canada, however, that has jurisdiction over whaling. It imposed a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1972, but recognized in 1996 the right of Inuit to hunt one bowhead whale, a species whose population had fallen from 10,000 in 1990 to about 700 in 1996.

Here in Neah Bay, Makah hunters paddled a hand-hewn cedar canoe and used three harpoons and two high-caliber rifle shots to kill the first gray whale the tribe has hunted since the 1920s, when they voluntarily discontinued hunting due to the depletion of stocks caused by commercial whaling. The gray whale population is currently at an all-time high of around 22,000. In 1994 it was removed from the endangered species list.

The day that the Makahs killed the whale, children abandoned their classrooms and adults their jobs to join the celebration. “I’m proud. I’m proud of the group that did this. This is one for the Makahs,” said Joe Jimmicum, a tribal member who waited to help get the whale on the beach, summing up the mood of many in the community.

Native American tribes from around the Northwest sent representatives to Neah Bay to celebrate along with the Makahs. As the news spread, indigenous peoples from around the world expressed their support for the whale hunt and the Makahs.

On May 22 more than 1,000 people gath-

ered on the Makah reservation to celebrate the whale hunt. The Makahs were joined by Native peoples from all over the West Coast, the Plains, Alaska, Canada, Fiji, and Africa. Makah Tribal Chairman Ben Johnson said, “The whale hunt brought us all together. I’m happy, overwhelmed to see this many native people together.”

The Makahs point out this is a victory because they stood strong in affirming the right to hunt whales, a right that is guaranteed by a treaty signed in 1855 with the U.S. government. It is a victory that has encouraged other Native peoples to fight for their own treaty rights.

In a statement called the “Makah Manifesto,” Keith Johnson, president of the Makah Whaling Commission, explained, “Our forefathers bequeathed our right to whale to us in our treaty and we feel that a treaty right which cannot be exercised is no right.”

In explaining why the Makahs want to conduct the whale hunt, Johnson wrote, “Whaling has been part of our tradition for more than 2,000 years. We... believe that the problems that are troubling our young people stem from lack of discipline and pride and we hope that the restoration of whaling will help to restore that. We also want to... restore a part of our culture that was taken from us.”

Unemployment on the Makah reservation is as high as 75 percent for much of the year. Most of the housing for the 2,000 residents consists of trailers and small houses. It is in this context that the Makahs are fighting for their culture and their traditions.

The Makah can legally kill up to 20 whales through 2002. Rather than more tribal hunts, individual families are expected to begin hunting the gray whales in Neah Bay.

Lieff Gutthiudaschmitt is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Paul Kouri in Vancouver, British Columbia, contributed to this article.