

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Elections in Europe show
decline of social democracy

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 56/NO. 17 May 1, 1992

Workers discuss sudden end to Caterpillar strike

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

EAST PEORIA, Illinois — Anger and frustration are common emotions among members of the United Auto Workers here who were told last week that the union leadership had decided to take down their picket lines at Caterpillar Inc.

While some of these unionists struck Caterpillar for five and a half months and others

Key unresolved issues remain before union

for a few weeks, there does not seem to be much difference in how they feel about the situation today.

Jim Frye, a worker in the hose plant in East Peoria with 20 years at Caterpillar, expressed the generalized anger among workers. Over the years the company had been chipping away at the union, laying off workers out of seniority and doing everything to weaken worker morale, he explained.

"I really wasn't sure what would happen when we went out, but we showed that when we have a common cause there is solidarity."

He said he respected his coworkers more and had more self-respect because of how

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Militant/Bridget Brunner

Banner at April 11 rally in Buffalo, New York. Antiabortion activists attempted to block clinics in the city April 18. Operation Rescue, which has been welcomed to Buffalo by the mayor, had announced plans to try to shut at least two clinics beginning April 20. Hundreds of abortion rights supporters mobilized at four clinics the morning of April 20, but no attempt was made to block access to the clinics. Another rally to defend abortion rights is planned for Saturday, April 25. For more information call Buffalo United for Choice at (716) 855-4033.

U.S. threats against Libya increase as UN-imposed sanctions take effect

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. government and its allies took another step toward war against the Libyan people this week, sealing off the country from all air travel. Governments around the world began implementing sanctions April 15. Approved by the United Nations Security Council at the request of Washington and London, the measures had an immediate and dramatic impact in the country by prohibiting air travel to and from Libya, halting arms sales, and requiring the expulsion of some Libyan diplomats.

Washington and London claim two Libyans are responsible for planting a bomb

that blew up a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 and have demanded their extradition. Libya does not have an extradition treaty with the United States or Britain.

Anticipating the arrival of a Libyan passenger airliner bound for Rome, two Italian fighter planes took to the sky to intercept it. The Libyan plane turned around.

In spite of their stated opposition to passage of the sanctions, most Arab regimes are complying. A Libyan Arab Airlines plane with 227 passengers was denied entry to Egyptian airspace the day the UN air embargo began. Governments in Tunisia, Mo-

rocco, and Jordan all announced they were suspending air travel with Libya. One of the few exceptions, according to a Reuters news report, is Chad, whose government has close ties to Tripoli.

The governments of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Sweden each heightened the war threats by ordering a number of Libyan diplomats to leave their respective country, placing restrictions on those allowed to remain. The United States, which has no diplomatic relations with Libya, is expected to order the expulsion of 3 out of 12 members of Libya's UN delegation in New York.

In response, Libya ordered expulsions or staff reductions at the Italian and Belgian embassies in Tripoli.

The air travel and diplomatic sanctions are not expected to have much economic impact on Libya. About 90 percent of Libya's imports enter by sea. Libyan oil exports, which are not included in the embargo, account for 20 percent of Germany's and Italy's oil consumption. But U.S. and British officials made it clear that more stringent measures would follow, warning that an embargo on oil could be next.

Numerous arrangements have been made to bypass the suspension of flights. A private company on the nearby island of Malta is scheduled to run high-speed air boats that can carry 330 passengers. Government-owned EgyptAir will coordinate flights with a bus shuttle service.

The main purpose of the sanctions and stepped-up pressure, however, is not economic but political. Washington and its allies hope to pave the way for further action,

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Charges dropped against unionists

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

PEORIA, Illinois — In a victory for democratic and union rights, charges of criminal trespass and obstructing an officer that had been filed against two unionists were dropped here April 20.

"This is a victory for all people fighting for their rights, especially workers at Caterpillar who waged a five-month strike to defend their union," said Kate Kaku, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois and a member of the United Steelworkers of America. Along with Mary Zins, a long-time activist in the United Mine Workers of America who is currently on layoff, Kaku was arrested by police at a March 22 rally here in support of striking Caterpillar workers.

Supporters of Zins and Kaku attended the court hearing and a press conference outside the courthouse after the charges were dropped. "From Peoria to Buffalo, New York," Kaku told the press, "young people, working people, working farmers, and others are resisting the assaults by the employers, their government, and the ultrarightist forces their system engenders."

"As in our case, the cops and employers attempt to close down the political space working people have to discuss how to fight back. The rulers seek to intimidate those who want to join in struggles and strikes across the country," Kaku said. "That is why Mary and myself were arrested and that is

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'Militant' supporters launch sales target week

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper are organizing a "target week" of sales and campaigning, in the current international circulation drive. During this special eight-day blitz, which begins April 25 and continues through May 2, special subscription sales teams will be organized to visit campuses and working-class communities on a daily basis.

This intensified effort, is tied with organizing speaking engagements and literature distribution for the socialist candidates in the U.S. elections. It is designed to put the international circulation campaign on schedule and generate the momentum needed to successfully complete the drive.

As the scoreboard on page 5 indicates, at the end of the second week the drive has slipped six percent behind schedule.

Setting up campaign literature tables on street corners and campuses, participating in important political meetings and protests, organizing special day-long sales and campaign teams, and phoning and visiting individuals who can be persuaded to renew their subscriptions, should all be part of organizing target week sales.

The international subscription drive, which has been extended a week to run through June 20, is aimed at winning 5,700

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Tripoli, Libya, after U.S. bombing attack in 1986.

What's wrong with Brown's 'flat tax' proposal — page 7

Socialist presidential candidates travel to North Korea to oppose U.S. war moves

BY SELVA NEBBIA

James Warren and Estelle DeBates, the Socialist Workers 1992 candidates for U.S. president and vice-president, have just visited North Korea to participate in the April 14 national celebrations in Pyongyang that marked the 80th birthday of North Korean president Kim Il Sung.

"It is especially important to visit Korea," said Warren in an interview before the two departed for North Korea, "because it is the target of a vicious campaign, led by U.S. imperialism, to hang the nuclear weapons frame around the neck of the Korean people and use it to justify war moves against that country." Washington has set June as the deadline for North Korea to allow inspec-

tions of its nuclear power plants, alleging they are being used for nuclear weapons development.

"We think that the U.S. government will engage itself in a war against some country, probably before this election campaign is over," Warren said. "Korea is one of the leading candidates for imperialist aggression. The other two are Iraq and Libya. So this trip to Korea is extremely important for us."

The 1992 Socialist Workers Campaign, said Warren, "aims to emphasize the importance of internationalism both in the fight against our imperialist government and in the fight against chauvinism in this country directed against workers in other imperialist

countries." Warren explained that from Korea he will travel to New Zealand and Australia. DeBates will visit Japan.

"This effort on the part of Estelle and myself to travel not only to Korea, but to three imperialist countries, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia, is part and parcel of the tone we want to set for the election campaign," said Warren. In these countries "we will tell people about our experiences in Korea and what the Korean people are doing to counter Washington's war threats."

"The theme of our election campaign will be internationalism as opposed to the nationalism of capitalist politicians in the United States, in Japan, in Australia, and in New Zealand," he added.

In Korea, the socialist candidates will talk with leaders of the government and the Workers Party of Korea, and with working people there. "It's important for people in the United States to know about Korea. If Washington does move in the direction of launching some kind of war against the people of Korea, the sons and daughters of working people in this country will be cannon fodder for defending the interests of U.S. imperialism against the interests of

working people both here and in Korea," said Warren.

"We should be aware of the lies that have been used to justify attacks against the people of that country and we should recognize that it is the rightful decision of the people of North Korea to determine whether they want to develop any form of technology, nuclear or otherwise," the socialist candidate explained.

"U.S. imperialism can't reserve the right to tell some countries in the world like Israel or others that it is okay to develop a nuclear arsenal on the one hand, and then tell a country like Korea that it will reserve the right to tell them whether or not they can develop nuclear technology."

The main thing the socialist candidates will be taking to the Korean people "is our solidarity with their fight for national sovereignty," Warren said, "and our pledge to maintain our struggle against Washington's plans to prevent the people of Korea from uniting their country." The Korean peninsula has been split into North and South Korea for almost 50 years. It was divided by the forces of the United States and the Soviet Union after World War II.



James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president. "It is important to visit Korea because it is the target of a vicious campaign led by U.S. imperialism," he said.

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New Jersey socialists file signatures for ballot status

BY MARILEE TAYLOR

TRENTON, New Jersey — Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign filed more than 500 signatures April 9 to place the names of four congressional candidates on the ballot.

The socialist slate is headed by William Leonard, 37, a veteran trade unionist who has traveled to Peoria, Illinois, to back the United Auto Workers strike against Caterpillar. He is running in the 10th Congressional District.

In a press statement released at the time of filing, Leonard said: "The Democratic and Republican parties, and the capitalist families they serve, are dragging working people closer and closer to World War III. The socialist campaign will speak out against all U.S. war moves, be they against the people of Libya, Iraq, or North Korea. Our campaign supporters are made up of youth, workers, and farmers who want to fight Buchananism."

"By Buchananism I mean the fascist, anti-labor demagoguery of Patrick Buchanan — from his anti-Semitism to his anti-immigrant campaign; the violent assaults on abortion clinics by Operation Rescue; and the mobilizations of cops in support of police brutality such as we have seen in the recent trial of Gary Spath." Spath is a cop who gunned down a 16-year-old Black youth in Hackensack and was acquitted by the courts.

Leonard encouraged all young people, workers, and farmers to support the socialist alternative in 1992 and to join the campaign for James Warren for president and Estelle

DeBates for vice-president.

Simone Berg, running in the 6th Congressional District, has been active for a decade in antiracist and women's rights struggles. She joined thousand of others in Washington, D.C., April 5 in the mass demonstration to defend abortion rights. Berg, 28 years old, will be organizing young people to campaign for the presidential ticket of Warren and DeBates.

Jane Harris, 38, a locomotive engineer for New Jersey Transit in Hoboken and member of the United Transportation Union, is the socialist candidate for the 13th Congressional District.

Jason Redrup, 30, has been active in protests against police brutality here in the state. He was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for the State Assembly from Newark in 1991 and is running in the 8th Congressional District.

The New Jersey Socialist campaign is also fielding two write-in candidates. Raymond Parsons, 29, a former rail worker and currently a worker in the printing industry, is a defender of the Cuban revolution and will campaign in the 9th Congressional District against the efforts of incumbent Robert Torricelli to tighten the blockade against Cuba.

Olga Rodríguez, a longtime fighter for immigrant rights and bilingual education, is running in the 2nd Congressional District. A garment worker, she is currently on layoff.

Several daily newspapers carried announcements of the filing for ballot status by the socialist campaign, including the Newark *Star-Ledger* and the *Jersey Journal*.

The Militant

Closing news date: April 20, 1992

Editor: GREG McCARTAN

Managing Editor: GEORGE BUCHANAN

Business Manager: Brian Williams

Editorial Staff: Derek Bracey, Estelle DeBates, Seth Galinsky, Martin Koppel, Paul Mailhot, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Williams. Published weekly except for next to last week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 727-0150; Telex, 497-4278.

Pacific edition printed in Wanganui, New Zealand, by Wanganui Newspapers, Limited.

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Subscriptions: U.S., Latin America: for one-year subscription send \$45, drawn on a U.S.

bank, to above address. By first-class (air-mail), send \$80. Asia: send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Canada: send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Société d'Éditions AGPP, C.P. 340, succ. R, Montréal, Québec H2S 3M2. Britain, Ireland, Africa: £35 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. Continental Europe: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. Iceland: Send 4,000 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavík. Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 400 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. Australia: Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box 79, Railway Square Post Office, Railway Square, Sydney 2000, Australia. Philippines, Pacific Islands: Send Australian \$75 or New Zealand \$100 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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Florida socialists: End embargo of Cuba

Issue appeal for supporters to come to Miami to help SWP campaign effort

BY MAUREEN COLETTA
AND JANET POST

MIAMI — The Florida Socialist Workers campaign has announced a drive to collect 8,500 signatures to put Laura Garza, candidate for U.S. Congress, on the ballot. A 32-year-old steelworker, Garza is running for the seat of Republican congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

This would be the first time a Socialist Workers candidate is on the ballot in Florida for a national public office. Florida has some of the most restrictive ballot access laws in the United States. In 1972, after supporters gathered tens of thousands of signatures for the socialist presidential ticket of Andrew Pulley and Linda Jenness, the slate was ruled off the ballot by the state. However, the socialist campaign committee — with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union — did win a suit challenging the undemocratic requirement of a 10-cent fee per signature checked by the Division of Elections. This requirement had applied solely to third party candidates.

Garza said the petitioning effort will include a full-time team of volunteers. She made an appeal for supporters to come to Miami at the end of April for several weeks to help out.

Embargo of Cuba protested

The Florida socialist candidate for U.S. Senate, Dan Fein, joined over 200 people, including many Cubans, demonstrating opposition to tightening the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba. The April 16 picket was held outside the office of Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen.

Ros-Lehtinen criticizes an embargo bill, sponsored by Democratic congressman Robert Torricelli, as being too liberal. The Torricelli bill would prohibit subsidiaries of U.S. companies abroad from doing business with Cuba and impose sanctions on other countries that trade with Cuba. It would also authorize funding for Cuban counterrevolutionary groups, many of which train in the Everglades of Florida. The U.S. blockade already prevents freedom of travel, communication, and trade as well as the sending of clothing and medicine to families.

The proposed legislation has fueled a debate in the Cuban-American community. Growing numbers of Cubans living in the United States oppose the embargo and favor moves toward normalization of U.S.-Cuban relations.

This sentiment was expressed at the picket line with signs and chants in Spanish including, "Family yes, embargo no," "Embargo = terrorism," "Medicine yes, embargo no," "Cuba yes, embargo no," and "Family yes, Ileana no!"

Dan Fein, a fueler at Miami International Airport, is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union Local 3-681. His opponent, Sen. Robert Graham, is a sponsor of the Torricelli bill. Fein and his supporters distributed a statement against the bill and the effort to step up the blockade.

"Washington is preparing more wars to defend U.S. business interests and control abroad," the socialist candidate said. "Stepped-up threats against Iraq, Libya, and North Korea are part of Washington's at-

tempt to beat down any country that dares to defy U.S. imperialism. The Torricelli bill is part and parcel of this drive toward war.

"My campaign calls for ending the blockade and the immediate normalization of relations with Cuba, including trade and freedom of travel. I also call for an end to threats and intimidation against those who call for normalization," stated Fein.

At an April 9 press conference launching the campaign, Fein spoke to Florida Public Radio and TV Martí in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) building as hundreds of immigrants waited in line to be processed.

TV Martí is controlled by right-wing Cuban exiles and partially funded by the U.S. Congress. It bombards a strong-frequency signal into Cuba that has for the most part been successfully scrambled and blocked. The TV Martí reporter said he had been paid "a lot of money" to interview Fein in order to show that "in a democratic country like the U.S., even a socialist candidate has an equal opportunity to run for office."

But Fein quickly corrected the reporter's assumption. "This is not a democratic election," Fein said. "Nor is there equal opportunity. I cannot even be on the ballot because of restrictive election laws, and I do not have equal access to the media. In Cuba, the workers and farmers directly participate in the government, in the decision-making process."

While at the INS office, Fein introduced the campaign and the *Militant* to some of the immigrant workers. He spoke against the repatriation of Haitian refugees, and against the increased effort to deport thousands of Nicaraguans whose temporary work permits will soon expire. He explained how immigrants are being used as scapegoats by the twin parties of the ruling rich as the economic and social crisis deepens.

Florida Public Radio asked Fein why he



Laura Garza, socialist candidate for U.S. Congress.

Militant

is running "as a communist, as a Marxist, when around the world communism is collapsing."

The candidate explained that the so-called communists in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were frauds, a reactionary bureaucracy holding working people in a death grip. "It's a good thing that these so-called communists have been exposed. Now real communist ideas, Marxist ideas, can be openly discussed as the way forward for working people," Fein said.

Supporters plan to reach out to workers, youth, and others interested in a fighting campaign. The candidates urge all supporters of democratic rights to aid the fight that will be needed to get a socialist alternative on the Florida ballot in 1992. This includes writing a letter in support of democratic access to the ballot in Florida, giving a contribution to the campaign, or joining in the gathering of signatures from April 25 to June 6.

Those interested in petitioning or other tasks to help put Garza on the ballot can call the campaign office in Miami at (305) 756-1020.

Utah socialists win ballot spot

BY BILL ARTH

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — The broadest slate ever of Socialist Workers Party candidates for statewide office in Utah will be on the ballot in 1992. Socialist candidates filed declarations of candidacy with the office of the lieutenant governor April 14, successfully completing the obstacle course erected by the state to deter working-class candidates from running. The candidates paid a total of \$2,256 in filing fees after the state had earlier certified that they had filed the required 1,100 signatures of registered voters necessary for ballot status.

On the ballot will be Patricia Grogan, an oil refinery worker at Phillips and member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union, for U.S. Senate; Eleanor Garcia, a smelter worker at Kennecott and member of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), for governor; William Arth, a chemical worker at BGA/Rubber Engineering and member of OCAW, for lieutenant governor; Eileen Koschak, a switchman for Union Pacific and member of the United Transportation Union (UTU), for U.S. Congress, 2nd District; and Nels J'Anthony, a conductor for Amtrak and member of the UTU, for U.S. Congress, 3rd District. David Anshen, a laborer in a non-union composites factory, is running for State Senate, 1st District, as a write-in candidate because of undemocratic restrictions requiring that candidates for State Senate be at least 25 years of age.

Supporters aim to gather the 300 signatures required to put the presidential ticket of James Warren and Estelle DeBates on the ballot during the summer.

Twenty-two-year-old Meg Hall, chairperson of the Utah campaign, urged "working people, farmers, youth, and all who want to fight the increasingly reactionary course of the Democratic and Republican parties to become a part of our campaign. The sole working-class voice in the 1992 elections will be the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party."

Good response to petitioning

In the weeks since the launching of the petition drive on March 14, the campaign has plunged into the political discussions going on among working people and youth. The effort to gather 1,100 signatures was projected to last three weeks. By the end of the first day, socialist campaign supporters

had collected more than 1,200. At the end of the drive, socialist campaigners submitted more than 3,500 signatures. They had sold scores of copies of the *Militant*, with a dozen people returning coupons for more information on the campaign.

A highlight of the effort to obtain ballot status was the circulation of petitions on the job by campaign supporters. Altogether, 45 USWA members at Kennecott and 41 at MagCorp, 26 OCAW members at Rubber Engineering and 21 at Phillips, 18 Interna-

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Socialist Campaign in the news

Eden Daily News

"The Voice of Rockingham County for 68 Years"

(USPS 167-560)

Eden, N.C. 27288

Monday, April 6, 1992

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One Eden Worker Seeks Presidency, Another In House Race

Fieldcrest Employees Seek U.S. Offices

The following article appeared on the front page of the April 6 *Eden News*. Eden, North Carolina, is an industrial city of 18,000. The *Militant* encourages readers to send us articles that appear in other newspapers. A clean photocopy of the article, including the front-page newspaper name as reproduced above, is helpful in making an attractive layout for this column.

Two Fieldcrest Cannon Inc. employees have announced their candidacies for governor and congressman on the Socialist Workers Party ticket.

Naomi Craine, 21, is running for governor, while Tony Prince, 41, is running for Congress in North Carolina's 12th District. Both are members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), and both work at Fieldcrest Cannon plants in Eden.

The Socialist Workers Party, which also has Chicago Steelworker James Warren

running for president and Estelle DeBates running for vice-president, stated from its Greensboro campaign office that the candidates are running to provide a "working-class alternative to the increasing reactionary bipartisan political agenda," according to a news release.

"Under the pressure of the economic and social crisis," Craine said, "both the Democratic and Republican parties have moved to the right. These two parties and the ruling rich they represent may have tactical disagreements over how to respond to the 'New World disorder' and the crisis of the market system, but they agree on one thing: a bipartisan drive against our standard of living at home and a rush toward war abroad."

"Working people need our own answers to the deepening depression that breeds social and economic devastation, war and fascism," Craine continued. "Instead of falling into the demagoguery and scapegoating of forces like (Pat) Bu-

chanan, we need to fight to break down the divisions between us bred by capitalism — both inside the U.S. and with fellow workers abroad."

The Socialist Workers candidates stand alongside working people who are looking for ways to fight back and defend their rights. On March 22, Craine traveled to Peoria, Ill., to join with 20,000 workers rallying in support of members of the United Auto Workers union on strike against the Caterpillar Corp.'s concession drive.

The first campaign activity for both Craine and Prince was their participation this weekend in the pro-abortion demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Craine has been a socialist activist since junior high school and a union activist for the last three years. Prince, a machine operator at Fieldcrest, has been active in union struggles for more than a decade. A long-time supporter of the Cuban revolution, he has traveled to Cuba several times.

Cat workers discuss abrupt end of strike

Continued from front page
they held the line. But now he doesn't know what to expect. Regarding the union officialdom's agreement to go back to work under the company's final offer, he said maybe this meant giving up all they had fought for. It will be "very difficult in there," he said, referring to going back to work at Caterpillar.

The Peoria *Journal Star* and other big-business papers that backed Caterpillar throughout the strike reported their view that many workers were ready to cross the picket lines. These press reports were exemplified by a *Chicago Tribune* article quoting Harley Shaiken, a professor of labor studies in San Diego, California, and a former United Auto Workers (UAW) official.

"The union staged an orderly retreat and avoided a debacle," he said. "I suspect it was a case of reading the membership. With the threat of losing everything, it was better to retreat in an orderly way."

Strength of strike

Many strikers, however, said the strength they had shown over the many months of the strike, with only a small minority crossing the picket line — many less than the 1,000 claimed by the company — showed something different.

"Like everybody else who stuck it out, I don't think I could've crossed the picket line knowing my brothers were still out here fighting for everything this union has worked for," said Mike Payne, a Caterpillar employee for nearly 21 years, in an interview with the *Journal Star*. "If I had, I wouldn't have liked myself very much."

Many UAW members told the *Militant* that talking about crossing the line and actually doing it were two very different things, and that there had not been any significant back-to-work movement among the strikers at any time during the strike.

The union and company say they will negotiate for at least the next 90 days to iron out an agreement.

In the meantime it is unclear what the UAW members going back to work face. Caterpillar has said it will implement its "final offer" to the union, including a two-tier wage and benefit agreement for its major parts facilities; changes in the seniority system and the grievance procedure; and a change in job protection provisions.

Immediately after the UAW agreed to take down the picket lines Caterpillar management announced it would not call all the strikers back. Throughout the past week management did not allow strikers who had reported for work to return. At the same time they escorted UAW members who had crossed the picket lines into the plants. Gerald Flaherty, Caterpillar Group president, initially said 10 to 15 percent fewer workers would be needed.

Plans to cut work force

Then on April 17 company spokespeople

said they would take all the strikers back and cut the work force by 1,350 through offers of early retirement or attrition. The company has said that 400 to 500 workers have retired since the strike began last November. Added to the 1,350, this means about 1,800 jobs lost.

In addition the April 17 *Journal Star* reported that Caterpillar will fire 10 strikers for their picket line activity.

While the company says it will not hire replacement workers, it has stated that Caterpillar will continue to interview and test hundreds of job applicants that it had lined up during the strike. This move fits in with the company's continued employment of the notoriously anti-union Vance International Security thugs.

Many UAW members said one of the things they were glad to see after the strike ended was that Vance had packed their bags and left. However, a column in the April 17 *Journal Star* called "Questions keep coming in Cat dispute" explained this was not the case. "Vance International Security employees will still be in Caterpillar facilities but they will be much less visible than during the strike," stated Jerry Brust, Caterpillar's chief negotiator.

Many UAW members at Caterpillar felt their strike had become stronger after the company announced it would replace strikers beginning in early April. They pointed to the expanded early morning picket lines outside the Caterpillar plants in Peoria and Decatur, Illinois, sometimes with up to 2,000 strike supporters or more, that confronted scabs on a daily basis.

More unionists and other strike supporters had been to the picket lines in the past

two weeks than at almost any time since the strike began more than five and a half months ago.

Among those on picket lines in Decatur and Peoria were members of the UAW; United Mine Workers; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; United Food and Commercial Workers; United Steelworkers; construction unions and more. High school students and others also came out to the picket lines.

Unionists from other cities have continued to come to the union hall since the strike ended. On April 15 half a dozen members of UAW Local 5 women's committee came to the union hall to support their fellow UAW members.

In an important show of solidarity with the Caterpillar workers, 175 students and unionists demonstrated at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana April 17. They were protesting the inclusion of two Caterpillar company officials in a conference on "global competitiveness."

Around the country unionists and others are discussing how the developments at Cat-



Pickets at Caterpillar plant in Peoria, Illinois, early April. Militant/John Sarge

erpillar affect them.

Jim Garrison, a UAW Local 110 member at Chrysler in St. Louis, reports heightened discussions among UAW members there. "Before April 1 there wasn't that much discussion at work about the connections between the Cat strike and our contract in 1993. But after the company started bringing in scabs and the press coverage increased the discussion was everywhere."

"When the strike ended the discussions continued, but now they're a lot more sober. A lot of people think this has really hurt us in our contract fight in 1993."

As picket lines come down at Caterpillar, key unresolved issues remain before union

The following article appeared in a special supplement to the *Militant* that was printed April 16.

BY ERNIE MAILHOT AND MARY ZINS

EAST PEORIA, Illinois — "I don't like this agreement. The fight is far from over. We'll keep fighting, but we don't know what it will be like," said Chuck Brannan, who has worked at Caterpillar here for the past 20 years.

The decision by top officials of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union to abruptly end the 5-month strike against Caterpillar Inc. April 14 has left many UAW members angry and unsure of where they stand.

Dennis Bennett, a union member at the East Peoria complex, explained to the *Peoria Star Journal* that while he would be glad to be getting a pay check again, "I'm confused. I'm bitter. I don't know why

the union agreed to this."

"This is worse than in 1982," said Don Edwards, a lathe operator with 18 years at Caterpillar, referring to the 7-month-long strike that year. "After the strike in '82 I was laid off for four years but at least we had a contract. Now we're going in there without even that."

The return-to-work agreement was reached behind closed doors in a meeting between top company and union officials with federal mediator Bernard E. DeLury. According to DeLury, the union agreed to go back to work under the company's previously rejected final contract offer. The company agreed not to hire replacement workers but reserved the right to continue taking applications and building up a pool of replacement workers.

The final contract offered by Caterpillar had been repeatedly rejected by union officials because of its many takeaway provisions. The company has insisted on a two-tier wage and benefit agreement for its major parts facilities; changes in the seniority system and the grievance procedure; and a change in job protection provisions that would help the company cut deeply into its workforce.

"I just don't understand this agreement," explained UAW member George Petty to a *New York Times* reporter. "It just makes you feel that everything we did was for nothing."

Caterpillar, with the taste of blood in its mouth, has taken a hard stance with union members who have shown up at the plant gates in order to return to work. Thousands of workers were told April 15, the day after the settlement, to go home and wait to be summoned to return. When asked about the rumor that Caterpillar would be cutting back 10 to 15 percent of its workforce, Wayne Zimmerman, vice-president for human services, responded, "That's a possibility." Company spokesperson Gerald Flaherty later announced that Caterpillar would be cutting back 1,350 jobs because of production changes instituted since the strike began. They would begin to reduce the workforce by offering voluntary early retirement.

Questions unresolved

While workers are supposed to be going back under terms of the company's final offer, contradictory statements between the union and the company leave many questions unresolved as workers begin going back into the plants.

- Will everybody have a job?

- Will Caterpillar put to work some of the replacement workers they have been interviewing up to now?

- What will happen to seniority in the plant? Will workers who have crossed the picket line have seniority over those that haven't?

- Are workers going in with a contract or not?

The answer to these questions will be determined in struggle between the union and the company in the coming days. The support of other unionists will boost UAW members in their battle to hold off Caterpillar's assault.

The strike against Caterpillar has been one of the most important battles of the labor movement in many decades. Corporations and workers around the world have been keenly watching it. Although there had been much publicity about workers abandoning the fight and crossing the picket line, up to the time of the agreement the strike had been solid. At some plant gates the numbers picketing were growing. Only a few hundred of the nearly 13,000 UAW members on strike had made the decision to go against the strike by returning to work.

Mass rallies

Most of the strikers had either been on strike or laid off for more than five months and were sticking with the fight through the hardships of the long strike. Caterpillar's decision to impose its final contract offer and begin hiring replacement workers brought the strike to a new stage. It opened up a fight by UAW members and other unionists to beat back the company's attempt to impose a takeaway contract.

Union members responded to Caterpillar's call for a back-to-work movement with mass rallies in front of every plant entrance. Thousands of UAW members mobilized for these early morning picket lines. They were often joined by other workers from nearby factories and mines who came out to support the Caterpillar workers and help discourage people from crossing the picket line. Mineworkers from central Illinois were coming up to the picket line in recent days to show support for the strike and discuss with UAW members how the unions should respond to Caterpillar's actions.

Since there were very few meetings for workers to discuss the strike, the rallies in front of the plant gave strikers the chance to

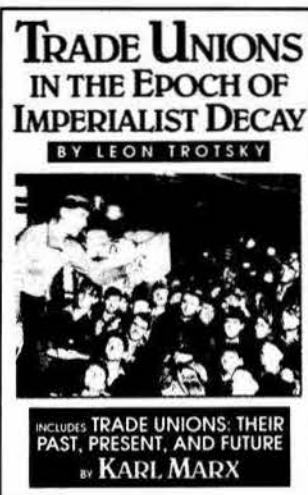
Continued on Page 12

FROM PATHFINDER

A BOOK FOR FIGHTERS

"More food for thought (and action) than will be found in any book by anyone else on the union question."

— **Farrell Dobbs**, outstanding leader of great battles in the Midwest that built Teamsters union in the 1930s.



As workers at Caterpillar and elsewhere confront the relentless war of the employers against our standard of living, unionists, students, and other fighters will find this book invaluable.

In this collection, two outstanding leaders of the revolutionary workers' movement discuss the tasks of trade unions under capitalism and their relationship to workers' fight for economic justice and political power. The articles by Trotsky were written during the capitalist crises and the deep-going workers' radicalizations of the early 1920s and the 1930s.

Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12, or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. 156 pp., \$13.95. Please include \$3 for postage and handling.

'Militant' supporters launch target week

Continued from front page
new readers to the socialist press. This includes 3,500 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 750 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 200 to *L'Internationale*, and 1,250 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Shortly after the *Militant* went to press last week the Caterpillar strike came to an abrupt end. In response to this development, the *Militant* staff produced and mailed to distributors a special Caterpillar strike supplement explaining the new situation and reporting discussions among workers on this turn of events. For the benefit of all our readers, this article is reprinted in this week's issue on page 4.

Teams of *Militant* supporters took the paper along with this supplement to plants and working-class communities throughout central and southern Illinois where many of these former strikers live and work.

The accompanying article by Ernie Mailhot shows the kind of openings that exist for introducing the *Militant* to working people and students interested in drawing the lessons from the Caterpillar strike experience.

Supporters in Des Moines, Iowa, are at the top of the subscription scoreboard for the second week in a row. They're off to a strong start in sales to members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union who have already bought 10 *Militant* and 4 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, along with 2 copies of *New International*.

Sara Lobman from Des Moines writes: "A worker from the Monfort meat-packing plant spent an hour at the Pathfinder bookstore discussing the superexploitation faced by workers in Mexico and other semicolonial countries, and the need for all workers to champion the demands of the worst off. He had already bought *Nueva Internacional* with the articles about Che Guevara. After getting paid, he also got a *Perspectiva Mundial* sub."

From Chicago, Claudia Hommel writes: "Militant supporters have been selling the paper at the subway terminal at O'Hare airport. Two United ramp workers, members of the International Association of Machinists, regularly buy the paper. They have begun to 'corner' their

coworkers to check out the *Militant* as well. A Chicago Transit employee working on the platform has just bought his first subscription."

The *Militant* business office is still waiting to receive national subscription goals

from supporters in industrial unions. When these goals have been received, the *Militant* will begin printing a weekly scoreboard reporting the progress being made in winning new readers among members of these unions.

'Militant' is part of discussion on results of Caterpillar strike

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

PEORIA, Illinois — As workers throughout central Illinois sort through what happened in the Caterpillar strike, the *Militant* is part of that discussion. Teams of socialist campaigners sold more than 180 copies of the paper to Caterpillar workers, coal miners, students, and others this past week.

John Grayned, a 25-year veteran of the Caterpillar facility in Decatur, said, "I don't know what to expect when we go back to work next week. They fired me three times before. Things will be pretty wild, but we still have a lot of unity in our union, even though we've been set back." Grayned bought a subscription to the *Militant*.

Sales teams fanned out to cover areas around Peoria, Decatur, Aurora, and Pontiac, as well as the central Illinois coalfields. Ellen Haywood, socialist candidate for Congress in Illinois, and a member of the Steelworkers union, reported that miners were especially interested in discussing the Caterpillar situation. Haywood and three campaign supporters sold 31 *Militants* at mine portals.

One group of workers at the Monterey No. 2 Mine in Albers had just returned from the picket line in Decatur several days ear-

lier. "This strike shows that labor has just got to learn to stick together more," one of them explained. Miners are anticipating a fight from the coal companies when their contract expires in 1993.

Ten papers were also sold to students at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. One student bought a subscription and then decided to join the team the next day for campaigning in Peoria. He attended the Militant Labor Forum on the Caterpillar strike Saturday night in St. Louis and is planning to work with other students to set up a speaking engagement for the socialist candidates on the campus.

Another team of supporters campaigned at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, where students organized a protest of 200 against officials of the Caterpillar company who were speaking on campus.

On Saturday, at a shopping center in Peoria Kate Kaku, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois, joined campaign supporters in selling the *Militant* and discussing the fight of the Caterpillar workers. An ironworker stopped his car to buy the paper. "We've got to learn how to have a strike that can win," he said. Maybe this will help."

Charges dropped against unionists

Continued from front page
why we won such quick backing for the demand that the charges be dropped."

Zins and Kaku were part of the large crowd that came to the March 22 rally as the strike against Caterpillar was heating up. Both had spent part of the day distributing campaign literature, selling the *Militant*, and talking with striking workers before going into the rally.

They were soon approached by a cop, taken out of the civic center where the rally was being held, handcuffed, put into a police car, searched, jailed, and charged.

Recognizing the stakes in the fight, and the fact that their arrests were meant as a message from the cops and government to United Auto Workers (UAW) members and others who supported the strike, Zins and Kaku organized a defense committee and garnered support among working people, students, and political activists in the area. Funds were raised to hire Peoria attorney

Clayton Moushon.

At the hearing the state attorney's office gave no reason for not pressing ahead with the charges. This is despite the fact the cops earlier told the local press the two had been arrested at the request of the UAW, who, the cops claimed, didn't want "militant literature" being passed around. It is clear that both the inability to back up this claim and the extent of the calls for dropping the charges led to the victory.

"Quite a few miners were outraged at our arrests," Zins said. "They were determined not to let it happen. The police thought they could get away with dealing a blow to workers' and young people's ability to organize ourselves. They found out differently."

Zins and Kaku thanked their supporters. "Without your support we wouldn't be here victorious," said Zins. "We will continue to build support for the fight now ahead of workers at Caterpillar, as they face ongoing attempts by the company to weaken their union. We will continue to campaign here and encourage others to do the same."

A reception will be held in St. Louis April 25 to celebrate the victory and raise funds to cover the legal and publicity fees involved in the defense case. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will take place at the Pathfinder Bookstore located at 1622 S. Broadway. Donations to the Committee to Defend Kaku and Zins can be sent to: P.O. Box 314, Madison, IL 62060.



Militant/Jim Garrison

Selling the 'Militant' in Decatur, Illinois. More than 180 copies were sold to Caterpillar workers, coal miners, students, and others in just one week.

Sales Drive Scoreboard

Areas	The Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		L'Internationale		New International		Total	
	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Des Moines, IA	130	37	28%	25	2	2	0	40	4	197	43
Salt Lake City	130	27	21%	20	2	2	0	30	1	182	30
Pittsburgh	90	17	19%	5	1	2	0	30	0	127	18
Cincinnati	20	3	15%	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	3
Birmingham, AL	80	10	13%	5	0	2	0	40	1	127	11
Greensboro, NC	80	10	13%	8	0	2	0	15	0	105	10
New York	250	33	13%	100	2	20	1	110	0	480	36
St. Louis	100	13	13%	5	0	2	0	25	0	132	13
Seattle	120	15	13%	35	9	3	0	25	1	183	25
Los Angeles	180	21	12%	100	8	4	0	110	2	394	29
Baltimore	110	12	11%	12	0	3	0	30	0	155	12
Cleveland	90	10	11%	10	0	2	1	20	1	122	12
Washington, DC	130	14	11%	20	0	10	0	55	4	215	18
Detroit	140	14	10%	10	0	2	0	30	4	182	18
Miami	110	11	10%	30	2	15	3	45	3	200	18
Newark, NJ	160	15	9%	50	0	12	0	70	5	292	20
Houston	80	6	8%	20	1	2	0	20	3	122	7
Atlanta	90	6	7%	8	2	2	0	30	2	130	10
Boston	135	10	7%	40	2	15	0	50	0	240	12
Philadelphia	85	5	6%	20	1	3	0	30	0	138	6
Chicago	150	8	5%	35	0	5	0	70	10	260	18
Morgantown, WV	80	4	5%	3	0	2	0	30	0	115	4
Twin Cities, MN	140	7	5%	20	1	2	0	30	0	192	8
San Francisco	150	6	4%	50	3	8	0	70	7	278	16
Ft. Madison, IA	5	0	0%	0	0	0	0	2	0	7	0
New Haven, CT	10	0	0%	2	0	0	0	3	0	15	0
U.S. TOTAL	2,845	311	11%	633	36	122	5	1,010	45	4,610	397
AUSTRALIA	45	0	0%	14	0	1	0	10	0	70	0
BRITAIN											
Sheffield	50	11	22%	3	0	2	0	25	7	80	18
London	80	7	9%	6	0	2	0	40	0	128	7
Manchester	50	3	6%	2	0	1	0	30	0	83	3
BRITAIN TOTAL	180	21	12%	11	0	5	0	95	7	291	28
CANADA											
Montreal	65	19	29%	20	1	30	5	50	10	165	35
Toronto	90	10	11%	20	2	5	0	45	2	160	14
Vancouver	90	13	14%	15	1	5	0	30	0	140	14
CANADA TOTAL	245	42	17%	55	4	40	5	125	12	465	63
FRANCE	5	0	0%	2	0	15	0	5	0	27	0
ICELAND	20	4	20%	1	0	1	0	5	0	27	4
MEXICO	0	0	0%	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
NEW ZEALAND											
Auckland	55	17	31%	5	0	1	0	13	0	74	17
Wellington	40	5	13%	1	0	1	0	10	0	52	5
Christchurch	40	6	15%	1	0	1	0	10	0	52	6
Other N. Z.	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
N. Z. TOTAL	139	28	20%	7	0	3	0	33	0	182	28
PUERTO RICO	1	0	0%	5	0	0	0	2	0	8	0
SWEDEN	55	17	31%	30	4	3	0	10	1	98	22
TOTAL	3,535	423	12%	763	44	190	10	1,295	65	5,783	542
SHOULD BE		630	18%		135		20		225		1026
DRIVE GOALS	3,500			750		200		1,250		5,700	

—CALENDAR—

TEXAS

Houston

Celebrate May Day: Backyard Party for Mark Curtis Parole Now Fund Raffle. Sat., May 2, 6-10 p.m. 1351 Goswell, Channelview, Texas. Watch video *Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*. Drawing at 8 p.m. For more information: (713) 522-8054 or 452-7214.



Nurses in Japan demand higher wages, shorter workweek

About 80,000 nurses in Japan stopped work for half an hour to four hours April 4. At protest rallies the nurses demanded higher wages, fewer night shifts, and hiring of more personnel, according to a report by the 170,000-member Japan Federation of Medical Workers' Unions.

Japanese hospitals are understaffed. There are about 18 nurses for every 100 hospital beds, compared with 69 in France and 55 in the United States, the union said. Nurses work six days a week and about nine night shifts a month. Their pay averages 20 percent less than that for office workers.

North, South Korean gov'ts agree to forgo trade tariffs

The governments of North and South Korea have agreed to make inter-Korean trade exempt from tariffs. It was the first specific agreement to be signed in the two-month-old talks, aimed at implementing a pact that would restore trade, travel, and closer relations between the two parts of divided Korea. Government representatives also agreed at a border meeting that direct air, land, and sea transportation should be used for trade rather than intermediary channels in China and Hong Kong.

Yeltsin demands hard currency to build power plant in Cuba

The Russian government of Boris Yeltsin decided it would resume work on a nuclear power plant in Cuba only after Cuba agreed to assume all hard currency expenses associated with the project. Construction of the plant began 10 years ago with help from the former Soviet Union. If the plant becomes operational each of the two reactors is expected to replace 600,000 tons of imported oil.

Ukraine regime builds own navy as friction with Russia lingers

The Ukrainian government is taking steps to build its own naval force as the dispute with Russia over the fate of the Black Sea fleet of the former Soviet Union remains unresolved. In January, Ukraine ordered the fleet's officers and sailors to take a loyalty oath to the newly independent state. Some complied, but many refused. Russian president Boris Yeltsin angrily laid claim to the fleet.

The two governments agreed April 9 to set up a commission on the fleet's fate. Meanwhile, Ukrainian military representatives have set up a temporary naval base in an old training school for ensigns in Sevastopol in the Crimean peninsula, in hopes of assuming control of at least part of the fleet.

Undercover Israeli agents murder Palestinian 'suspects'

Last November, gunmen of an undercover Israeli army unit shot Palestinian fruit vendor Bassam Fadi Shaban at point-blank range at the market in the West Bank town of Jenin. Then they repeatedly fired at him as he lay on the ground. His crime? Alleged membership in the Palestinian organization Black Panthers, affiliated with Al Fatah, the main group of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

There have been at least three dozen cases of similar summary executions by undercover army units over the last year and a half. Members of these units speak fluent Arabic and easily blend into crowds by wearing Arab headscarves, or sometimes women's clothes.

United Nations threatens to pull its troops from Cyprus

The United Nations Security Council threatened to pull UN troops out of Cyprus if the divided island's two regimes do not reach a compromise by July. Cyprus has been divided into Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot regions since Turkey invaded the island in 1974. About 30,000 Turkish troops occupy the northern third of the country, which is recognized only by Turkey as a separate state. Greece maintains a smaller force in the south. The UN troops are deployed in between.

U.S. imposes sanctions on Libya

Continued from front page

including military strikes, leading to the overthrow of the government of Muammar el-Qaddafi.

The British *Economist* predicted two scenarios for war against Libya in its April 11 edition. If Qaddafi refuses to turn over the two alleged suspects, "America and its allies — following the Iraqi precedent — seek permission to use force." If Qaddafi gives in and turns over the two, it will not lessen the threat of war, the magazine predicts. The two men will "say that they were merely obeying the colonel's [Qaddafi's] orders" and Washington and London will "go after the colonel himself."

Imperialist hypocrisy

The *Economist* article entitled "Get Qaddafi," encourages London and Washington to make a more convincing case before going to war. "In so far as the Security Council is behaving like a court, the plaintiffs are also acting as judges and — potentially — executioners."

The weakness of the propaganda campaign against Libya has led at least one of the relatives of the victims of the Lockerbie bombing to raise questions. "As they stand right now, the sanctions can only be symbolic," said Pamela Dix, whose brother died on the Pan Am flight. "I can't see how they will serve any useful purpose in themselves other than possibly to frighten innocent people in Libya."

The accelerating threats also affect Libya's 1 million foreign-born workers, 60



percent of the country's work force. One thousand U.S. citizens work in Libya.

In an attempt to keep relatively well-paid workers from abroad — who are crucial to Libya's oil production — from fleeing, the National Oil Company of Libya announced an increase in their wages.

"They told us that any extra travel time created by the sanctions will be considered work time," a British oil worker told the *New York Times*. "And we will be compensated for any extra expense."

Pentagon report on Gulf war tries to justify killing thousands of Iraqis fleeing Kuwait

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a recent report on its war against Iraq, the Pentagon presents its justification for the burying alive of Iraqi soldiers, the mowing down of soldiers and others fleeing Kuwait City on the road to Basra, and the destruction of bomb shelters.

The Pentagon's "legal" defense comes near the end of a more than 1,000-page document titled, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress*. It was released in April.

"Situations arose in the course of Operation Desert Storm that have been questioned by some in the post-conflict environment," the report delicately notes.

One of the questioned "situations" was the burying alive of thousands of Iraqi soldiers at the start of the ground offensive, during a two-day assault by U.S. forces Feb. 24-25, 1991. *New York Newsday* broke the story in September of that year.

In almost clinical language, the report describes how the assault was conducted:

"To accomplish the deliberate breaching operation, the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized) moved forward and plowed through the berms and mine fields erected by the Iraqis. . . . The division then assaulted the trenches containing other Iraqi soldiers.

"Once astride the trench lines, the division turned the plow blades of its tanks and combat earthmovers along the Iraqi defense line and . . . began to fill in the trench line and its heavily bunkered, mutually supporting fighting positions."

Maximum speed and violence

This "tactic," the report explains, "resulted in a number of Iraqi soldiers dying in their defensive positions as those positions were bulldozed." This statement is the closest the entire report comes to providing any information about Iraqi casualties in the war.

The document compares the bulldozing of the trenches to other U.S. attacks during the opening of the ground offensive.

"Marine Corps breaching operations along its axis of attack into Kuwait used different, but also legally acceptable, techniques of assault by fire, bayonet, and the blasting of enemy defensive positions," the report asserts.

"Both tactics," it takes pains to emphasize, "were entirely consistent with the law of war."

The authors state that "to minimize loss" of U.S. lives, "military necessity" required "maximum speed and violence."

Responding to criticism that the Iraqis in

the trenches had no chance to surrender, the report says that "there is a gap in the law of war." To surrender, "communication must be made at a time when it can be received and properly acted upon — an attempt at surrender in the midst of a hard-fought battle is neither easily communicated nor received. The issue is one of reasonableness."

An earlier portion of the report, however, estimates that about two weeks before the start of the ground offensive Iraqi soldiers were not receiving enough food to survive. It makes it clear that U.S. commanders knew the Iraqi army — abandoned by the Saddam Hussein regime, without supplies, without officers, and without antitank weapons — could no longer function as a fighting force.

The road to Basra

The second "situation" this section of the report defends, is the massacre on the road to Basra.

On Feb. 26, 1991, Iraqi soldiers began leaving Kuwait City. In reality they were no longer an army, but a crowd of people doing their best to get out of the line of fire. Thousands of vehicles clogged the road out of the city as they tried to get back to Iraq as fast as they could.

The Pentagon report describes what happened next:

"The Iraqi force was stopped by barricades of mines deployed across the highway in front of and behind the column. Air attacks on the trapped vehicles began."

B-52s dropped 1,000-pound bombs on the highway. U.S. Marine, Navy, and Air Force planes, joined by British bombers in wave after wave, unloaded cluster bombs, missiles and whatever else they had on hand in the rush to wreak maximum damage, night and day.

The result, according to the report: "More than two hundred Iraqi tanks had been trapped and destroyed in the ambush, along with hundreds of other military vehicles and various forms of civilian transportation." *New York Newsday* puts the number of destroyed vehicles in the tens of thousands. Women and children were among the dead.

In an attempt to downplay the number of casualties in this situation, which the Pentagon planners call a "kill box," the report claims that "most Iraqi soldiers" were able to abandon their vehicles before they were destroyed.

Charred bodies everywhere

Eyewitness accounts by reporters who visited the road shortly afterward give a

"Most of us have been working in Libya since before 1986, when conditions were considerably more hazardous," he added. "But we all know that the United States doesn't hesitate to bomb anywhere, even where its own people are working."

Threats against Iraq and Korea

While focusing on Libya, Washington has continued to beat the war drums against Iraq and North Korea.

The UN Security Council told the Iraqi government not to interfere with U-2 spy planes that UN representatives have been flying over the country.

The *Washington Post* reported April 15 that the United States, Britain, and France delivered a warning to Iraqi ambassador Abdul Amir Anbara. "If an Iraqi radar locks on to allied aircraft, that radar will be eliminated," an unnamed diplomat told the paper.

Anbara was also told Iraq must withdraw missile batteries and radar units from areas near Kurdish-controlled zones in northern Iraq.

Meanwhile, Washington, trying to lay the basis for a military strike against North Korea, continues to charge that Pyongyang is developing nuclear weapons.

Central Intelligence Agency director Robert Gates, seeking to justify U.S. military action in the future, stated in early April that "once they have the requisite plutonium, they can have a weapon in as little as a few months to two years."

different view. "I lost count of the Iraqi corpses crammed into the smoldering wreckage or slumped face down in the sand," wrote a journalist from the *London Independent*.

A *New York Times* reporter said there were "charred Iraqi bodies everywhere."

"The law of war permits the attack of enemy combatants and enemy equipment at any time, wherever located, whether advancing, retreating, or standing still," the Pentagon report states. Searching for further justification, it adds, "Attacks on retreating enemy forces have been common throughout history."

To further wash their hands of responsibility, the report's authors assert that "at no time did any element within the formation offer to surrender." They don't explain how this would have been possible during the hours of sustained bombing.

Conduct of the Persian Gulf War also defends U.S. attacks on civilian targets and "collateral damage." In particular it takes up the destruction of a Baghdad air-raid shelter Feb. 13, 1991. More than 200 people died in the attack, when two laser-guided bombs pierced the shelter roof.

Claiming that U.S. commanders did not know there were civilians in the shelter and that it was "a legitimate military target," the report says it doesn't really matter. "The presence of civilians will not render a target immune from attack," the Pentagon says.

Among other chapters of the document are sections titled, "Cutting Off the Iraqi Army," "Degrading the Iraqi Army," and "Kill Boxes."

One section called "War Crimes" focuses on Washington's accusations of violations of the Geneva Convention by the Iraqi forces.

While the report spends hundreds of pages describing the number of air sorties flown against Iraq every day, the functioning of U.S. weaponry, and the conduct of the air and ground assault, it maintains total silence on three questions:

- It gives no figures for the number of Iraqi military or civilian casualties.
- It makes no mention of the Bush administration's refusal to disclose where Iraqi soldiers are buried.
- The report does not say one word about the Feb. 27, 1991, decision to halt the ground assault, a continued matter of controversy in ruling-class circles.

Brown's 'flat tax' would burden workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In his quest for the Democratic Party presidential nomination, Edmund Brown has attempted to project himself as a spokesperson for working people up against the corrupt politicians in Washington. At the center of the demagogic rhetoric of his campaign is a proposal to overhaul and simplify the current federal tax structure, replacing it with a flat rate of income tax.

This plan would in reality saddle working people with even higher taxes while signif-

icantly lowering the tax rate paid by the ruling rich.

Changing tax rates does not even begin to get at the source of problems facing workers

Brown proposes abolishing the progressive income tax structure along with the corporate income tax, Social Security taxes, and the gasoline tax. He advocates replacing them with a 13 percent flat income tax and a 13 percent value-added tax, which would be like a national sales tax.

"The 13 percent will lower the taxes on the middle class and the lower-income people," claimed Brown, who pitches his plan as a radical alternative to the current complicated and corrupt tax system.

However, according to the Citizens for Tax Justice, under Brown's proposal the

plan was the stuff of revolution instead of a deeply reactionary scheme."

Brown's value added tax amounts to a double form of taxation on working people who would pay both an income tax and another tax on all goods and services purchased. Working people, who spend virtually every penny they earn on items of consumption and basic services, would pay a disproportionately greater share of their income on the value added tax than the rich, who shelter a large portion of their wealth in savings and investment.

Well-known economist and author Paul Samuelson said Brown's tax system would "emasculate the distributional equity of a progressive tax system."

One of the former leading members of President Ronald Reagan's Council of Economic Advisors, William Niskanen, is enthusiastic about Brown's flat tax plan. "It is both pro-growth and antigovernment," he said. He added that because the plan would increase the taxes of the "middle class," this would increase pressure on the government to reduce expenditure on social programs.

Brown's tax plan also offers big tax breaks for businesses, claiming this would spur economic growth. For example it would allow corporations to depreciate the value of their investments much more rapidly — taking big deductions all in one year instead of spreading it out over several as required by current tax regulations. Brown would also eliminate the tax on capital gains, money earned from bond and stock investments. This proposal goes one step further than President Bush who has been

"reformed" in 1977. The wealthiest 10 percent pay much less.

Brown's tax plan is just one of the more demagogic proposals being put forward by capitalist politicians today. Both the Democratic and Republican party presidential contenders attempt to convince working people that tinkering with or overhauling the tax system is the way to end social injustice and revive economic prosperity. However, changing tax rates or altering the methods of taxation altogether does not even begin to get at the source of the problem facing working people — the worldwide capitalist economic depression and the moves by the rulers to salvage their system by relentlessly attacking the rights and living standard won by working people through past struggles.

Advocating tax reform as a panacea for society's ills is nothing new as far as capi-

talist politicians are concerned.

In 1886 a middle-class social reformer, Henry George, ran on a labor party ticket for mayor of New York with a campaign focused exclusively on tax reform. George and his supporters, who became popularly known as the "single taxers," called for increasing the tax on land while abolishing all other taxes. However, this plan, like Brown's "radical" proposal today, did not even address the deep social and economic crisis caused by the capitalist system of production.

No matter how much the tax system is reformed, the fundamental problem remains that basic industry and political control of the government continue to be in the hands of capitalist billionaires who reap tremendous profits from the exploitation and oppression of working people.



Democratic presidential contender Edmund Brown's tax proposal reflects shift in capitalist politics to the right. His plan would lower taxes for the rich.

poorest fifth of the U.S. population would pay 26 percent of their income in taxes, up from the current 6.7 percent. The richest 1 percent, whose incomes average more than half a million dollars annually, would pay just 13.5 percent in taxes, down from 28.6 percent at present.

"It will be the greatest thing for the rich and powerful since Andrew Mellon was Calvin Coolidge's treasury secretary in the 1920s," said Robert McIntyre, director of Citizens for Tax Justice.

Brown models his tax plan on a flat tax proposal developed by two right-wing economists, Robert Hall and Alvin Rabushka, from the Hoover Institution in Palo Alto, California. But Brown's proposal would place an even stiffer tax on the poorest of working people. Hall and Rabushka would exempt from taxes the first \$16,000 in income. Brown's plan has no such exemptions.

Brown's proposal has won the backing of important political forces on the right including conservative economist Milton Friedman and the editors of the *Wall Street Journal*.

'Moving right and left'

Doug Henwood, editor of the *Left Business Observer*, points to a 1974 statement by Brown, which aptly describes his confused political perspective. "You watch, I'm going to move right and left at the same time," said Brown.

"The left part is easy to see in the antirich, anticorporate rhetoric of his 'take back America' campaign," comments Henwood. "The right part is a little less visible, thanks to Brown's rhetorical skills. For example, from listening to him, you'd think his tax

on a campaign to lower the capital gains tax rate.

Among the liberals backing Brown's proposal are Alexander Cockburn, a columnist for the *Nation*, and Robert Pollin, a member of the national steering committee of the Union for Radical Political Economics. In an April 2 column in the *Wall Street Journal*, they write, "With his flat tax plan Jerry Brown has prompted the only serious intellectual debate of the Democratic primaries. . . . Mr. Brown offers something we on the left should always welcome: an opportunity to think about fundamental change."

While admitting that Brown's proposal is indeed regressive, they claim this can be compensated for by introducing other measures that would restore progressivity. But Brown makes no such proposals.

Brown's tax proposal comes out of and is a reflection of the shift of capitalist politics to the right. While liberals such as Cockburn and Pollin embrace Brown's proposal as a radical-sounding promise for fundamental change, the only thing that would actually change for working people would be even higher taxes.

Brown seeks to tap support for his plan by appealing to working people's justified hatred of the burdens currently imposed on them by the current tax system. Despite Democratic and Republican party politicians' constant talk about tax reforms and promises of tax cuts, the various pieces of legislation passed by Congress through the years have actually increased taxes on working people. According to *Newsweek*, 90 percent of taxpayers today pay a larger share of their income in federal taxes than they would have if the tax system had not been



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

DEAN ATHANS

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Pathfinder Bookstore in Stockholm, Sweden, celebrated Black History Month for the first time in 1992. Reaching out with promotional materials, they took Pathfinder books and pamphlets to high schools, African clubs, shopping centers, and elsewhere.

Sales in February 1991 were \$272, but this year shot up to \$1,240, a 350 percent increase. The top-selling Malcolm X title was *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, with 6 copies sold. The best-seller of the month was the *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, followed by *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, by Ernesto Che Guevara. They also signed up three new members for the Pathfinder Readers Club in February.

Referring to a Pathfinder press release from Black History Month, which reported the recent successful Pathfinder visit to bookstores and libraries in South Africa, the Malcolm X Lovers Network Series, edited by Preston Wilcox, of Harlem, New York, observed: "This announcement is a credit to Pathfinder Press and Dr. Betty Shabazz. . . . We invite visitors to New York to view the Pathfinder Mural on the wall of the above-mentioned address." On the back page of the newsletter there is a picture of the mural, and the following: "Make

this MURAL a National Landmark! Plan to visit/observe this MURAL on your next trip to the Big Apple. It's located at 410 West Street."

Attractive, well-stocked, and open bookstores sell more books. The Atlanta Pathfinder Bookstore uses foamboard-backed bookcovers mounted with velcro on cork display boards in their front window. Bookstore staffer Salm Kolis says this system makes it easy to vary the display.

The Vancouver and Toronto Pathfinder Bookstores in Canada have taken steps to make their stores more attractive by moving into new storefront premises. See the directory on page 12 for the new addresses.

Out Now, A Participant's Account of the Movement in the U.S. Against the Vietnam War, by Fred Halstead, is back in stock. Reprinted last July, with a new introduction and cover, demand for it exceeded expectations. The book was out of stock at the warehouse last month. The 400 copies sold since July indicate that interest in the U.S. component of the international fight against the imperialist war against Vietnam continues to build.

Pathfinder books are now being distributed throughout the Middle East and Africa, with the signing of distribution agreements by Pathfinder and David Philip Publishers in South Africa, and a sales representative who will be selling them throughout the rest of the continent and in the Middle East.



Pathfinder Bookstore in Atlanta

Militant

Gains for ultraright in French elections are the result of growing social crisis

BY DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS — Facing a growing social crisis and rising popular hostility to the established political parties, French president François Mitterrand gave Prime Minister Edith Cresson the axe April 2, making her 10-month tenure the shortest in the 34-year history of the Fifth Republic. Named to replace her was Finance Minister Pierre Bérégovoy, best known for his defense of a strong franc and austerity policies.

The change followed on the heels of a defeat for the governing Socialist Party (SP) in the March 22 and March 29 regional and departmental elections. The SP received 18 percent of the nationwide regional vote, half its 36 percent score in legislative elections four years ago, and its worst showing since 1969. However, the SP defeat was by no means a victory for the traditional big-business parties, the Rally for the Republic (RPR) and the Union for French Democracy (UDF), led by former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The vote for these parties, running on unified coalition slates, dropped to 33 percent, down from 38 percent in 1988.

Scoring gains were parties virtually without representation in the National Assembly — the ultrarightist National Front, with 14 percent of the vote, and two environmental parties, the Greens and Ecology Generation, which together also won 14 percent.

Ultrarightist party gains

In the 1981 presidential elections, which saw the upset victory by Mitterrand over incumbent Giscard d'Estaing, National Front chief Jean-Marie Le Pen received less than 1 percent of the vote. Three years later, the National Front was winning enough votes to send deputies to the European Parliament. Subsequent elections have given it increasing support, with 10 percent in the 1988 legislative elections and 12 percent in the 1989 European elections. This has paralleled the deepening social crisis and loss of hope that the SP and the Communist Party (CP) have any policy different from that of the conservative coalition.

After 23 years out of government for the SP and 33 years for the CP, the 1981 electoral victory of their coalition generated large expectations among working people. Some of the first acts of the SP-CP regime were a substantial hike in the minimum wage, a fifth week of paid vacation for all workers, the lowering of the retirement age to 60, and nationalization of all major banks and some industry.

In 1982, however, in an abrupt shift, wages were frozen and workers' real wages declined for the first time in decades. From then on austerity became a permanent policy, jointly managed by the SP and CP, until the latter left the government in 1984. Unemployment has doubled from 1981 to almost 3 million today, 10 percent of the workforce.

Economic growth, which stagnated at 1 percent in 1991, is forecast by the government to barely inch forward in 1992. Recently surfaced scandals involving the channeling of public funds to finance SP election



National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen addressing rightist rally in Paris in January. Le Pen focuses on attacking the rights of immigrants.

campaigns and the use for transfusions in 1985 of blood known to be contaminated with the AIDS virus have further discredited the party.

Small waves of struggles by workers, youth and peasants have broken out since 1986. Last fall 200,000 farmers demonstrated against the reduction of their income. A crippling three-week strike by workers in the Renault Cléon auto plant, as well as other fights, took place. Since February tens of thousands of youth have demonstrated against a government-sponsored reform of secondary and higher education, which increases selectivity and aims to gear studies more closely to the needs of big business.

National Front's anti-immigrant plan

The National Front presents its hate-filled anti-immigrant program as a solution to the crisis. In November it published a manifesto with no less than 50 proposals to restrict the rights of immigrants. Among these are the deportation of all unemployed immigrants who have exhausted their unemployed benefits; denaturalization of all those having acquired French citizenship since 1974; priority access to jobs, housing, schools, and even school dormitories for French citizens; public aid to companies employing only French workers and special taxation of companies using immigrant labor; expulsion of all immigrants from the Sonocotra immigrant workers hostels, which are to be transformed to house homeless French citizens; and abolition of the current 10-year residency permits, to be replaced by 2-year permits "which are not automatically renewed."

The National Front often uses anti-Semitic rhetoric as well, such as Le Pen's statement that the gassing of millions of Jews was simply "a detail of the history" of World War II.

In response, large antiracist and antifascist demonstrations have been organized by broad coalitions of antiracist organizations, unions, and political parties. At least 50,000 people, overwhelmingly young, marched in one such action January 25 in Paris. During the recent National Front election campaign, demonstrations of thousands protested its meetings in every major city. One anti-Le Pen protestor was shot and wounded in Marseilles two days before the regional elections.

Le Pen's party, far from being at opposite poles from the major pro-capitalist parties, has developed further the anti-immigrant stands they share. Of the 3.6 million non-citizens in France — 6 percent of the population — half are North African. Together with several million immigrants who have received French nationality, they are in their great majority industrial and construction workers, particularly in the auto industry. With the deepening crisis, politicians increasingly try to whip up anti-immigrant sentiments while piously proclaiming that they themselves are not racist.

The RPR and UDF have denounced the Socialist government for being too lax on immigration. RPR leader and former prime minister Jacques Chirac publicly empathized with an imaginary French worker who became "crazy" over the "smell and

noise" of immigrants. Not to be outdone, UDF leader Giscard d'Estaing warned of an "invasion" of immigrants in the offing. He called for nationality to no longer be automatically granted to all those born on French soil, but only on the basis of a mysterious "blood right."

The Communist Party, long known for its chauvinistic policies and anti-import "Let's Produce French" slogan, has often joined in anti-Le Pen and antiracist demonstrations. This did not prevent it, however, from accusing the Cresson government of being soft on illegal immigration or from regularly speaking of crime and immigration in the same breath.

The evolution of the Socialist Party has been perhaps the most striking. The first SP-led government in 1981 granted papers to tens of thousands of illegal immigrants. After considerable pressure from immigrant organizations, it facilitated the renewal of work and residency permits which were combined into one 10-year permit. It dropped a proposal for the right to vote for immigrants in local elections, which had

figured in Mitterrand's 1981 election program.

When Cresson was named prime minister in May 1991, she quickly moved to restrict the granting of asylum to refugees. On July 8, 1991, she declared her willingness to use any means necessary, including air transportation, to deport alleged bogus asylum seekers. To a journalist who asked if this would not be the same as the "charter flights" used by the Chirac government to expel immigrants in 1987, and previously denounced by the SP, she replied that there were differences: "Many people take a charter flight to go visit a country on vacation and then come back. Here there won't be any coming back and, believe me, it won't be a vacation."

Cresson's government has set up detention centers near airports for asylum seekers the police wish to immediately deport. These centers have been repeatedly ruled illegal by the courts.

Cresson also became well-known for Japan-bashing, declaring, for example, "The Japanese work like ants... We want to live like human beings."

More instability ahead

In the March 22 regional elections the CP maintained its previous vote total with 8 percent of the vote. It failed to benefit from the discrediting of the SP because of its own previous participation in austerity governments from 1982 to 1984 and because of its long-time association with the Stalinist leadership in the former Soviet Union.

The two environmental parties campaigned for the curtailment of the French nuclear power program, the sharing of work to combat unemployment, and priority for mass transportation. They also called for an end to French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. This proposal was met with the promise of a moratorium on testing for the remainder of 1992 by Bérégovoy on April 8.

According to an extensive poll published

Continued on next page

Unionists in Canada march against gov't wage freeze

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — Tens of thousands of unionized workers demonstrated in Montreal and Quebec City April 12 against layoffs, plant closings, and wage cuts.

March organizers estimated that 50,000 workers marched in Montreal and 25,000 in Quebec City. Police estimated the combined marches at 35,000. The large majority of participants were hospital and provincial government workers. Their anger was focused on the Quebec government's decision to postpone renewal of collective agreements and impose a virtual wage freeze until June 30, 1994.

The day before, 8,000 teachers had protested in Quebec City against the wage freeze.

Last year the Quebec government negotiated a one-year extension of contracts with six union federations representing 400,000 workers in the public sector. The unions agreed to a wage freeze for the first six months of 1992, to be followed by a 3 percent increase in July, plus a 1 percent bonus.

Union officials motivated the deal by explaining that government workers had a responsibility to help the government during times of economic recession.

In February, the government announced its intention to unilaterally impose a reduction to 1 percent of the wage increase scheduled in July to be followed by increases of 1 percent in January 1993, and 2 percent between July 1993 and June 1994.

Speaking to the Montreal demonstration, Fernand Daoust, president of the Quebec Federation of Labour, said, "We are demanding of the sorcerer's apprentice Daniel Johnson [president of the Quebec government Treasury Board] not to play with fire and incite social tensions in Quebec."

Diane Lavallée, president of the Quebec Nurses Union, told the Montreal demonstrators, "Seventy-five thousand public service workers are in the streets today and they must be listened to."

Many marchers were angered by news reports the previous week that 30 of the Quebec government's top bureaucrats received average salary increases of 12.8 percent last year.

"I work in a hospital," one participant in Montreal told the *Militant*, "and we're fed up with the government. They raise our taxes, they give themselves big pay increases, and then they tell us that we're the ones who have to pay for their deficit."

Joining the march were many municipal workers and federal government workers, as well as workers from construction sites and factories. A contingent of 20 flight attendants on strike at Nationair, Canada's largest charter airline, joined the march. Their fight for a new contract is receiving growing publicity and support from unions across Canada and in Europe.

The unions are organizing protests against the wage freeze in the days and weeks ahead. They plan to protest in workplaces as well as to demonstrate at public appearances of Quebec government ministers.

Demonstrations are being organized across Quebec May 1 to coincide with the international day of struggle for workers rights. A union coalition is organizing a march in Montreal that evening under the theme, "Lack of respect, that's enough!" March organizers expect thousands of workers to participate.

Roger Annis is a member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1900 in Montreal.



Antiracist protest in Paris. Fifty thousand marched against Le Pen January 25.

Political turmoil continues in Britain after victory of Conservative Party

BY MARCELLA FITZGERALD

LONDON — The April 9 general election in Britain saw the defeat of the Labour Party and gave the Conservative (Tory) Party a 21-seat majority in the House of Commons.

While the London stock market responded to the news with jubilation, the mood among workers has been subdued. Many voted Labour in the hope that a Labour Party administration might bring some measure of relief from worsening conditions at work and a knife-edge economic existence. Others who voted Conservative did so out of fear that the increased taxes proposed by Labour to cover the party's campaign promises of increased spending on health and other social services, would put them on a knife edge. They were not jubilant either.

The election campaign by all capitalist parties, two profascist groups, and several organizations calling themselves socialist, reflected the growing nationalism and shift to the right of bourgeois politics in Britain.

The failure of the Labour Party to unseat the Tories in face of the deepest recession since the 1930s comes on the heels of a similar decline for social democratic parties in recent elections in France, Germany, Italy, and earlier in Sweden. This has led some commentators to talk about the demise of European social democracy as a whole.

The widespread base of support for the Tories, associated with Margaret Thatcher's government, has crumbled as unemployment and indebtedness have grown. However, no other party was able to propose any solution to the social and economic insecurity facing both workers and large sections of the middle class.

Kinnock resigns

The Labour Party has immediately gone into turmoil, with party leader Neil Kinnock announcing his resignation within days. A leadership battle opened between the center and right wings of the party.

The campaign of the Labour Party was distant from any identification with the trade unions, let alone a fighting labor movement using union power to defend itself from employer attacks. Trade union officials put the brakes on labor disputes such as that of miners in Armthorpe, Yorkshire, until after the election on the grounds they would cut across canvassing for the Labour Party.

There is little evidence that the trade unions campaigned, even among their membership, for a Labour vote. Bill Morris of the Transport and General Workers Union is now arguing for workers to wait five years and then, with "one more push," vote the Tories out. It is unlikely that resistance to worsening conditions will wait that long.

Five thousand London Underground (subway) workers were voting on whether or not to take strike action, while this article was being written.

Ultraright gains in French elections

Continued from Page 8

in the Paris daily *Libération* the environmentalists have the youngest electorate of any party. They also attracted a large number of votes from workers, equalling the SP and the National Front, with 19 percent of workers' votes. The CP only received 11 percent. The votes from workers for the "antiestablishment" ultrarightists and the environmentalists were significantly higher than the overall totals of 14 percent for each.

In his new government's April 8 policy statement, Bérégovoy once again had little to offer working people, hard-hit by the economic crisis. He proposed an increase in part-time work and a 3 percent reduction in the value-added tax on cars and luxury items.

In Scotland, the demand for some level of autonomy was an election issue. Labour MPs have joined with Scottish Nationalist, Liberal Democrat, and Green Party members to form "Scotland United," a group whose priority is to force the government to hold a referendum on Scotland's constitutional future.

Seventy-five percent of Scots did not vote for the Tory party. "Scotland United" held a street rally in Glasgow, April 12 that attracted 5,000 people.

No solutions to economic crisis

Throughout the campaign, none of the capitalist parties proposed any solutions to the economic crisis gripping Britain along with United States, Canada, Germany, France, and Japan. Side by side with this a growing cross-party agreement was seen on all major political questions critical to the interests of capitalism in Britain.

Throughout the campaign no dissent was heard over the threats of military action and the April 15 sanctions against the people of Libya imposed by the UN with the Tory government as one of the main backers. Only the Communist League candidates spoke out against the war moves. There is, however, a growing discussion among the rulers on the proposed European economic union. This debate had caused a rift among the Tories and led to the replacement of Thatcher as party leader a year and a half ago. The Maastricht treaty on European union, drafted in December 1991, is the source of growing political tensions both within and between Germany, France, and Britain.

All public discussion leading up to the election was confined to domestic policies. Analyzing the media coverage of the election campaign in Britain, the *Guardian* newspaper found that 24 percent of TV and radio items on the election had been given over to the economy, 12 percent to opinion polls, and zero to foreign policy.

Dependence on German mark

All discussion of the economy in the election campaign was restricted to domestic policies. Nevertheless, the possibility of even a shallow and short-lived upturn in the British economy depends on whether the German Bundesbank reduces its interest rates and therefore the exchange rate of the Deutsche mark. Without this, any reduction of interest rates in Britain, aimed at encouraging investment, would make the pound less attractive than the German mark to those capitalists who hold capital as money bonds. It would further reduce its exchange rate against other currencies, and therefore worsen the terms of import and export for manufacturing businesses in Britain.

The German imperialists have no interests in alleviating the problems of their British counterparts. At the same time they face huge problems trying to swallow the workers state in eastern Germany, as well as growing internal opposition to the Maastricht treaty.

On the eve of the election, Labour Party leader Roy Hattersley offered to support the passage of the controversial Asylum Bill into law before the Parliamentary session ended. This was intended to remove any discussion on immigration from the election campaign, by demonstrating Labour's agreement with the Tories on this issue.

This did not stop Nicholas Fairbum, Tory candidate for Perth and Kinross, from claiming that "under Labour the country would be swamped with immigrants of every color and race."

Typical of the tone set for this debate was a front page article in the national *Daily Mail*, headlined, "Baker's Migrant Flood Warning." Inside, the paper featured an item by Home Secretary Kenneth Baker titled, "We must not let our tolerance be abused." Baker argued that an open-door policy to



Conservative Party leader John Major. British election reflected growing nationalism and shift to the right of capitalist politics. Communist League candidates explained that racism and drive toward war are bred by worldwide crisis of market system.

immigrants would lead to the rise of fascist groups in Britain as in Germany. Many applicants to enter Britain are "bogus" because they are economic refugees, Baker explained.

Anti-immigrant raids

Throughout the three-week pre-election period the press carried stories of raids on workplaces to arrest illegal immigrants. The pursuit by police with tracker dogs of Punjabi small farmers who had paid their life savings to get to Britain was also regularly reported. A center page spread in the *Sun* newspaper showed a map of Britain with arrows indicating how immigrant workers from various countries were "invading" Britain.

None of the capitalist politicians so much as mentioned the bombing of Kurdish settlements by the Turkish government. Kurdish workers in London, protesting the bombing of Kurdish areas and the killing of over one hundred demonstrators by security forces in Turkey, were brutally attacked by police. Communist League candidates issued a statement on this incident and campaigned to bring it to the attention of other workers. Their statement was distributed during a demonstration against police brutality in Newham, east London.

Britain's continuing rule of Northern Ireland was similarly excluded from the election debate. Gerry Adams, president of the Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein, lost his seat in West Belfast to John Hendron of the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP). The SDLP has been taking part in talks with the British government on the constitutional future of Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein supporters harassed

Throughout the election, campaigners for Sinn Fein were harassed and held in detention by British security forces. They were also shot at. Three Sinn Fein supporters in Portadown were reported to have been arrested six times in 36 hours while campaigning for the party.

In Northern Ireland, the Tory party stood in the elections for the first time, eschewing its usual support for the Unionist parties.

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Afghanistan president Najibullah resigns

BY DEREK BRACEY

Afghan president Sayid Mohammed Najibullah resigned April 16 and tried to flee Afghanistan as growing sections of the army began fighting alongside militias seeking a new government. His downfall places in doubt whether a scheduled United Nations peace plan will proceed.

Najibullah handed power to members of his Watan Party as troops from the mujahedeen, which has been fighting a war against the government for more than a decade, reached the outskirts of Kabul, the capital.

Najibullah had agreed to transfer power to an interim government at the end of April as part of a peace plan drawn up by the United Nations in an attempt to end the war. UN negotiators were rushing to finalize the conditions for a new government when Najibullah unexpectedly resigned.

Two separate mujahedeen armies have been advancing on Kabul. One is led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, whose troops have control of much of the northern part of the country. The other militia, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, predominates in large sections of southern Afghanistan.

The two rebel militias are hostile to each other, leaving open the possibility that the war will continue despite the fall of the government.

Massoud's militia has been receiving important reinforcements in recent weeks as several government army leaders have sided with him, leading to the rapid fall of many towns and army bases into his control.

The United Nations made an appeal for all sides to stop fighting and to support the peace plan. Abdul Wakil, who was Najibullah's foreign minister, has indicated that the rump government wants to support the UN plan.

The civil war in Afghanistan has lasted

nearly 13 years. More than 2 million have died in the war, which has also left more than 500,000 disabled veterans; one-third of all villages destroyed; and 6 million refugees in Pakistan, Iran, and other countries.

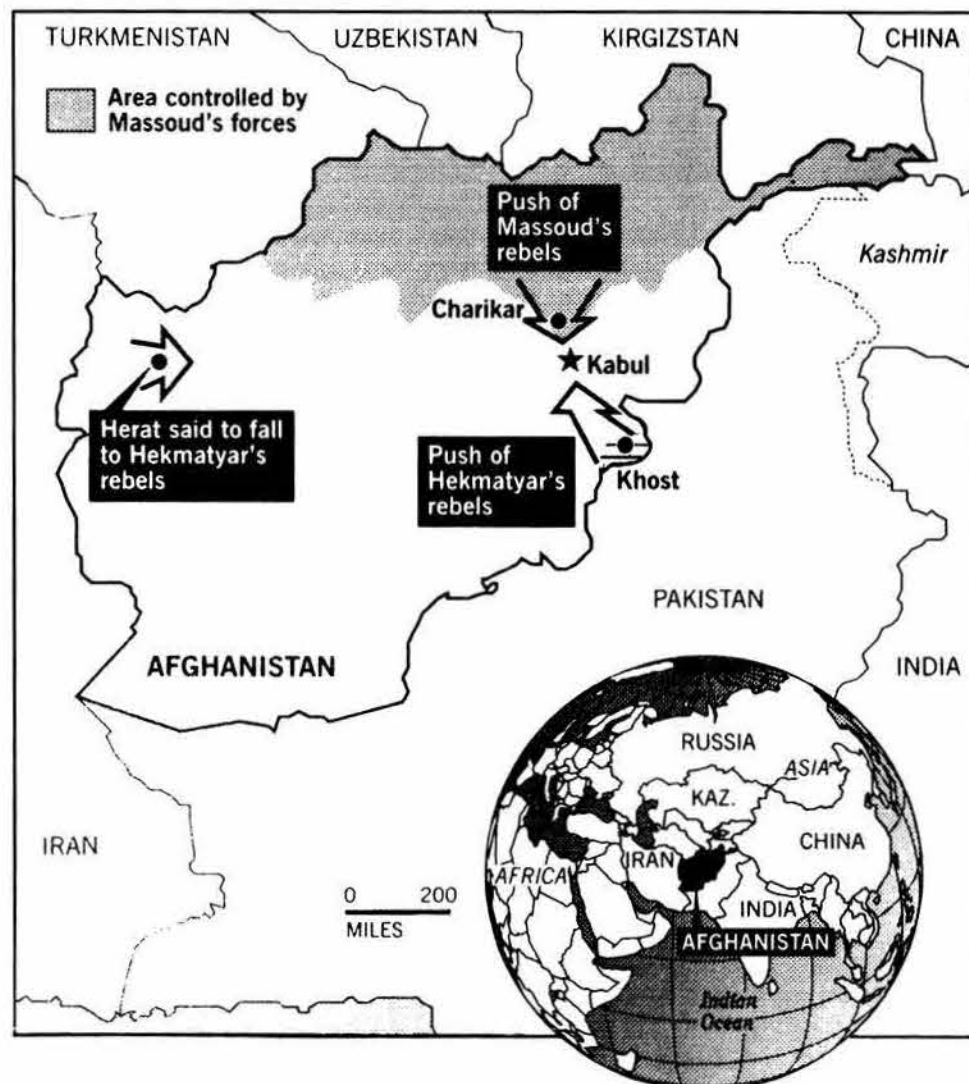
In December 1979 the Soviet Union sent troops to defend the government against the mujahedeen militias. They began a large-scale campaign to break the militias, including aerial attacks on sections of the Afghan population. By the time the last Soviet troops left Afghanistan in February 1989, they had destroyed some 12,000 villages.

The USSR's intervention in the civil war drove large sections of the Afghan population to support the mujahedeen troops. Soviet forces pulled out under fire, after losing 15,000 troops.

The U.S. government gave massive aid to enable the mujahedeen to sustain the war, as did Pakistan, which provided bases as well as material and logistical support to the mujahedeen forces. U.S. aid reached \$600 million a year by 1987.

A UN peace plan was first announced in May 1991. In September of that year the Soviet and U.S. governments agreed to stop sending military aid to Afghanistan. This UN process took another step when Pakistan endorsed it in January of this year and agreed to cut off military aid to the mujahedeen.

Najibullah offered March 18 to step down and be replaced by a UN-organized interim government. This plan was agreed to April 10 by the rebel leaders, who nevertheless continued to advance against government troops.



Political party wins right to privacy victory as harassment lawsuit opens

BY SETH GALINSKY

An important victory for the right to privacy was scored in the weeks leading up to the April 13 trial of a harassment suit against the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) and eight of its members in Seattle.

The case began in 1984, when former FSP member Richard Snedigar filed suit alleging that a 1979 donation he gave to the party was not used as he wished and sued for its return.

"We are trying to show that the court doesn't have the right to intervene in our internal affairs," said Doug Barnes, one of the defendants, in an April 14 phone interview. "The Freedom Socialist Party has the

right to make its own financial decisions, not the court and not former members."

"This is a political suit," added defendant Yolanda Alaniz. "It's not about a gift."

In a victory for democratic rights and freedom of association, Judge Dale Ramerman, who is hearing the case, ruled that the Freedom Socialist Party does not have to turn over minutes from its meetings. The decision by Ramerman, a county superior court judge, was issued March 19.

In pursuing his case, Snedigar demanded that minutes from FSP meetings be turned over to him as evidence. From the outset he has tried to force disclosure of internal FSP records, minutes, lists of members and sup-

porters, and financial records.

In 1987 the FSP was ordered by the court to present the minutes. The party was placed in default when it refused. Without trial, a judge ordered the FSP to pay Snedigar \$42,139. The FSP, which describes itself as socialist-feminist, succeeded in overturning the ruling on appeal in March 1990.

The Washington State Supreme Court at the time reaffirmed constitutional privacy rights and broke new legal ground by specifically including minutes as constitutionally protected information. The judges ordered the case returned to the county court, placing the burden of proof on the need for the documents on Snedigar.

In his March 19 decision, Judge Ramerman found that Snedigar "has not shown a sufficient need for the minutes. . . . The defendants have demonstrated that their First Amendment rights of association will be harmed by disclosure of the minutes."

The ruling came a day after the King County Labor Council donated \$1,000 to help out with the defendants' trial expenses.

"Many unions, gay and lesbian groups, and others, see this case as an attack on everyone's right to privacy," stated Barnes.



Former Afghan president Najibullah

Cuban church leader on U.S. speaking tour

BY MARLA PUZZI

ATLANTA — "We don't see any reason for tensions between the United States and Cuba. We want to be able to freely trade our products, and freely travel and visit each other." This was the message of Rev. Reynaldo Hernández, a Cuban Methodist minister on a six-month speaking tour of the United States. He spoke to an informal gathering of environmental activists here March 2. The tour, sponsored by the U.S. United Methodist Church, is part of an exchange between Methodists to promote understanding and dialogue between the two countries.

Hernández explained the history of Cuba's fight for self-determination, from the era of the Spanish colonization to the present. "Until 1959, Cuba was just a colony of the United States. North Americans could visit Cuba and conduct all types of business there. But the people were dying of hunger. With the triumph of the revolution, there were many changes in favor of the poor and in opposition to the ruling classes."

The minister also described the Cuban economy today. He said the situation is critical. Food and essential household items are rationed to ensure equitable distribution. Cuban families face shortages of detergent, condensed milk, canned goods, cooking oil, and soap. Hernández's family has not received its soap ration for three months. Factories have closed due to fuel shortages, and transport is difficult.

Despite these hardships, Hernández continued, there is "not much unemployment in

Cuba. People are retrained or given the option to work in the countryside. They can move closer to their workplace or switch to a job closer to home, maintaining the same wages." He added, "The Cuban people are determined to preserve their revolution and its social gains, such as free education and health care."

Hernández also described recent shifts in the policy of the Cuban government and the Cuban Communist Party toward the churches and religious believers.

In 1991 the Fourth Congress of the Cuban Communist Party voted to open its membership to religious believers, dropping the clause that required party members to be atheists. For the first time, Cuban religious believers may also serve in high government posts.

Recently, students at the school Hernández's daughter attends elected her president of the chapter of the Pioneers at her school, a children's organization affiliated with the Communist Party. Such an event would have been unheard of before 1991.

The Catholic Church in Cuba was traditionally a church of the wealthy elite, and its hierarchy remains largely unfriendly to the revolution.

With the 1959 revolution, Protestant churches which were offshoots of U.S. churches, saw their leadership flee to Miami. Eighty-five percent of Methodist pastors left Cuba," said Hernández.

Today, a new Protestant leadership has grown up with the revolution and has "a

position of dialogue and critical friendship with the revolution," said Hernández. Cuban Christians participate in many aspects of the revolution, including military training and defense. Last year the Cuban Methodist Church passed a resolution condemning the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

Utah socialists win spot on ballot

Continued from Page 3

tional Association of Machinists members at Eimco, and nine UTU members at Union Pacific signed petitions at work.

A team of campaign supporters circulated petitions in Price, the center of the coal-mining region in Utah. The Price area has been devastated by layoffs and mine shutdowns. The day before the team arrived, a major nonunion mine, Soldier Creek, had closed. A worker at another nonunion mine, Skyline, had recently been killed in a roof fall. The UMWA is also in the midst of fighting for legislation to make the coal operators financially responsible for the health-care fund for retired miners. The fund is in danger of insolvency due to reduced employer contributions.

Attacks on coal miners

The campaign issued a statement on the attacks on coal miners and received an excellent response from United Mine Workers

of America (UMWA) members, especially retirees. Many agreed with the need for fundamental change, including the idea of a workers' and farmers' government. On the other hand, a supervisor at a nonunion mine responded to the campaign statement by uttering obscenities at the petitioners. Campaigners gathered a total of 273 signatures in the Price area.

The campaign also participated in a public hearing on plans by the state to institute a "workfare" program for families on welfare. The hearing was attended by some 200 angry opponents of the plan, mostly single parents. Campaign supporters distributed a statement in opposition to the workfare plan.

In addition, supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign in Utah have attended demonstrations in defense of abortion rights in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Eleanor Garcia participated in the rally for striking Caterpillar workers in Peoria, Illinois, March 22.

Turkish government transforms Kurdish areas into war zones

BY BOBBIS BEYOĞLU

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Turkey's capitalist coalition government of the right-wing True Path Party and the social-democratic Populist Party has transformed the south-eastern part of this country into a war zone.

Tens of thousands of army troops, the military police, the police, and 30,000 "village guards," who are armed militiamen organized by the government to protect local landlords, have subjected the Kurdish people living in this region to continuous terror. Since March 21 an estimated 100 people have been killed, hundreds wounded, and more than 1,000 arrested.

For months the government of Turkey has been preparing for "spring war" against those it calls "terrorists and separatists." Fresh troops, new armored vehicles, and military equipment have been arriving in the southeast since February. Interior Minister Ismet Sezgin said in a February 12 speech that "until now only the days were ours." He pledged that "the Turkish security forces on duty in the region are today prepared for guerrilla war with the most modern weapons," so that "the night will also be ours."

A group of members of Parliament on a fact-finding mission in the Kurdish areas in early March was met by protests in several towns. In the Idil township of Simak, for example, they were greeted by 5,000 people shouting slogans for Kurdish independence and waving the red, yellow, and green Kurdish flag.

The *Turkish Daily News* reported that most of the politicians on the mission "are said to have concluded that the southeast was being lost to the outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK)." Parliament subsequently extended state of emergency measures in the 13 provinces of Turkish Kurdistan.

In a letter to the *Turkish Daily News* the PKK, which has an armed wing, called on Kurdish people "to join in mass uprisings throughout the country as of March 21." This date, marking the Kurdish New Year, is the anniversary of a Kurdish uprising led by an ironsmith. Protests to press for the

national demands of the Kurdish people have been traditionally organized on New Year's Day, known as *Nevroz*.

Police helicopters dropped leaflets on March 20 explaining that *Nevroz* is a Turkish holiday. In an attempt to block off mass participation in the town centers, dozens of villages and towns were occupied and blockaded by the army. In Diyarbakir, the region's capital, the governor banned *Nevroz* celebrations. The government also issued a decree warning that "if the celebrations turn into an expression of political beliefs or separatist demonstrations, the security forces will intervene."

Mass arrests

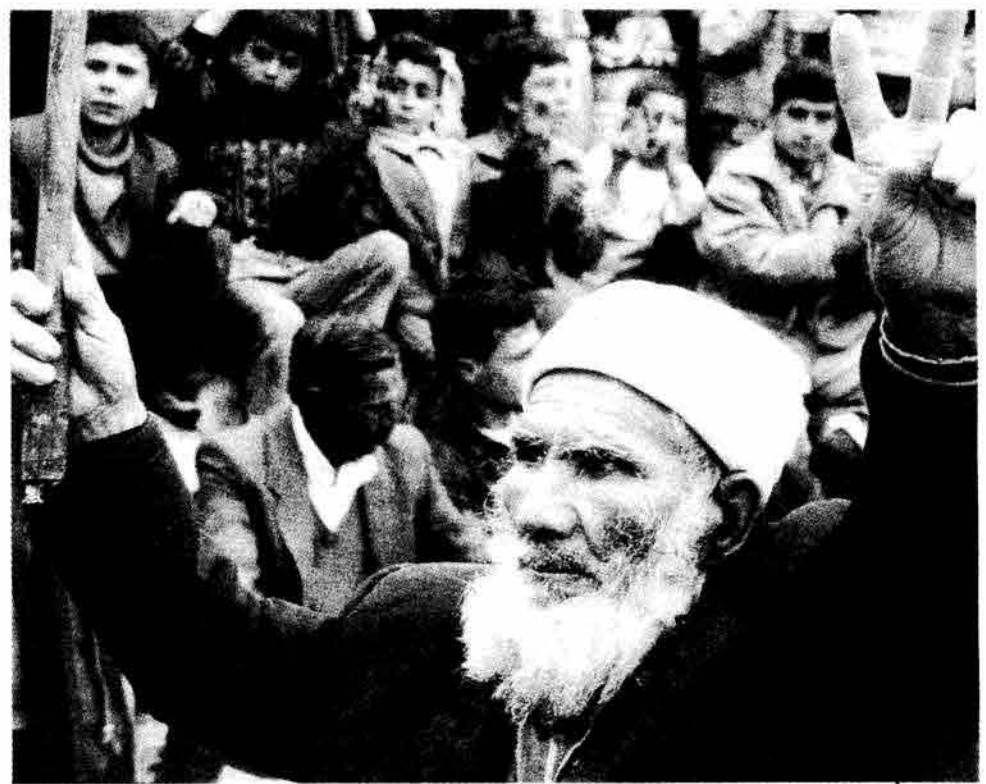
The police proceeded with mass arrests, and army attacks by troops left at least a dozen Kurds dead, including three children. A spokesperson for the People's Labor Party (HEP) warned that the Turkish government "using *Nevroz*, has launched a military operation."

Despite this campaign of terror, thousands took to the streets in cities, towns, and villages. Twenty thousand people marched in Silopi and Van. In Idil and Siverek 10,000 demonstrated in each city. When protesters chanted slogans, sang Kurdish songs, and waved the Kurdish flag, the police blasted Turkish battle songs over their loudspeakers. More than 90 people, including women and children, were massacred when the army fired into the crowds.

Armed clashes broke out as a result in Cizre, Simak, and Nusaybin. It took more than a week for Turkish armed forces to regain control of the region. Curfews were imposed and in Simak, all residents were ordered to gather at the local soccer stadium.

Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said in a March 25 speech, "The state just responded to those who rebelled against it." He called on "the people of the southeast as well as the outlaws to turn in their weapons."

Hundreds of journalists marched in Ankara the same day, protesting the murder of reporter Izzet Kezer. Kezer, who worked for



Kurdish protester defies Turkish government. Since March 21, 100 Kurds have been killed, hundreds wounded, and more than 1,000 arrested.

the Turkish daily *Sabah*, was killed by the army when troops opened fire on a group of journalists.

In an interview with the Turkish daily *Milliyet*, PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan explained the party's goals. "The PKK wanted to start negotiations with the government," he said, "and propose changes to the constitution. Turkey should become a federal state like Germany."

Ocalan said the Kurdish people should be allowed to elect their own parliament, which will organize a referendum "so that people in the southeast will decide what sort of relationship they want with Turkey. The PKK has already set up congresses in a number of cities, and delegations for the Kurdish parliament have been selected," he said. "It will convene this summer."

The oppression of the Kurdish people is reflected in the fact that the southeast is the poorest region of the country with per capita income in Diyarbakir one-tenth of that in Istanbul.

After decades of fierce government repression and the denial of Kurdish national rights, the struggle of the 14 million Kurds in Turkey is at a turning point. Given impetus by the fight of Iraqi Kurds for autonomy

in the wake of the imperialist war against that country, the fight has won new political space for working people to engage in open activity and to press forward their demands. The use of the Kurdish language, culture, and music have now been legalized. Newspapers and books in Kurdish have begun to be published.

Recently, the government has moved to use a series of bombings in major cities to try to close down the political space that has been won. In the aftermath of the *Nevroz* events, *Rojname*, a Kurdish newspaper with a circulation of 40,000, was raided by the police and has since ceased publication.

Imperialist complicity

The Kurdish people also face U.S. and other imperialist troops stationed in the city of Silopi as part of what Washington cynically calls "Operation Provide Comfort." The *Turkish Daily News* quoted a UPI report, that said, "Turkey used U.S. intelligence to direct air raid operations" against Kurdish camps in northern Iraq. Turkish warplanes bombed Kurdish areas in Iraq March 25 for the fourth time this year.

"Turkey continues to be a Desert Storm and NATO ally," a U.S. Defense Department official was quoted as saying in the UPI report. "When we consider our common interests in the region, this sharing of information is a natural development."

While the U.S. State Department praised the Turkish government "for its restraint in handling the events in the southeast," the government of Germany banned all arms shipments to Turkey, citing human rights violations. The London-based *International Herald Tribune* said, "Under pressure both from the heavily pacifist German public and from the 400,000 Turkish Kurds living in Germany, Bonn politicians stepped up their rhetoric against the use of violence."

Germany's defense minister resigned March 31 following disclosures of illegal arms shipments to Turkey. Under pressure from Bonn, the April 4 meeting of European Community foreign ministers, issued a protest against Turkey "for not respecting human rights while combatting terrorism in the southeast."

Thousands protest sweeping cutbacks throughout Sweden

BY DAG TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Demonstrations against cuts in public services are taking place throughout the country in response to plans that will result in the layoff of some 22,000 public workers.

One of these protests took place in Huddinge, where the municipal council was about to begin discussing the cuts when 4,000 angry people came marching up to the town hall.

Among the organizations that called the protest were unions of public workers and teachers, whose membership will be hit by the planned \$50 million cuts in the municipal budget. The cuts will include the layoff of 800 public workers and the closing of an indoor swimming pool and four out of five public libraries.

Economic situation on Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua 'has never been so bad'

BY MATILDE ZIMMERMANN

WHEELING, West Virginia — Ray Hooker, a Sandinista National Liberation Front delegate to the Nicaraguan National Assembly from Bluefields, spoke to an audience of about 50 at the Wheeling Jesuit College here March 17. Hooker was one of the main authors of Nicaragua's Autonomy Law, passed in 1987. The law's main aim was to guarantee important cultural, political, and economic rights to the indigenous peoples and English-speaking Blacks who live on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

"No nation state has yet found a satisfactory solution to the situation where people of different languages and cultures live in the same territory," said Hooker, pointing out that this was a worldwide problem. "Most dominant nationalities solve this problem through cultural genocide." The Nicaraguan autonomy process represented a different approach, one that recognized and encouraged cultural diversity, he asserted.

In response to question from the floor, Hooker said that the economic situation in the Atlantic Coast region "has never been as bad as it is now, even in the midst of the savage and cruel war inflicted on Nicaragua." Unemployment in the southern region, according to official statistics of the central government, is more than 80 percent, he said. In the northern region it is more than 90 percent. Official unemployment is the country as a whole is between 55 and 60 percent.

In an interview following his talk, Hooker said the situation on the Atlantic Coast was one of "economic and social devastation."

"All the fisheries are closed," he ex-

plained. "Teachers are being fired. Health workers are being fired. Centers are being closed. There's been no airplane service at all to the north or south for at least three months, and none to Corn Island for 20 months."

At the time the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) government was voted out of office in February 1990, Cuban



Ray Hooker, Sandinista National Liberation Front delegate.

construction brigades were carrying out a massive aid project in Bluefields building houses for people who had been left homeless by Hurricane Joan in 1988.

Cuban volunteer brigades

Cuban volunteers were forced out after they had finished only 120 houses. The new government "said the United States was going to build 5,000 houses in Nicaragua, but only if the Cubans left," the FSLN leader added. "So the Cubans left. And how many houses has the United States built? Exactly zero." The 120 completed houses are being occupied by the families who worked with the Cubans to build them. They were not put on the market.

Cuban doctors and nurses remained in both regions of the Atlantic Coast and, according to Hooker, provide virtually the only health care available today. "The attitude toward the Cubans is very positive," he said.

The central government in Managua, dominated by a coalition party called the National Opposition Union (UNO) has been trying to undermine the autonomy process. It refuses to fund the regional councils elected in the north and south. "Some of our UNO people in the regional governments are working with us in this confrontation with the central government," Hooker said.

UNO delegates in the National Assembly in Managua have introduced a bill to repeal the Autonomy Law altogether, he added. The repeal measure is opposed by the FSLN nationally and by all the elected members of the regional councils, whether they belong to UNO, Yatama (another anti-FSLN party), or the FSLN.

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation are welcome to attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

At the Militant Labor Forum you can express your opinion, listen to the views of fellow fighters, and exchange ideas on how best to advance the interests of workers and farmers the world over.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

De Cierta Manera (One Way or Another). Cuban film directed by Sara Gómez. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Immigrant Workers Under Attack. Speakers: Pierre LaBossiere, member of Coalition for a Democratic Haiti, steward at Oakland Community United Church of Christ; Georges Mehrabian, Socialist Workers Party candidate for California State Assembly (13 A.D.), member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

tion: \$3. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

FLORIDA

Miami

Defeat the Torricelli Bill! End the Blockade of Cuba! Speaker: Rosa Garmendia, chairperson, Florida Socialist Workers 1992 campaign, just returned from Cuba. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Lessons of the Caterpillar Strike. Speakers: A panel of unionists. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 2905 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

The Caterpillar Strike: What Happened? Speaker: Dave Alvarez, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Auto Workers Local 369. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Boot'em Out of Buffalo! Stop Operation Res-

cue! A panel of activists returned from Buffalo, NY. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Houston

Racial Oppression: How It Began, How It Will End. A panel discussion. Speakers: Representative of African Holistic student organization, Prairie View University; Jackie Floyd, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

New Stage in the Struggle to End Apartheid. Speakers: Hilton Mokoka, African National Congress; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

What Can We Learn From the Caterpillar Strike? A panel discussion by union activists. Sat., May 2, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Unresolved Issues of the Caterpillar Strike. Speaker: Harvey McArthur, Socialist Workers

Party, member United Transportation Union Local 845. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

Socialist Workers 1992 Washington State Campaign Rally. Speakers: Kathleen Wheeler, candidate for governor; Mark Severs, candidate for U.S. Senate; David Warshawsky, candidate for U.S. Congress, 7th District. Sat., May 2. Reception 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. 1405 E Madison. Donation: \$5. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

BRITAIN

London

Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s. Speaker: Lars Ericson, member TGWU. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £2. Tel: 71-928-7993.

Sheffield

Britain in a World Depression. A panel discussion. Sat., April 25, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-729469.

The Crisis of the Criminal Justice System. Speakers: Andrew Green, supporter of *Conviction*, campaign newsletter against frame-ups; Jenny Prideaux, supporter, Mark Curtis Defense Committee; representative, Communist League. Sat., May 2, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-729469.

CANADA

Montréal

Cuba 1992: Meeting the Challenges Confronting the Revolution. Speaker: Michel Dugré, Central Committee, Communist League, director of *L'Internationale*. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

From Patrick Buchanan to Solidarity Chateauguay: The Ultraright in North American Politics and How to Fight It. Michel Prairie, Central Committee, Communist League. Sat., May 2, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Toronto

South Africa Today. Speaker: Jabu Dube, African National Congress. Sat., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$3. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

ICELAND

Reykjavik

No War Against Libya — No to Iceland Government's Support to UN Sanctions. Speakers: Sigurlaug Gunnlaugsdóttir; Moussa Thioe. Sat., April 25, 1 pm. Klapparstíg 26. Tel: (91) 17513. Sponsor: Internationalist Forums Association.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Why Did Prime Minister Bildt go to Washington? Speaker: Carl-Erik Isacson, Communist League. Sat., April 25, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St., Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

War Threats Against Libya, Iraq, and Korea! Washington's Policy Leads to World War III. Speaker: Lasse Johansson, Communist League. Sat., May 2, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St., Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Caterpillar strike abruptly ends

Continued from Page 4

give each other encouragement and discuss through the questions that were being posed for their fight. The strikers were also beginning to get help from others who saw the fight as an important cause. Students at the University of Illinois had begun to organize for a protest rally at the school after it was announced that a Caterpillar official would be speaking there.

Caterpillar, the world's largest manufacturer of earth-moving equipment, has made its fight against the UAW a do-or-die battle to remain "globally competitive" in an increasingly depressed world market. Its primary competitor is Komatsu of Japan, whose Peoria-based U.S. affiliate has been operating two plants since November under an imposed contract along the lines of what Caterpillar has been demanding.

In the face of Caterpillar's determination to hire scabs top labor officials have posed fighting for antiscab legislation as the only way to stop replacement workers from breaking a strike. Caterpillar's plan, "is another signal that the practice of using permanent replacements is quickly breaking down the collective bargaining process," stated Owen Bieber, president of the UAW. Their stance amounts to, "What else are we going to do but go back until they get that bill passed?"

Many strikers point to President Ronald Reagan's decision to break the 1981 air traffic controllers strike with replacement workers as the beginning of this type of strikebreaking.

Bosses have always used scabs

Employers have "legally" had the right to hire replacement workers to break strikes since a 1938 Supreme Court decision. However, bosses have always used scabs whenever they felt they could get away with it. It is nothing new. Whether they have been successful or not has depended only on the strength and organization of the labor movement to resist this. In recent years the bosses have accelerated the use of scabs because they have felt no substantial resistance by the labor movement. Antiscab legislation by itself will not stop their efforts, and such legislation will only come about as the by-product of serious struggles by unions to keep scabs from entering the factories when a strike is on.

Increasingly the fight to stop scabs from breaking a strike is being posed for every labor struggle that arises. The use of union power, not deliberations in Congress, will determine the outcome of future battles like the one taking place at Caterpillar.

Caterpillar president Donald Fites, like all directors of major corporations today, is pushing to protect the company's profit rate while the world economy and intense international capitalist competition are making that difficult. The fight organized by Fites against the UAW is exactly what all employers will now be looking to repeat.

Workers at Caterpillar and at UAW-organized auto plants have made many concessions in previous years "to help the company be more competitive." Donald Ephlin, a retired official of the union who has pro-

moted these schemes, tries to defend this approach by saying, "Cat was just getting started with some big involvement processes, and here's a guy [Fites] who wants to turn the clock back to Day One."

But these efforts have only whetted the bosses' appetite for more blood. This is a hard lesson that is now being learned by UAW members throughout Illinois.

Fight to defend unionists

Caterpillar has already begun reprisals against strikers, with the firing of George Cornwell, who has worked at the Mossville plant for 20 years. The company handed him a letter stating that he had been "separated from the company." Caterpillar had said earlier the reason for this firing was alleged violence on the picket line.

The company also announced that they intend to fire up to 10 others for misconduct on the picket line.

Another important case related to the Caterpillar strike is the arrest of unionists and socialist activists Mary Zins and Kate Kaku. Kaku is a member of the Steelworkers union and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois. Zins is a laid-off coal miner and long-time activist in the United Mine Workers union. She is also the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Missouri.

Both were arrested and charged with criminal trespass and obstructing a police officer while attending the March 22 Peoria rally to support striking Caterpillar workers. Local police arrested them after

falsely accusing them of selling socialist literature inside the rally. Peoria County prosecutors refuse to drop the charges in spite of numerous protests against the undemocratic arrests of Kaku and Zins. The two unionists have been forced to build a publicity campaign to get the charges dropped. More than \$1,500 is needed to cover their initial legal expenses.

Working people across the United States and around the world are increasingly facing the same type of battles that Caterpillar has waged against the UAW. This is the only way these corporations hope to salvage their declining system — by driving relentlessly to keep taking more and more out of the hides of working people. The determination of many Caterpillar workers and other unionists, not only in this strike but in the previous battles they have waged, shows that a fight is possible. These fights can be carried to victory when the weight of the labor movement is mobilized against the war the bosses are waging against us.

Ernie Mailhot, of St. Louis, is a former Eastern Airlines strike coordinator of International Association of Machinists Local 1018 at LaGuardia airport in New York. He has also been the Socialist Workers Party trade union work director. Mary Zins is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Missouri. She is a laid-off coal miner and a long-time activist in the United Mine Workers of America.

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SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10. Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Give him a towel — In Ohio, budget cuts slashed nearly 90,000 people from the welfare rolls.



Harry Ring

Pressed by protesters, Gov. George Voinovich asserted he was trying to balance compassion for the poor with the problem of the state deficit. Facing the TV cameras, the guy burst into tears.

Balancing act — While Gov. Voinovich insisted he was giving

due regard to the needs of the poor, it was noted that welfare expenditures account for 2.1 percent of the state's budget and 49 percent of cutbacks.

Last to know, first to die — Recently released Canadian government documents explained that before any "overt" moves toward war, there would be an enormous "covert" plan. "At this stage," the document said, "action would be limited to internal federal government activity to avoid undue concern or speculation by other levels of government, the media or general public."

Welfare case — We don't have figures at hand on how many

Chrysler workers lost their jobs last year, but Chairman Lee Iacocca surely took it on the chin. His wages were slashed 35 percent, leaving him with but \$2.98 million for the year. He got no bonus for the second year in a row.

Needy greedy — Since Ivan ("Greed is good") Boesky, the Wall Street con artist, did 20 months, he is apparently having trouble settling down, dividing his time between southern California, the Aspen Colorado ski community, Paris, and the French Riviera. He also seems short of bread. In divorce proceedings he's asked that his wife provide him \$20,000 a week living expenses.

First things first — The Los

Angeles school system says it lacks the money to provide decent education or pay teachers adequately. But last year, it spent \$250,000 on a PR outfit whose efforts to brush up the district's image included ghost-writing letters to the editor smearing the teachers' union. (They now claim the letters never got sent.)

Education patron — When the Los Angeles board ran short of funding for the ghost-writing PR firm, the tab was picked up by the Milken Family Foundation. That's Michael Milken, the currently incarcerated junk bond swindler.

If it's not to the right, it's not correct? — In Canada, it was dis-

closed that the Alberta Association of Provincial Court Judges passed a secret motion urging that funding for jurist educational programs be approved only if they are "free of political correctness." The judges said they had no need to study how not to be sexist or racist on the bench.

Maybe they can reship it — The feds seized some 30,000 cans of "Ocean King Chunk Light Tuna" as decomposed and unfit for human consumption. It was part of a lot of some 50 million cans packed in 1985 in a Canadian cannery which was later shut down. Originally, the cans were going to be sold as "Seventh Heaven" cat food, but somehow got "mislabelled."

Toronto cops acquitted in killing of Black youth

BY GARY KETTNER

TORONTO — Two Peel Region police officers here were acquitted April 8 of all charges in the fatal shooting of Michael Wade Lawson, a 17-year-old Black youth. As the verdict was announced, the accused cops thrust their fists into the air and their supporters in the courtroom cheered.

Lawson's mother, Evelyn Lennon-Lyon, told a press conference at her home that evening, "My son was executed by these two police officers." Milton Blake, a spokesperson for the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC) called the ruling "a flagrant example of the miscarriage of justice. Lawson was painted as a criminal," he said.

"No white jury in Canada is ever going to convict a police officer," said BADC leader Dari Meade. "Black people have to organize and resist this system. Short of a mass organization and a mass rebellion nothing is going to happen."

Lennon-Lyon and the BADC condemned the selection of an all-white jury in this case and called for an immediate appeal. The Ontario provincial Attorney-General has 30 days to decide if an appeal will be launched.

Lawson was shot in the back of the head by Constable Anthony Melaragni December 8, 1988. Melaragni and his partner Darren Longpre fired a total of six shots after they stopped Lawson driving a stolen car. The cops, who were in plainclothes and drove an unmarked car, claimed that they fired in self-defense at the car's tires as Lawson steered toward them. But all of the bullets, fired at close range, hit the car's passenger compartment.

Lawson was killed by a bullet that entered through the rear window of the car. The police used illegal "dum-dum" bullets, a fact that the judge did not allow to be presented to the jury.

Lawson's murder provoked angry demonstrations and Melaragni was eventually charged with second-degree murder. He was also charged with discharging a firearm with intent to wound and with aggravated assault against Dwight Hilton, a passenger in the car. Longpre was charged with discharging a firearm with intent to wound and with aggravated assault.

BADC chairperson Dudley Laws spoke at a Militant Labor Forum here April 11. The acquittal of Melaragni and Longpre, he said,

are the latest in a long series of cases in Canada where police have gone unpunished for the shootings of Blacks.

"Buddy Evans, Albert Johnson, Lester Donaldson, Sophia Cooke, Marlon Neale, and Jonathan Howell in Toronto; Anthony Griffin and Marcellus François in Montréal — all over the country Black people have been shot," he said. Laws himself is facing trial on frame-up charges of conspiring to smuggle people between Canada and the United States.

Chanting "No Justice, No Peace," 125 people gathered in downtown Toronto April 14 to protest the verdict. As the peaceful rally was beginning, police attempted to disrupt the event by arresting two participants. The two were members of the Black Coalition of Quebec. They had come from Montreal to join the protest. As they were handing out leaflets advertising the demonstration at a



Militant/George Rose

1988 march against cop murder of Michael Wade Lawson

nearby mall, they were roughed up and ejected by five security guards before being taken away by police.

The demonstrators marched to the local police station and then to Metropolitan Toronto police headquarters to demand their release.

Ruling on murder of Miami youth gives green light to cops, says father

BY MAGGIE McCRAW

MIAMI — "It was a sham. The script was written and they stuck to it. The message to the cops is clear: go ahead and shoot, we'll cover for you." This is how Joseph Morello described the inquest into the February 1 murder of his 16-year-old son Andrew.

On March 30 a Dade County judge ruled that police officer Laura Russell was right to shoot Morello.

Laura Russell and George Russell, both off-duty cops, confronted Morello and three friends as two of the youths attempted to break into a car near the Russells' house.

One of the young men testified that Andrew was backing up his van to leave the scene and that they never heard the Russells identify themselves as police officers.

However, Judge Morton Perry chose to believe George Russell, who testified that Morello's van came toward the cops. Russell had time to run away, he said. But his wife didn't, and shot through the windshield hitting Morello in the chest.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Morello explained that although Perry's decision is binding, the inquest was much different than a trial. The sole evidence was presented by the district attorney, there was no cross examination, and only the judge questioned witnesses.

The courtroom was filled with cops who were mobilized to attend the hearing. "They tried to incite people," Morello said, "calling a 71-year-old woman 'trash.'" Referring to students who attended the hearing wearing "We'll miss you Andrew Morello" T-shirts, one cop said, "Look at these scumbag kids. They should be in school."

Following the inquest, warrants were issued charging two of Andrew's friends with his murder. One youth has been arrested. Under Florida law, those involved in a crime

where a death occurs can be charged with felony murder.

"This is another part of our family's devastation," said Morello. "To sentence them for stealing is one thing, but murder is another. One of these boys gave Andrew mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and kept him alive until the paramedics arrived."

Andrew's friends and family are not giving up their fight and intend to challenge the ruling.

"I'm one of those people in the middle ground. Then something like this happens and I have to act. I didn't do anything about Antonio Edwards or the Lozano case and I should have," Morello explained.

Antonio Edwards, a Black construction worker, was hospitalized in a coma caused by a police chokehold just a month prior to Morello's shooting. George Russell was one of the cops involved in beating Edwards.

William Lozano is a police officer who was convicted of manslaughter in the 1989 killing of Black motorcyclist Clement Lloyd and his passenger, Allan Blanchard. Lozano, who was sentenced to seven years in prison, claimed he shot because Lloyd's motorcycle was bearing down on him.

Following the deaths of Lloyd and Blanchard, Miami's Black community erupted in a three-day uprising against police brutality.

Recently an appeals court overturned Lozano's conviction, saying he did not get a fair trial because jurors feared an acquittal would spark more "riots." After a propaganda campaign branding the Black community as violent and riot-prone, and claiming unbiased jurors could not be found in Miami, a Dade County judge ruled in favor of a change of venue for Lozano's retrial. The trial will begin July 20 in Orlando, Florida.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
May 1, 1967
Price 10¢

The largest demonstration for independence seen in Puerto Rico for the last 15 years took place in San Juan on April 16. The Movement for Puerto Rican Independence (MPI) which organized the demonstration, claimed "from 13,000 to 15,000" [participated].

There were a few incidents in which right wing elements, Cuban exiles and advocates of annexation to the U.S. attacked the marchers. The MPI members defended themselves.

Along with the demand for "Independence Now!" the slogans on the march condemned the plebiscite farce which the U.S. imperialists plan to hold soon in an attempt to "legally" ratify the colonial status of Puerto Rico.

The demonstration was in open support of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, and in support of the young Puerto Ricans, now numbering in the thousands, who are resisting the draft.

The rally expressed its solidarity with the huge antiwar demonstrations which had taken place the day before in New York and San Francisco.

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

May 2, 1942

Attorney-General Biddle has taken steps to ban Coughlin's *Social Justice* and some other fascist sheets from the mails. The liberals and Stalinists are hailing this as proof

that the Roosevelt administration is out to destroy the native fascist movement.

In New York the high point of fascist activity came when the Nazi Bund and its Coughlinite allies provocatively staged a huge demonstration in Madison Sq. Garden on Feb. 21, 1939. Roosevelt's good friend, Mayor LaGuardia, not only permitted that fascist gathering, but protected it with the largest police mobilization in the city's history. But the Socialist Workers Party issued a call to the workers of New York to gather in counter-demonstration around the Garden, and when the fascists met they were surrounded by over 50,000 grim determined workers. LaGuardia's cops tried to break up the workers' ranks, but failed.

Six months later the Coughlinite Christian Mobilizers announced that they would march from Columbus Circle to Union Square, the traditional gathering-place of radical workers. LaGuardia not only granted the fascists a permit to march but issued orders for a big mobilization of cops to protect them.

Again it was the Socialist Workers Party that alone took real action against the fascists, calling on the workers to rally in Union Square in counter-demonstration. So vigorous was the response of the workers throughout the city, that a few days before the scheduled fascist march Coughlin himself got his followers to call off their march!

It is clear that the fascist sheets are now being banned from the mails merely as a war-time measure and as "proof" that the government is not only hitting at the revolutionary left but also at the fascist rightists. No capitalist government can be depended on to destroy the fascists because today's "democratic" capitalists will be ready tomorrow to back the fascists in order to crush the labor movement. Therefore the workers can only depend on their own workers' organizations to crush the fascists.

Caterpillar: not all settled

The big-business press and major corporations are gloating over the decision of top officials of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union to call off the Caterpillar strike. They are hoping that the blow the company has struck will discourage working people further from using union power to fight for decent wages and working conditions.

But the strike did not end because the workers' nerve failed or because picket lines were too weak. In fact, once Caterpillar demanded that union members return to work or be replaced by scabs, UAW members began to mobilize and strengthen their strike. Instead of a back-to-work movement, Caterpillar got mass rallies of several thousand workers lining the roads to the plant gates every morning. Only a few hundred crossed the picket line.

The Caterpillar strikers were also strengthened by the solidarity they were receiving from coal miners and many other union members who joined them on the picket lines.

Members of the United Mine Workers of America in particular saw this fight as part of their upcoming battle with the coal companies. Other UAW members could hear the auto bosses cheering for Caterpillar as their contract comes up next year.

The struggle waged by thousands of Caterpillar workers during a five-month strike was important for all working people. The demands of the workers to maintain wages, benefits, and working conditions were justified. The company's demands for major changes in seniority, grievance procedures, and retirement provisions, and a two-tier wage and benefit structure at its major parts plants deserved to be fought.

Some advisors have counseled union members that "both sides have to struggle to rebuild" labor-management relations. But the multitude of efforts that the union has made over the years to help the company have only weakened the union's ability to fight and given a green

light for the company to press its assault.

Caterpillar will now be out for blood. Workers are going back to work but matters are hardly settled. One of the most ominous signs is the company's decision to cut at least 1,350 jobs from the workforce. This will mean job combinations, speed-up, and more dangerous working conditions. Older workers will be forced to "voluntarily" retire as job conditions become unbearable.

Caterpillar officials have also fired one striker and spoken of plans to fire another 10.

Caterpillar workers deserve continued national and international support from the labor movement as these attacks are fought out in the plants.

The major big-business press has highlighted the anger and frustration that many UAW members have justifiably expressed toward union officials, officials who are responsible for calling off the strike without any discussion among the members and without a decent contract — or any contract for that matter. The bosses are hoping to turn workers against unions altogether.

But the attacks of the bosses on our standard of living are driving working people to fight in spite of all obstacles. UAW members fought to carry out this strike and to stay solid on the picket lines.

The strike showed that working people have a tremendous capacity for struggle and that we will have to use real union power — the strength of our numbers — against the employers' assaults. As demonstrated in the past, that power can push back the corporation's attacks. These are the tried and true methods of a labor movement that can fight in the interests of all working people. This course, rather than waiting for or relying on Congress to pass "antiscab" legislation, as advisors and top union officials suggest, can lead to victories.

Halt U.S. and British war moves

The British magazine *Economist*, commenting on the campaign against Libya by Washington and London, put its finger on the matter when it noted that these governments are acting like plaintiff, judge, and executioner all rolled into one.

The *Economist* suggests the following alternative scenarios: if the Libyan government refuses to hand over two men accused in the bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, the United States and Britain will use force. If, in spite of the lack of an extradition treaty, the two are handed over, their claims to have only been carrying out orders will lead Washington and its allies to accuse Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi of heading up an international terrorist network. Washington and London will then "go after the colonel himself," it said, referring to Qaddafi.

Whether or not the magazine's predictions come true, the fact remains that nothing the Libyan regime or people do will satisfy Washington except for total, abject submission to imperial dictates and the installment of a government to the liking of the White House.

Violating the national sovereignty of Panama, U.S. forces kidnapped Manuel Noriega and forced him to stand trial in the United States. Now Washington demands that Libya extradite two of its citizens.

Just imagine the indignation in Washington if Libya

were to demand the extradition of then president Ronald Reagan for the April 15, 1986, U.S. bombing of Tripoli that left 37 people dead! Or if the Iraqi regime were to demand the extradition of Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, Gen. Colin Powell, and President George Bush for the bombing of an air-raid shelter filled with civilians, or for the burying alive of Iraqi soldiers on the verge of surrender.

The Pentagon's *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress* makes it plain that Washington justifies all such actions to the end.

Kill civilians in a bomb shelter? A legitimate target, the generals say. Bury starving soldiers alive and shoot fleeing Iraqis in the back? "The law of war permits the attack of enemy combatants and enemy equipment at any time, wherever located, whether advancing, retreating, or standing still," the generals answer.

This is the true face of imperialism. This is what the capitalist rulers in Washington have in store for the people of Iraq, Korea, Libya, and others around the world who dare step out of line.

The threats of the capitalist rulers against Libya, Iraq, and Korea must be taken seriously. The sanctions against Libya, in particular, pave the way to another war. Working people around the world should demand an end to the U.S. war moves.

The failure of social democracy

Recent elections in Western Europe have been notable for the poor showing of parties such as the opposition Labour Party in Britain and the governing Socialist Party in France — the social-democratic parties. The same trend has been seen this year in Italy and Germany, and earlier in other countries with a strong social-democratic tradition, such as Sweden, where the Socialist Party was voted out in 1991. Similarly, in New Zealand the Labour Party lost office in 1990.

Since 1982, the Socialist Party (SP) government of François Mitterrand has presided over the effects of capitalism in crisis by implementing austerity policies.

In Britain the Labour Party was unable to make a serious dent in the Conservative Party's grip on power, despite the depression conditions developing after a long period of Tory rule. Labour's promises did not convince workers, many of whom voted Tory because they feared a Labour government would only raise their taxes.

With the world market system in long-term crisis, the social democrats' promise — that they can guarantee at least some form of "socialism," with workers' living standards protected and welfare for all, while at the same time preserving capitalism — is exposed more than ever as a lie.

In Sweden for example, long considered the model welfare state with little or no unemployment for decades, the growing unemployment now stands officially at 4.2 percent while another 3 percent of the workforce are in temporary jobs or government retraining schemes.

From Sweden to France, Britain, Canada, and New Zealand, the social democrats' promises are cast in a national socialist framework — the framework of a single,

imperialist, country. The benefits they hold out are for a select few, not for working people worldwide.

The social democrats help carry out the war that capitalism is waging against immigrant workers. In Britain the Labour Party supports the Asylum Bill. In France Prime Minister Cresson has created special detention centers for asylum seekers.

Promoting austerity, national chauvinism, attacks on immigrants — the social democrats everywhere are a part of the universal rightward evolution of capitalist politics.

Social democrats have played this role repeatedly throughout this century. For example, in the 1930s social democracy, together with Stalinism, was responsible for throttling the rising labor movement in country after country as they sought to subordinate workers' demands to the needs of capitalism. Without this, imperialism would have been unable to launch the slaughter of World War II.

In contrast to the wretched dead-end that social democracy offers, what working people need to move forward is an internationalist labor movement based on the active participation of the working class itself, that can reach out for allies and win.

The vanguard of this fighting labor movement is being put together today, through the battles, however small and partial, that workers are going through. As these battles expand in response to sharpening employer and government attacks, working people find their way to independent political action.

This is the fighting perspective of the socialist election campaigns, from that of the Communist League in Britain to the Socialist Workers candidates in the United States.

This column is devoted to a discussion with our readers — printing remarks, questions, suggestions, and other comments sent to the *Militant*. Where possible we will take up issues raised in notes and letters as a way to help clarify and expand on the coverage in the paper.

In a letter printed on the opposite page, Laura Kamienski describes a question raised in a radio talk show: "Why is it that the very people who say the government should stay out of abortion are the same ones who want the government to pay for them?"

Kamienski answered the question by explaining that the government should both respect a woman's right to choose

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

and provide funds to guarantee women access to abortion if they need it.

The phrase "the government should stay out of abortion" mixes two separate questions. The first is the right of an individual woman to decide what to do with her life — whether or when she wants to have children. This right should exist without any interference from the government, either in the form of restriction on the availability of contraceptive information and devices, forced sterilization, outright prohibition of abortion, or of roadblocks such as requirements for consent by parents, husbands, or others.

The second question is the need for the government to guarantee the availability of safe abortions to those who need them.

The reality is that access to abortion in the United States is becoming increasingly limited. A recent *New York Times* article put the causes of this down to "a combination of economic forces, political pressures, and doctors' changing attitudes." Janet Benshoof of the American Civil Liberties Union estimated that "About 20 percent of American women who want abortions cannot get them. Because of money, geography, and the shortage of doctors who will perform abortions," she said, "abortion is not an option for many poor women, rural women, teenagers, and women in the military."

With Congress barring the use of federal funding for abortions in 1977, and only 13 states now providing funding, many women miss out. An abortion in the first 13 weeks of pregnancy costs about \$200 to \$300, and abortions late in the second trimester cost \$2000 or more. Several abortion clinics have noted that because of economic hardships many women are taking longer to gather the money to pay for the operation. As a result, more second-trimester abortions are now being performed.

Abortion is the most commonly performed operation in the United States, with more than 40 percent of women having the operation before age 45. Sufficient funds should be provided to make it safely available to all women who want it.

* * *

The following are excerpts from the article, "The Opening Guns of World War III," by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes, which appeared in the magazine *New International No. 7*. With today's war threats by Washington against Libya, Iraq, and North Korea, the information in "Opening Guns" is more important than ever.

You can obtain a copy of *New International No. 7* from one of the Pathfinder Bookstores listed on page 12 or by sending \$12 plus \$3 shipping and handling to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

The immediate goal of the Republican/Democratic bipartisan war drive and assault on Iraq was to use Washington's military might to bolster U.S. dominance in the Arab-Persian Gulf region, which has some 65 percent of the world's known oil reserves. To accomplish this aim, the U.S. rulers sought to pursue the war drive in such a way as to guarantee the establishment of a regime in Baghdad that for all practical purposes would be an imperialist protectorate, politically subservient to the U.S. government. They hoped the political momentum of such a blow would enable them to shift the class and state relationship of forces in the Gulf more to their favor, as well as advance their interests vis-a-vis their imperialist competitors.

That was the purpose of the U.S. government's war drive against Iraq — not to liberate Kuwait or restore its national sovereignty, let alone bring democracy to the Arabian peninsula.

From the standpoint of the U.S. ruling class, the outcome of the war stands in striking contrast to that of Washington's invasion of Grenada in October 1983 and Panama in December 1989. In both those cases Washington succeeded through limited military operations in installing subservient and relatively stable capitalist regimes almost overnight. The U.S. rulers' resulting political victory was virtually simultaneous with the military victory — and at the cost of very few U.S. casualties.

Washington's war has actually created new problems for American imperialism in the Gulf region. It has set in motion unforeseen and uncontrollable social forces. It has opened up new conflicts and struggles. It has set off new flows of displaced populations. All this was virtually inevitable, since world capitalism at its current stage of crisis and decline is incapable of bringing economic development — and thus meaningful national independence, sovereignty, or social stability — to these or other countries and peoples in the semicolonial world.

Food workers strike Kroger stores in Michigan

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

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes over speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, and attacks on health and safety benefits. Some unionists faced with sharp takeback

year. However, workers haven't received a wage increase in more than 10 years.

Kroger has demanded concessions from the union, which would eventually relegate all workers to part-time status. "Once you're part-time, you'll never be full-time," said one worker on the picket line. "How can you support your family on a part-time job?"

ON THE PICKETLINE

demands, lockouts, and union-busting moves have gone on strike to force the bosses to back down.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

Stating that they were "not willing to cave in to corporate greed and bad faith bargaining," nearly 8,000 workers walked off the job at midnight Monday, April 13, at 64 Kroger stores in southeast Michigan.

About 6,000 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 876, representing Kroger retail clerks and cashiers, voted to strike the day before, after rejecting the company's proposed contract. They were joined by several hundred meat cutters represented by UFCW Local 539. The cutters have been working without a contract since January 4. The company has not made a contract offer to the meat cutters.

Kroger is the largest grocery store chain in the country and the second largest in Michigan. The company reported an \$80 million profit on \$21 billion in sales in 1991, and a 2.7 percent increase in sales for the first quarter of this

Especially on wages like these with no insurance or benefits."

Part-time Kroger workers would start off at \$4.50 an hour and get wage increases from 85 cents to \$1.50 per hour over the length of the proposed four-year contract. A clause in the contract would eliminate the possibility of part-time employees ever becoming full-time. Health-care coverage would be reduced or eliminated for some workers. Ten personal and sick days per year would also be revoked from full-timers.

During the weeks leading up to the contract vote, Kroger ran ads in the major local newspapers for scabs with hourly wages up to \$3.00 above what union workers make.

Some 1,000 scabs along with management personnel from out-of-state Kroger stores are keeping the supermarkets open.

Resolve on the picket lines remains firm. With more than 20 pickets at most of the stores, sales have been cut 90 to 95 percent, costing the company an estimated \$11 million per week. Community and union support has been strong. "We've had people from the postal workers and the UAW out here. We've had food sent over from lots of the small stores around here," one picket said.

Marc Laura, a member of the United Auto Workers Local 369 and former Kroger employee, said he was on the picket line because, "In the first place I'm pro-union. Also, they gave me the shaft when I worked for them. I've seen how they treat people firsthand."

A customer brought hot dogs to

one store Monday night and cooked them for pickets. Eva Haase, a retired Farmer Jack grocery store employee picketed with the strikers. "I'll keep going as long as my feet last," she said.

Truck drivers for Foodland Distributors, which is half owned by Kroger and serves as its main supplier, have refused to cross the picket lines. The drivers, members of the Teamsters union, parked their trucks by the side of the road. Temporary layoffs of 150 drivers and warehouse workers were announced at Foodland because of the strike. Many said they will be joining the Kroger strikers on the picket line.

Textile workers rally at North Carolina trial

One hundred textile workers, members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union at Fieldcrest Cannon, went to Kannapolis, North Carolina, March 30 to rally during the first day of a trial against the company. Over 150 unfair labor practice charges have been filed against Fieldcrest Cannon.

The workers demand that Fieldcrest Cannon pay the same 5.5 percent raise to workers in the union plants as in the nonunion plants, with back pay. They also call for the company to rehire Kannapolis area workers fired for their support to the union and schedule a new representation election. The union lost last year's election by less than 200 votes out of more than 6,000 cast.

At the company's request, the trial was moved from the county courthouse in Wentworth, North Carolina, near Eden, to Kannapolis, two hours away. It was held in a room in the Kannapolis police station.

The Eden and Fieldale workers, joined by several dozen Kannapolis-area workers, held a rally and a news conference on the front lawn of the police station. Several Charlotte TV stations filmed the event.

A Fieldale worker told the media, "We're here to support our brothers and sisters in Kannapolis, and we're going to stick with them as long as it takes, until they get a

union." A young Kannapolis worker shouted, "This game ain't going for nine innings. This game is going until we win."

About 60 or 70 workers crowded into the small room in the police station to observe part of the trial, and then the whole group went to the union hall to discuss the day's events.

In the afternoon some returned to the trial. About 50 others went to one of the main gates at Plant 1, the biggest Fieldcrest Cannon facility in Kannapolis with 4,000 workers. The union, activists passed out union stickers and talked to workers going in and out of the mill.

Most of the workers the activists talked to at the plant gate seemed to have definite opinions about the union. The majority was in favor but a minority was hostile. Some wore the stickers into the plant. A Mexican worker asked for a union cap, which he then put on and wore into the plant, to the enthusiastic cheers of the union activists.

Truckers mount work stoppage at Houston port

Independent truckers at the Port of Houston stopped work for seven days after a tentative agreement with trucking firms collapsed.

During the last day of the work stoppage, truckers believed they had scored a victory when a trucking company negotiating committee agreed to a 15 percent across the board rate increase. However, most of the larger trucking companies refused to go along with this agreement, effectively scuttling it. The United Container Haulers (UCH), a loosely organized group that mounted the work stoppage, decided to return to work for 30 days while negotiations with the trucking firms continued.

The independent truckers, who largely shut down the huge port facilities here, haul containerized goods after they are off-loaded from cargo ships. Though they own their own rigs, they work for trucking companies that enter into contracts with the steamship firms for delivery of goods.

The truckers, organized into the UCH, parked their rigs April 2 to protest low rates, high expenses, and dangerous working conditions. Picket groups ranging from 10 to 30 workers gathered at all entrances to the port.

On a normal day 700 truckers move chassis loaded with containers off the ships, but on April 2 only 40 rigs crossed the picket lines. Next day the number was down to 26.

While there was an increase the next couple of days, the overwhelming majority of truckers stayed out. One striker explained the unity by saying, "We've hit bottom, we can't go any lower. We have nothing to lose."

Alex Maloncon, a UCH representative said, "The rates paid by the trucking companies are just too low; insurance rates and other costs to the drivers are just too high. We're not taking home hardly anything."

Truckers have many high expenses. License plates alone cost \$850. Quarterly road taxes are \$550.

"Each week I pay \$200 on my truck note and \$150 on fuel," said Gregorio Moran, a picketing driver. "And most of the time I don't gross more than \$500 a week. How can they expect me to feed my family on that? I've taken a load clear across Houston and gotten paid only \$29 by the trucking companies!"

In addition to a 15 percent increase, the truckers are also asking for a guarantee of at least 90 cents a mile for loads over 100 miles. According to one striker the rates haven't changed substantially since 1975.

The following people contributed to this week's column: David Alvarez, member of United Auto Workers Local 369 in Detroit; Tony Prince, member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 385T in Eden, North Carolina; Kathie Fitzgerald, member of United Food and Commercial Workers and Jerry Freiwirth, member of Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers in Houston.

LETTERS

Challenges for farmers

I was glad to see the *Militant's* report on the massive February 21 demonstration in Ottawa in defense of marketing boards for eggs, dairy, and poultry production. Jim Upton did a good job of explaining some of the complex issues involved.

Some of the issues raised, however, deserve elaboration. The *Militant* might usefully analyze in broader terms the implications of current GATT negotiations for working farmers. Centrally involved in the talks, of course, is jockeying for position in agricultural trade among the imperialist powers and trading blocs. But the GATT talks are a vehicle as well for efforts by the competing imperialist classes to restructure agriculture in their own countries — at working farmers' expense, as always. The effect of a new GATT agreement will be intensified exploitation of working farmers on an international scale.

In short, there are good internationalist reasons why farmers should mobilize in opposition to the GATT process.

Upton effectively demonstrates in relation to the dairy industry that "supply management" enforced by import controls cannot resolve the problems faced by dairy farmers. But it should also be acknowledged that dismantling marketing board

structures will exacerbate the farm crisis. The marketing boards in question do provide some immediate, though limited, relief to working farmers in Canada and Quebec.

Due recognition of that reality is necessary for understanding the political dynamics of the struggle around marketing boards. It can help socialists win a more receptive audience in explaining that reliance on national protectionist measures is an obstacle to the internationalist program and strategy working farmers will need to finally resolve the farm crisis.

Faced with an impending demonstration of 30,000 to 40,000 farmers, Canada's governing politicians fell over themselves to declare support for marketing boards. And why not? They can confidently count on GATT to insist on dismantling the "supply management" system, thereby providing cheaper dairy, egg, and poultry production for agribusiness food processors in Canada.

That, I believe, is the real objective of Canadian government policy — whatever capitalist politicians say. Explaining that objective to working dairy, egg, and poultry producers can help them more readily understand that their real enemy is "at home."

Howard Brown
Rosetown, Canada

Applauds 'Militant'

I am incarcerated in an isolation cell; the *Militant* will be my only news about what's going on in this country and the world. But more importantly, the *Militant* will give me the truth about world events, which I can't get with any other newspaper.

We must continue the struggle, continue to pull our people together, because the very survival of the race depends on it. The harder we struggle the less we suffer, the less the masses will suffer.

A prisoner
Mineral Point, Missouri

Abortion rights

I attended the April 5 demonstration for choice and was recently interviewed on a local radio talk show. I stated that the attacks on abortion rights are part and parcel of the broader attacks against the working class as a whole.

A woman caller asked, "Why is it that the very people who say the government should stay out of abortion are the same ones who want the government to pay for them? How do you balance that?"

I would like to see some sort of discussion on this in the pages of the *Militant*.

I responded to this question by



explaining that the government in the United States has a huge stake in pushing back women's rights to further their objective of pushing back all workers' rights. I explained that the conditions which exist for women under capitalism impose financial restrictions in the area of choice. It is imperative that we win federal funding for abortions because the government is responsible for those conditions. I made clear that I was not fighting for the government to stay out of the issue of abortion but rather for the government to defend a woman's right to choose.

Laura Kamienski
Sunbury, Pennsylvania

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.

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

At Hartford 15 trial, agents testify to FBI spying on Puerto Rican activists

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

BRIDGEPORT, Connecticut — The trial against Puerto Rican independence advocate Yvonne Meléndez opened here with a string of FBI agents testifying about the massive wiretapping they conducted in the government's effort to smear her and other activists, known as the Hartford 15, as "terrorists."

One cop, under cross-examination, described how he and 200 other FBI agents were flown into Puerto Rico Aug. 30, 1985, to carry out the nighttime sweep of dozens of homes that led to the arrest of most of the activists. The 15 were taken out of their country to the United States, where they were jailed for up to two and a half years without bail. They were charged in connection with the 1983 robbery of a Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, Connecticut.

Meléndez is now on trial in a U.S. district court almost seven years after her arrest. Nine of the other activists were convicted, one was acquitted, and two had all charges dropped. Another member of the Hartford 15, Filiberto Ojeda, went into hiding and is being tried in absentia together with Meléndez.

The case of the 15 independence fighters has won widespread support both in Puerto Rico and the United States, including Hartford, where the earlier trials took place.

Supporters denied entrance to trial

As the trial proceedings began April 13, nearly 100 people from several cities in the Northeast held a picket line in front of the courthouse in support of Meléndez. When they tried to enter the courtroom to attend the trial, however, U.S. marshals provocatively barred all spectators, claiming the room was filled by prospective jurors. Following protests by supporters demanding that the trial be public, the court backed down the following day.

In an attempt by the government to portray Meléndez as a dangerous terrorist, however, everyone is frisked by armed marshals and must go through two sets of metal detectors before entering the courtroom.

The prosecution began its case by parading 10 witnesses, none of whom linked Meléndez to the Wells Fargo robbery or admitted even knowing her. One such individual was Kenneth Cox, an admitted professional shoplifter who has supplemented his income as an FBI informer since 1985.

Cox, who admitted being paid at least \$14,000 by the FBI and \$50,000 by Wells Fargo, claimed he was told of the planned robbery by Juan Segarra Palmer, one of the Hartford 15 who is now serving a 65-year sentence.

The government's wiretapping has become one of the key questions in the trial. The prosecution's case against all the defendants has rested primarily on tape recordings made by the FBI in Puerto Rico during a huge surveillance operation in 1984 and 1985.

FBI agents admitted during testimony April 15 that some 60 agents had taped more than 1,000 hours of private conversations in the homes of the 15 in Puerto Rico. One FBI employee, in charge of the cop agency's Electronic Surveillance Room in San Juan, testified that the "EISur Room" was so stacked with these tapes that he had to open up a second storage room.

'Random' eavesdropping

Another federal cop, Edward Bergerano, described how the FBI planted microphones in Ojeda's living room and tapped his phones and all the public telephones in the neighborhood. He claimed the agents only eavesdropped on conversations related to the alleged conspiracy to rob the bank depot. This, he said, was ensured by "random" listening. If the agent overheard an "unrelated" conversation, he supposedly hung up.

When asked what he meant by random

listening, the cop replied, "About once a minute, or every two minutes." The spying was carried out from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. every day, he said.

One FBI agent, after explaining how he fingerprinted Meléndez and the others who were arrested in 1985, denied under cross-examination that she had been brought into FBI headquarters blindfolded.

"That agent was lying," Meléndez told the press following the court session. "Nineteen FBI agents came into my house in the middle of the night, pointing guns at my kids and me. They got me out of bed and didn't even let me get dressed."

"There was an uproar in Puerto Rico about the arrests, about how they had us all blindfolded, handcuffed, and in chains. They even made me take a shower blindfolded."

Meléndez pointed out that the tape recordings violated the Puerto Rican constitution, which forbids the use of wiretaps. In addition, she said, "some of the tapes remained unsealed for up to four months. That's illegal. The reason for that delay is that some tapes were tampered with."

She explained that one FBI agent had even admitted taking tapes home. On some of the tapes, she added, the tampering is evident because people are heard talking who could not have spoken to each other on the day alleged.

"Those tape recordings are a gross violation of our rights," Meléndez stressed. "They should be inadmissible as evidence."

Miners union in Britain calls one-day strikes

BY KEVIN COATES

In a vote taken April 15 and 16, members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in the Yorkshire area approved strike action against British Coal (BC). The miners are fighting BC's attempt to use private contractors to develop new mine faces.

Miners voted 5,131 to 4,984 to begin a series of one-day strikes in Britain's largest coalfield over the following month, the first such action in nine years. The NUM is urging the company to begin talks on the dispute, a step BC so far refuses to take.

The strike vote was called to support



Militant/Martín Koppel
Framed-up Puerto Rican activist Yvonne Meléndez, her son (left), and Elías Castro.

This, together with the fact that I was denied bail for 16 months and that I've been denied my right to a speedy trial — they are trying me almost seven years after my arrest — shows this is a political case."

Meléndez, accompanied by former Hart-

ford defendant Elías Castro, who recently won a big victory when the government dropped all charges against him, invited supporters to attend the trial and publicize the truth about the frame-up of the pro-independence activists.

British coal miners freed 15 hours after roof cave-in

BY JIM SPAUL

SHEFFIELD, England — Eight pitmen were trapped underground April 6 for more than 15 hours when the roof of the mine they were working in collapsed. They were freed after rescue workers removed tons of rubble to get to their shaft.

The miners were about midway through their afternoon shift at the Stillingfleet pit in the Shelby coalfield when 17 feet of the roof fell in, burying them alive. Many workers from other shifts came to aid in the rescue operation.

This latest accident comes as a struggle brews between British Coal (BC) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) over health and safety laws. BC has proposed a package of new regulations and codes in the coal industry.

The package includes the repeal of the 1908 Coal Mines Regulation Act, which limits underground workers to seven and a half hours per shift. BC's proposal

would allow a flexible seven-day working week, with a considerable extension of the time miners could be made to work underground.

In addition to the NUM, the Institution of Professional Civil Servants, representing the Mines and Quarries Inspectorate, has expressed fears that BC's proposals would weaken the current safety laws.

Mark Davis, NUM branch secretary at the pit said the drive on the part of BC shows "that, once more, it is prepared to sacrifice the health and safety of working people in return for profit. Generations of miners have fought for vital safeguards like the 1908 Coal Mines Act. It was originally introduced to protect miners against the dangers of excessive working hours and the exploitation by the coal owner."

Jim Spaul is a member of the NUM in Kellingley, Yorkshire.

Local NUM leaders protested the company's decision and insisted that the existing development teams be allowed to do the work. After several meetings though, it was clear the company was intent on using outside contractors and disbanding the union teams.

The NUM then organized a Yorkshire-area meeting with four branch presidents and BC officials. It became clear that the company had no intention of talking seriously. G. Smith, a company representative who was the chair of the meeting, spent two hours checking room decorations and going to the toilet, for example.

As a result of that meeting, the NUM put the question to a vote of the Armthorpe miners. Taken February 27 and 28, the vote was 72 percent in favor of a series of selective strikes.

BC challenged the legality of the vote and the High Court in London ruled it invalid. The NUM organized another vote for March 5 and 6. This time 80 percent voted in favor of strike actions.

The Armthorpe miners first struck March 13. In response, the Markham Main manager stepped up attacks on the union, including stopping automatic deductions for union dues and restricting the union's ability to function at the mine site.

On March 30, during another work stoppage, the miners learned that outside contractors were to start that day. However, the contractors decided not to cross the picket line.

The manager then sent a letter saying that the miners were organizing a "go slow" on the job. He stated that the basic pay would be cut to reflect the slower work.

The Armthorpe miners decided to appeal for support to other branches in the Yorkshire area April 6, leading to the approval by Yorkshire area mine workers to join the strike actions.

Kevin Coates is secretary of the Markham Main branch of the NUM.