

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

U.S. rulers map plans to oust Vieques protesters

— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO. 18 MAY 8, 2000

INS assault in Miami strikes blow to the working class

In defense of the Cuban revolution, in defense of the working class!

Since the day last November when then five-year-old Elián González was rescued from the water off the coast of Florida, the *Militant* has campaigned against the Clinton administration's refusal to immediately return him to Cuba.

We have pointed out that he is one of many thousands of victims of the decades-

EDITORIAL

long U.S. government policy codified in the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act. That policy is designed to entice Cubans into the dangerous Florida Straits on flimsy rafts and rickety skiffs with the knowledge that if they survive, unlike other immigrants, they will be welcomed with aid and citizenship papers in the reputed "land of plenty," the world's wealthiest capitalist power.

The *Militant* has insisted, moreover, that the top echelons of the U.S. government, with brutal indifference to the consequences for an innocent child, quickly came to see how unanticipated developments surrounding this case could be played to advantage. Elián González could be used to help the U.S. ruling class polish the tarnished image of *la migrá*, its largest and most hated federal police force, and to strengthen the executive powers of the imperialist state. These are strategic goals that rank high with the U.S. rulers, as they prepare their arsenal for use against working

Continued on Page 9

151 federal agents carry out massive assault at Miami home

BY MIKE ITALIE, ARGIRIS MALAPANIS, AND GREG McCARTAN

MIAMI—In a brutal attack on democratic rights and in an assault on working people, 151 federal agents, many of them heavily armed, carried out a raid under authority of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to remove six-year-old Elián González from the home of his great-uncle, Lázaro González, in the early morning hours of April 22.

A force of 131 INS agents and 20 U.S. marshals were involved. Some 53 INS agents surrounded the two-bedroom house, threatening a crowd there and roughing up a number of people. The cops used battering rams to knock down the door. An eight-member Border Patrol Tactical Unit, wear-

Call for federal troops to enforce civil rights: a world apart from Miami INS assault— page 8

ing goggles and bullet-proof vests, and carrying automatic rifles, led the charge inside.

An AP photographer inside the house caught the now-famous scene of an agent with the barrel of an automatic weapon in the face of Donato Dalrymple, one of the fishermen who rescued the boy, holding Elián González in his arms in a bedroom.

Continued on Page 10

Janitors strike scores victory in Los Angeles



Striking janitors and supporters rally in Beverly Hills, California, April 20.

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES—Janitors here won a victory for their union and all working people in this city through their spirited and determined three-week strike against 18 building maintenance contractors.

Some 2,000 members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1877 voted to accept a new contract by an 88 percent margin and are now back at work. The SEIU represents 8,500

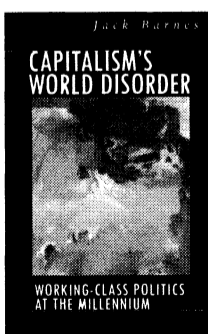
janitors covered by the agreement, about 4,000 of whom walked off the job.

The workers, who clean 70 percent of downtown office buildings, earn \$7.80 an hour. In Century City and outlying areas workers earn \$6.80 an hour.

"My head is high," Jesus Perez, a janitor for 20 years, told a *Los Angeles Times* reporter. "This strike was not just about our wages it was about respect. We showed we are part

Continued on Page 12

FROM PATHFINDER



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Jack Barnes

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Economic and land crises destabilize Zimbabwe

BY PATRICK O'NEILL AND GREG McCARTAN

In the last several months political and economic tensions have escalated sharply in the southern African state of Zimbabwe. The country's president, Robert Mugabe, has come under pressure from British and U.S. imperialism to halt takeovers of large farms owned by wealthy whites. Mugabe is demanding Britain restart payments used to fund purchase of these farms.

The Mugabe government, in power since the country won independence in 1980, recently suffered defeat in a constitutional referendum that would have both extended the president's powers and allowed the government to seize white-owned land without compensation.

This was an unusual defeat for Mugabe's governing ZANU-PF party, and registered the deep discontent among working people in the country. The drive against the constitutional changes was spearheaded by the

Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which was backed by the Commercial Farmers Union, a white farmers organization. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in May.

Working people in Zimbabwe face a deepening economic crisis. The country remains marked by the backwardness imposed by a near-century of colonial rule, and by the imperialist exploitation and debt bondage it endures today despite its hard-won independence.

Zimbabwean society is characterized by deep inequalities of wealth and a growing economic crisis. Fully one-half the population is jobless and inflation is running at 70 percent. One adult in four has been infected with HIV. Gross Domestic Product is predicted to fall by 1 percent this year, after zero growth in 1999. The Zimbabwean dollar now stands at half its value of a year ago. The country's foreign debt stands at \$4.4 billion, and its

Continued on Page 11

Communist candidate gains hearing in London race

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON—"For more than 100 years it has been the colonial and imperialist power in London that denied peasants their land in Zimbabwe," declared Jonathan Silberman to a Communist League election meeting in London on April 22. Silberman, a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union at GlaxoWellcome, is standing as the League's candidate in the May 4 London Assembly elections for the Lambeth and Southwark constituency.

"London's complaints that the government in Zimbabwe is not distributing the land in the way it wants is the height of hypocrisy. It has cut off promised aid for land distribution and exudes imperial arrogance in its dealings with the government there," Silberman said.

"Whether the wealthy rulers of Britain are pursuing their interests in Zimbabwe or the United Kingdom, it's their profit system which drives them to attack working people," the Communist League candidate said. "Our challenge is to see working people in Zimbabwe as allies, and to build a movement of working people here that can overturn the imperialist government in London."

Silberman pointed out that Britain organized brutal colonial land seizures in the 1890s, where half the population of Zimbabwe was forcibly moved to barren communal areas. It backed a white minority regime until 1980, and in the end demanded the liberation fighters not touch the giant white-owned farms in exchange for a negotiated end to the racist government.

"No doubt, Prime Minister Anthony Blair hopes that by having well-known anti-apartheid campaigner Peter Hain as his spokesperson on Zimbabwe he can imply British policy today is not rooted in this past and is aimed to aid the people of Zimbabwe. The reality is quite different," Silberman said. "The people of Zimbabwe have only ever achieved anything, including independence, and will only ever achieve anything, through their own struggle. As the Irish know too, Britain never grants anything without a fight."

"At the same time as London is whipping up a campaign to defend its imperialist

interests in Africa, they are also seeking to divide working people here against immigrant workers," said Silberman. The Labour government recently floated the idea of requiring visitors from the Indian subcontinent to put up a bond of £10,000 during their stay. The next day they said they would deport up to 3,000 Kosovan Albanians who came here during the last year. Not to be outdone, Conservative party leader William Hague proposed that in the future all asylum seekers should be housed in misnamed "reception centers." These are internment camps, such as one already established by the government at Oakington.

Silberman argued that the government's "racist policies are aimed at dividing and weakening this vast new layer of workers as they come into the labor force." Pointing to the recent janitors strikes in the United States, and the 18-month-long strike by airline catering workers at London's Heathrow airport, he said, "The reality is, the working class is getting stronger through immigration." Silberman spoke about the significance of the 80,000-strong march April 1 in Birmingham protesting job losses facing car workers there. "This was the biggest union protest in a decade," he said.

Paul Galloway, a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union and Communist League candidate for the Levenshulme ward of Manchester Council, reported at the meeting on his participation in blockades by dairy farmers protesting the low prices they receive from the supermarkets for milk.

Silberman explained that it is in the context of this kind of resistance by workers and farmers that Prime Minister Blair "is losing in his efforts to get his candidate elected mayor of London May 4." Blair organized the Labour Party selection process to ensure that his nominee, Frank Dobson, was selected, although only gaining

a minority of votes. The Prime Minister has proved unable to gain support for Dobson in the campaign. Instead, Labour MP Ken Livingstone, despite being forced to run as an independent and stripped of his party membership, continues to be seen by working people as the legitimate Labour candidate and is on course to win the election.

Silberman pointed to how the Communist League election campaign had gained more press coverage than before. In the last week the two local papers in the area ran articles by all the candidates. Previously such articles were only open to the main capitalist parties.

Silberman said that he has been able to explain on the job, through campaign engagements, and in the media that his campaign aims to chart "a political course for working people to take power through a revolutionary struggle. This may seem utopian to some. But I ask: What is more utopian—the idea that the current wave of redundancies are going to be stopped by electing someone, or that working people can do what the Cuban people did and organize a mighty revolution to take power out of the hands of the exploiters? The latter, I believe, is the most practical and least utopian proposal for working people."

Pete Clifford is a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Jonathan Silberman: Communist League

As a factory worker and active member of my union, the TGWU, I believe that the alternative working people need begins in struggle.

That's why I participated in the 80,000-strong march for jobs in Birmingham on April 1st; why I joined the picket line when RMT railworkers at



Waterloo took strike action for union rights; why I back farmers blockading dairy depots throughout the UK, demanding decent prices; and why I have travelled to Northern Ireland to stand alongside Irish people fighting for freedom from British colonial

rule. Like the Rover workers in Birmingham and the Ford workers at Dagenham I am facing redundancy. No matter who wins the election, working people will continue to face:

- attacks on our jobs, living standards and democratic rights
- racist scapegoating of immigrants and Black people

- imperialist wars and rising fascist movements

Such attacks are a product of the capitalist system. There are no London solutions to such problems as the other assembly candidates claim. Political action by millions—a revolution—is needed to establish a government of workers and farmers which can overthrow capitalism and join in the worldwide fight for socialism. Having visited revolutionary Cuba I know that such a perspective is not only necessary but possible. It depends on people like you joining the fight.

Vote communist! Read the Militant newspaper and Pathfinder books! Better still, join the Communist League or Young Socialists. Come to our election rally, Saturday 22 April, 7.00pm Pathfinder Bookshop, 47 The Cut, SE1.

Press release of Communist League candidate Jonathan Silberman printed in Southwark News.

LABOR NEWS BRIEFS

Finland: Paper strike ends

After an eight-day strike, some 30,000 paper workers in Finland began returning

to work after union officials accepted a new three-year contract. The walkout, which began April 11, shut down most of Finland's pulp and paper industry. The new pact reportedly provides for a 4 percent wage increase and gives the workers an extra paid holiday each year. Finland produces about 4.4 percent of the 350 million tons of annual production of paper and paperboard worldwide.

Tentative pact at Northwest

Officials of flight attendants union at Northwest Airlines and the company have reached a tentative agreement that, if ratified, would end a three-year contract dispute at the nation's fourth-largest airline. The Teamsters union, which represents the 11,000 attendants, says the pact would increase base pay by 29 percent to 120 percent, depending on seniority. According to an announcement made by the officials, the

deal improves pensions, domestic-partner health benefits, and provides for work rules that add protections for flight attendants. Last August a proposed agreement was rejected by 70 percent.

Union decertified at Wal-Mart

The Ontario Labor Board approved a decision by Retail Wholesale Canada, a division of the Canadian Auto workers, to end its right to represent workers at a Wal-Mart store in Windsor, Ontario. In 1996, this store became the first in the Wal-Mart chain to be unionized. The union was certified after filing charges with the labor board that Wal-Mart interfered with its organizing efforts. At the time the officially counted vote was announced to be 151-43 against union representation. Over the next three years the company waged a campaign to convince the majority of workers to decertify the union.

THE MILITANT

Defend democratic rights

The immigration cops' attack in Miami and the latest move by the U.S. rulers to scrap Miranda rights highlight the eight-year assault on democratic rights led by the Clinton administration. Only in the 'Militant' can you read a working-class analysis of these events and the resistance waged by workers and farmers. Don't miss a single issue!



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Court hears debate on Miranda rights

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. Supreme Court recently heard arguments in a case on the landmark Miranda ruling, which requires cops to inform anyone they detain of their right to remain silent and to consult a lawyer. Justifications to scrap the 34-year-old decision were presented in a crowded courtroom April 19. A decision by the high court is expected in June.

The case before the court, *Dickerson v. United States*, is on appeal after a ruling from the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia, dealt a blow to Miranda rights. It overturned a decision by a Federal District Court in Virginia, which had ruled that a confession by Charles Dickerson to being a driver in a bank heist in 1997 should be thrown out because the cops had not given him the Miranda warnings before interrogating him. The Fourth Circuit court, as the basis for its decision, resurrected a little used federal law passed by Congress in 1968 that sought to undermine the Miranda law.

The famous Miranda warnings stem from the 1966 Supreme Court decision in *Miranda v. Arizona*, which said cops are required to inform anyone they arrest of their rights before questioning them. In 1963 Ernesto Miranda was arrested and convicted on kidnapping and rape charges in Phoenix. Miranda initially said he was innocent but after a few hours in police custody he signed a confession.

Miranda appealed the case, asserting his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination had been violated. The cops had not told him of his right to legal counsel or the right to remain silent while in police custody. Three years after his arrest the Supreme Court ruled by a 5-4 vote that a suspect's statements cannot be used in trial unless they have been informed of their rights. The ruling was based on the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that states, "No person...shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself."

1968 Omnibus Crime Control Act

This blow to the ability of the cops to intimidate people, force "confessions," and prevent access to legal representation was quickly taken up by the U.S. Congress. Two years after *Miranda v. Arizona*, Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. It included Section 3501, which was aimed at overruling Miranda rights by allowing "voluntary" confessions to be used in trials, even if the Miranda warnings were never read.

In *Dickerson v. United States*, the Appeals Court ruled that Section 3501 had effectively overturned Miranda for federal prosecutions. In the arguments before the Supreme Court, Solicitor General Seth Waxman argued on behalf of the Clinton administration for reversing the prior ruling and maintaining Miranda rights. He stated, "Stability in the law is important, and it is nowhere more important than in this case." Waxman

U.S. House attacks abortion rights

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill April 5 that seeks to limit a woman's right to choose abortion. The measure would ban a late-term abortion procedure called intact dilation and extraction. Opponents of the medical procedure demagogically call it "partial birth abortion." U.S. president William Clinton is expected, as in previous years, to veto the ban. The vote in the House was 287 in favor of the ban to 141 against. This exceeds the two-thirds majority to block a presidential veto.

Texas Republican representative Tom DeLay said, "Abortion is a stain we must begin to wash away. A ban on partial birth is the first step." Some Democrats support the direction of the ban, but argued it should include an exception for cases that threaten the life of the mother.

added that "the case has not been made to overrule *Miranda v. Arizona*."

Speaking for the 1997 Appeals Court decision that ruled against Miranda, Paul Cassell told the justices, "Section 3501 enumerated factors giving very clear incentives to law enforcement agents to deliver warnings. He maintained that the Miranda warnings are simply procedural safeguards, not constitutional mandates and asserted that Section 3501 was an "adequate" substitute.

The Miranda decision strengthened the democratic rights of working people against coerced confessions and helped to put a halt to cop manhunts that occurred throughout the country where suspects were rounded up en masse and detained, sometimes for several days.

In a recent *Washington Post* opinion column, Colbert King wrote, "Everyone who walks the streets of America, especially people without money and with little education, ought to watch what the high court does with this case. There's a strong push on to overrule Miranda. Lord help us if the court agrees." King cited the response by cops in the nation's capital after the murder of Alyce Taggart, a white woman, in 1953.

"D.C. cops gave new meaning to the term 'dragnet,'" he wrote. "Men just seemed to disappear off the streets. Some were gone for days." Within three days of the murder, more than 600 people had been questioned before the cops nabbed Clarence Watson, a 19-year-old Black youth, who allegedly confessed to the killing.

The youth was held in secret custody by

Farmers tour Chicago, speak about Cuba

BY BETSEY STONE

CHICAGO—In a three-day visit to Illinois, Eddie Slaughter, vice president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, talked with students, working people, and farmers about the stakes in the struggle of Black farmers to keep their land. He also spoke about his experiences as part of a delegation of farmers from the United States to Cuba this February.

Slaughter received a warm reception from talk-show host Cliff Kelly, and from those calling in, when he appeared on a popular Black radio show on WVON April 14. After he explained how the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has robbed Black farmers of their land through discrimination in making loans and collecting debts, several callers shared their own experiences about struggling to hold on to family farms.

Slaughter pointed out that the land owned by Black farmers has gone from 16 million acres in 1920 to just under 3 million acres today. Describing the class-action lawsuit, *Pigford vs. Glickman*, against the USDA for discrimination, he emphasized that the \$50,000 offered individual farmers who are Black in the court settlement was a paltry amount that cannot solve the problem of the immense debts they owe. "It's not the \$50,000 we need, but the land," he said. "Until the USDA grants debt relief, one and a half million acres of land currently owned by Black farmers stands to be lost."

Slaughter pointed out that due to the agrarian land reform carried out by the revolution, Cuban farmers do not face the same kind of problems as small farmers in the United States. "They gave the land back to the poor, to the peasants, to the farmers. You don't have foreclosures in Cuba; you don't have the accelerated collection of debts; you don't have taxes on the land." Farmers are "held in high esteem in Cuba," he said.

Slaughter spoke at three different college campuses in the Chicago area. He gave a presentation that was part of the Seventh Annual African American Leadership Conference at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois; spoke to a class at Chicago State University; and at a meeting at DePaul University sponsored by the Activist Student Union. At all the presentations he urged support for the next national protest action being organized by the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association—a demonstration in Washington outside the United States Department of Agriculture on May 8.

He stressed that all family farmers have a stake in this struggle since all are being hit

Peasants in Brazil hold 'march of excluded'



Some 2,000 Indian peasants hold 'march of the excluded' April 22 in Pôrto Seguro, Brazil, marking 500 years of colonial domination. Cops attacked the protest with tear gas, nightsticks, and rubber bullets. The Movement of Landless Rural Workers marked the anniversary by launching a campaign to occupy 500 new farms and ranches laying idle. Blacks in Brazil also held protests recently against the marginal role offered them in that Third World capitalist country.

the police and interrogated throughout the night, with no warning of his Fifth Amendment rights and no legal counsel. The cops didn't file a complaint against Watson until more than 20 hours after his arrest.

Watson was put on trial once and not convicted. On the state's second try he was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to die in the electric chair. The verdict was overturned on the cop's failure to warn him

of his right against self-incrimination.

In a separate ruling, the Supreme Court said that cops going down the luggage rack of a Greyhound bus squeezing the bags of passengers is an unconstitutional search and invasion of privacy. The court overturned the narcotics conviction of a man whose bag was probed by a federal Border Patrol agent conducting an immigration check on a bus traveling through Texas.

by falling commodity prices and government policies that favor the rich farmers.

At Northern Illinois University, he described the liberating feeling of being in Cuba, of being with fellow fighters who were farmers, of not having to deal for a while with police brutality and with racist institutions like the USDA. In answer to a question about racism in Cuba, he said, "Yes, some exists. But not the institutionalized racism like we see in this country." Racism does not exist like here "as a tool to keep us divided."

A high point of the visit was an open air meeting at the farm of the Basu family attended by farmers and other residents of Pembroke Township. The township is an overwhelmingly Black rural community about 60 miles south of Chicago.

Among those attending were members of the Pembroke Advocates for Truth, a group

fighting to stop the construction of a prison that poses a threat to local farms. The Basu explained to Slaughter that the adjacent lot to their farm is where the prison is set to be built. The proximity to the farm puts their organic certification in jeopardy.

A protest action is projected at the time of the groundbreaking. Mark Anthony, one of the farmers present, explained that in his opinion the groundbreaking has been postponed "due to the fight we have been waging."

On WVON, when a speaker from Pembroke called, Slaughter tied together the fight against the prison and the fight of Black farmers for land. The growing incarceration of Blacks is part of the discrimination and the crisis of the system, he asserted. "We're not just talking about a crisis of Black farmers."

David Rosenfeld contributed to this article.

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YS hosts educational weekend in Alabama

The Young Socialists is an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the Young Socialists write to P.O. Box 33, Times Square Post Office, New York, N.Y. 10108, or call (646) 263-8974, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY WILL DONALDSON

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—The chapter of the Young Socialists here coordinated an April 8-9 educational weekend for youth interested in socialism. Activities included three classes, a forum by Socialist Workers Party leader James Harris, a social, and a cookout to end the weekend. The YS chapter also had the opportunity to give a boost to the national fund drive.

Classes were given on a variety of topics, including the origins of women's oppression, the Cuban revolution, and on imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism. All the classes were led by members of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers

Party. Participants found the weekend to be of help to them in learning about the communist movement.

Kristen Shelby, a high school student who joined the Young Socialists during the educational conference, said she liked the class on women's liberation because "it made me think about why our society is dominated by males and how under capitalism women cannot be fully liberated until there is a revolution—the overthrow of capitalism. This system exploits women."

Saturday evening James Harris spoke about his recent trip to Cuba along with six farmers from the United States who are fighting to keep their land. Harris's remarks were both colorful and extremely informative as he explained how farmers cannot lose their land in the socialist country.

He also noted the importance of helping to organize meetings that will give the farmers who went on the trip the opportunity to speak about their experiences at local college campuses and with other farmers in the area. Many felt that this forum was the highlight of the weekend.

Overall, this event was a great benefit to everyone who participated. It helped YS members get a chance to talk to young people about politics, raise funds for the YS, and learn more about the socialist movement. The weekend had a big impact on Shelby, who explained why she decided to join the YS: "I agree with the politics. In order to have a revolution I want to be involved in an organization. Young people need a way to organize themselves. They shouldn't be misled."

Ricardo Zuniga, a textile worker, contributed to this article.

Youth in Michigan protest cop brutality

BY JAY PARADISO

KALAMAZOO, Michigan—At least 100 young people and workers and their families demonstrated here April 8 against recent police harassment and brutality. March

organizers announced that this was the first demonstration against cop brutality in the history of this city, which has a population of 85,000.

Protest signs and chants focused on the jailing of more than 25 people, predominantly Blacks. Speakers at the rally said they had been held naked in police custody and not given food or water. The main speaker, Beril Wilson, spoke about his eight-hour jailing by the Kalamazoo police. "It's a shame, but my experience is not unique," he said, "it's time for a change in this community."

Several students came from surrounding campuses and high schools, including Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and Coloma High School. One high school student, Joe Burke from the town of Paw Paw, came to the demonstration after seeing a flier at Kalamazoo Community College. "It's the first demonstration that I've ever been to," he said. Burke and a friend each bought a *Militant* plus a Young Socialists pamphlet, and are looking forward to going to future actions.

Youth in Georgia press fight against cop killing

BY DAVID KLIERAND ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

VALDOSTA, Georgia—Willie Williams was stopped by Lowndes County Sheriff Deputy Kevin Farmer on Sept. 1, 1998. One day later, he was found dead in his jail cell. The People's Tribunal is building a movement here to protest police brutality and win justice for Williams.

The medical examiner who received Williams's body the next day found that he had a broken neck, a massive brain hemorrhage, three broken ribs, two front teeth knocked out, and scrapes and bruises all over his body.

A coroner's inquest ruled the death "accidental" on Dec. 2, 1998, with the three jury members who were white outvoting two Blacks. On December 18 a grand jury voted not to indict any police officers in-

involved.

The local sheriff states that Williams simply fell down. However, a videotape from a backup squad car shows the arresting officer, Farmer, swinging a flashlight at Williams and knocking him to the ground. The medical examiner also found two deep oval contusions on the back of his head.

Since the hospital staff that treated Williams on the night of his arrest claims his injuries were not as severe as reported by the medical examiner, one question Tribunal members are asking is what happened to Williams after he went to jail. Conveniently, the booking tape that recorded Williams's arrival at the jail has disappeared.

Addressing an April 8 rally of 300, Tribunal leader Rev. Floyd Rose explained why the group continues to fight and is recruiting new members to its ranks. "Some people say we are fighting a losing battle. They say it's taking a long time, and there still isn't even a grand jury indictment. Or they find it possible to believe that Williams resisted arrest, or find it easier to just believe that this was an accident like the police say. I am not moved by any of this," said Rose. "I say when it comes to justice, all that matters is what is right. We will never let those responsible for the murder of Willie James Williams forget, because we will never stop fighting."

Young people join in

According to Truise Nash, who helped organize the rally, the participation of youth has contributed to the staying power of the group. "Young people have made all the difference in us sticking with this fight," said Nash in an interview at the April 8 rally. "Youth today are more active, and if it takes protesting to gain recognition, they are willing to do it, whatever means are necessary to be heard." Nash was a veteran of the civil rights movement here, including the protests in 1961 to desegregate lunch counters in the city.

"This is a great cause," said rally participant Angie Furney, 22, who is a student at Valdosta State University (VSU). "Unless you're rich and white you are not represented in this town." Another VSU student, Jenny O'Hara, added, "The problem is everywhere, it's international."

Speaking at the rally, Atlanta Young Socialists member Paul Cornish pointed to the rise in police brutality as a worldwide problem. "What we are doing is very important. We are part of an international consciousness that is combating police brutality," he said. "But we should ask each other, what will it take to eliminate the problem of police brutality? In my opinion, the answer is the union of all workers, and taking our fight further to eliminate capitalism, which systematically breeds police brutality in every corner of the world."

The YS leader, who is also a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and



Militant/Dan Fein

April 8 rally led by People's Tribunal in Valdosta, Georgia, against cop killing of Willie Williams. Youth have become more active in the struggle against police violence.

Textile Employees, called for solidarity with workers fighting for better wages and conditions on the job.

The rally broke into applause at the remarks of Manuel Cahan, a Cuban-American and professor at VSU. "The only cure for contempt, is counter contempt. Immigrants are told to behave, to speak English, to obey, to integrate. That this country is a melting pot. But we immigrants haven't melted yet. We have the right to be respected. We are not invisible," he said.

Willie Head, a farmer who recently returned from a fact-finding trip to Cuba and is vice president of the Tribunal, urged participants to learn more about the Cuban revolution. "The fact that you are here today shows that you are willing to be a fighter. The workers and farmers of Cuba have a lot to teach fighters like you and me."

There have been several developments here since the April 8 rally. The attorney for the Williams family, Joe Wiley, Jr., has discovered that there are two videotapes in circulation that were recorded from a patrol car at the scene of the arrest of Williams. According to the lawyer, one of these tapes shows Williams being struck with a flashlight, the other has these scenes edited out. Wiley believes that this edited tape was shown to the jurors as evidence and also may have been sent to the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, which has been asked to investigate the case.

The discovery that there are two different tapes goes along with the initial feeling by many that there is a cover-up operation going on.

It has also come to light that Kevin Farmer, the officer who arrested Williams, is suing a local newspaper for slander in an attempt to shut down the only source of

printed information regarding this and other issues that other local media will not publicize.

David Klier is a member of the Young Socialists and a student at Valdosta State University. Arlene Rubinstein is a member of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association in Atlanta.

Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign \$80,000 Fund

City	Goal	Paid	%
Twin Cities	5,000	1,310	26%
Detroit	3,000	300	10%
Seattle	6,000	500	8%
Boston	3,750	100	3%
Newark	4,000	100	3%
Allentown	1,000	0%	
Atlanta	3,100	0%	
Birmingham	3,500	0%	
Brooklyn	2,800	0%	
Cape Girardeau	565	0%	
Charlotte	1,200	0%	
Chicago	7,000	0%	
Chippewa Falls	500	0%	
Cleveland	2,250	0%	
Des Moines	1,200	0%	
Fort Collins	250	0%	
Houston	5,000	0%	
Los Angeles	6,000	0%	
Miami	2,500	0%	
N.Y. Garment Dist	4,000	0%	
Philadelphia	3,000	0%	
Pittsburgh	3,000	0%	
San Francisco	3,500	0%	
St. Louis	1,300	0%	
Upper Manhattan	2,000	0%	
Washington	3,300	0%	
Other			
Total	\$78,715		
Goal	\$80,000	\$2,310	3%

Young Socialists Fund Drive March 15-June 1

City	Goal	Raised	%
Birmingham	450	225	50%
Detroit	550	144	26%
Seattle	350	120	34%
Chicago	800	205	26%
Twin Cities	650	115	18%
Miami	400	50	13%
Tucson	200	20	10%
New York	1,000	94	9%
Cleveland	350	0%	
Fresno	200	0%	
Los Angeles	450	0%	
Newark	700	0%	
Philadelphia	500	0%	
Valdosta	200	0%	
Washington	200	0%	
Santa Cruz	250	0%	
San Francisco		20	
Total	\$7,250	\$993	14%

Selling the 'Militant' to respond to INS raid

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Every supporter of the *Militant* is encouraged to help distribute the paper this week on the job, at picket lines, door-to-door, and on college campuses in an intensive campaign to present a communist voice and the interests of the working class in response to the INS raid in Miami, the latest outrage in the political course the U.S. rulers have carried out over the last decade. Many workers and farmers will seriously consider and welcome the perspectives in the pages of the *Militant* this week.

The *Militant* business office will quickly respond to more orders for the paper and we look forward to stories, short articles, and photographs on this effort.

Participants in the drive can build on their work to reach out with the paper over the next nine days to get better organized for the rest of the drive. Winning new subscribers takes careful weekly planning and organization, as partisans of the *Militant* respond

to political developments and participate in class-struggle fights and actions.

At the halfway point in the drive we are behind schedule. The April 29-May 7 target week provides an excellent opportunity to get the campaign back on target.

Several workers, including some involved in labor battles, who recently bought subscriptions, have commented on their appreciation of the socialist newsweekly. Frankie Pickup, a retired miner in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, said he bought a subscription after meeting supporters of the *Militant* at the United Mine Workers of America convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Last December, 300 union members in Nova Scotia occupied the mining company's corporate headquarters and shut it down. The miners are engaged in a battle for jobs and pension benefits as the bosses close down the coal industry there.

Pickup explained how he hosted a team of *Militant* supporters at his home. "They



Militant/Brian Taylor

Young Socialists member promotes the *Militant* at April 1-5 Latin American and Caribbean Student Congress in Havana.

wanted to come to Nova Scotia to do a follow-up story on the occupation of the coal mines. I invited them to stay at my house.

Why pay all that money for a hotel? I fixed them bacon and eggs and they were tickled pink."

"When I get my issue I pass it around to the guys in the mines," said Pickup. He said many of them read the *Militant* article that reported on their struggle and the coverage of the UMWA convention. "They liked it. I passed out about 30 subscription blanks. I think you can expect some of them to become subscribers."

The retired miner asked the *Militant* to send him 50 subscription blanks: "If that takes off send me 50 more. I don't mind going to the mine site. I can also pass them out at the union meetings."

U.S. rulers map plans to oust Vieques protesters

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Washington has escalated its probes to evict scores of protesters from Vieques who oppose the U.S. Navy's use of that Puerto Rican island for bombing practice. In response, anticolonial fighters and others are gearing up for further protests both in Puerto Rico and the United States.

On April 24, two days after U.S. marshals and immigration cops carried out a commando raid on a house in Miami to seize Cuban child Elián González, unnamed Pentagon sources reported to the media that two U.S. Navy warships were heading toward Vieques with 1,000 Marines to back up U.S. marshals and FBI agents preparing to arrest the protesters.

The following day, a U.S. official stated that the departure of the *Bataan* and the *Nashville* from Norfolk, Virginia, was being delayed because news of the move had been leaked. The ships had been projected to pick up Marines from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and set up a perimeter around the 21-mile-long island of Vieques, to prevent access by fishermen and others to the dozen protest camps on the U.S.

Navy's bombing range. The Puerto Rican colonial government agreed to provide police for "crowd control," stepping aside for the imperial cop agencies to do the main job. After the arrests, the Marines would reoccupy the disputed Vieques territory.

The big-business media immediately connected the INS raid in Miami with the announced raid on Vieques, which would also be directed by the U.S. Justice Department. The San Juan daily *El Nuevo Día* noted that "the eviction operation would be more complex than the one that federal authorities carried out to remove Cuban child Elián González from the home of his Miami relatives," and suggested that protesters had guns, the same pretext used in the Miami raid.

Robert Rabin, a leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, denied the accusation and held U.S. president William Clinton and Puerto Rican governor Pedro Rosselló responsible for any violent incident resulting from a U.S. assault on Vieques.

In one probe, a bus carrying several unknown individuals attempted to ram through the entrance to the U.S. Navy's Camp García, which remains blocked by protesters who have set up Camp Justice and Peace. Within 30 minutes, some 250 local residents rushed to the camp to join the six protesters on duty. The Puerto Rican Lawyers Guild, which has pledged to defend any activists victimized, immediately flew in an attorney.

Since April 1999, when a U.S. warplane on a training exercise dropped "errant" bombs that killed Vieques resident David Sanes, the 60-year-long fight to remove the U.S. Navy from Vieques has been rekindled, becoming a mass campaign in Puerto Rico and winning increased support among Puerto Ricans in the United States. The fight has involved significant numbers of fishermen, workers, and youth.

Meanwhile, U.S. officials announced that the USS *George Washington* aircraft carrier battle group will train off the east coast of the United States rather than the coasts of Vieques. It is the fourth series of naval maneuvers to be diverted from Puerto Rico since the Vieques movement exploded.

The Clinton administration has been seeking to implement a January 31 agreement with colonial governor Rosselló to allow the Pentagon to resume bombing practice on Vieques and to hold a referendum among island residents—widely scorned in Puerto Rico as a fraud—on whether to withdraw the U.S. forces in 2003.

Despite having to divert the latest naval exercises, Washington continues to press for an opportunity to dislodge the protesters and retake the territory in eastern Vieques.

Meanwhile, opponents of the U.S. Navy have announced demonstrations to take place at Fort Buchanan in San Juan, at New York's Times Square, and in other cities as soon as any arrests take place on the island.

"I was a sergeant in Korea for 11 months... fighting for democracy—now I'm

ready to fight the Navy," declared Angel Navarro, 72, who told an Associated Press reporter he plans to take his fishing boat through any blockade.

Other Vieques residents have vowed to replace any arrested demonstrators by cutting fences, sending in reinforcements by horseback, and dispatching dozens of fishing boats to break any blockade.

Militant/PM Subscription Drive in the Unions				
	Militant	PM	NI	
	Goal/Sold	%	Goal/Sold	Goal/Sold
UK				
TGWU	3 2	67%		
RMT	3 1	33%		
Total	6 3	50%		
Australia				
MUA	3 2	67%		1
TCFUA	2	0%		1
Total	5 2	40%		2
U.S.				
IAM	45 15	33%	10 4	20 3
UTU	32 8	25%	3 2	10 3
UAW	17 3	18%	3	9
USWA	40 7	18%	3 1	16 2
UNITE	35 2	6%	25 2	16
UFCW	35	0%	20	15
Total	204 35	17%	64 9	86 9
Canada				
UFCW	3		1	4
UNITE	4		2 1	2
Total	7	0%	3 1	6

IAM—International Association of Machinist; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; RMT—National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TCFUA—Textile, Clothing, and Footwear Union of Australia; 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

Where we stand		
Mil	PM	NI
Week 7		
Week 6		
Week 5		
Week 4		

Militant/PM Subscription Drive March 25–May 21							
Country	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Australia	12	7	58%	1		5	2
Sweden	12	7	58%	4		6	4
New Zealand							
Christchurch	12	6	50%	1		3	
Auckland	20	4	20%	1	1	3	1
N.Z. total	32	10	31%	2	1	6	1
United States							
St. Louis	15	9	60%	5	1	10	5
Tucson	5	3	60%	2		2	
Atlanta	30	16	53%	10	5	12	7
Los Angeles	60	30	50%	30	20	30	8
Twin Cities	35	16	46%	8	2	10	
Seattle	40	18	45%	12	2	12	
Pittsburgh	25	11	44%	2	1	8	
Des Moines	30	13	43%	15	6	10	2
Washington	30	13	43%	10	4	11	6
Birmingham	45	18	40%	5		15	3
Charlotte	10	4	40%	3	1	5	1
Chicago	40	15	38%	15	3	15	4
Chippewa Falls*	25	9	36%	18	8	10	6
Cleveland	25	9	36%	8		5	
Fort Collins	12	4	33%	1	1	4	
San Francisco	50	16	32%	20	7	25	3
Philadelphia	35	11	31%	10	5	15	8
Newark	65	19	29%	25	14	25	5
Detroit	45	13	29%	8	1	15	
Miami	40	11	28%	15	5	20	11
Allentown	15	4	27%	2		5	
Cape Girardeau	12	3	25%	4		4	
Boston	35	5	14%	10	3	15	
Houston	35	3	9%	15	3	12	4
Fresno	12	1	8%	8		6	
Upper Manhattan	55	4	7%	20	5	20	
N.Y. Garment Dist	60	4	7%	20		20	
Brooklyn	55	2	4%	10		25	
U.S. total	941	284	30%	311	97	366	80
Canada							
Toronto	25	6	24%	6	3	20	10
Vancouver	25	6	24%	5	2	12	10
Montreal	16		0%	6	1	15	6
Canada total	66	12	18%	17	6	47	26
Iceland	5	1	20%	1		5	1
United Kingdom							
London	40	5	13%	8	4	20	8
Manchester	24		0%	2		12	
UK total	64	5	8%	10	4	32	8
France	4		0%	4		20	3
Int'l totals	1136	326	29%	350	108	487	125
Goal/Should be	1100	550	50%	300	150	450	225
*raised goal							

Revelations on killing of Patrice Lumumba force Belgian government to open probe

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa—Following new disclosures of the role it played in the overthrow and murder of Congolese prime minister and independence leader Patrice Lumumba, the Belgian government has been forced to establish a public commission of inquiry on the events of 1961.

A book released last year, *De Moord Op Lumumba* (The Murder of Lumumba), by Ludo de Witte, caused a stir in Belgium. First published in Dutch, it is now also available in French. Based on the portion of documents that Brussels has made public on the events in the Congo, it concludes that, after they were shot, the independence leader's body and those of two other members of his government were sawed into bits and dumped in acid to obliterate the evidence.

According to the February edition of *New African* magazine, a Belgian police commissioner, Gerard Soete, recently confessed on Belgian television to sawing up the men and dousing their bodies in acid.

The book sheds some new light on the already well-established facts: that Washington and its allies, under the banner of the United Nations, moved to destabilize the Congo, which achieved independence from Belgium in 1960; backed a pro-imperialist breakaway regime in Katanga; assisted a coup led by a breakaway faction of Lumumba's government under Joseph Mobutu; and organized to have Lumumba murdered.

New African reports that "the American president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, had long given the green light for the CIA to plan the elimination of Lumumba, according to Madeleine Kalb in her book, *Congo Cables*, published by Macmillan in 1982 based on leaked State Department cables."

The magazine also states that "last year, American author Adam Hochschild, revealed in his book, *King Leopold's Ghost*, that President Eisenhower had personally given his approval for the assassination of Lumumba."

A fighting mass movement

Lumumba was the central leader of the Movement National Congolaise (MNC), the main organization that the toilers supported in the battle for independence from Belgium. A central feature of the MNC was its attempt to cut across tribal divisions.

Belgian, French and American capital—including the Rockefeller family—had large interests in the Congo's diamonds, copper,

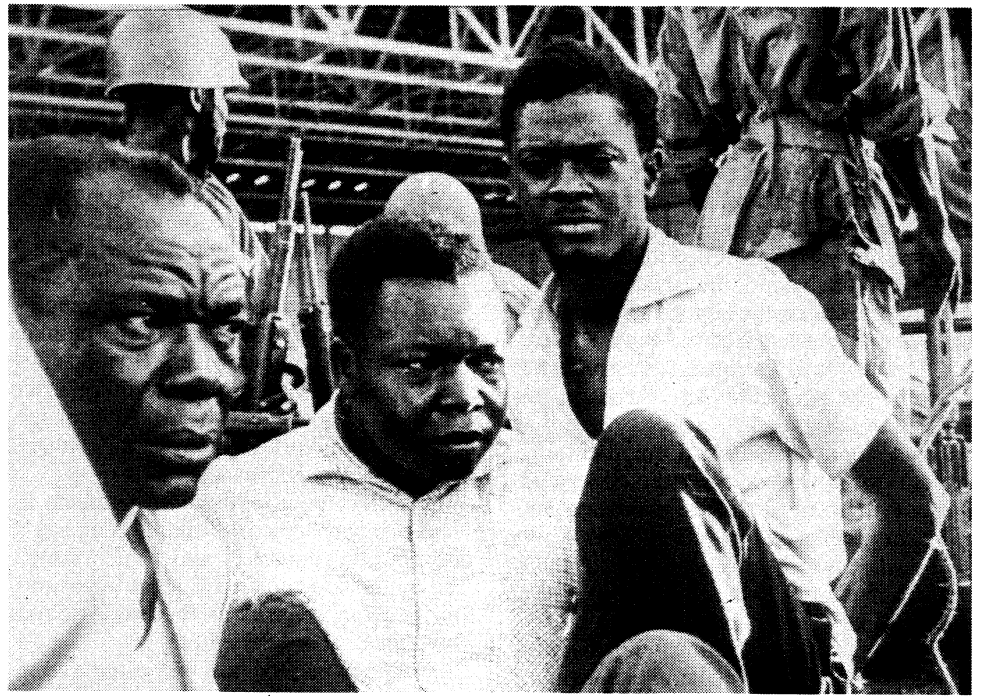
uranium, and cobalt mines. They furiously resisted the movement for sovereignty and independence. For example, Lumumba was arrested in January 1959 for "inciting a riot" in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) after a revolt that began when colonial officials refused to grant an MNC request to hold a mass meeting. Cops shot 26 people dead and wounded more than 100.

Despite such brutality, the mass movement was unstoppable, and Congo won formal independence in June 1960, and a government was formed with Lumumba as prime minister.

Moise Tshombe's CONAKAT party won only eight of the 137 seats in the parliament. Tshombe quickly announced secession of Katanga province and Brussels sent troops into Katanga to support him. Lumumba invited UN troops in to help, which proved a fatal error.

While most of the UN troops were African, Washington called the shots. As Lumumba attempted to rally his supporters against the growing imperialist sabotage in September 1960, the UN command ordered its troops to seize the national radio station to prevent him from doing so. When Lumumba led a group of soldiers to take over the station, UN troops threatened to shoot him. Days later, Mobutu, who according to the *New African* had been recruited by the CIA and Belgian operatives, led a coup with Washington's support.

Lumumba was put under house arrest, surrounded by both UN troops and soldiers loyal to Mobutu. He escaped on November 27, 1960, according to De Witte's book, and U.S.



Patrice Lumumba (third white-shirted man on right) captured by soldiers loyal to Mobutu. UN soldiers called by Lumumba to aid his struggle organized his demise.

officials alerted Mobutu, whose soldiers arrested Lumumba four days later. He was sent to Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) in Katanga on January 17, 1961, with Maurice Mpolo, a minister in his government, and senate deputy president Joseph Okito. On the same night, the men's hands were tied behind their backs; they were beaten and shot. The bodies were quickly transferred to Belgian custody for disposal.

Days before his death, Lumumba wrote to his wife, stating in part: "History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that is taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington, or in the United Nations, but the history which will be taught in the countries freed from imperialism and its puppets. Africa will write its own history, and to the north and south of the Sahara, it will be a glorious and dignified history."

Protesters demand justice in nightclub killing

BY EDWIN FRUIT

DES MOINES, Iowa—A march and rally at the Polk County courthouse here drew more than 100 people April 16 to protest a grand jury ruling in the death of Charles Lovelady.

Lovelady, a young Black man, was suffocated to death in February by bouncers at Graffiti's, a local nightclub, after being denied entry because of the clothes he was wearing. Rather than prosecute the case, the Polk County district attorney sent it to a grand jury. Even though the coroner's office ruled it a homicide, not one of the two men has spent any time in jail for Lovelady's death. A coalition called Citizens for Justice has been

formed to demand justice in the case. A couple of days before the protest, the grand jury indicted the two men on involuntary manslaughter charges, punishable with up to two years in prison if convicted.

Cory Williams, a longtime friend of Lovelady, said at the rally, "You go to jail for not wearing a seat belt but not for murdering a young Black man." In a news conference held the previous day, Lamont Lovelady, Charles's father, said that recently a person in Des Moines convicted of abusing a dog was sentenced to more than two years in jail.

From the beginning people have been outraged that no charges were filed in the case. On March 4, some 200 people marched six miles from Creative Visions, a community center in the Black community, to the nightclub where the incident occurred. The day before, the Polk County coroner declared that Lovelady's death was a homicide.

In a column in the *Des Moines Register*, Rob Borsellino raised questions that activists asked at a news conference. "What would have happened if a white man—a former Dowling student and Valley football captain—was choked to death by a couple of Black bouncers at a black-owned club. Would the club have remained open with the license intact? Would the county attorney suggest that we go slow? Would the bouncers be out walking around as if nothing happened?"

Protesters continue to publicize the case. A speakout March 9 at the Maple Street Baptist Church included Cory Williams, a longtime friend of Lovelady; Keith Ratliff, head of the Des Moines chapter of the NAACP; and Bob Wright, Jr., the attorney for the Lovelady family. A prayer vigil was held at Graffiti's March 18 along with a breakfast news conference. A similar gathering occurred at the Wilkie House March 25. All the events were covered by local media. This pressure forced authorities to move up the timetable for the grand jury, which began to meet March 27.

At one of the organizing meetings of the Citizens for Justice, Cory Williams pointed out that nightclubs are targeting Black designer clothes to keep African-Americans out. "We want the bouncers charged but we also want to address the discriminatory practices that are occurring in Des Moines to make sure that this doesn't happen again," he said.

On April 16 it was announced that two African-American professionals have filed a race discrimination complaint with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission against six local clubs. The complaint alleges that the

clubs' dress codes are discriminatory and used to exclude minorities.

An article in the *Des Moines Register* confirmed that a number of clubs specifically exclude people wearing clothing labels such as FUBU, MeccaUSA, Phat Farm, and a number of others. Black designer labels are prominent on the list.

Citizens for Justice has organized meetings of more than 20 people each week and is planning more public protests, including Sunday vigils outside the courthouse and a presence at the opening of the trial, which is scheduled to begin in June.

Edwin Fruit is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149.

New Jersey governor attacks privacy rights

BY ANDY BUCHANAN

NEWARK, New Jersey—New Jersey governor Christine Whitman is proposing amendments to the state constitution that would give authorities added powers to trample on the right to privacy. She wants to allow the government to post comprehensive information on the Internet about people convicted of sex offenses. Her plan, endorsed by State Senate president Donald DiFrancesco, expands on proposals already approved by the State Assembly.

Twenty-one states already use web sites to spread such information, including the names, addresses, photographs and physical descriptions of convicted sex offenders. Many of these sites also list details of crimes the ex-prisoners were accused—not convicted—of committing.

In addition, Governor Whitman now proposes to post a rating—with categories of low, moderate, and high—of the risk these former prisoners allegedly pose to the community. The *Star-Ledger* explains that these ratings are based on prosecutors' assessments of each former prisoner and of the offenses of which they were convicted. The state already uses such material in conducting leaflet campaigns to notify residents of the presence of former prisoners in the community. These moves are the latest extension of state and federal versions of "Megan's Law," an antidemocratic measure adopted after the killing of seven-year-old Megan Kanka in 1994. Deborah Jacobs, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union in New Jersey, said the ACLU may file a legal challenge.

Pathfinder Reprint Project's indexing team doubles output

BY DEAN DENNO

WASHINGTON—In order to take advantage of the new computer-to-plate technology installed last year in Pathfinder's print shop, a large group of volunteers is converting all Pathfinder books and pamphlets into computer files.

Many of the Pathfinder Reprint Project's newest volunteers have joined the index concordance production team. This team was the most recent one organized as part of the effort to put all of Pathfinder's titles into digital form.

After proofreading, the text of each Pathfinder book is reformatted using modern, easily readable typefaces and layout. This changes the number of pages in a book, so the index must be converted to match the new pages. The conversion of the old index to the new page numbering is called index concordance. Index concordance is one of the last steps in preparing a book for digital reprinting. It cannot be done until the text is formatted, checked, and ready to print. In earlier stages of the Reprint Project, index concordance was done by the volunteers who formatted the text. This could involve weeks of work by a single volunteer and slowed down the production of reprints.

The index concordance department was organized in the fall of 1999 to help relieve this production bottleneck. It includes volunteers who do only index concordance work as well as some who do proofreading or formatting and take an occasional assignment in indexing. This is possible because

the index work is done in concentrated spurts, to complete an index as quickly as possible once the book text is ready. The goal is to have almost all of the volunteers able to do the indexing work, so that our overall monthly production of books can reach 10. So far, about 40 volunteers have participated in this aspect of the Reprint Project's production.

Index concordance begins with looking up an entry in the index of the old book. The volunteer then finds the same text in the new book and notes the page number to be entered in the new index. Because the new book is available only in electronic form the work must be done at the computer. However, it does not require a high level of computer skills, which makes this work attractive to many of the new volunteers.

With increased experience and improved written instructions it has been possible to quickly integrate many new volunteers. This has made it possible to double the output of the index concordance department in a short time. We completed four indexes totaling 33 pages in the last three months of 1999; in January through March of this year we finished nine indexes totaling 67 pages.

The April goals of the team include three indexes totaling 28 pages: Book 1 of *What Is Surrealism?*, *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, and *The Leninist Strategy of Party Building*. It will be necessary to involve more volunteers and further increase our output in order to meet the Reprint Project's overall goal of digitizing 10 Pathfinder titles per month.

Vietnam 1975: 'A victory for all oppressed'

Twenty-five years ago, on April 27, 1975, the liberation armies of Vietnam forced the ignominious flight of the Washington-backed government of South Vietnam. Two years earlier, U.S. troops had left the country after 16 years of intervention. Washington had thrown massive forces into Vietnam after the defeat of French imperialism in the "First Indochina War." As the U.S. intervention mounted through the 1960s and '70s, a mass antiwar movement gathered momentum in the United States and many other countries.

The May 9, 1975, issue of the *Militant* carried a large photograph of Vietnamese liberation fighters atop a tank abandoned by Saigon troops. A May 1 statement by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee called the expulsion of "the last imperialist armed forces from their country" a "victory for all those throughout the world who are fighting oppression and exploitation."

Below are excerpts from the Afterword of *Out Now! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the U.S. Against the Vietnam War*, copyright ©1978 Pathfinder Press. The book was written by Fred Halstead, a long-time leader of the Socialist Workers Party who played a leading part in the antiwar movement. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY FRED HALSTEAD

The Second Indochina War was the first in the epoch of American imperialism in which the United States went down to defeat. After emerging victorious from the Spanish-American War and two world wars, then encountering a stalemate in Korea, the Pentagon's military machine was ignominiously evicted from Vietnam, thanks to the persevering struggle of the Indochinese plus the antiwar resistance of the American people. This was the most sustained and, except for Russia in 1905 and 1917, the most effective antiwar movement within any big power while the shooting was going on.

The official propagandists cooked up various formulas to justify their military intervention. It was depicted as a crusade for democracy and freedom against the threat of communist totalitarianism and for the defense of the independence of the South against invasion from the North. The U.S. was there, it was said, to fulfill treaty obligations to the client Saigon regime and thwart the expansionism of China and the Soviet Union. Toward the end the excuses became exceedingly thin: to assure the return of the POWs; to prevent a bloodbath in the South if the NLF (National Liberation Front) should take over completely; to protect U.S. troops as they were withdrawn. All this was demagoguery.

In reality, U.S. intervention had a thoroughly imperialistic character. The colossus of world capitalism hurled its military might without provocation against a small and divided colonial nation thousands of miles away struggling for self-determination and unification. A series of American presidents sought to do what King George III's empire failed to do against the rebel Patriots of 1776.

On one side was a state armed to the teeth promoting the strategic aims and material interests of the corporate rich on the global arena; on the other was a worker and peasant uprising heading toward the overthrow of capitalist power and property, despite the limited political program of its leadership.

A revolutionary struggle

These underlying anticapitalist and antilandlord tendencies were eventually clearly expressed in the reunification of Vietnam in 1976 and the process of eliminating capitalist property relations in the South. The prolonged civil war in South Vietnam thereby proved to be an integral part of the international confrontation between the upholders of capitalism and the forces moving in a socialist direction that has been unfolding since the October 1917 Bolshevik revolution.

Apart from genocide against the Native Americans, which involved intermittent warfare over four centuries, this was the longest war in America's history. The first U.S. soldier was reported killed in Vietnam in 1959, the last in 1975, a span of sixteen years. (The Revolutionary War lasted eight years and the Spanish-American War only four months.)

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the total number of American mili-

tary personnel engaged at one time or another in the Southeast Asian war—including bases in Thailand and elsewhere and on ships at sea—was over eight million. This was more than half the number of Americans engaged in World War II (8,744,000 compared with 16,112,566). Over three million Americans were sent to Vietnam itself. Sixty thousand were killed, 46,000 of these in combat; and 300,000 were wounded. (The ratio of seriously wounded and permanently disabled to killed, incidentally, was much higher among Americans in Vietnam than in previous wars, owing largely to advanced techniques of removing casualties quickly to hospitals.)

The Indochinese were killed in the hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, and their lands devastated. The Pentagon dropped more bomb tonnage on the relatively small area of Indochina than had been dropped anywhere in the world in all previous wars combined.

The direct dollar cost to the U.S. in South Vietnam alone was \$141 billion. This was more than \$7,000 for each of the area's 20 million inhabitants, whose per capita income was only \$157 per year. The collateral expenditures amounted to far more. Economists correctly link the rapid inflation of the late 1960s to the large federal deficits resulting from U.S. spending for the Vietnam War.

Differing class balance sheets

Most Americans today regard this as a colossal waste of lives and wealth in a shameful war. But the Pentagon strategists make a different assessment. To be sure, they did not cover themselves with glory or succeed in crushing the Vietnamese revolution and retaining a staging area for U.S. operations in the region. But they did hold back the advancement of the colonial revolution in Vietnam for a decade and a half. That was part of their job of policing the world for American big business, its multinational companies, and its clients in Japan and elsewhere.

In the early sixties the vast majority of Americans ignored the war, or accommodated themselves to it, though without much patriotic fervor. It seemed remote from their immediate concerns, something which they knew little or nothing about and left trustingly to their government. That was still a time of confidence in the wisdom and honesty of the top political leaders and above all in the benevolent intentions of the occupants of the White House. The Washington policy makers took cruel advantage of this naiveté.

Without exaggeration, most Americans were hardly aware that Vietnam existed when the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations were stealthily pulling them step by step into the bloody quagmire. The Democrats and Republicans jointly carried out the "bipartisan foreign policy" in Southeast Asia and rubberstamped it in Congress while the major media that molded public opinion—and kept it uninformed—gave no warning



Vietnamese troops climb aboard U.S. tank abandoned by routed army of South Vietnam. Washington was defeated by persevering struggle of Vietnamese people.

of what was ahead.

The antiwar movement began with people who were already radicalized: pacifists, socialists, communists, rebellious students, and a scattering of morally outraged individuals. At the start these were a small minority, convinced of the justness of their cause and ready to face unpopularity for their stand. The energy, resoluteness, and fortitude of this vanguard brought the movement into being and remained its prime mover.

It is too early to assess the full consequences of this experience. It is nonetheless clear that the antiwar agitation and mass mobilizations spurred the radicalization of many sectors of the population. "It is no accident," wrote Susan Jacoby for one, "that so many female veterans of the civil-rights movement and the antiwar movement ultimately became involved in the women's liberation movement."

It changed the political face of the United States and motivated a healthy distrust of the rulers in Washington that bore fruit in the Watergate revelations and their sequels.

It broke the fever of the anticommunist hysteria and weakened the efficacy of the "red scares" that have been used as a weapon against any challenge to the status quo.

It challenged and changed the stereotyped image of GIs as obedient pawns of the brass immunized against dissenting currents within the civilian population.

The abhorrence of any further military ventures abroad has restricted the options available to Washington in its imperial designs, as its dilemma over Angola in 1976 indicated.

Toxins plague Vietnam years after war

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As working people worldwide celebrate the 25th anniversary of the defeat of U.S. military forces in Vietnam, the criminal acts—from the massive bombardment and use of toxic chemicals like Agent Orange—carried out by the U.S. rulers against the people of Vietnam continues to plague this Southeast Asian country today.

Scientists and government officials in Vietnam point out that some 1 million Vietnamese—combatants, civilians, and their children—were poisoned by Agent Orange, the poisonous defoliant widely used by U.S. forces during the Vietnam War.

From 1961 to 1971, U.S. forces sprayed 20 million gallons of herbicide over 10 percent of the land area of what was then South Vietnam. The defoliants, 60 percent of which was Agent Orange, reduced dense lush jungles and mangrove forests to barren wasteland. In 1969, scientists showed that its components caused birth defects in laboratory animals. President Richard Nixon was finally forced to stop spraying Agent Orange-based chemicals in December 1970. Soil, water, and human tissue samples

recently taken in several parts of the country that were sprayed more than 30 years ago reveal high concentrations of dioxin, a highly carcinogenic component of Agent Orange that is one of the world's most toxic substances.

In one heavily defoliated valley in Vietnam's central highlands, for instance, Canadian researchers have found high levels of dioxin in children who were born after the spraying ceased in 1971. Peoples in these areas continue to grow crops in the soil and fish the streams.

'There is no way we can forget'

Vietnamese officials point to the rash of cancers, immune-deficiency diseases, and drug-resistant malaria in the 1970s and 1980s stemming from the use of this chemical. Vietnamese doctors say that dioxin contamination is responsible for an unusually large number of birth defects, particularly malformed limbs and mental retardation.

"There is no way we can forget about the war," stated Pham Tan, 44, who went to work after the war as a construction worker in areas that were sprayed. He, like many,

The American movement against the Vietnam War broke the pattern of large and successful movements for social reform in the United States confining themselves to domestic matters and accepting uncritically the imperialist foreign policy, aggressive wars, and counterrevolutionary ventures of the American Establishment.

All this cannot but be reflected in future struggles for social progress within the United States and internationally. It is even possible that the antiwar movement will prove to have been in a number of aspects a rehearsal for the coming American social revolution.

In any case, the veterans of the antiwar movement have every reason to be proud of their record, part of which is set down in this book. We accomplished what we had set out to do. Our protests did win over public opinion and exert enough pressure—along with that of the Vietnamese—to bring the U.S. forces home. That done, the Vietnamese were finally able to take over their own country.

The American movement against the Vietnam War knocked a gaping hole in the theory that because of its control over the military, the police, the economy, and the tremendously effective modern media, the ruling class could get away with anything so long as there was some degree of prosperity.

The antiwar movement started with nothing but leaflets. But it proved that people can think for themselves if the issue touches them deeply enough, technology notwithstanding. In human affairs there is still nothing so powerful as an idea and a movement whose time has come.

drank the local water and ate vegetables grown on denuded jungle that had been turned into farmland. His son was born with severe mental retardation and no legs.

"It has now become clear that Agent Orange will affect us for many generations," stated Le Cao Dai, a Hanoi physician who has studied the effects of this chemical. He said recent government studies found that children living near the extensively sprayed former U.S. military base at Bien Hoa have dioxin levels 50 times higher than children living in Hanoi.

The U.S. government has refused to acknowledge that Agent Orange is responsible for the rash of birth defects and other ailments among the Vietnamese people, and they have refused to provide funds to clean up the areas that their bombs and chemical agents had destroyed.

In the 1970s and '80s, many of the 2.6 million U.S. military personnel who served in Vietnam reported similar illnesses and birth defects. A group of 20,000 veterans sued Dow Chemical Co. and Monsanto Co., which manufactured the defoliant, and eventually won a \$180 million settlement.

Call for federal troops to enforce civil rights: a world apart from INS assault in Miami

BY STEVE CLARK

"We should not get caught up in the debate of whether too much force was used," writes Les Slater in one of the letters on page 15 of this week's issue of the *Militant*. Slater is referring to the April 22 SWAT-style raid in Miami during which eight members of a 130-strong Border Patrol special forces task force of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)—wearing riot gear and armed with MP-5 submachine guns—broke down the front door with a battering ram and smashed their way into a private home.

In another letter printed in this issue, Joe Callahan also welcomes this assault by *la*

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

migra, comparing it "to the use of U.S. troops to enforce desegregation in the South in the 1950s and 60s, something that socialists staunchly supported."

The *Militant* editorial, "In Defense of the Cuban Revolution, In Defense of the Working Class," featured on the front page, presents the communist viewpoint on the brutal and unconstitutional INS assault in Miami. In addition, however, an explicit answer is called for to the misrepresentation in the letter by Joe Callahan of the Socialist Workers Party's political course as part of the fight against Jim Crow segregation and for Black civil rights.

That mass proletarian movement swept not only the U.S. South but the United States as a whole for well more than a decade. It had deep roots in the battles that forged the industrial unions in the 1930s and in struggles by sharecroppers and tenant farmers during those same years. Many of its most self-sacrificing cadres gained initial experience in the mobilizations by Black workers, rural toilers, and youth during World War II against the color bar in wartime industries and lynch-mob terror and cop violence—as well as statutory segregation of units inside the U.S. armed forces itself, segregation that included the assignment of the all-Black units both to the filthiest and to the most dangerous tasks.

Struggles against colonialism

The struggle paused for a number of years following the war. But the embers were fanned by victorious struggles for colonial independence and national liberation across much of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. By 1954 that shifting postwar balance of international class forces brought about the conditions in which the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of *Brown v. the Board of Education*, decided there was little choice but to declare school segregation to be contrary to the U.S. Constitution.

Over the following decade, a veritable social war was fought across the U.S. South. Segregationist forces used both official police power and stepped-up lynch mob terror in an effort to deny voting rights to Blacks and bar them from equal access to schools, transportation, restaurants, hotels, and public facilities of all varieties. (It was during this period that the Confederate battle



Soldiers at University of Mississippi, 1962. Under pressure of mass movement, federal government sent 23,000 troops to guarantee safety of Black student, James Meredith, seen here on his first day of classes.

flag was once again raised as a banner of racism, reaction, and secession over state capitols in South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and elsewhere.) Blacks combated the racist violence, including by organized armed self-defense in many cases, and reached out to supporters of all skin colors across the United States to mobilize for freedom rides, sit-ins, marches, and mass demonstrations and rallies.

Federal troops, armed self-defense

White-supremacist governors such as Orval Faubus of Arkansas, Ross Barnett of Mississippi, George Wallace of Alabama, and others initially called out the National Guard in those states to block the desegregation of elementary schools, high schools, and universities by Black students, and to maintain institutionalized inequality in all aspects of life and work. In response, working people and youth who were Black, not only in the South but across the United States, began to demand that Washington enforce the equal rights it now claimed before world opinion to guarantee—including, if necessary, by federalizing the National Guard or sending in the U.S. armed forces.

The communist movement in the United States began raising this demand as early as 1955. "How many more lynchings, beatings, floggings, and kidnappings must we have before the federal government acts to protect the Negro people of Mississippi?" opened a *Militant* editorial in October of that year. Just a few days earlier, the lynchers of a young Black man named Emmett Till had been acquitted in a Mississippi Delta town through the connivance of the all-white judge, jury, and prosecution.

During a Socialist Workers Party leadership discussion the following year, national secretary Farrell Dobbs reported that during a recent trip to Chicago he had found "a big response to the demand for federal troops" among Black workers he had met there in the packing and farm equipment industries. Dobbs added that "this is a big demand which must be fought for through mass action. To demonstrate their seriousness, the Negro leaders should organize a March on Washington. This course...would



help give weight to the whole struggle of the Negro people."

Dobbs also pointed "to the accumulated evidence that the Negro people themselves have been showing initiative in moving toward self-defense," and that defense against reactionary forces is "a problem which confronts unionists, Negro and white alike, as well as the Negroes as a people.

"I think the troop slogan," Dobbs said, "will help to push the defense guard slogan as a propaganda point. Failure of the government to protect the Negro people against terror leads to the conclusion that they must find a way to defend themselves as best they can, in other words, defense guards organized in association with their white allies."

Desegregating 'Ole Miss'

Over this period, both the Republican administration of Dwight Eisenhower and the Democratic administrations of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson resisted at every step along the way dispatching federal troops to enforce Black rights. But the growing mass movement demanding that Washington take action against the weakening but still violent segregationist bunker in the South forced the White House to send in federal marshals and military units at several turning points.

As schools opened in the fall of 1962, for example, Mississippi governor Barnett deployed state troopers and local sheriffs to rebuff three straight efforts to enforce a federal order to admit a young Black man named James Meredith to the University of Mississippi ("Ole Miss") in the town of Oxford. Finally, on October 2, the Kennedy administration agreed to dispatch the forces necessary to ensure Meredith was registered and allowed onto campus. Accompanied by federal marshals, the Black student was met by a racist mob, some shouting "Go to Cuba, nigger lovers, go to Cuba!" and lobbing stones. By the end of that day, the segregationist thugs had injured 160 federal marshals—28 of them with bullet wounds—and killed a local worker and British reporter. Over the weeks to come, some 23,000 U.S. Army, Marine, and Air Force troops were stationed on the campus.

A year and a half later, in March 1965, when mass civil rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, were putting a spotlight on the refusal of state authorities to guarantee voting rights to Blacks, the *Militant* called on the federal government to send troops to Alabama to arrest Wallace "and all other state and local officials guilty of denying Negroes their rights. Moreover, the federal government should arm and deputize Alabama Negroes so that they can protect their own communities from racist violence."

When several thousand civil rights fighters refused to be turned back by a bloody assault by state troopers on their first attempt to march from Selma to Montgomery, the Johnson administration was forced two weeks later not only to call Alabama National Guardsmen into federal service to ensure the safety of the marchers, but to introduce legislation that became the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Gains in democratic and social rights

By the latter half of the 1960s, the mass civil rights movement had sounded the death knell for the system of state-sanctioned segregation and discrimination across the U.S. South known as Jim Crow.

Not only was equality codified in federal civil rights legislation, but a major extension of Social Security protection for all working people had been won as well—Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and cost-of-living protections. These were the first significant new conquests in working people's social wage since the massive labor battles of the 1930s.

These victories provided a vital impulse to struggles against national oppression by Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other oppressed layers of the population; set a powerful example for the movement for women's rights that exploded at the end of the 1960s; and gave momentum to the emerging movement to stop U.S. imperialism's war against the people of Vietnam.

The working class and labor unions in the United States had been immeasurably strengthened.

The use of federal troops to enforce Black rights, moreover, had not helped the capitalist rulers morally justify or politically reinforce their various apparatuses of repression against working people, as the Clinton administration is seeking to use this week's lightning pre-dawn INS assault in Miami.

To the contrary, as the Black rights movement gained power, expanding from the South throughout all parts of the country, among the consequences was a parallel expansion of political rights and constitutional protections for all working people. Fourth Amendment rights against "unreasonable search and seizure" were strengthened by the Supreme Court in 1961, including the exclusion of evidence illegally obtained by the cops. Sixth Amendment rights of all to an attorney were extended in 1964. Fifth Amendment protections against self-incrimination and forced confessions were codified in 1966, the so-called "Miranda" ruling. And the death penalty—a barbaric class weapon of the bosses—was struck down in 1972.

As U.S. and world capitalism entered a long-term crisis by the mid-1970s, each of these conquests has come under increasing pressure, as the courts and politicians in both capitalist parties have sought to chip away at or reverse them. The biggest attacks on these gains have been pushed through by the Clinton administration, with bipartisan backing in Congress.

So, it's true that "the use of troops to enforce desegregation in the South in the 1950s and 1960s [is] something that socialists strongly supported." Contrary to the assertion of Joe Callahan, however, this bloody and proud chapter in the struggle of U.S. working people provides convincing evidence of why labor and the oppressed must intransigently condemn the anti-working-class and unconstitutional commando operation by the executive branch of the federal government in Miami. That Easter weekend raid is part of the frontal assault on the constitutional rights conquered by a mass working-class vanguard in these battles of the 1950s and 1960s.

Every class-conscious worker should not only "get caught up" in this debate but help lead it—and act on its conclusions.

Readers interested in learning more about the politics and history discussed here are encouraged to pick up the Education for Socialists bulletin entitled, *From Mississippi to Boston: The Demand for Troops to Enforce Civil Rights*, available from Pathfinder Press.

Further reading from Pathfinder

From Mississippi to Boston

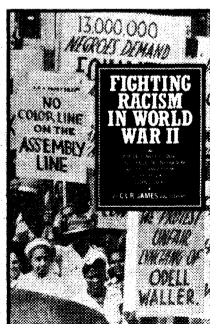
The Demand for Troops to Enforce Civil Rights

How does the demand that the federal government provide troops to protect civil rights fit into a strategy of mobilizing working people and others to defend and advance these rights? Articles on the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, and the school desegregation fight of the 1970s taken from the *Militant*. \$6.00

Fighting Racism in World War II

C.L.R. James, George Breitman, Edgar Keemer, and others

A week-by-week account of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination in the United States from 1939 to 1945, taken from the pages of the socialist newsweekly, the *Militant*. \$20.95



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12

In defense of the Cuban Revolution, in defense of the working class!

Continued from front page people at home and abroad.

The April 22 Miami commando-style operation carried out in the wee hours of the morning by heavily-armed special forces of the Immigration and Naturalization Service provides striking new confirmation of the *Militant's* assessment. That raid dealt a stunning blow to the right of every U.S. resident to be "secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures," as provided by the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, part of the Bill of Rights codifying space wrested by the toilers over more than two centuries of struggle. Every class-conscious worker is obligated to take a clear and unambiguous stand against that police action, which, in addition to all else, was accompa-

EDITORIAL

nied by chauvinism and anti-immigrant prejudice against the population labeled "Miami Cubans."

That's why the *Militant*, whose masthead proudly declares it is "published in the interests of working people," is campaigning with the headline this week: "INS assault in Miami strikes blow to the working class." Condemnation of the raid is all the more incumbent on those who for more than 40 years have been the most consistent and intransigent defenders of the Cuban revolution.

Following months of unprecedented publicity, the police action in Miami removed a Cuban child from the home of relatives who, with no legal custody rights, were parading him before the world as a trophy of the counter-revolution. For that reason, the operation is being hailed by a layer of activists in the Cuba solidarity movement as a "victory," for which U.S. top cop Attorney General Janet Reno and U.S. president William Clinton should be sent bouquets of flowers and letters of commendation.

Nothing could be more dangerously false. What's at stake is a working-class line of march in defense of democratic rights and political space won by working people in the United States through two revolutions and numberless bloody battles in the streets. It is along that road that the Cuban Revolution, the first dictatorship of the proletariat in our hemisphere, will be effectively defended as well.

Never was there greater need for clarity that the government of the most dangerous and brutal imperialist power in the world does not act for "us." "We" and "they" are two irreconcilable classes.

Clinton strengthens police powers

Since taking office more than seven years ago, the Clinton administration, with bipartisan backing in Congress, has been steadily pursuing a course to strengthen police powers while restricting political space for the exercise of democratic rights. This is the rulers' considered need, an anticipation in face of slowly growing political polarization and intensified resistance by broadening layers of workers and farmers to the conditions of their exploitation and oppression. The following are just a few of the measures taken by the White House, Congress, and the courts:

- Under the banner of "the fight against drugs," Clinton's 1994 Crime Bill assaulted Fourth Amendment protections against illegal search and seizure in private homes, and the courts have virtually eliminated such rights in automobiles.

- Following adoption of the White House-initiated Illegal Immigration Reform Act in 1996, deportations hit a record high over the next two years. *La migra's* hated pow-

ers to seize and deport suspected "illegal aliens" without right to judicial review or appeal have been expanded.

- The Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act signed into law by Clinton in 1996 permits the INS to jail immigrants using what it calls "secret evidence." It also broadens government powers to use wiretaps and hold individuals without bail in "preventive detention."

- The U.S. prison population today is some eight times what it was in 1971, and nearly twice its level when the Great Jailer took up residence in the White House in 1992.

- Appeal and parole rights have been further restricted, while mandatory minimum sentences, longer terms, and even prison labor for the "free market" have all become more common.

- During the seven-year administration of the Great Executioner, the annual number of state-sponsored electrocutions, hangings, and deaths by lethal injection have tripled, while the number of defendants charged with federal capital offenses has tripled since adoption of the Clinton-initiated Federal Death Penalty Act of 1994.

- The White House has stepped up heavier and more deadly arming and equipping of police forces. Between 1995 and 1997 alone, the Clinton administration gave police departments 1.2 million pieces of military hardware, including 73 grenade launchers and 112 armored personnel carriers. Use of self-repeating handguns with large clips has been encouraged and expanded.

- In the name of preempting "terrorist" attacks, the Clinton Pentagon has established, for the first time in U.S. history, a de facto "homeland defense command," preparing the way for the U.S. armed forces to openly conduct police operations—now prohibited by law—against residents of the United States.

Mailed fist and imperial arrogance

Official sanction by the Clinton administration for escalated police violence has led with increasing frequency, from one end of the country to the other, to cold-blooded murders by cops. The roster of names that have prompted outpourings of anger and demands for justice in recent months alone is long and well-known—Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond in New York City; Willie James Williams in Valdosta, Georgia; Tyisha Miller in Riverside, California; and many others. But we should remind ourselves that the pattern of domestic police violence does not stand in isolation. It goes hand-in-hand with the sharpening inter-imperialist conflict and U.S. military aggression throughout the world, from Iraq, to Yugoslavia, to the Sudan, to Korea.

They do at home what they do abroad. Foreign policy is always ultimately an expression of the real trajectory of domestic policy. Their course and objectives have nothing to do with the "rule of law." They have everything to do with the mailed fist and imperial arrogance of the world's one "indispensable nation," as William Clinton likes to call the United States.

The INS raid in Miami, as Harvard constitutional law professor and liberal Establishment attorney Laurence Tribe has pointed out, was carried out in violation of the fact that under the U.S. Constitution "it is axiomatic that the executive branch has no unilateral authority to enter people's homes forcibly to remove innocent individuals without taking the time to seek a warrant or other order from a judge or magistrate." No judge or magistrate "had issued the type of warrant or other authority needed for the executive branch to break into the home to seize the child."

The INS, with its enhanced powers under the 1996 Immigration Act, can secure



The Militant/Harry Ring

High school students in Los Angeles protest Proposition 18. Passed in a 1994 referendum in California, the measure denies public education, health, and other social services to so-called illegal immigrants. Court rulings limited its impact, but 1996 federal immigration and welfare acts enforced similar cuts and increased INS powers.

warrants to search workplaces for illegal aliens and "to search, interrogate and arrest people without warrants in order to prevent unlawful entry into the country," Tribe added. "But no one suspects that Elián is here illegally." (To the contrary, we would add: the U.S. rulers' Cuban Adjustment Act is designed to entice the maximum number of "Eliáns," all of them "legal.")

La migra's justification for the firepower deployed in Miami was the all-too-well-known claim of "intelligence" reports of weapons in the house or crowd. (How often have workers in the United States been victims of "secret intelligence," offered by the FBI and other police agencies, informers, and provocateurs to justify murderous acts?)

The timing of the predawn raid, prohibited by the terms of most search warrants; the battering down of the front and back door; the refusal to seek or obtain a court order obliging the family to turn over the child (the INS architects of the "dilemma" claim their powers are not subject to judicial review); the wanton "collateral damage" inflicted on the home of the child's relatives, to whom the administration had originally "granted" custody; the pepper gas sprayed on the crowd outside the home; the assault on the NBC camera crew—all are elements of the violation of the constitutional right to safety and security in our own homes that U.S. residents consider among our most precious guarantees under the Bill of Rights. All were intended to teach a class lesson about what "the rule of law" really means to those who would resist the advance of the imperial power that William Clinton and Janet Reno serve.

As if the point needed to be reinforced, two days after the INS raid in Miami, the New York press reported that cops "in battle gear—backed up by search dogs, helicopters and rooftop sharpshooters—blocked off streets" for hours in the Edgemere section of Queens. They were "acting on a tip" that a man wanted in connection with a series of shootings was in an apartment in the area. He was never found, but others in the neighborhood were detained, manhandled, and grilled. Get the message?

Next target: Puerto Rico

Immediately following the Miami raid, the U.S. government announced it would soon begin operations with U.S. marshals and other federal police agencies to clear the Puerto Rican island of Vieques of the protesters permanently camped there to prevent the Pentagon from resuming use of the island as a weapons-testing site.

The chauvinist, anti-Cuban, anti-immigrant and anti-working-class prejudice that has been used to bolster support for the police commando operation in Miami is one of its most pernicious aspects. High levels of support for the INS raid among African-Americans polled in South Florida is one register of the successful attempt to bolster decades of resentment against many in the Cuban community for reactionary ends.

The pen of leading *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman drips with venom

as he repeatedly refers to the perfidious role of "the Miami Cubans," as a bloc, undifferentiated by class or other distinction, except to identify some among them as "extremists." As a people they bear a collective guilt. Whether as residents or citizens, they have fewer or lesser rights than "Americans."

In the aftermath of the INS raid he enthusiastically supported, Friedman gloats that one can only hope "the Miami Cubans" have been reminded "that they are not living in their own private country, they cannot do whatever they please and that they may hate Fidel Castro more than they love the U.S. Constitution—but that doesn't apply to the rest of us." This from a near-hysterical advocate of tearing up the Bill of Rights for all of us, so "the Miami Cubans" can be taught a lesson.

Blanket references to Cuban-Americans living in Miami as gusanos, or as the "Miami Mafia" (almost more powerful than the imperialist state)—references that often crop up among supporters of the revolution in the United States (see letters page)—are of a similarly reactionary and petty bourgeois character. Events surrounding the Elián González affair confirm what the *Militant* has long argued: with every passing year Cubans and Cuban-Americans living in the United States are more and more marked by the same class divisions and political polarization as other residents. The Cuban bourgeois layers who dominate the Dade County political machine are more integrated today, not less, with their class brothers and sisters nationally. The role various of them played in "negotiations" throughout the Elián case bears testimony to this.

Cuban workers in the United States are likewise more homogeneous with their class.

End of an era

Even the relatively small size and elevated average age of the crowds that held vigil in the streets around the González home in Little Havana should be noted. The virtual absence of the armed counter-revolutionary organizations that in earlier years would have furnished a cadre and played a weighty role in events such as those of the last five months is further confirmation that the Elián González case will be recognized as the end of an era of reactionary hopes to influence U.S. politics.

Imperialist publicists like Thomas Friedman notwithstanding, it is not "hard-line" Cubans who have "kidnapped U.S. policy on Cuba for all these years," and now must be taught a lesson by the real Americans for whom he speaks. The space enjoyed for many years by forces such as the Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF) derived from the fact that they served the interests and policies defended by Washington. Even the typically chauvinist image of Cubans as uncontrollable extremists has been useful to the U.S. rulers and continues to play into their hands. As the political advantage of keeping Elián González in the United States diminished in Washington's eyes, however, the reality

Continued on page 14

INS agents wage massive assault on home

Continued from front page

Outside, the cops ordered bystanders to the ground, told reporters to stay where they were, and doused protesters with pepper spray, both as they launched the raid and before they sped off in their vans.

NBC has filed a complaint with INS commissioner Doris Meissner for federal agents roughing up a cameraman and sound man to prevent them from shooting footage of the assault.

Earlier in the day, Miami police and federal agents arrested two men who lived in a house behind the home of Lázaro González, claiming there had been reports of weapons being stockpiled. Lacking evidence, they arrested both men on immigration charges.

The raid was organized by Attorney General Janet Reno, who briefed President William Clinton in advance of the assault. In the days since, they have won substantial backing within U.S. ruling circles for the attack.

González is a Cuban-American worker. He was given custody of the boy by the INS last November after the six-year-old was found at sea, one of the few survivors of the collapse of a flimsy boat carrying him, his mother, and 12 others who had left Cuba. The INS revoked González's custody rights April 13, and had been involved in negotiations about turning over the boy to his father up until the moment the raid began.

Lázaro González is an opponent of the Cuban revolution and became a temporary front man for the U.S. government as he used his possession of the boy to provide a platform from which to denounce Cuban president Fidel Castro, smear the Cuban revolution, and attempt to gain custody of the child.

Reno ordered the invasion of González's home three days after the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals dealt a blow to the Justice Department when it barred anyone from taking the boy from the United States until a court hearing on what is purported to be a request for asylum by the six-year-old. The document was filed by the distant relatives. After the raid, a judge on the Appeals Court added further conditions to his stay, and indicated he may seek to secure "a special guardian" to "report to the Court directly on the Plaintiff's [Elián González's] condition and care as well as the circumstances of his present custody."

'A textbook police operation'

"A textbook police tactical operation," boasted Janet Reno. Her words were echoed by other U.S. officials and pro-police "experts." Clinton praised Reno, stating: "When all efforts failed, there was no alternative but to enforce the decision of the INS.... The law has been upheld, and that was the right thing to do."

Presidential candidates George W. Bush and Albert Gore blamed the Cuban government for the conflict, opposing administration statements that Elián and his father should be reunited. Bush denounced the raid, claiming, "The chilling picture of a little boy being removed from his home at gunpoint defies the values of America."

New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani took the opportunity to accuse the Clinton

administration of police brutality, comparing the federal agents in the raid to "storm troopers." On April 24, Giuliani held a news conference denouncing "Fidel Castro, Bill Clinton, and Janet Reno"—repeating the three names three times—and the INS agents' use of force. "The action was unprecedented and unconscionable," he said.

Hillary Clinton, the main Democratic contender for U.S. Senate in New York state, who is running against Giuliani, condemned her opponent and praised Reno. She argued

Navy and Marine Corps."

The recent column, titled, "Reno for President," ran April 25 after two *Times* editorials opposed the raid. "The Justice Department acted rashly and unwisely in ordering the raid, and its decisions now require the most careful evaluation by Congress and the American people," an April 24 *Times* editorial said. The government "must exhaust other remedies first and insure that it obtains the unambiguous authorization of a court to take action." Noting



Above, cops in riot gear and armored tank, evict squatters in New York in 1996.

that the INS action "was accomplished rapidly and without injury." In a campaign appearance, she urged Juan Miguel González to defect with Elián and the rest of his family, declaring, "I don't have any liking for Fidel Castro and the Cuban government."

'What happens if you defy the law'

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman wrote that it "warmed his heart" to see "a U.S. marshal in Miami pointing an automatic weapon toward Donato Dalrymple and ordering him in the name of the U.S. government to turn over Elián González." Friedman said the picture should be put "in every visa line in every U.S. consulate around the world, with a caption that reads: 'America is a country where the rule of law rules. This picture illustrates what happens to those who defy the rule of law and how far our government and people will go to preserve it. Come all ye who understand that.'"

Friedman, in a front-cover feature in the March 28, 1999, *New York Times* magazine, advocated a similar course in U.S. foreign policy. "The hidden hand of the market will never work," he stated, "without a hidden fist—McDonalds cannot flourish with McDonnell Douglas, the designer of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies is called the United States Army, Air Force,

that "these steps may not be required by law in an immigration case," the paper cautioned that "they are necessary to reassure the public that the government is not acting arbitrarily or using excessive force—even if it has a search warrant—when it invades someone's home in the middle of the night."

Harvard constitutional law professor and Democratic Party stalwart Laurence Tribe asked in a guest column in the *New York Times*, "Where did the attorney general derive the legal authority to invade that Miami home in order to seize the child?" The "government's actions," he wrote, "appear to have violated a basic principle of our society, a principle whose preservation lies at the core of ordered liberty under the rule of law."

Tribe pointed out that the U.S. Constitution prohibits the executive branch from entering "people's homes forcibly to remove innocent individuals without taking the time to seek a warrant or other order from a judge or magistrate."

Reno's decision, he says, "to take the law as well as the child into her own hands seems worse than a political blunder. Even if well intended, her decision strikes at the heart of constitutional government and shakes the safeguards of liberty."

Record of Clinton administration

Under the guise of fighting terrorism, drugs, and crime, the Clinton administration has overseen sweeping attacks on democratic rights and the beefing up of police forces across the country. These measures include:

- The 1994 crime bill that expanded the death penalty to about 60 federal offenses and restricted the amount of time death row inmates have to file habeas corpus appeals. The bill also assaulted Fourth Amendment rights by allowing prosecutors to use illegally obtained evidence in court and allocated funds to put 100,000 more cops on the street.

- The next year, in wake of the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City, the government expanded its powers to use wiretaps, hold an accused person without bail in preventive detention, and to give the president the power to declare a person or organization "terrorist," and allow the government to deport those accused of terrorism without presenting a judge with evidence used against them.

- The bill also required immigrants arriving without documents to have their asylum claims heard by a single INS officer, instead of an immigration judge as was the case previously.

- The number of cities of more than 50,000 people with police SWAT teams or

paramilitary units reached nearly 90 percent. Some 75 percent of cities smaller than 50,000 now have SWAT teams.

- The Department of Defense has armed these units by giving them 1.2 million pieces of equipment between 1995 and 1997 alone. This includes 73 grenade launchers and 112 armored personnel carriers. A 55,000 pound armored personnel carrier, named "Any Time Baby" by the New York Police Department, was used to evict people in Manhattan in 1995.

- The INS now can detain and jail a person on the basis of secret evidence. Last year some two dozen people, all Arab, were being held in jail, some for up to three years.

- Deportations hit a record high of 300,000 over the two years following the adoption of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. The bill mandated the Border Patrol to bolster its forces by more than 1,000 a year. It more than doubled in size from 1993 to 1998 to nearly 8,000 cops. The INS has \$1 billion a year at its disposal and boasts the largest federal police force with 15,000 officers carrying weapons and authorized to make arrests.

- The Clinton administration has set up a military command, giving the U.S. military policing powers and structure inside the United States. Organized under the Joint Forces Command, training exercises have been carried out in a number of cities across the country. In Chester, Pennsylvania, soldiers stormed vacant public housing project dwellings, detonating bombs, and sprayed live gunfire while helicopters buzzed overhead. Elite units of the National Guard have now been trained in addition to regular U.S. forces.

- Claiming to be seeking drug dealers, New York City cops burst into a Bronx apartment with a battering ram March 18, 1998. They acknowledged two days later they had smashed up the "wrong" apartment, one of 11 such "mistakes" admitted to that year.

- Declaring that "Effective law enforcement would be appreciably impaired without the ability to search a passenger's personal belongings," the Supreme Court ruled that cops may not only search the belongings of the driver of a car but the passengers as well.

- The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the police have a right to forcibly enter any place for which they have a drug-related search warrant, a decision later overturned by the Supreme Court.

- Clinton has allowed states to free themselves from federal laws aimed at maintaining humane conditions in prisons; allowed police to join parole officers in surprise raids on the homes and living accommodations of parolees; and has overseen the rise of the U.S. prison population to 2 million in February, double what it was in 1990, and the execution of 98 people in 1999.

- The routine brutality of the police has been met with rising protests. Los Angeles has been swept by a wave of "revelations" in which police, in the words of a *New York Times* editorial, "routinely framed innocent gang members, lied in court, and occasionally shot and planted weapons on unarmed people." The fact that working people don't get a fair trial was recently acknowledged by the governor of Illinois when he suspended the death penalty for that reason.

- The very way police are trained reinforces this tendency. In the trial of the cops who killed Amadou Diallo in New York, two recalled, as reported in the *Times*, "training at the 'funhouse,' an apartment building rife with gunmen and other faux dangers. When a prosecutor asked whether the training included learning to distinguish between guns and innocuous objects, Officer Carroll said, 'The only objects they ever pulled on us were firearms. In every incident we were killed.'"

The actions of the Clinton administration since November when Elián González was rescued at sea through the brutal and unconstitutional April 22 raid, were all aimed at reinforcing and advancing this course upon which the capitalist rulers have been propelled for several decades. The forced entry into the home of a U.S. citizen, without an adequate warrant, in the dark, with a massive police mobilization is another watermark in this drive.

Small turnout at protests

After failing to stop the seizure of the boy, or to mount any effective resistance to the

Continued on Page 14

In *New International* no. 6
Washington's 50-Year Domestic Contra Operation

LARRY SEIGLE

As the U.S. rulers prepared to smash working-class resistance and join the interimperialist slaughter of World War II, the national political police apparatus as it exists today was born. Documents the consequences for the labor, Black, antiwar, and other social movements and how the working-class vanguard has fought over the past fifty years to defend democratic rights against government and employer attacks. In *New International*. \$15.00

FBI on Trial

The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying

EDITED BY MARGARET JAYKO

The victory in the case fought from 1973 to 1987 "increases the space for politics, expands the de facto use of the Bill of Rights, increases the confidence of working people that you can be political and hold the deepest convictions against the government and it's your right to do so and act upon them" — from the introduction. \$17.95

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Economic and land crises in Zimbabwe

Continued from front page

foreign currency reserves have plunged.

Mugabe came to power as a prominent leader of a national independence struggle that lasted more than a decade. The struggle against the racist white-minority regime led by Ian Smith, which remained a colonial outpost of Britain despite a declaration of "independence" in 1965, won wide support among African working people.

When the two main liberation organizations were legalized, hundreds of thousands celebrated in the streets of many cities and towns. A crowd of 200,000 greeted Mugabe on his return to Zimbabwe in January 1980, after several years of exile.

The settler government of Rhodesia—named after the leader of armed settlers who had invaded the territory in 1890—depended heavily on investment from apartheid South Africa. Funds from Rhodesia's southern neighbor continued to flow to the government during negotiations hosted by London in late 1979, while the Rhodesian air force bombed Zimbabwean camps in neighboring countries.

Under these pressures, the national independence forces finally agreed to Britain's demands that white farms not be confiscated without compensation, but with promises from Britain to help pay for farms needed for land reform. London has used the promised payments as a pressure point, and stopped them altogether in 1992. Other imperialist powers that contributed some funds, including Washington, suspended payments with the onset of the current crisis.

The spokespeople of British imperialism express the same arrogance today that they

showed 20 years ago in their dealings with the movement that created Zimbabwe from white-ruled Rhodesia. On April 21 the British foreign secretary Robin Cooks warned Mugabe to halt the occupations. "It's time we got back to the rule of law and back to building the economy," he said.

Cook was responding to a declaration by several presidents of southern African countries who met with Mugabe on the same day. Afterwards, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, and Sam Nujoma of Namibia called on the British government to carry out its pledges to support land reform.

Land reform is a pressing need

The events of the past several months have thrown a spotlight on the landlessness of the Black majority in the country and the pressing need for a thoroughgoing land reform. According to a 1998 United Nations report, inequitable land distribution "constrains the human development of at least 60 percent of the population."

Some 4,000 white farmers in a country of more than 12 million people own one-third of the productive land. They devote their time to commercial agriculture, selling 60 percent of the maize grown on their land, and "retaining grain mainly to supply their workforce and for cattle feed," in the words of the *Financial Times*. In contrast, smaller-scale African farmers, who lack investment funds, a reliable supply of water, and marketing facilities, achieve one-fifth the yields per acre, and hold on to most of their crops for their own needs.

One study in 1998 reported, "A million black families are still settled on barren land after being forced to vacate their original fertile areas by the colonial rulers." After evicting Africans from their land the settler capitalists hired them to work as wage laborers at a pittance.

The government has taken only partial steps towards land reform, and the results have often benefited its supporters. According to the *Financial Times*, "In its 20 years



Supporters of Zimbabwe government protesting on farm in the city of Karoi. Land occupations are used by ruling party against political opposition.

in office the Mugabe government has resettled some 91,000 families—not much more than half the 162,500 households due to have been relocated in the first five years of independence."

The government and a state-owned agency together own some 750,000 hectares of former commercial land, which has still not been settled. But land acreage is only one ingredient needed to begin the necessary land reform. Explaining the need for funds for a "rural development programme," the *Financial Times* quoted "experts [who] put the cost of acquiring the land at less than a quarter of the total outlay for a resettlement scheme."

Opposition party gains strength

Mugabe is faced with an opposition party that is growing in support. The MDC has emerged as a serious contender for power since it was founded six months ago. The new party campaigned for a "no" vote in the February referendum, helping deal Mugabe a significant defeat. Morgan Tsvangirai, the new party's leader, worked in the nickel mines and rose to become the secretary general of the country's largest union coalition. He has built a following with promises to improve wages and end

governmental corruption. Tsvangirai has met with top officials of the U.S. government in Washington. He and offers his party as a stable alternative to the Mugabe regime.

The farm occupations began after Mugabe gave the nod to his supporters when the constitutional reforms were defeated. They have involved peasants, villagers, and government supporters, who have been taken on buses from the capital. Often farm workers have been assaulted along with white farmers. This thuggery has also been used against supporters of the MDC.

Some 1,000 farms have been occupied, reportedly often targeting farmers who support the MDC. Two white farmers were killed in the second week of April, and beatings have also been reported. A MDC official and several other supporters of the opposition have also been killed.

Tsvangirai is raising funds among the white farmers, and has gained a following among the Blacks who labor on their farms. A *New York Times* correspondent described one rally in Bindura in an April 3 article. Tsvangirai "promised to improve wages and end corruption and farm invasions, then led the cheering throngs of farm workers in a rousing cry of "Change! Change! Change!" reported Rachel Swarns.

Iowa workers rally for Teamster strike

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa—Some 175 Teamsters, Steelworkers, and other unionists and supporters turned out April 22 for a spirited rally in support of workers on strike at Smurfit-Stone Container here.

The strike by members of Teamsters Local 147 began December 30. Workers are demanding increased wages and health care benefits, and contractual limits on mandatory overtime.

The rally helped link up the Teamsters fight with the hard-fought strike by United Steelworkers of America Local 164 at Titan Tire, just across town. A leader of that struggle spoke to the crowd, urging everyone to attend the steelworkers' April 29 rally to mark the two-year anniversary of the Titan fight.

Strike leader Gary Anderson thanked steelworkers for their help over the course of the four-month fight. "It's good to see all the kids here today—they are why we're on strike," he said. "We're not here just to make money for the stockholders. It's time we get a piece of the pie."

Teamsters officials said the fight against Smurfit-Stone is being taken to its plants and customers around the country. A May 18 action at the company's board of directors meeting in Chicago was announced.

Members of USWA Local 310 at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines were at the Teamsters rally. The contract there, part of a nationwide agreement affecting thousands of rubber workers, expired later that day at midnight.

Ray Parsons is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 310 at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines.

Unionists in Australia picket machinery plant

BY LINDA HARRIS AND RON POULSEN

MOSS VALE, Australia—Workers set up picket lines at Joy Mining Machinery here March 31. Moss Vale is a small town in the midst of the coalfields south of Sydney.

The 70 workers at Joy make heavy mining equipment. They belong to three unions. Most are members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU). There are also members of the Australian Workers' Union and the Electrical Trades Union of Australia.

Workers at Joy have been trying to negotiate an agreement for the past five months, carrying out rolling stoppages to support their claims. Joy demanded separate agreements and separate bargaining periods for each department. The company tried to force a lock out, hired security guards, and started to take out mining equipment parts. Workers responded by calling a meeting and deciding to set up picket lines to prevent the removal of machinery.

On the picket line, Joy shop steward and AMWU member David Turner said that the company's demand for four different agreements with four different expiration dates would weaken unity at the plant as well as workers' ability to take action together. The company "dangled a carrot to the guys in hydraulics, offered them a wage increase, and then went after their conditions," he said.

Workers voted to fight for one agreement to cover everyone in the four different departments with the same conditions across the site. The main work area is the fabrication shop. The warehouse, hydraulics, and gearbox shops are smaller departments.

When the mining machinery plant was built it was centered in the thriving South Coast mining belt. But now many coal mines in the area are closing. A recent government report predicted that up to 40 percent of miners would lose their jobs in the southern coalfields area over the next three years.

Joy is full of rumors about moving its operations to Newcastle to be near the Hunter Valley mining region north of

Sydney. Forty-one workers were retrenched [laid off] from the plant last October.

Turner stated that the company was using blackmail tactics, telling workers at a company meeting, "You've got your future in your hands," implying that industrial action might force the plant's closure.

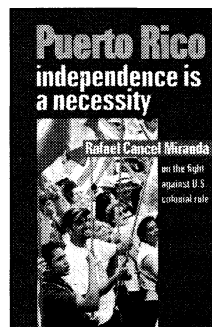
While the company claims that the dispute is over a wage raise, workers on the picket line explain that it's really over conditions and defending the union. "The company wants to take back half of our RDOs [rostered days off] and cut back on the overtime; they're also trying to close the canteen," said Turner. "What they really want is the ability to change the agreement when business demands it."

Joy recently took over Cram, a nonunion hydraulics shop in Wollongong. Now the

bosses from Cram are running the Joy plant. "The bottom line is that the company wants an agreement without the union," Turner said.

There has been a lot of support from the local community for the union fight. Collections have been taken at local factories. Two delegates from Joy are heading up to Sydney to pass the hat around. A barbecue on the picket line for families and friends was planned for April 14. The Joy workers are prepared for a long battle and are determined to stay on the picket lines for as long as it takes.

Linda Harris is a member of the Textile, Footwear and Clothing Union of Australia. Ron Poulsen is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.



Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity

Rafael Cancel Miranda

In two interviews, Cancel Miranda — one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979 — speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the campaign needed to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners, the example of Cuba's socialist revolution, and the resurgence of the independence movement today. In English and Spanish. Booklet \$3

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Janitors win victory in contract fight

Continued from front page of a bigger movement."

While short of the \$1 an hour per year wage hike they were demanding, the final pact included a 22 to 26 percent wage hike over three years, the largest contractual raise in two decades. Workers in Downtown and Century City will get a raise of 70 cents the first year, followed by two 60 cent increases the second and third years of the agreement.

In outlying areas janitors will receive a 30 cent increase next October, then the two 60 cent hikes. Los Angeles County workers who are employed outside the main organized buildings did not fare as well, receiving only a 20 cent per hour increase for each year of the three-year contract.

The employers agreed to pay at least 30 cents above minimum wage to all workers. Starting salaries for new hires remain at the precontract levels for a year, which is \$6.80 to \$7.90 an hour, then rise to the new contract pay. All workers will receive a signing bonus of \$500.

The union also won, for the first time, five paid sick days over the three-year contract. They likewise defeated the contractors' demand that workers make co-payments to-

wards medical insurance and agree to the subcontracting of union jobs to nonunion cleaning companies.

Language in the new contract states that management must immediately inform the union if there is to be an investigation into the immigration status of any member, and members are granted 30 days to correct any immigration problems. The contract ends April 30, 2003, which coincides with the expiration of the northern California SEIU janitors contract.

Many union members see the strike as a victory. Their militancy and frequent rallies of up to several thousand won the support and respect of the majority of working people.

This battle highlighted the impact of immigrant and women workers in the union, and the growing strength of the union resulting from it. Members became more confident during the strike, on the picket lines, and in rejecting contract concessions. The employers, too, have taken note of these gains.

The *Los Angeles Times*, for example, commented that the strike is "likely to be remembered as a watershed moment for Los Angeles labor."

It is a change that has been long in coming. In the mid-1980s the city's building maintenance industry fired almost all of the unionized workforce—mainly Black workers who earned \$7.32 an hour—and hired immigrants, many undocumented, at \$3.35 an hour.

Through successful battles and organizing drives in the 1990s the union grew to 8,500, some 98 percent of whom are immigrants and 55 percent are women. They have fought harassment by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, threats of deportation, and a cop riot against a peaceful march in 1990 in Century City.

At a union rally April 23, one of the strikers, who asked not to be identified, said in an interview that he was "not happy with the contract negotiations. The wage increase should be at least \$1 an hour. But if we vote to go back to work tomorrow, we go back stronger."

After a discussion at the local union meeting, International Association of Machinists Local 2785 at the Los Angeles Airport voted to send a financial contribution, to initiate a food drive, and to distribute SEIU strike ma-

Chicago suburban janitors strike



Militant/Betsy Stone

Several thousand striking members of Service Employees International Union Local 1 rallied in Chicago on April 17. Their strike lasted for five hours before employers agreed to a new contract for workers, who clean downtown commercial buildings. The next day janitors who work in the suburbs began a rolling strike. One week later the action involved 4,500 workers. The strikers, who make \$6.65 an hour, are demanding a pay raise and medical benefits.

The downtown janitors have pledged their support. Five of the seven contractors negotiating with the suburban janitors also clean 90 percent of the downtown commercial buildings.

DEFEND Immigrant Rights!

AFL-CIO meetings

In Atlanta Sat., April 29, Chicago Sat., May 6, and Los Angeles Sat., June 10.

New York

Rally Mon., May 1—Union Square, 1 p.m.

Sponsor: National Coalition and Amnesty for Undocumented Immigrants.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Crime, Cops, Capitalism and the Working Class: What the Ramparts Police Scandal Reveals. Speakers: Lessie Kimberly, Claremont College student, activist in Irwin Landrum Jr. Organizing Committee; Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 5, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico. Donation: \$5. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Rally for National Socialist Workers Campaign Fund. Speaker: J.P. Crysdale, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress from Philadelphia. Sat., May 6, Reception 6:00 p.m., Program 7:00 p.m. 711 E. Passyunk Ave. (Two blocks south of South St.). Donation: \$5. Tel: (215) 627-1237.

Support fighting farmers

Farmers are planning to "sound off" at field hearings conducted by the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture. Only farmers and ranchers will be permitted to testify.

Woodland, California

May 1, 8:30 a.m. Heidrick Ag History Center.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

May 2, 8:30 a.m., Augustana College Humanities Building.

Boise, Idaho

May 12, 10 a.m., City Council Building, Lesbois Room.

Peoria, Illinois

May 13, 8:30 a.m., Peoria Civic Center, Exhibit Hall B.

For directions or to listen to the sessions on the Web visit: www.agriculture.house.gov

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materials to the membership urging them to join the janitors pickets and protests.

Janitors are still on strike in downtown San Diego and suburban Chicago. Several other cities like Cleveland, Seattle, and Milwaukee face possible strikes by SEIU organized janitors.

Mark Friedman is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 2785 in Los Angeles.

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Militant subscription, anyone?—A searching analysis of the recent market crash, presented by the *Los Angeles Times*, was aptly summarized in the headline: "Time to Buy. Sell or Hold? It Depends, Planners Say."



Harry Ring

Cost of slaughter escalates—The new, more "sophisticated" version of the Patriot missile, which Associated Press says

gained "acclaim" in the 1991 U.S. war against Iraq, will cost 30 percent more than estimated. A thousand of the weapons will cost a reported \$10.1 billion.

The march of capitalist civilization—"Six more prisons to be prepared for women"—Headline, the *Times*, London

New win for 'Labour' gov't—The European Community granted the Labour Party government in the United Kingdom a 12-year grace period in establishing a 48-hour maximum work week for junior medics in the Na-

tional Health Plan.

Contract time? Show this to the boss—Two U.S. Postal executives were given \$248,000 to cover moving expenses. Being transferred to Alaska? Nope. Just a bit further into the burbs. One 30 miles from his office, the other 10. The deal includes \$25,000 each for such "hidden" costs as installing new drapes, and for hooking up the washing machine.

Check out *Capitalism's World Disorder*—"Japan's unemployment rate in February hit a record

high of 4.9 percent, underscoring the effect of increasingly aggressive cost-cutting by employers." —News item

Yeah, but the rent's lower down there—We've often reported the corporate honchos taking home billions in "wages" and bonuses. So we should report that Mackey McDonald, top dog of the VF Corp., took it on the chin. Based in Greensboro, North Carolina, and maker of Wrangler jeans, VF is one of the world's biggies. So McDonald's bonus dropped from \$1.54 million to a mere \$555,000. But the directors took

some mercy, increasing his salary 5.3 percent, to \$800,000.

In this country? No way—"Higher Ratio of Black Women Strip-Searched at Airports"—News headline.

The elderly poor, sock it to them—Nearly half the older people in the United States can't afford medication insurance and pay at least 15 percent more for their pills than the insured. Clinton says he is preparing to "phase in" a plan. The drug racketeers say they agree with him that it's a complex situation.

Class tensions are growing inside China today

The excerpt below is taken from "Youth and the Communist Movement," a report presented in the United Kingdom at a special congress in Sheffield over the June 27-28 weekend in 1992. The entire talk appears in the pages of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, copyright © 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The consequences of slowing capital accumulation and sharpening interimperialist conflict are also at work throughout Asia and the Pacific—from Japan, to Australia and New Zealand, to Korea, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. And there, too, capitalism is expanding the size of the working class, whose prospects are ever more tightly linked to those of workers around the world.

We should never underestimate how attractive the Chinese revolution remains to hundreds of millions of toilers, especially to peoples of color long oppressed and ex-



"The struggles that are coming, whatever their tempo and exact forms, will be larger and more explosive than anything in China since the revolution itself." Above, workers and peasants in China hold angry actions in front of the U.S. embassy in Beijing in May 1999, to protest the "accidental" bombing of Chinese embassy during the Washington-led bombing assault against the people of Yugoslavia.

from the pages of *Capitalism's World Disorder*

ploited by imperialism. Despite the crimes of its Stalinist misleadership, China stands as an example of a people—more than a billion strong, abused by both European and Asian imperialist powers for more than a century—who carried out a powerful revolution, swept aside the landlord and capitalist exploiters, and restored their national sovereignty and dignity.

Today, more and more toilers in China are being drawn out of the countryside and into factories, mines, and mills owned by the state and increasingly also by foreign and domestic capital. As this process unfolds, the breakdown of Stalinist apparatuses that we have seen in Europe and the former USSR will inevitably shake the deformed Chinese workers state as well.

It will take time, but class tensions and conflicts are already growing in China's cities and workplaces, as well as in the countryside. And when the day comes that a young and rapidly growing working class enters into combat in larger battalions, the Stalinists will find that their bloody suppression of the Tiananmen Square youth rebellion in 1989 cannot be endlessly repeated. The struggles that are coming, whatever their tempo and exact forms, will be larger and more explosive than anything in China since the revolution itself.

Many of you have probably read newspaper reports about the so-called Special Economic Zones in southern China, where much of the imperialist investment is concentrated. These zones are located in huge, and growing, population centers. The Shenzhen and other Special Economic Zones in Guangdong [Canton] Province and the Pearl River Delta, around Hong Kong, are in an area with about 80 million people. Companies based in Hong Kong are estimated already to employ as many as 3 million factory workers in this region.

Among Deng Xiaoping's pithy sayings of late was one this past January, during a visit to Guangdong. In another twenty years,

Deng said, the province would become the "Fifth Small Dragon" of Asia, joining Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong itself. Think of the depth of the political bankruptcy! The main spokesperson of a supposedly socialist country says the goal they are pursuing—and are well along the road to achieving—is to become more like Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong.

But that is the goal of the dominant wing of the bourgeois-minded bureaucratic caste in China. Desperately poor peasants are being drawn from the countryside and into the cities, where to survive they are forced to work long hours, under extreme speedup, for minimal wages in both state- and capitalist-owned factories. In the medium term, these conditions will permit a relatively rapid economic expansion.

The Japanese, U.S., and other capitalists investing in China think they have died and gone to heaven. They have most of the rights of capitalists, but the state "handles" the workers for them. The state, including the Communist Party and its functionaries, makes sure the workers do not get out of line on the job, do not strike—do not do much except work very hard, for very long hours, for very little pay. It seems like a dream!

Explosive conditions in China

Of course, the dream will not last. As capitalist exploitation increases throughout China, so do strikes, peasant protests, and attacks on bosses. A few weeks ago, for example, the *New York Times* ran an article headlined, "Capitalist-Style Layoffs Ignite Sabotage and Strikes in China." The home of a Chinese bank director, a "reformer," had been firebombed after he had fired numerous workers. In another case, a factory boss known for "Western-style management" had been run over by a truck, and workers at the plant rejected the government's proposal to honor him as a "martyr" for reform.

The article cited spreading wildcat strikes, sabotage, and smashing of machinery across China. The *Times* reporter noted that these "incidents suggest that opposition to fundamental changes is increasingly coming not only from octogenarian Communist hard-liners but also from many ordinary

blue-collar workers."

Ignore the correspondent's imaginary bloc between angry workers and senile Stalinists. The resistance reported in the article is real, however. Workers in China will conduct more fights like these, and they will eventually link up with dissatisfied peasants and also win support from young people attracted to the working class as the force that can revitalize society. *That will be the real bloc.* It will be forged through enormous class battles, and as that happens growing numbers of fighters will be open to the ideas of the communist movement.

Preparing for what is coming in Asia

In preparing for what is coming in Asia,

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



May 9, 1975

OLYMPIA, Wash.—Chanting, "Save our schools," more than 8,000 angry teachers and supporters rallied here April 22 to demand state funding of schools hard hit by special levy losses.

The teachers' rally was the latest in a series of actions in Olympia, the state capital, in the wake of the most widespread school-levy losses in the history of Washington public schools. School levies, which are voted on every year by each school district, are special property taxes that pay for a substantial share of the schools' basic operating costs.

Students and teachers are calling for an end to the special-levy method of financing the schools and for state funding to make up for school-levy losses. The WEA estimates that as many as 5,000 public school employees will be fired as a result of school-levy failures in thirty-one school districts.

The demonstrations came on the heels of a strike vote by Seattle public school employees. In the April 21 voting, 84 percent of Seattle's teachers and staff threw their support behind a strike to protect their jobs.



May 8, 1950

DETROIT, April 30—Denied the use of Wayne University for a meeting, and refused at the last minute a church previously promised, several thousand students engaged last week in a mass demonstration the like of which has not been seen here for many years.

One of the largest civil rights rallies in Detroit's history, it was called only four hours earlier by leaflet, and reflected the growing indignation against the Wayne administration's denial of elementary democratic rights to political speakers.

Milling around the Student Center, the Science Building and structures in the campus vicinity, leaning out of windows, standing on rooftops, on university property, on sidewalks and tying up traffic in the streets—the students defied the school officials and voiced their right to hear speakers of their own choice.

So large an assembly could not be easily dispersed by the police or the "Gas House Gang"—the fascist-minded school hoodlum athletes. They could only stand by and watch as the meeting took place on the rear lawn of the main Detroit library directly across the street from the main school buildings.

Defend Cuba, working class

Continued from page 9

in Washington's eyes, however, the reality of CANF's reputed power was exposed.

Beginning from the moment decisive action was taken in February 1996 by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba against the Brothers to the Rescue abortive overflight, and culminating with the frustrating failure of the campaign to "keep Elián González in the 'free world,'" any pretense that there is a politically homogeneous Cuban-American organization, let alone an armed group, weighty enough to substantially influence Washington's policy towards Cuba has been shattered. The fiction of a monolithic, non-class-divided Cuban community, kept in line by a powerful rightist cadre, backed and pandered to by Washington, has lost credibility. The self-serving notion that Miami is not subject to the same laws of class struggle as the rest of the United States has been further weakened.

The issues surrounding the INS raid in Miami are of vital importance to the workers movement. Millions of working people feel nothing but outrage at the rulers' trampling on our most basic rights and political space, our livelihoods, our very life and limb. The regressive burden of the bourgeoisie's tax policies; the inevitability of banks and government agencies foreclosing on small farmers squeezed by the ever-increasing weight of giant monopolies; the brutal indifference to human life symbolized by the deadly police assault on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco—if the only voice working people and worse-off layers of the middle classes hear speaking out against such indignities are those of reaction, if no angry and determined working-class voice is heard pointing a class-struggle way forward, then the radical siren song of fascist demagogues will gain an ever more receptive ear.

Our battle to return Elián González to Cuba is not yet over. It would be futile to predict how much longer it will take. But with each passing day it becomes clearer that the U.S. ruling class in its majority has become convinced that the gains to be made from preventing the boy from going home have petered out. His use value to them has been exhausted. The "caring president" is moving on to other things.

The people of Cuba have won.

The massive mobilization of ordinary Cubans, day after day, month after month; their determination to prevent the arrogant imperialist power to the north from stealing a child; the spotlight of publicity around the world—that is what finally made it impossible for the U.S. government to sweep the increasingly embarrassing affair (their own creation from the beginning) under a rug. "One day longer"—the battle cry of workers and farmers everywhere—is the banner under which the Cuban people marched.

Cuba's unforgivable offense

As many times before over the last 40-odd years, the U.S. rulers are arguing among themselves over how to continue punishing the working people of Cuba for the unforgivable affront of creating the first free territory of the Americas. The propertied families are divided, as always, over how best to advance their objective of overturning the revolutionary state power on U.S. imperialism's doorstep. There is no truce, even for a day. But by drawing a line in the sand, the people of Cuba have shown the U.S. rulers they have misjudged the moment in history. Not for the first time.

As we share the sweet taste of victory with our comrades in Cuba, however, communists and class-conscious toilers in the United States must be both clear and intransigent about the class political issues involved—the character of the U.S. imperialist government and its armed agencies. Our future—in fact the future of the world—depends on it.

The muddle-headedness—at best—in facing these class questions within what is broadly thought of as the Cuba solidarity movement is a mortal danger, including to the Cuban Revolution itself. Every step taken by the U.S. ruling class to close political space for working people within the United States—to restrict the exercise of democratic rights temporarily wrested through bloody struggles—is a blow against the Cuban Revolution as well.

When the victorious October Revolution was obliged by the unfavorable world relationship of forces in 1918 to sign the rapacious Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with German imperialism in order to buy time to save the state power of the workers and peasants—a very special period in the young Soviet republic—V. I. Lenin led the fight within the Bolshevik leadership to take that necessary step. Parliamentary deputies in Germany calling themselves socialists voted to ratify that same treaty in the German Reichstag, arguing there was no reason not to do so since the Bolsheviks themselves had signed the onerous terms.

The Bolsheviks' unforgettable reply to them—as recorded by Leon Trotsky, organizer of the Red Army and Lenin's chief negotiator at Brest-Litovsk—was: "You swine. We are objectively compelled to negotiate in order not to be annihilated, but as for you—you are politically free to vote for or against, and your vote implies whether or not you place confidence in your own bourgeoisie."

For the working-class movement in the United States today, the same class principles are at stake.

Federal agents carry out assault in Miami

Continued from Page 10

INS raid, a few thousand opponents of the return of Elián González to Cuba gathered on the streets of Miami the day after the INS assault, in crowds of up to a few hundred at a time, shouting and burning tires and trash bins.

The protests were called by rightist Cuban-American organizations and were given some support by Democrat Alex Penelas, mayor of Miami-Dade County, and Joseph Carollo, Republican mayor of the city of Miami, and many other local politicians.

The police, however, didn't hesitate in quickly breaking up the protests and keeping roads clear. Seven hundred Miami police, 650 Miami-Dade County cops, high-

ers and resentment among other workers of oppressed nationalities—both Blacks and Latinos—by portraying all Cuban immigrants as privileged, thus letting the capitalist families of Florida off the hook.

One illustration of this myth promoted by the big-business press was an article in the April 25 issue of the New York *Daily News* titled "Huge ethnic rift in Miami."

"The uneasy peace that has long existed among Miami's ethnic groups has been shattered by the battle over Elián González," the reporter said. "The problems could intensify today, when Cuban-American leaders try to bring the city to a standstill by urging supporters to stay home from work and businesses to close."



Cop in "Rampart unit" in Los Angeles carries out "antigang sweep" in 1994, holding several youths at gunpoint

way patrol officers, and a SWAT team from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement were on the streets, pumping tear gas canisters into crowds and taking away dozens in handcuffs. In the first 24 hours after the INS raid, the police reported 303 arrests, including a few journalists, and 304 fires, mostly trash fires in the streets.

Small actions took place in a few other cities that day, including one of a couple of hundred who briefly slowed traffic into New York's Lincoln Tunnel from the New Jersey side.

Leaders of 21 rightist Cuban-American organizations, including the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) and the Democracy Movement, denounced the INS assault, calling the federal agents "shock troops, reminiscent of the Gestapo." They issued a statement calling for a "general strike" for April 25. The call, directed mainly at the 800,000 people of Cuban origin in the area, asked people to stay home from work and for businesses to shut down, to make Miami a "dead city" for the day. The CANF is run by millionaire Cuban-American businessmen and has enjoyed U.S. government support and financing over the years.

Weak response to strike call

Large numbers of Cuban-owned retail businesses, mainly in Little Havana and Hialeah, where the large majority of the population is Cuban-American, shut down April 25. In these areas, many gas stations, coffee shops, and other stores were locked that day. But the work stoppage had little impact in the rest of Miami, or at area factories.

For example, at Aerothrust, an aircraft engine repair plant of 200 workers where a two-week-strong strike recently ended, one Cuban-American mechanic was considering joining the work stoppage, saying, "The kid belongs with his father, but they never should have done it the way they did at gunpoint in the middle of the night." Later in the day, a worker holding right-wing views brought in flyers with the photo of the gun-wielding Border Patrol cop in front of the frightened six-year-old, with the caption, "Elián's first interview with the INS." But only a handful of workers heeded the call to stay home.

On the other hand, one of many garment shops in Hialeah was closed by the owner. The big majority of some 70 workers planned to go to work on April 25, but supervisors told them Cuban-American office workers were not going to show up and that because the plant is located in Hialeah the company would close for the day for workers' "security."

At another garment cutting plant of about 40 employees located in Opa Locka, an area with a largely African-American population north of Hialeah, not a single worker missed work to heed the strike call. At that factory, one employee who supports reunifying Elián with his father condemned the way the raid was carried out, a worker at the plant, Eric Simpson, reported.

Addressing some Cuban fellow workers, a worker originally from Haiti stated, "You finally got a whiff of the tear gas we Haitians have been smelling for years."

Prejudice against Cuban-Americans

This comment reflected to a degree a widespread prejudice that the big-business media and politicians have worked overtime to foster against Cuban-Americans by lumping them together as a monolithic "ethnic group" made up almost entirely of rightists. They obscure the real class differences and political divisions among Cuban-Americans here. These big-business forces promote anti-Cuban chauvinism among non-Spanish-speaking work-

The article quoted local businessman Dan Ricker saying, "You have 450,000 Anglos who are really disgusted with this whole thing, and the African-Americans are saying, 'You've been ignoring us for 20 years. You break down our doors all the time.'"

This was reflected to a degree in recent discussions among rail workers at the CSX freight yard and adjacent Amtrak coach yard in Hialeah. "SWAT teams knock down doors in the Black neighborhoods every day," said Joe Higgins, a CSX road conductor who is Black. "Why should the Cubans be treated any different?" A number of workers at these yards defended the INS raid.

Government effort to prettify INS image

Discussions among industrial workers here reflected some of the success of the Clinton administration in using this case to prettify the image of the INS among working people. María, a knitting department worker in one of the largest clothing factories here, who asked that only her first name be used, believes that Elián González should return to Cuba because that is where his immediate family wants to live. She also stated her view that both the Miami relatives of the boy and the Cuban government were to blame for "making this political."

María had been expressing her anger for weeks at *la migra* (INS) for the way they have treated her and her family in their effort to gain residency status. But after the INS and Justice Department announced their decision to reunite Elián with his father, María said, "The INS and Janet Reno have the best position in the case."

At that same plant, where the majority of the workforce are Cuban-Americans, about 15 employees among 150 missed work on April 25 in response to the call for the "work stoppage." Most of the Cuban workers interviewed there supported reuniting Elián with his father. Several, who asked that their names not be used, expressed disagreement with the rightist protests and said they disliked the INS raid.

Mike Italie and Argiris Malapanis are garment workers in Miami; Greg McCartan contributed from New York. Bill Kalman, a member of the United Transportation Union; Eric Simpson, a member of Local 415 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; and Rachele Fruit, a member of the International Association of Machinists, contributed to this article.

Cops terrorize New York neighborhood

Helicopters, search dogs, and rooftop snipers backed up dozens of police officers in battle gear as they raided a house and cordoned off a street in Edgemere, New York, on April 24. The cops erected barricades for the seven-hour operation, which took place two days after the raid by INS cops in Miami.

The cops did not find the man they claimed to be looking for. Twenty-six-year-old construction worker Ronald Hall and his girlfriend, in the house at the time of the 10:00 a.m. raid, were held for several hours and then released. The police treated him like a criminal," said a friend. "He and his girlfriend came out, and they put them on the street and handcuffed them."

Where to aim our fire

I thought the "Toilers stand up in Latin America" editorial in the *Militant* was excellent. But I feel it could have been even stronger by adding a sentence on this being the way forward rather than aiming our fire at the World Bank, etc. What the editorial addresses is at the very heart of what is written in *Capitalism's World Disorder*. A sentence spelling this out would be a great contribution to the discussions and debates we continue to have on job sites and campuses.

D.F.
Charlotte, North Carolina

A working-class analysis

I am currently reading the *Militant* online, and have enjoyed your coverage this month. However, I wanted to find a working-class analysis of the unfolding events in the case of Elián. I have not found an article focusing on this topic. Why?

Carlos Hernandez
Los Angeles, California

Ruling-class divisions?

When I was in Cuba recently I was impressed by the massive mobilizations of people demanding the return of Elián to his father and Cuba. As Mary-Alice Waters reports in the April 17 issue of the *Militant*, the view in Cuba was generally to blame the "Miami mafia" rather than the U.S. government.

In fact, some young militants told me that the reason why there were no homemade banners or posters on the marches was because some people "wrongly wanted to place the blame on Clinton." My view was that the reason why Elián wasn't being returned immediately was because it suited

the U.S. government for the boy to be used to create more space for their anti-Cuba propaganda campaign.

However, Patrick O'Neill, in his answer to Les Slater in the April 24 *Militant*, states that the INS ruling to return Elián González to Cuba has the majority support within the ruling class but nevertheless came under fire from right-wing politicians. He gives this as an example of the divisions that exist in U.S. foreign policy and it is these divisions that have affected the course of the Elián case. What are these divisions?

It was interesting to read in the *Militant* about the power of the INS and how Clinton is using the case to boost this power. I must admit that I have looked at it differently, seeing the fact that they had not actually done anything to enforce their ruling as proof that it suits them to let things drag on. However, the INS and Clinton obviously want to be seen as taking a "reasonable" position in this case. But do street mobilizations and demonstrations demanding the return of Elián to his father and his country have to be done on the basis of support for the INS?

Wendy Knight
Alicante, Spain

The campaign in Cuba

I want to thank the *Militant* for making available Mary-Alice Waters's comments on the Elián González question. They provided sensible answers to questions I've had.

I found confirmation of what she was saying at work, when a boss—who supports returning Elián to his father—declared to a group of workers who were discussing the case, "The INS decides who stays and who doesn't—and that's that." A number of workers nodded in agreement but the ones

in the group who are most sympathetic to the Cuban revolution were simply pushed out of the discussion and into silence.

Unlike in Cuba, there has been no working-class fight and no opening to build one to return Elián to his father—and this fact has been catastrophic for Elián.

The federal government has been in basic command of the process, from the moment the INS in Miami turned the child over to his right-wing Miami relatives down to the latest delays and court hearings. The Cuban campaign was very necessary, in my opinion. It has kept the Clinton administration on the spot internationally, and has helped force the rulers to think about how far and how fast they can afford to go in acting against Cuba.

A child was lost at sea, his mother drowned, he was rescued by fishermen from the United States who brought him to shore in this country. It was the elementary duty of the authorities to immediately seek out his surviving parent in his homeland and arrange for his return.

Fred Feldman
Newark, New Jersey

INS assault result: a step forward

The long captivity of Elián González in Miami, and denial of custody to Juan Miguel González, with the accompanying media orgy, has been an international outrage. His April 22 removal from the clutches of the right-wingers and distant relatives in Miami was a step forward for the rights of working people.

I found the April 24 article on the case in the *Militant* to be unclear or even contradictory. The article begins by saying that the *Militant* "wholeheartedly supports" the re-

turn of Elián González to his father and to Cuba. But then seems to balk at or even argue against any action to bring this about, saying, "In the context of the rulers' drive to boost INS powers and to weaken the rights to legal appeal, it is dangerous to advocate the 'simple administrative return' of the child."

The "legal appeals" to take Elián away from his father consist of the false claim that he is a political refugee, fleeing persecution by the Cuban government, filing for political asylum in the U.S. He is not. The petition for asylum is being filed by right-wing groups and distant relatives, who have no right whatsoever to speak on his behalf. U.S. appeals courts have no right to sit in judgment of whether people in Cuba should have the right to have children.

The article asserts that Clinton is trying to use the case to "polish up the image of the INS." I doubt that the spectacle of the government giving lip service to the idea that Elián's father should have custody, while doing nothing for four months to bring that about, has been a pretty picture in the eyes of the vast majority of people in the U.S. who reject the anti-Cuba campaign to keep Elián in captivity in Miami.

I would compare Elián's removal by federal police to the use of U.S. troops to enforce desegregation in the South in the 1950s and '60s, something that socialists staunchly supported.

Joe Callahan
Minneapolis, Minnesota

INS action: positive development

The removal of Elián González from the Miami home is a positive development. We should not get caught up in the debate of whether too much force was used.

The next question is what should be our position toward the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta enjoining Elián González "from departing or attempting to depart from the United States."

The INS is a cop agency. There are others. As the capitalist crisis deepens we will find that we will face even more brutal and hated police. Their role is becoming more naked.

However, until the working class has state power, we will find that we will call on the state to enforce some of its laws. We've done it in the past and we'll do it in the future. To think otherwise smacks of ultraleftism and anarchism.

At this point we should expose and denounce all attempts to prevent Elián and his family from returning to Cuba when they wish.

Les Slater
Brookline, Massachusetts

Congrats to Reno & Clinton

WE HAVE WON!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Elián is presently winging his way to Washington. What can stop him returning to Cuba immediately?

Well, unfortunately the answer is that Reno's dawdling in doing what she should have done in the first place enabled the Miami lawyers to get a federal court injunction against his leaving.

It is not simply up to Janet Reno to say to Juan Miguel, "Good-bye. Good luck." What she can and should do is immediately file with the courts to rescind the federal order that Elián remain in the United States. And if that fails, and if Juan Miguel is still willing to wait it out there with Elián, insist that the State Department immediately grant the visas to the rest of the group of students, teachers, psychologists, and doctors needed to help Elián and his family begin the healing and readaptation process.

Write to Reno, Clinton, Meissner et al congratulating on the action and demanding that nothing more impedes Elián from returning to his home in Cardenas, Cuba. Juan Miguel always said that the agreement to remain in the U.S. for the Atlanta appeal was on condition that Elián was returned voluntarily from Miami. He said that if force was necessary, all deals were off.

LET THEM GO NOW!!!

Karen Wald
Havana, Cuba

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.

Flowers for Reno?—An exchange of opinion in a coalition on Cuba

[The following exchange was received from the Hartford Coalition on Cuba. It was sent to all those on its e-mail list.]

What do we think of the INS raid in Little Havana last weekend which rescued Elián González from the Lazaro González family? Should Attorney General Janet Reno be given credit for "finally having done the right thing." Or should we oppose the action? I have had an exchange of messages with Les Slater, an activist in the Boston July 26 coalition. I share our correspondence with you and invite your comments.

Tim Craine
Hartford, Connecticut

Craine: While the long-delayed reunification of Elián and his family has been greeted with approval by the vast majority of the people in the United States and throughout the world, we condemn the police-state methods used by the Clinton administration when it ordered federal agents to seize the child at gunpoint from the Miami home of the Lazaro González family. We hold the government responsible for the fact that Elián was allowed to be used as a pawn by right-wing forces in the Cuban-American community who became increasingly intransigent in their refusal to let him go home.

(At its meeting on April 25, the Coalition voted against retaining the language "we condemn the police-state methods used..." The vote was 3 to 5.)

Slater: I do not think we should put ourselves in the position of making tactical prescriptions on how Elián should have been removed from the Florida house. The fact that he was removed is the important thing and it is a positive development.

Craine: Have you followed the latest developments regarding Vieques? It appears that the government may use the removal of Elián as a wedge to start an operation there. Let's think carefully about what sorts of actions we implicitly endorse.

Slater: I think the removal of Elián from the Miami captors is a positive development we should not be afraid to say so. We cannot let these issues be reduced to what tactics the ruling class uses. We are in favor of Elián being removed from the clutches of the Miami gang.

We are, however, against the U.S. ruling class and their island lackies succeed-

ing in their endeavor to maintain the colonial status of Puerto Rico, regardless of what methods they use. Intervention by U.S. forces in Puerto Rico has a qualitatively different character. We do not ever call on the U.S. state repressive forces to act in any other country.

Craine: Several days ago there was a call by some Cuba activists to send flowers to Janet Reno to thank her for rescuing Elián! This demonstrates to me how dangerous it is to fall into the trap of seeing the Clinton administration as an ally in this struggle. After all, if they had really cared for the welfare of the child they would have sent him home five months ago. I was pleased to read Stan Smith's reaction to the "flowers for Reno" campaign. At least not all Cuba solidarity activists have lost their heads. Please read the communication below.

What Should We Say about Saturday's "Rescue"?

by Stan Smith

Some of us have written articles that have included asking flowers be sent to Janet Reno and articles stating the raid to rescue Elián González was not violent.

We should neither praise Reno nor characterize a raid by 8-10 or more INS troopers with machine guns as a nonviolent act. If 8-10 INS agents with machine guns busted into your house and started pointing these guns at you and your kids, but since no one was killed or wounded in your family, you would call that a nonviolent act?

Of course the Miami González family were not victims. They set up the situation that created this type of Gestapo raid. However, this type of raid does not somehow become nonviolent because it was directed partly against a house of gusano kidnapers (and partly against Elián González himself).

Reno and Clinton deserve no praise. They created this situation even more than the Miami González family. They delayed and delayed and refused to do their jobs in order to allow anti-Cuba propaganda to flood the media. When they finally acted it was only because keeping Elián González was no longer a political asset but a liability. The Elián González Show backfired in their faces: to the American and world public, Cuba no longer looked evil, instead the U.S. government and its anti-Cuban allies did.

Because the government initially tried to use Elián González for anti-Cuban propaganda, they exacerbated the situation by ignoring parental rights, U.S. law and international law. In the end they deliberately let

the situation get so out of hand that they had to use Gestapo tactics to enforce the law.

Finally, when they did act, we see this cop with a machine gun in Elián González's face. Obviously he was scared to death. I am sure Juan Miguel González got incensed, as I hope any parent would, after seeing a cop with a machine gun in his child's face. Why should we speak out in support of rescuing Elián in that manner? We do not want to be publicizing ourselves as approving of this kind of operation. We do not want to be apologists for this kind of show of force. Now the two major American anti-Cuban groups are fighting among themselves, why should we be drawn into taking one of their sides, that of the Gestapo or the gusanos. That is not our business, not our problem.

We should stick to defending Elián González, not that of a Gestapo operation by a government which obviously never did and still doesn't care less about Elián González. And he, after all, is not rescued yet: he is not yet safe at home.

We should state to the public the truth behind the situation. First, that no violence at all would have been necessary if Clinton and Reno, the chief law enforcement officers had obeyed the law from the start, if they put the interests of Elián González first. The U.S. government should have carried out the law and returned Elián González to Cuba when he left the hospital in late November. Then this five-month ordeal for Elián and this military operation Saturday would never have been necessary.

Second, we should state that this only dragged on for five months because the government let Elián González be used to create dishonest anti-Cuban propaganda stories.

Third, the government was forced to act only because using the Elián González Story to bash Cuba didn't fly with the American public.

Fourth, we do not approve of the government's actions so far because we do not approve of Elián and his family still being held hostage indefinitely and against their will here in the U.S.

Fifth, the government deserves no thanks, for it is only because of their embargo of Cuba and their Cuban Adjustment Act that created the situation where Elián González was stranded in the ocean in the first place.

New documents show U.S. military role in execution of civilians in Korean War

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

The widely presumed fact that the reactionary south Korean regime executed thousands of political prisoners and civilians without a trial during the years surrounding the 1950-53 Korean War have been verified through recently released "top secret" documents held by Washington.

Accompanying this release—hidden for half a century—is proof that U.S. general Douglas MacArthur, who commanded the south Korean military then, knew about at least one of the mass killings. It involved 200 people who never saw a trial, but were taken out to sea, shot, and thrown off a ship.

Stories revealed

Despite the fact that south Korean records of the massacre appear to have been destroyed, and only brief mentions of some of the incidents are written into U.S. military reports that have been suppressed until recently, several U.S. and south Korean military personnel have come forward with testimonies that match what south Korean victims' families have been saying for years. In addition, bones from mass burial sites have now been found.

One U.S. military cop, in a report to his company commander, described "extreme cruelty" exercised against prisoners by the south Korean regime. He and several other witnesses reported that up to 300 prisoners, including young children, were killed by south Korean military police atop a mountain 155 miles southeast of Seoul.

According to documents dug up by U.S. National Archives researcher Lee Do-young, Army attaché Lt. Col. Bob Edwards wrote a report back to the U.S. Army that 1,800 political prisoners were summarily executed by south Korean forces at Taejon, 93 miles south of Seoul.

"Thousands of political prisoners were



South Korean troops prepare political prisoners to be shot in Taejon, south Korea, in July 1950. Washington was complicit in these massacres.

executed within weeks after fall of Seoul to prevent their possible release by advancing enemy [north Korean] troops," Edwards wrote. "Orders for execution undoubtedly came from top."

"There was no time for trials for them. Communists were streaming down. It (summary execution) was a common practice at the time," huffed retired south Korean Rear Adm. Nam Sang-hui. Nam said in July 1950, as a Navy commander, he authorized three ships to carry 200 people out to sea off the port of Pohang. They were shot by south Korean cops and dumped overboard, weighted down with rocks so they would sink to the bottom of the sea. Nam argued that the "critical situation for South Korea" necessitated the cold-blooded terminations. The Korean War started on June 25, 1950,

as troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea crossed the 38th parallel, in an effort to boot U.S. occupation forces out of the southern region of Korea.

Relatives of the deceased described truckloads of prisoners passing through their towns into the mountains never to be seen again. They said that many people who were executed had not been convicted of any crime.

Washington's bloody role

While many of the reports in the big-business press attempt to polish the Pentagon's role, reducing it to mere observers of the massacres, this portrayal is false. "The Americans cannot escape the charge that they condoned, if not supported, the massacres. After all, those soldiers killed these

people with rifles and bullets the Americans gave them," said Do-young. Reports of mass shootings were circulated routinely among the Army brass, according to the researchers' findings.

Beside the fact that MacArthur knew of the killings, U.S. soldiers have come forward about massacres carried out against civilians, the most infamous of which is that at No Gun Ri.

Using a pretext that north Korean soldiers were advancing, U.S. troops drove two villages of peasants from their homes. As peasants fled on railroad tracks, U.S. planes bombed an area where they rested. As hundreds died, others ran underneath a nearby railroad bridge to hide. U.S. soldiers opened fire on hundreds of Korean civilians, mowing them down in a machine-gun blitz. "We just annihilated them," admitted ex-machine gunner Norman Tinkler. The U.S. government locked away the truth about this gruesome event for 50 years.

Associated Press researchers uncovered several other incidents, two of which involved U.S. troops using machine-guns and mortars to attack civilians. In another case, a bridge was blown up by U.S. troops with full knowledge that civilians were streaming across it. Researchers also report that in declassified U.S. Army documents, they found "standing orders to shoot civilians along the warfront to guard against North Korean soldiers disguised in white clothes of Korean peasants." There have been protests in south Korea by victims' families demanding compensation for the killings.

Desire for reunification unbroken

The newly released proof of the massacres comes at a time when the desire of the Korean people to reunify their country remains high. According to Seoul, about 1.2 million people there who were alive during the war have families living in the north. A summit between Seoul and Pyongyang is scheduled to take place as early as June, where developing closer ties, among other things, will be discussed. It would be the first such meeting since the Korean War was touched off 50 years ago.

Washington spearheaded the war against the people of Korea in the 1950s and imposed the division of the country. It maintains 37,000 troops on the border between north and south to enforce it.

Pyongyang has reiterated its demand that U.S. troops be withdrawn from south Korea, saying their presence is a hindrance to talks between the two Koreas.

Steelworkers host solidarity rally in Kansas City

BY RAY PARSONS

KANSAS CITY, Missouri—Some 100 unionists gathered here April 18 at a rally that linked up three Midwest labor struggles.

The event was sponsored by United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 13 at GST Steel as a solidarity event for struggles by members of Steelworkers Local 1028, who are locked out at the MEI foundry in Duluth, Minnesota. Both plants are owned by GS Industries, based in Charlotte, North Carolina. Members of the Teamsters and United Auto Workers union also participated.

The action won new support for the Duluth fighters, who went on strike August 25 in a fight against mandatory overtime and unsafe working conditions. At the end of February the union offered to end the strike and return to work while continuing contract negotiations. MEI bosses refused, locking out all 143 unionists. Not one union member has broken ranks and crossed the picket lines over the course of the eight-month struggle. The company has 70 scabs working in the plant.

Eight members of USWA Local 164 on strike at Titan Tire in Des Moines came to the action, and invited everyone to attend an April 29 rally in Des Moines marking the two-year anniversary of their fight. Fifteen members of Teamsters Local 955, locked out by Associated Wholesale Grocers (AWG) in Kansas City, Kansas, came to back the steelworkers and build support for their fight.

Six members of USWA Local 310 from Bridgestone/Firestone, came from Des Moines to the rally. The action was of interest among unionists in the plant looking for ways to build support as their contract talks take place. The negotiations, which affect more than 8,000 workers at nine plants around the country, have continued beyond the April 23 expiration of the old pact.

Stuart Smith, one of 10 Duluth fighters

in attendance, spoke at the rally. He started at MEI 12 years ago, after losing a 27-year job at an iron mine that went bankrupt in northern Minnesota. "I saw fellow workers at MEI get their legs crushed others who got carpal tunnel. Once they did, they went out the gate," he said. "We want contract language to ensure this doesn't happen."

Local 1028 member Julie Kromschroeder was impressed by the solidarity expressed at the rally. "If we continue to get together and the companies have to deal with all the unions, that will put a different light on things. Individually we can't do anything," she said.

Kromschroeder noted that she started out at MEI 15 years ago, working the front office telephone switchboard and later moved into production. When the union was voted in by a slim margin only seven years ago, she voted no, thinking it wasn't needed. "Then I saw how they treated us. I was wrong. A vote for the union today would be 143 to nothing!"

She said the fight at MEI has changed how workers view their union. "Since I've gotten involved, I've been saying there's got to be change. We can't have a few people dictating what goes on in the union. Everyone has to be involved. It's our union. We're a family now. We won't be the same when we go back."

Since the beginning of the strike the union has organized potluck dinners every other Thursday where the steelworkers and their families can meet to discuss where the struggle is at.

The Teamsters at the April 18 rally are among some 1,200 locked out by AWG bosses in Kansas City, Kansas, and Springfield, Missouri, April 2. When Teamsters at AWG in Oklahoma City honored picket lines thrown up by the locked-out locals, another 300 workers were fired at that facility. The unionists are distributing flyers

at grocery stores around the area urging a boycott of supermarkets supplied by AWG.

On the same day as the Kansas City action, Local 1028 rallied in Duluth, and other fighters leafleted the GS Industries plant in Georgetown, South Carolina. MEI and union negotiators also announced that a new round of contract talks will begin May 18.

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310 at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines.

Wage gap rises between workers, bosses

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Fears by the wealthy rulers of the United States about the growing income gap between the rich and poor during the economic upturn of the 1990s has created an even more explosive social situation when the "boom" ends and the economy slides into a deep downturn were recently summed up by Albert Hunt in a *Wall Street Journal* opinion column.

"Over the past two decades, income in the world's richest countries has soared while income in the poorest nations has plummeted," he wrote in a piece published April 20. The percentage of income taken in by the richest 20 percent of the world's population increased from 76.3 percent of the total in 1980 to 85.9 percent in 1997 according to a United Nations study. At the same time the percentage of the total income of the poorest 20 percent went down from 1.7 percent in 1980 to 1.1 percent in 1997.

Hunt cited a Brookings Institute official who called the gap between rich and poor people in the United States a "startling increase." Today, the top 1 percent of the population holds 40 percent of the country's wealth—more than double the percentage of

just 25 years ago. The wealthiest 20 percent rake in almost 20 times what wage workers in the bottom 20 percent make; this margin has doubled over the past two decades.

"The good news is this gap has leveled off over the past five years," states Hunt. "The bad news, notes Frank Levy, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is that with the strongest economy in memory, and tight labor markets, 'you would expect inequality to get better; it has not.'"

Today CEOs of major companies are making about 400-fold more than their average workers. According to *Business Week*, the CEOs of the largest 350 companies had an average total compensation of \$12.4 million last year, up from less than \$2 million at the start of the decade. "If the current \$5.15-an-hour minimum wage had risen comparably, it'd be about \$24 an hour," notes Hunt.

Hunt cites Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan warning that the widening income gap potentially poses "a major threat to our security," that is the "security" of the capitalist rulers who've increased their wealth and well-being at the expense of the vast majority of workers and farmers.