

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Plans get off the ground  
for World Youth Festival

— PAGE 10

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Albanian rebels close in on capital

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The revolt in Albania against the procapitalist regime of President Sali Berisha has spread. Government forces have lost control of most of southern Albania. A heterogeneous array of armed rebels — including thousands of workers, peasants, and

**Beginning next week, the Militant will carry eyewitness coverage from Albania from an international team headed by staff writer Argiris Malapanis**

young people, backed by an increasing number of army units that have joined the insurgency — have extended their hold over about a third of the country.

Beginning March 11, the unrest spread in the northern part of this workers state. Four people died March 13 as insurgents stormed a heavily mined armory in

Continued on Page 8

## Coal miners strike and demonstrate in Germany

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Tens of thousands of miners have been striking, occupying coal pits, and demonstrating in Germany since March 7, in opposition to government austerity measures. The protests began after Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government announced drastic cuts in subsidies to the coal industry, which the miners' union, IG Bergbau, says will eliminate half of the country's 90,000 coal mining jobs.

Demonstrations have been held across the Ruhr Valley, in several cases blocking major roads. In Saarland, an industrial state near the French border, miners blocked a highway March 9 with a mound of coal, in which they stuck crosses bearing the names of previously closed mines. Some 5,000 miners rallied that day at the coal mine in Goettelborn, following a similarly sized demonstration by workers in Duesseldorf March 8.

Thousands of miners converged on Bonn to demonstrate March 10, and 13,000 strikers blocked the parliament building the next day, when talks between Kohl and IG Bergbau officials were scheduled. The chancellor called off the negotiations at the last minute, complaining that the demonstrations by the miners near his office would put the government under undue pressure to compromise.

"We are here!" and "Kohl must go!" chanted the miners, who were reluctant to leave when union officials told them to go home for the day. Negotiations were rescheduled for March 13, and the union called another mass demonstration in Bonn for that day.

## Students win victory in affirmative action fight

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

AMHERST, Massachusetts — After a six-day occupation, 150 students at the University of Massachusetts campus here left Goodell Library, claiming a victory in the fight for affirmative action. The students took over the building on March 3 to demand that the administration live up to agreements reached in 1992 after another campus protest. The Goodell building houses the Controller's Office, the main financial center of the university.

The 1992 action erupted after the acquittal of the four Los Angeles police officers captured on videotape beating Rodney King, a Black worker stopped for a traffic violation. Like many across the country, UMass students were outraged at the verdict. An 11-hour sit-in at the Administration building resulted in the university's agreement to implement some measures of affirmative action in enrollment and hiring, including increasing to 20 percent the number of Black, Latino, Asian and Native American students. The college admits that minority enrollment stands at 16 percent of 28,000 students, while minority faculty and staff stands at 12 percent and 10.5 percent respectively, well below the quotas agreed to.

The occupation began after 150 people rallied March 3 at the Student Union. The following day, hundreds of students walked

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## Thousands march for immigrant rights in L.A.

BY BARRY FATLAND

LOS ANGELES — Thousands of people marched through downtown Los Angeles March 9, in the first major protest against the new immigration law and welfare reform passed by the federal government last year.

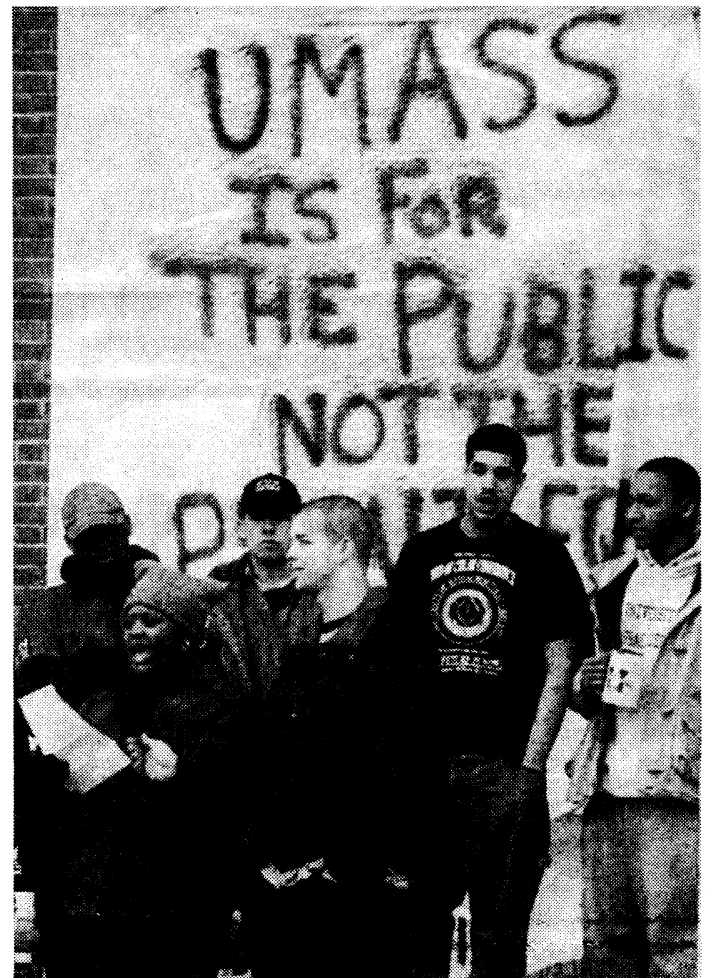
Both pieces of legislation, approved with bipartisan support, deepen the attacks on workers in the United States who have come here from other countries.

Claudia, 18 years old, was at her first march, helping to hold the lead banner which read: "March for Immigrants Rights — Justice, Dignity, Human Rights for All." Many participants interviewed by Militant report-

ers at the demonstration wanted their last names withheld from publication.

While the majority of the protesters were Latinos of different nationalities, with many Mexican, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran flags present from start to finish, there was also a significant increase in participation from the large and growing Asian communities in the Los Angeles area.

Six busloads of senior citizens came directly to the rally site where hundreds of chairs had been set up in anticipation of their



Students at University of Massachusetts at Amherst protest in front of occupied building March 4.

arrival. They had been organized to depart from different senior housing complexes and they represented the Chinese, Filipino, and Korean communities.

Toward the front of the march, a spirited contingent of young people organized by the Asian Pacific Islanders For Immigrants Rights and Empowerment (API FIRE), helped lead chants in English. Over the past year, API FIRE has led in organizing broad public response, from all over the world, to the growing attacks against immigrants in the United States. They organized to get the main march leaflet translated into Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese and distributed in the different Asian communities throughout the area.

The demonstration was broadly publicized in the Spanish language media, with the main daily newspaper *La Opinion* carrying full page ads for several days prior to the march. Television and radio coverage the day before the protest helped boost the participation.

Alvaro and Rosalba from Durango, Mexico, and their two children, learned about the march by reading *La Opinion*. Alvaro said he called his sister to tell her about it. "I'm Mormon and it's against the rules for us to be here, but I had no other choice. We have to be able to feed our families."

Elena Sánchez, a housewife in her 40s, heard about the protest action the night before on Channel 34, a Spanish language station. It was her first demonstration.

Valentin, an older worker originally from the Mexican state of Hidalgo commented on the new legislation. "It's causing a lot of harm to the people. I've been here since 1980, but I don't have any work authorization papers."

When asked if he had applied for amnesty under the 1985 Immigration and Reform Act (IRCA) that millions took advantage of, he replied, "I had to return to Mexico because

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## IN BRIEF

### Auto workers in Belgium, France protest closing of Renault plant

When the French auto giant Renault SA announced February 27 it would close its assembly plant in Vilvoorde, Belgium, laying off 3,100, workers in both Belgium and France responded. Unemployment in Belgium stands at 13 percent. Immediately, production stopped at the plant in Vilvoorde, and workers refused to allow 4,000 finished cars off the factory grounds. Some 3,500 auto and other workers marched through the streets of Brussels March 3.

On March 5, a convoy of 900 Vilvoorde workers drove across the border to Douai in northern France, to a factory proposed to take the work of the Vilvoorde plant. Workers there promptly stopped work and joined in the demonstration. Workers at the Vilvoorde plant are planning a series of demonstrations in Paris and Brussels for March 16; auto workers across Europe have pledged support. Renault also plans to use early retirement, part-time work and other methods to cut 2,764 jobs from its French operations. The automaker had already cut 1,600 jobs with similar measures last year.

### France: public employees strike

Chanting "Enough austerity!" tens of thousands of public employees marched in Paris and other cities March 6. They demanded pay raises in a 24-hour strike after French prime minister Alan Juppé froze salaries last year as part of an austerity plan. This year, the government has offered a 1 percent raise. Seven major unions supported the public employees strike — the third such action since last September. Schools were especially affected, as about 50 percent of the teachers at some primary school struck.

### Bonn faces antinuclear protests

More than 15,000 people joined in protests March 5-6 as the German government moved truckloads of nuclear waste to be dumped in the northern town of Gorleben. Protesters blocked the main roads by cementing tractors to the pavement, digging deep holes, and covering up alternate routes. A force of 30,000 police officers was deployed to protect the 540 tons of radioactive cargo, in what Reuters described as



Auto workers from Vilvoorde Renault plant knock down fence at plant in Douai, northern France. Renault plans to eliminate 3,100 jobs by transferring work to Douai plant.

Bonn's "largest postwar security operation." Some protesters threw stones and firebombs at the cops. German police arrested 250 protesters. Meanwhile, unemployment in Germany rose again in February to a new post-war high of 12.2 percent.

### Shipyard closes in Poland

The Gdansk shipyard, famous as the birthplace of the trade union Solidarity, which emerged as workers rose up against the bureaucratic Stalinist government in Poland in the 1980s, began laying off its last 3,600 workers March 6. The shipyard employed 7,500 workers before it was declared bankrupt last August. The state bank, PeKaO SA, rejected a request for a \$100 million loan because Gdansk's "business plan did not guarantee a profit," the Associated Press reported. Last June workers at the Gdansk shipyard in Warsaw struck to protest the Polish government's plans to close the facility. They demanded back wages and called on the government to find a way to keep the shipyard open. Gdansk is 60 percent owned by the government. "People are very much

embittered by this situation. They are blaming everyone, the government, Solidarity, [former president Lech] Walesa," said Witek Pawlak, who has worked there for 22 years.

### Tel Aviv gives 'minimum' land

Palestinians protested in the West Bank city of Beit Omar over the delay in the withdrawal of Tel Aviv's occupation force from their area. Protesters threw rocks and bottles at Israeli troops, as the soldiers fired tear gas at the crowd. After a heated debate March 7, the Israeli cabinet voted 10-7 to approve the latest troop removal from the West Bank. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his cabinet that he had given up "the necessary minimum" of land. Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat said the 9 percent pullback, which was supposed to start on March 7, but will be extended several days, fell far short of expectations and violated accords between his organization and the Zionist regime.

### Tamil rebels continue fight

In the heaviest fighting since January, the Tamil Tiger rebels waged a three-prong attack on the government in Sri Lanka March 6. The rebels hit a base at Vavunativu and another on the China Bay. At the same time, about 300 rebels attacked the air force's eastern headquarters, firing rockets and mortars at planes on the tarmac, a Sri Lankan military official reported. The Tamils are fighting for a homeland and an end to discriminatory policies by the Sinhalese majority. Tamils make up 18 percent of Sri Lanka's 18 million people. More than 48,000 people have been killed in the 13-year war.

### Colombia renews spraying coca

On March 5, the government of Colombia suspended a program that sprayed coca

crops as part of an eradication effort backed by Washington. The move was in retaliation for the U.S. government's "decertification" of Colombia, for the second year in a row, for what the *New York Times* described as "failing to cooperate fully with the United States in antidrug efforts." Washington had accused Bogotá of allowing a 32 percent increase in the cultivation of coca last year. Two days after halting it, Bogotá reinstated the coca eradication program. In a clear swipe at Washington, Justice Minister Carlos Medellín said he would ask the French government's help in verifying Washington's crop estimates.

### Ten hospitals to close in Toronto

A government commission announced March 6 that it recommends closing 10 of Toronto's hospitals to cut costs. The move would put thousands of people out of work and eliminate 1,750 beds, more than 20 percent of the city's total. Also slated to close is Ontario's only French-language hospital, Monfort Hospital in Ottawa. These cuts in Ontario have been duplicated in every Canadian province. In Alberta, authorities executed a mock disaster they claimed would demonstrate that emergency care wouldn't suffer from the planned closure of the only hospital in downtown Calgary with a trauma unit.

### Police raze homeless in NYC

Cops carrying flashlights and axes surrounded Manhattan's last large homeless encampment February 26 and used bulldozers to demolish the makeshift homes where some 45 men and women had lived for the last three years along a stretch of old rail yards. City officials accelerated the long-planned action, because the encampment is part of an area where real estate magnate Donald Trump plans to construct a luxury complex. The Coalition for the Homeless estimates there are 100,000 homeless people in New York City.

### 'Three strikes' doesn't cut crime

"Three strikes" laws mandating long sentences for those convicted of three offenses have not brought down crime, according to a study released by the Justice Policy Institute. In 1994-95, both violent and overall crime rates dropped more in the 37 states without the three strikes laws than in the 13 with them. In California, where the laws were aggressively carried out, the state imprisoned more than 15,000 offenders in two years. Since 1995, 11 other states have implemented three-strikes laws.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Justice Department reported March 6, that one out of every 20 U.S. residents will spend time behind bars. "At current levels of incarceration a Black male in the United States today has greater than a one in four chance of going to prison during his lifetime," the report said. The chance for Hispanic males is 16 percent, compared with 4.4 percent for white males.

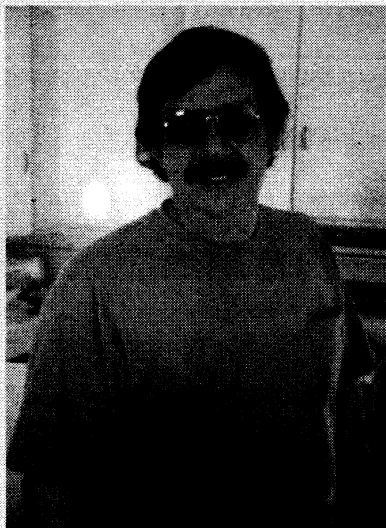
— MEGAN ARNEY

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Rudy Juárez, member of  
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# U.S. 'certification' demands spark debate in Mexico

BY RUTH NEBBIA

MEXICO CITY — Washington's procedure of "certifying" Mexico for being sufficiently "cooperative" in the so-called war on drugs has provoked much debate in this country. The discussion particularly heated up after the February 6 arrest of the top Mexican drug enforcement official, Gen. Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo, over alleged ties to drug traffickers.

The debate had many aspects, including the question of national sovereignty and the hypocrisy of the U.S. government deciding which other countries pass muster. The Clinton administration announced February 28 it would certify Mexico, but once again "decertify" Colombia.

A week later a congressional committee voted to override the president's decision and present legislation in the House of Representatives that would decertify Mexico, but give Clinton the power to waive economic sanctions. This occurs in the context of a deepening economic crisis, deteriorating social conditions, and rising resistance by working people in Mexico.

Many people here reacted to the arrogance of U.S. officials' statements toward Mexico and the certification process. "I'm convinced that our children will be better off if we work with them [the Mexicans]," declared Barry McCaffrey in a statement to the U.S. Congress February 27. McCaffrey is the Clinton's director of the office of National Drug Control Policy.

In announcing the White House decision the next day, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright stated, "Our certification process is not meant to measure the depth of Mexico's shortcomings, but the extent of its cooperation with us in overcoming them. The point, in other words, is not to keep score but to change the score in our favor."

"In light of the imperialist arrogance the indignant reaction of diverse sectors of public opinion in Mexico is understandable," wrote Victor Flores Olea in an op-ed piece for *El Universal* March 1. "What right does the world's largest consumer of drugs have to assign itself the duty to certify the conduct of any country, be it in matters of human rights or drug trade?"

Many ruling-class spokespeople in Mexico also chafed at Washington's conditions for certification. In an interview with the daily *El Universal*, former Mexican foreign minister Bernardo Sepúlveda, who served during Miguel de la Madrid's administration in 1983, expressed concern over the demand that U.S. members of bilateral intelligence units be granted the right the right to carry arms and have diplomatic immunity.

The proposed U.S.-Mexican units would operate in northern Mexico in the regions of Tijuana; Ciudad Juárez-EI Paso, Texas; Matamoros-Brownsville, Texas; and Monterrey. Each of the four elite units would consist of 6 U.S. agents, 20 Mexican police, and an interpreter.

## Washington's 'certification' conditions

Whether or not Mexico should accept the certification process was prominent in the major news dailies here. *La Jornada* compiled and publicized a list of Washington's demands for certification. They included:

- Creating the joint border forces, with immunity for DEA, FBI, and U.S. Customs agents operating in Mexico.
- Requiring more background checks on antidrug agents in Mexico, including lie detector and drug tests.
- Increasing the number of U.S. agents in Mexico.
- Extradition of accused individuals, including Mexican nationals, to the United States. The Clinton administration has 150 pending requests for extradition from Mexico of people it claims Washington can "convict and keep in jail better."
- Allowing the U.S. Coast Guard to patrol Mexican territorial waters to hunt alleged drug traffickers both by water and in Mexican airspace.
- Implementation of new laws against money laundering by the Mexican govern-

ment.

"'End the attacks against Mexico'; Barrio Terrazas demands to certify the US as well," was the headline in the February 25 *El Universal*, quoting Francisco Barrio Terrazas, the state governor of Chihuahua.

"It would be a slap in the face to not certify," Secretary of Foreign Relations José Angel Gurría told *La Jornada* the next day. Gurría said Washington's unilateral action ignores the great demand for drugs and the corruption that exist in the United States.

Nevertheless, the Mexican government agreed to the demands, and also promised to allow the installation of U.S. radar systems in southern Mexico, allegedly to track suspected drug flights.

An editorial in the daily *Excelsior* February 26 pointed to one of the reasons Washington decided to "approve" Mexico but not Colombia. "A 'decertification' would have as a consequence the cancellation or denial of credits to our country, and imposition of commercial sanctions," said the editorial. "But between Mexico and the United States there is a bilateral exchange of US \$140 billion that would be gravely compromised. Millions of people on both sides of the border live from this commerce, and the industry that backs it."

Prior to the certification decision, the *Washington Post* cited one White House official as saying, "Whatever you do to Mexico, the next day when you wake up, there is still going to be 1,900 miles of border, immigration issues and the fact that they are a major trading partner."

The uncertainty of certification had financial repercussions. On February 27, the day before Clinton's announcement, the peso fell 2.2 percent against the U.S. dollar, the largest one-day drop since the country's financial crisis at the end of 1995. The Mexican stock market also tumbled more than 1 percent that day. This exacerbates the already strained economic problems facing Mexico.

Figures from the economics department at the Autonomous University of Mexico show that a basic daily food basket costs 78 pesos, three times the minimum wage of 23 pesos a day.

Two thirds of the workforce earns less than 40 pesos a day, half the population is not covered by any form of social security, and 20 percent of Mexicans suffer from malnutrition, according to a study by the employers association Compamex.

Last September, *El Financero* reported



Around 1,500 street vendors marched to the Zócalo plaza in Mexico City February 24 protesting a plan to increase the fee for a vendors license.

that Mexico's foreign debt had grown 64 percent in the previous 10 years, and now stands at 56 percent of the Gross Domestic Product.

In January, the Mexican government paid the entire \$12.5 billion it borrowed from Washington, plus interest. The loan was made in the wake of the collapse of the peso in December 1994. U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin bragged that Washington made an extra \$580 million profit from the deal, by charging premium interest rates.

## Resistance to austerity

Resistance to austerity measures that the government has imposed since 1994 is evident throughout the country.

About 2,000 teachers, members of the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), confronted soldiers February 25 as they tried to march to government offices demanding higher wages and an end to attempts to privatize education. Two other SNTE locals meanwhile rejected being paid with debit cards, as well as protesting the massive layoffs of school personnel.

With inflation reaching 29 percent in 1996, real wages have eroded. Telephone workers at TEL-MEX are demanding a 47 percent pay raise and vowed to strike after April 25 if their demands are not met. The 45,000-member Mexican Union of Electricians also decided to strike for a 55 percent

wage increase beginning March 16. Some of those present for the vote explained that this was not a question of better salaries but of a response to the drastic economic situation which is an "enemy of the workers and the people."

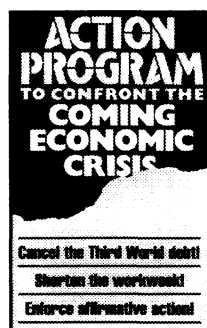
Street vendors marched through the streets of Mexico City February 24 demanding lower vendors fees. They participated in a vendors forum taking place the same day, and protested the reassignment of streets where they are allowed to sell, since their income has been affected by lower sales.

Meanwhile, pilots at Aerolitoral went on strike March 1, after rejecting the offer made by Servicios Aereos Litoral. The company offered pilots a 20 percent raise. The pilots, who demanded 40 percent, say they are willing to negotiate but will not go as low as 20 percent, because they lose buying power.

In the last 15 months, over 300 textile shops have closed in Chihuahua, Tlaxcala, due to financial problems. More than 1,000 workers have lost their jobs due to the inability of the small shop owners to pay them, explained Erasmo González Apan, president of the Chihuahua weavers union.

Ruth Nebbia, a member of the United Transportation Union in New York, participated in the Mexico City Book Fair February 22 - March 2.

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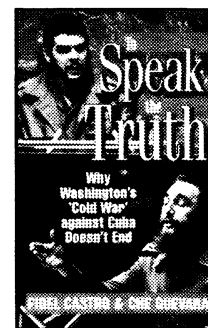


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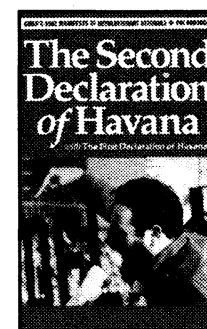
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# Interest in revolutionary books high at Mexico fair

BY LINDA JOYCE

MEXICO CITY — As the U.S. government was going through the annual process of "certifying" Mexico in the so-called "war on drugs," supporters of Pathfinder Press were participating in the 18th annual Mexico City book fair February 22 – March 2.

Many workers and young people did a double take and then were delighted when they saw workers and youth from the United States offering revolutionary books for sale. Others were not surprised, and came to the book fair precisely to find Pathfinder books. "I came last year, and also in '95, and I bought the *Communist Manifesto*," explained 16-year-old Marco Lara, a high school student in Mexico City, as he looked through the books at the Pathfinder Press booth at the International Book Fair. His latest selections were Pathfinder's Spanish-language editions of *Malcolm X Speaks* and *Abortion Is a Woman's Right*.

Other young people met Pathfinder representatives from 10 U.S. cities and Mexico at several of the local universities during the week of the book fair; speaking in classrooms, displaying books on campus tables, and visiting libraries.

The book fair, held in the Ministry of Mining, was packed with people every day. More than 100,000 workers, students and book professionals came to visit the booths set up by several hundred book distributors, publishers, and bookstores. Cuban distributors had a large room for their literature. Pathfinder representatives had hours of discussions, some of which continued into the night after the book fair closed at 9 p.m. Many signed up to be involved in a group of young people who are meeting to read and discuss the ideas in the revolutionary books they are buying each year from Pathfinder.

Alonso García, 20, said that he had visited Cuba and was very interested in Pathfinder's books on the Cuban revolution. He said, "Cuba and Mexico have a common history, a common account of tragedies. Cuba is the only country that has broken from its colonial past. I admire Cuba because within its own limitations it has generated its own social, political and economic theory. Other countries fall, but Cuba hasn't."

García and his friend Darío Tzihuari, bought the Spanish-language issue of *New*

*International* magazine focused on "Che Guevara, Cuba and the Road to Socialism," as well as *Peru's Shining Path, Evolution of a Stalinist Sect*, in Spanish. Like many people here, they commented that the "certification" of Mexico was hypocritical on the part of the U.S.—the biggest consumer of drugs in the world.

Pathfinder representatives also took the books out to plant gates, picket lines, and sit-ins. At the Chrysler Mexico truck assembly plant, Pathfinder representatives had been asked to leave the plant earlier in the week



Militant/Linda Joyce

Participants at March 1 Pathfinder reception during Mexico fair

by two unfriendly union officials. Before this happened, several workers had indicated they wanted to buy books, and said to come back on pay day.

So on Friday three Pathfinder representatives set up a display of books near the bus stop on the main street in front of the plant. Dozens of workers from the Chrysler plant of 3,000 and the nearby Modelo brewery of 6,000, stopped to talk and buy books. Many said the books really caught their eye. One was upset at the treatment the team had received earlier in the week.

After three hours in a mid-afternoon sun, the team had sold 157 pesos (about \$20) worth of literature, including a copy of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, by Ernesto Che Guevara, in English. This time, the company sent out a photographer, an executive, and some menacing goons to harass the team, which was packing up to leave anyway.

On their way back to the fair, they stopped to talk to garment workers on strike at London Suits, a few blocks from the assembly plant. For two years workers have been guarding the plant so the owner could not remove the machinery. They explained that the government shut the plant down when the boss refused to pay the various taxes he owed and had taken out of their paychecks for over eight years. Some of the women had worked for minimum wage for over 40 years.

"He used to tell us what a family we were!" scoffed Josefina Machuca. "We went to see [President Ernesto] Zedillo, but were sent to all kind of government agencies that did nothing. Our union, the CTM, did nothing. But we have to fight, join up with other workers and shout!"

A highlight of the week was the special reception that Pathfinder Press held in a large meeting hall at the book fair site March 1. Ruth Nebbia, a rail worker from New York, talked about the importance of the newest Pathfinder Press releases in Spanish: *The Second Declaration of Havana* and *Lenin's Final Fight, 1922-23*. More than 120 people filled every available space in the room to join in the discussion.

Carlos Ribero, 20, a worker in a radiator plant, said, "I've been coming here for the last three years. We need to do something out of this forum."

Altogether, sales of Pathfinder literature totaled more than \$1,700. The top seller was *Malcolm X Speaks*. Fifty people bought the book in Spanish, and everything by Malcolm X in English and Spanish sold out. Twenty-seven copies of *The Second Declaration of Havana* were sold, even though the shipment of the just-released pamphlet did not arrive in Mexico City until the last weekend of the fair. Twenty-three copies of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* were sold, and other titles on the Cuban revolution were popular. Three people bought full sets of the Spanish-language edition of the Marxist theoretical magazine *New International*.

Linda Joyce is a member of United Auto Workers Local 882 in Atlanta. Craig Honts, a member of United Transportation Union Local 1-674 in Los Angeles, contributed to this article.

## Youth, workers raise pledges to fund

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — Arlene Rubenstein wrote to the *Militant*, "The March 8 Militant Fund rally in Atlanta successfully launched the fund here. As a result, supporters in Atlanta decided to raise their goal from \$3,100 to \$3,500."

She reported that several new pledges and contributions came in, including from a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and two *Militant* readers who recently renewed their subscriptions — an auto worker at Ford and a Cuba solidarity activist. At the meeting itself \$451 was collected. "Pledges from the Atlanta chapter of the Young Socialists now total \$175," Rubenstein added. "At the rally, one YS member raised his pledge from \$20 to \$100."

Frank Gorton from Detroit said *Militant* supporters there have now raised their goal from \$4,000 to \$4,750 due to the response they have received from reaching out to

readers. Partisans of the socialist press in Christchurch, New Zealand, also decided to increase their goal, by \$700.

Margrethe Siem reports from New York that one of her co-workers in a garment shop bought a copy of *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Spanish-language sister publication of the *Militant*, during a discussion on the economic crisis in Mexico. Another worker there, who became a new reader of the *PM* a couple of weeks earlier, helped to sell the magazine. When she heard about the Militant Fund Drive, she said, "I'll support that. Bring me a copy every time a new issue comes out." She also donated \$3.50 to fund the socialist periodicals. That will go toward a goal of \$25 taken by socialist garment workers to be raised on the job.

As the February 22 – April 26, 1997 Militant Fund Drive enters its third week, pledges from around the world exceed the \$110,000 goal by more than \$5,000. Internationally, however, we are behind sched-

ule in the collection of these pledges. Cities need to re-double their efforts to help complete the drive on time. Many Militant Fund rallies are scheduled in the next few weeks. Reports on these rallies and workers correspondence should be sent in for future articles on the progress of the fund.

Supporters of the *Militant* and contributors to the fund drive will be interested in the very first campaign to raise money for the socialist paper. Reprinted below is an excerpt of a column on this subject written by Sara Lobman during the 1993 Militant Fund Campaign.



When James Cannon, Martin Abern, and Max Shachtman began planning the first issue of *The Militant* just 65 years ago, they had no idea how it would be paid for. The three working-class leaders, just expelled from the Communist Party for opposing the thuggery and counterrevolutionary course of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union, had no money of their own.

A local printer agreed to print the first issue on credit and supporters in Chicago scrounged up a little cash. The new paper promised to come out twice a month. The second issue ran an advertisement for the first *Militant* fundraising event—a "Cabaret and Dance" to be held in New York on Dec. 1, 1928. The paper was able to keep its promise to come out every other week. It printed documents smuggled out of the Soviet Union from those leading the fight against Stalin and his followers. It covered the union organizing campaigns and strikes in the textile mills of North Carolina and the debates and discussions among coal miners in the Illinois coalfields and garment workers in New York. In short, it provided fighting workers with the news and analysis they needed to learn from previous struggles and to be better and more effective fighters in the battles of the day.

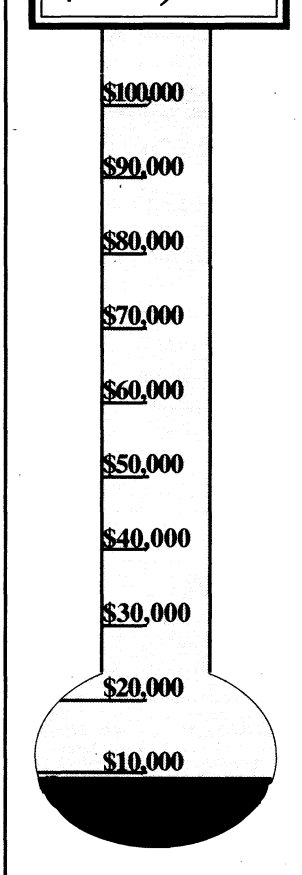
In early 1929, the *Militant* placed a challenge before its readers. If \$2,000 was collected, the editors said, the *Militant* could end its semimonthly schedule. The final leg of this campaign was launched in September. Two months later—in a fitting celebration of the 12th anniversary of the Russian revolution—the *Militant* would become a weekly!...

The first weekly issue of the paper was dated November 30, 1929. "We can publish the *Militant* regularly and improve it with each issue only with YOUR aid," the preceding issue had explained. To that end, the *Militant* launched a Sustaining Fund on the heels of the successful fund for the weekly. The goal, the editors said, was to "establish a firm foundation under our feet."

"If you can give an outright donation of money, sent it in immediately," *Militant* readers were asked. "If you can make a pledge to send in a sum of money each week...no matter how large or small the pledge may be, let us know right away."

CONTRIBUTE TO THE MILITANT FUND			
Country/City	GOAL	PAID	%
<b>United States</b>			
New York	\$12,000	\$3,643	30%
Greensboro	\$2,250	\$525	23%
Detroit	\$4,750	\$1,095	23%
Twin Cities	\$6,000	\$700	12%
Atlanta	\$3,500	\$376	11%
Chicago	\$7,500	\$780	10%
Peoria	\$1,200	\$100	8%
Los Angeles	\$9,000	\$370	4%
Des Moines	\$2,000	\$80	4%
Morgantown	\$1,500	\$60	4%
Newark	\$7,500	\$275	4%
San Francisco	\$9,000	\$325	4%
Birmingham	\$2,300	\$0	0%
Boston	\$4,500	\$0	0%
Cleveland	\$2,500	\$0	0%
Houston	\$4,000	\$0	0%
Miami	\$2,000	\$0	0%
Philadelphia	\$4,000	\$0	0%
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$0	0%
Salt Lake City	\$2,000	\$0	0%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$0	0%
Washington, D.C.	\$2,800	\$0	0%
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>\$102,300</b>	<b>\$8,329</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Canada</b>			
Montreal	\$2,000	\$0	0%
Toronto	\$1,440	\$0	0%
Vancouver	\$1,080	\$0	0%
<b>Canada total</b>	<b>\$4,520</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>\$350</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>			
Auckland	\$3,500	\$707	20%
Christchurch	\$1,750	\$340	19%
Wellington	\$140	\$0	0%
<b>N.Z. total</b>	<b>\$5,390</b>	<b>\$1,047</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>			
London	\$800	\$0	0%
Manchester	\$800	\$0	0%
<b>UK total</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>TOTAL FUND</b>	<b>\$115,360</b>	<b>\$9,376</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$24,200</b>	<b>22%</b>

\$110,000!



To contribute to the Militant Fund contact the supporters nearest you listed on page 12 or send donations via mail to: The Militant, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014



SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Immigrant workers help sell subscriptions to socialist press

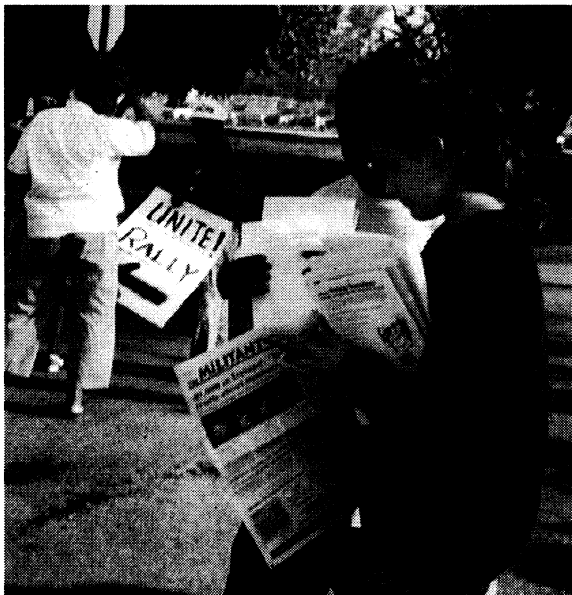
BY MAURICE WILLIAMS
As armed working people deepened their control over the southern third of Albania, and rebels in Zaire accelerated their march to uproot the dictatorship there, supporters of the Militant, Perspectiva Mundial, and New International launched a seven-week drive March 8 to win new readers to the socialist press. In some areas, they were joined by recent subscribers who helped organize

house meetings, went door-to-door in working-class communities, and set up literature tables. Supporters of the socialist press have taken a goal of selling 1,400 Militant subscriptions, 450 subscriptions to its Spanish-language sister magazine Perspectiva Mundial, and 600 copies of the Marxist magazine New International by April 26.

"We got help kicking off the sales drive from immigrant workers involved in a fight for a union contract at Case Farms, a poultry processing plant in Morganton, North Carolina," wrote Lisa Potash, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Greensboro. "We called an activist in that fight who subscribed to the Militant and Perspectiva Mundial during the last drive and he agreed to join a team to sell in the Morganton area.

"When we arrived, he introduced us to a Mexican neighbor who now does construction work in the area. The neighbor bought a subscription to Perspectiva Mundial, and wanted to know what we thought were the reasons underlying the changes taking

of the paper and 15 Pathfinder titles, including The Politics of Chicano Liberation, Feminism and the Marxist Movement, February 1965: The Final Speeches by Malcolm X, and Malcolm X Talks to Young People. Members of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party set up a meeting there to discuss the fight for affirmative action and other political questions," said Bockman. "We are organizing a meeting for Young Socialist leader Patricia O'Beirne, who has been touring the country to build



Selling the Militant at the rally against "Kitchen of the Ocean," in Deerfield, Florida, February 13.

place in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Potash said they went to another household of two young immigrant workers from Mexico who are among a core of workers involved in fighting for a contract at the Case Farms plant. "I saw this paper in Washington, D.C., at the [immigrant rights] demonstration October 12," one worker remarked when they showed him Perspectiva Mundial. Both of the activists bought six-month subscriptions to Perspectiva Mundial.

"After an hour long discussion they decided to buy a copy of Nueva Internacional no. 3 to read more about the successes and shortcomings of the leadership of the Nicaraguan revolution," Potash stated. Potash said they sold another book, Wall Street enjuicia al socialismo (Socialism on trial), to the subscriber who originally invited them out.

Mary Nell Bockman, a airline ramp worker at USAir in Boston, told the Militant, "We found great sales opportunities when the student occupation broke out on the University of Massachusetts college campus at Amherst." Participants in the protest there bought two Militant subscriptions and two copies of the Marxist magazine New International.

"We also sold 20 single issues

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

Countries/Cities	February			Previous Months		
	Goal	Sold	%Sold	Jan	Dec	Nov
SWEDEN	55	60	109%	69%	110%	90%
FRANCE	25	24	96%	20%	84%	104%
UNITED STATES						
Detroit	54	126	233%	123%	50%	91%
San Francisco	95	160	168%	243%	63%	194%
Miami	41	59	144%	117%	62%	382%
Houston	65	83	128%	34%	42%	109%
Los Angeles	120	114	95%	81%	73%	133%
Cleveland	50	47	94%	66%	44%	28%
Atlanta	48	42	88%	117%	115%	194%
Chicago	77	65	84%	103%	108%	197%
Seattle	80	63	79%	84%	30%	101%
Birmingham	50	39	78%	106%	30%	58%
Salt Lake City	27	20	74%	50%	70%	35%
Des Moines	45	32	71%	31%	31%	0%
Morgantown	32	22	69%	56%	25%	22%
Washington, D.C.	64	43	67%	84%	106%	303%
Newark	171	97	57%	51%	17%	26%
Boston	65	36	55%	100%	111%	72%
Philadelphia	50	27	54%	88%	18%	84%
Peoria	27	14	52%	130%	58%	120%
Pittsburgh	63	31	49%	71%	49%	43%
Twin Cities	104	45	43%	41%	46%	82%
New York	245	106	43%	45%	41%	25%
Greensboro	41	8	20%	22%	70%	39%
U.S. Total	1614	1279	71%	74%	48%	90%
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%	100%	100%	100%
NEW ZEALAND						
Christchurch	28	28	100%	136%	28%	63%
Auckland	56	23	41%	100%	91%	79%
NZ Total	84	51	61%	112%	68%	73%
AUSTRALIA	36	16	44%	175%	136%	111%
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	96	64%	0%	46%	72%
Manchester	78	0	0%	46%	13%	63%
UK Total	228	96	42%	15%	35%	70%
CANADA						
Montreal	80	37	46%	61%	54%	89%
Toronto	80	32	40%	226%	118%	78%
Vancouver	41	14	34%	154%	34%	128%
CANADA Total	121	46	38%	146%	78%	91%
GREECE	13	3	23%	46%	54%	100%

IN THE UNIONS

	February			Jan	Dec	Nov
	Goal	Sold	Total			
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	4	100%	50%	125	150%
CANADA						
IAM	8	7	88%	113%	125%	50%
USWA	10	6	60%	25%	163%	100%
CAW*	6	0	0%	17%	17%	33%
CANADA Total	16	13	81%	72%	79%	43%
UNITED STATES						
UMWA	3	3	100%	67%	0%	20%
UAW	50	41	82%	94%	38%	0%
UFCW	6	4	67%	17%	33%	50%
IAM	59	34	58%	39%	32%	48%
USWA	46	22	48%	22%	26%	15%
OCAW	44	12	27%	16%	25%	16%
UNITE	26	6	23%	69%	42%	42%
UTU*	94	0	0%	15%	12%	22%
U.S. Total	328	122	37%	37%	26%	23%
UNITED KINGDOM						
TGWU	7	7	100%	0%	0%	29%
AEEU	10	4	40%	0%	40%	40%
RMT*	8	0	0%	50%	0%	0%
Total U.K.	25	11	44%	19%	15%	22%
* No new report						

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Metal Workers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

sponsored by the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party.

As the subscription campaign picks up steam, supporters are reminded that selling single issues of the Militant and Perspectiva Mundial can lead to new subscribers. Airline worker Emily Fitzsimmons from Seattle wrote, "In the third week of February we sold some 50 copies of the Militant to striking musicians, including one six-month subscription renewal."

The Militant encourages readers to send in stories and photos of sales activities. Next week the Militant will print the results of the first week of the subscription drive.

# Cuban youth speak to Paris workers, students

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 14392, St. Paul, MN 55114. Tel: (612) 644-0051. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY RAFIK BENALI

PARIS — Two young Cubans, Sylvano Merced Len, a sports student, and Loreley Zamora Alonso, who works as an economist in a pharmaceutical institute in Cuba, made a 10-day speaking tour in the Paris area in December at the invitation of the France-Cuba Association.

The tour was supported by a number of student organizations — the National Union of Communist Students, the National Union of Students of France, the National Union of Moroccan Students, and the National Union of Tunisian Students — as well as the Young Socialists.

In addition to wanting to explain the situation in Cuba today, the two young Cubans came to build the World Youth Festival, which will be held in Havana July 27 – August 6. The Cubans hope to bring 5,000

young people from around the world to the Festival.

At the GEE Alstom power transformer factory near Paris, they met with about 50 workers. The workers, who met the two Cubans in the union-run factory library during their lunch break, asked questions about the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Merced said, "It's like being forced to walk around the entire factory in order to go to the canteen, about 20 yards from here." He was referring to the fact that, due to the pressure the Helms-Burton law places on neighboring countries, Cubans often have to go to far off areas in the world to get imports available much closer.

One of the workers, who came from the African country of Mali, pointed out, "All over Africa, the governments are under pressure from the United States to not establish any type of relations with Cuba."

## Cubans face 'special period'

Forty students came to hear them at the University of Paris VIII in the Paris suburb of St. Denis. A student asked what the concrete results of the Cuban revolution were. "In 1959 there were only three universities. Today there are 56 universities and 2,000 university professors," Merced replied.

"There is one school teacher for 43 inhabitants, which is better than in most capitalist countries. As for medicine, there is one doctor and one nurse per 143 inhabitants."

In the discussion, a student said that the disappearance of the Eastern European regimes was a mortal blow for Cuba. Merced answered, "It was not a mortal blow. We are still here, but it was a hard blow."

Zamora noted that since 1990 Cuba has been in a "special period," which was very difficult for the Cuban people. But since 1994, the economy has begun to grow again with 1 percent growth in 1994, 2.5 percent in 1995 and nearly 8 percent in 1996. This is in spite of the destruction caused by the recent hurricane, which cost the Cuban economy \$500 million.

Zamora, explained to one student who wanted to have more details about the special period, "The special period has different aspects. Since the legalization of dollars and setting up of legal money changing stations, the peso has gone from a low of 120 to the dollar in 1990 to 19 pesos today. Some individual businesses are now allowed and subsidies for some unprofitable companies were cut back to stabilize the country's economic situation."

Many students at a speaking engagement

at Nanterre University wanted to know if their was freedom of expression in Cuba. Zamora gave the example of financial aid to students, which the government wanted to suspend when students did their military service. Many students opposed this measure and the student aid was maintained. "People can criticize measures and propose alternatives. That is part of our democracy."

## Parliaments of workers and students

She also pointed out that "young people play an important political role in Cuba, where the voting age is 16. There are 12 members of parliament who are under 30 years old. There are two youth representatives in the State Council who also participate in the Council of Ministers. In general, young people can take part in any political debate. In Cuba, there are not only workers' parliaments but also student parliaments."

These parliaments examine the university curriculums, she added.

Ten students took part in the debate at Jussieu University. One student who had been to Cuba a few months earlier raised that young Cubans he had met had no perspectives for their future nor for the defense of the revolution.

Zamora gave her own example, saying, "I owe everything to the revolution because I came from a poor family. My mother is a worker who had three children. My two brothers have finished their university studies. My mother did not have to worry about our studies and our health. In addition she now owns her own home thanks to the Cuban system. In Cuba, rent is calculated in relation to one's income, and after a number of years of paying rent, you become the owner of your home."

The last meeting was organized by the France-Cuba Association. Over 60 people attended.

One participant asked in what way is Cuba a revolutionary country today. "I believe that the Cuban people are revolutionary," answered Merced, "because it is a people who have made a revolution. Since 1959, the people have continued to change things, to deepen the revolution and perfect it."

"For a people to have been able to resist for 37 years, it means that there have been numerous revolutions within the revolution in every area since 1959."

# Students win affirmative action gains

Continued from front page

out of morning classes to support the protest. Groups of students organized to get food, bedding and other necessities into the building, which was sealed off by university security. Tents were set up on the lawn outside Goodell and several dozen students camped out, despite sub-freezing temperatures.

Faculty from the Science Department, Economics Department and Women's Studies Department announced that they would not penalize students who missed class or exams and urged other faculty to do the same. The Service Employees International Union local, representing 900 staff members, endorsed the protest. The Graduate Employees Organization lent its offices to help organize, and volunteered to tutor students occupying the building.

The students' broad list of demands also addressed the right to an education, regardless of ability to pay. It included demanding \$2 million more in financial aid for low income students, an end to fees imposed for late tuition payment, ending the holds on registration for students owing back tuition, and university funded child care, among others. A large banner hung from the front of the occupied building proclaiming, "UMass is for the public, not the privileged."

This theme was echoed by speakers at all-day rallies in front of Goodell during the occupation. Jonan Murchea told the hundreds assembled on March 4, "Students of color are being deprived of coming to school because they don't have the money." A first-year student explained that when she applied for financial aid she was sent loan applications. Her parents' income, \$20,000 a year, makes her ineligible for any assistance.

Amy Winnice, a student who works in the Student Union, said, "At first it was hard to get involved because I came here to go to school. But it is the right thing. These issues affect all of our friends and ourselves. It is bringing the campus together."

Support also came from outside the campus. A local restaurant donated hot meals on one day. A march of several hundred students and faculty from the four other colleges in the area arrived at the rally site to wild cheering from inside and outside the building.

A dozen students from junior and senior high schools in Amherst walked out March 6 to join the protest. Jonah, a student from Amherst High, told the university *Daily Collegian*, "UMass is a business. They're going to treat people like any other big business does and there's always going to be problems."

Opposition to the occupation and the student demands was also visible. Anant Ahuja wrote in the *Daily Collegian* that having a set percentage of minority students admitted is "the most outrageous demand I have ever heard. That right there is discrimina-

tion." Other letters expressed support for the demands but disagreed with the building takeover.

The University administration responded to the demands by saying it "genuinely shares the students' concerns about the learning environment for minority students." In a written response they then explained that the demands would cost \$13 million and would be given "consideration in the budgeting process." This initial response was rejected by the negotiators for the students.

On March 8, a 21-point commitment was issued by the university. It again agreed to meet the 20 percent quota for minority student undergraduate enrollment and 15 percent in graduate school. The administration agreed to hire several minority counselors and recruiters and to fund new programs aimed at retaining Black, Latino, Asian and Native American students. It promised to

reduce the holds on registration due to outstanding bills and to increase financial aid. Other demands like childcare and departments for Irish, Native American, Latin American and Asian studies were to be studied.

The agreement was ratified by the students occupying the building who issued a statement saying, "We believe that the draft agreement can begin a process to resolve some of the inequities which led to this historical occupation.... Over the next several months we will be able to gauge the sincerity of the administrators' commitment to meeting all of our demands and can plan further appropriate action if satisfactory progress is not made."

Mary Nell Bockman is a member of the International Association of Machinists in Boston.

# Protests continue against antigay stance in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, schools

BY GLOVA SCOTT

PHILADELPHIA — Last September, the Elizabethtown School Board passed a misnamed "pro-family resolution" banning programs and activities for gay students throughout the district. Elizabethtown is a small town southeast of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Outraged students, parents, and activists from various religious, community, and gay rights groups have staged several candlelight vigils and press conferences protesting the school board's actions. Many say that the resolution speaks against households headed by single parents. The local media throughout central Pennsylvania widely covered the protests.

About 125 people turned out for the February 11 school board meeting, most of them opposed to the antigay resolution. At the meeting, school board member Andrew Saylor read a statement reaffirming the board's actions. He then said that educational programs should not promote same-sex orientation to minor children. He said the policy is to "address a problem before the damage is done. What reasonable person can be against this policy?" he asked.

Dr. Susan Ross, a sociology professor from Dickinson College, noted at a press conference held before the school board meeting, that "only 7 percent of U.S. families fit the description of a traditional family." Most live in an extended family setup, she said.

Other speakers at the press conference, which 50 people turned out for, demanded that the school board's antigay policy be



February 11 candlelight vigil was one of many protests against the antigay resolution adopted by the Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, school board.

rescinded. Protesters also seek the election of a new school board.

The resolution asserts that "the traditional family, of one man married to one woman and their children through birth or adoption, has been the norm in civilized societies all through history." The school board resolution also appeals to right-wing ideology which emphasis the family as the primary institution responsible for the upbringing of

children. It scapegoats gay and lesbian couples for undermining the so-called traditional family. In passing this resolution, the Elizabethtown school board affirmed "that pro-homosexual concepts on sex and family as promoted by the National Education Association will never be tolerated or accepted in this school." Protesters have renamed the school board's policy the "anti-family diversity resolution."



# Big business pushes attack on Canada Wheat Board

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

MONTREAL — About 80,000 Canadian prairie farmers who have grown barley in the last three years are currently waiting for the results of their mail-in vote on a proposal to end the Canadian Wheat Board's (CWB) sales monopoly on malting and export barley. Beyond its immediate importance to barley producers, the plebiscite is widely seen as a test for the board's monopoly on sales of wheat, the dominant crop in the region. The results of the vote should be known by mid-March.

Officials in the capitalist governments of grain exporting countries, in particular the United States, as well as owners of the small number of giant grain trading companies who control the world market, are closely watching the debate taking place among farmers in Canada on this question. For the biggest capitalist players in the world grain trade, destruction of the wheat board would eliminate an important competitor in international markets and open the door to expanding their operations within Canada itself. Some of them are already following in the footsteps of Cargill, the world's largest grain company, in expanding their Canadian operations.

ConAgra, the world's fourth largest food company, has recently opened a Winnipeg office and announced plans for building three huge grain-handling facilities in Saskatchewan. General Mills has built a large grain facility in Sweetgrass, Montana, in partnership with the Alberta Wheat Pool. The crossing at Sweetgrass is the busiest Canada-U.S. border point between Washington state and Minnesota. "A shift to north-south shipping patterns, [and] the North American Free Trade Agreement" were factors cited by the company for building this facility. But the hoped-for end of the CWB's monopoly on wheat and barley exportations is no doubt a big factor in these initiatives.

Meanwhile, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials are threatening to renew a farm products trade war with the use of export subsidies. Their main target remains their European rivals. But "you are going to see much more focus by us on state trading enterprises," such as the Canadian Wheat Board, said John Keeling from the American Farm Bureau in January.

## Wheat board restricts competition

Since the 1940s the CWB has been the sole exporter of Canadian wheat and barley. The board has a monopoly as well on domestic sales of malting barley and of wheat for human consumption. Under the CWB system, the grain elevator companies act as collectors of board grain, but they do not actually purchase or market it. Their capacity to profit from competition among farmers in the marketplace is thereby severely restricted.

The returns from board sales over each crop year are shared among the 120,000 or so prairie producers, who are paid the same price per metric ton for wheat or barley, whatever the total size of their production. Under this pooling system, smaller producers receive a certain level of protection against competition from large farmers.

The CWB's "pool pricing" system has been under growing attacks over the last quarter century.

In 1974, the board's monopoly on domestic feed grains was ended by a Liberal government, introducing a domestic dual pricing system for those grains. This initiative was prominently supported by the United Grain Growers (UGG), an elevator company with its origins in the early cooperative movement, as well as by the Cargill and Winnipeg-based Pioneer grain companies, and the provincial stock growers' associations, representing the interests of capitalist ranchers. Oats were completely removed from the board's jurisdiction by a federal Conservative government in 1989.

The Canadian government officially calls for maintaining the board's current jurisdiction over barley and wheat. But a Western Grain Marketing Panel set up by Agriculture Minister Ralph Goodale in 1995 was carefully selected to deliver a report hostile to the board, sparking a series of farm protests last summer. Aiming a blow at price pooling, Goodale has placed legislation be-

fore the House of Commons that would permit the board to buy grain at spot market prices outside the pooling system.

Meanwhile, the Alberta Barley Commission, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association, and 21 individual farmers are taking court action against the CWB, claiming that the CWB Act violates their rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom. Farmers, they argue, should be free to sell their grain either through the CWB or directly on the open market through a so-called "dual marketing" system. The case is about opportunity and choice, the plaintiffs' lawyer, Keith Groves, told the court.

The 180 participants at the January 1997 convention of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association, which speaks for larger farmers, voted to raise CAN \$100,000 (\$US73,040) to advertise their opposition to the CWB before the plebiscite on barley marketing. The convention adopted a resolution calling on farmers to deal only with elevator companies that support an end to the wheat board monopoly.

The wheat and barley growers have been joined by the Reform party and the Alberta Conservative government in campaigning against the board; Alberta accounts for about half of prairie barley production, which is a staple of the province's large cattle industry. UGG and Cargill have also been active in the campaign against the CWB.

## 'Farmers for Justice' aids big growers

Among the campaigners against the board, the Canadian Farmers for Justice, founded in 1995, has received broad publicity in the big-business media. "Loosely affiliated by a network of fax machines, computer modems and a shared determination to break the board's monopoly, the group's 2,000 members are the guerrilla fighters of the grain wars," wrote David Lees in the March 1997 issue of *The Financial Post Magazine*, in an article that gave the group sympathetic coverage.

The principal tactic of Farmers for Justice has been assembling convoys of grain trucks at Canada-U.S. border points, with the aim of defying the wheat board system. In its most recent initiative, the group claims to have signed up 200 farmers for such a convoy, with the aim of involving 500 in the border-crossing event. "When they have a massive number of people, they're going to break the wheat board's monopoly," said Jim Pallister, a Manitoba farmer who advises the organization.

Farmers for Justice represents the interests of large farmers, who stand to gain competitive advantage over their smaller neighbors with elimination of the wheat board system. Mobilized in their ranks as well are smaller producers who believe their proximity to the border would allow them to prosper through serving U.S. "niche markets." The National Farmers Union (NFU), with a membership of about 10,000 based among small and medium-sized producers, has described the farmers organizing border-crossing protests as "foot soldiers and pawns serving the hidden agendas of the multinational grain corporations and the North American commodity exchanges."

Farmers for Justice has called on producers to boycott the three Wheat Pool eleva-

tor companies on the prairies to protest the Pools' support for the wheat board. The three Pools have their origins in farmers' fight earlier in the century for price pooling. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool actively lobbied for a pro-board vote in the months leading up to the barley plebiscite. For the Pools, the wheat board monopoly helps to protect their major share in the prairie grain handling system. Today they are ill-equipped to take on the international grain marketing function performed by the wheat board, and are unprepared to compete in the open market with fully integrated grain marketing monopolies like Cargill or ConAgra.

Also defending the wheat board's current powers is the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party government, testimony to the weight of the powerful Saskatchewan Wheat Pool within the social democratic party.

## Gains won't be reversed without fight

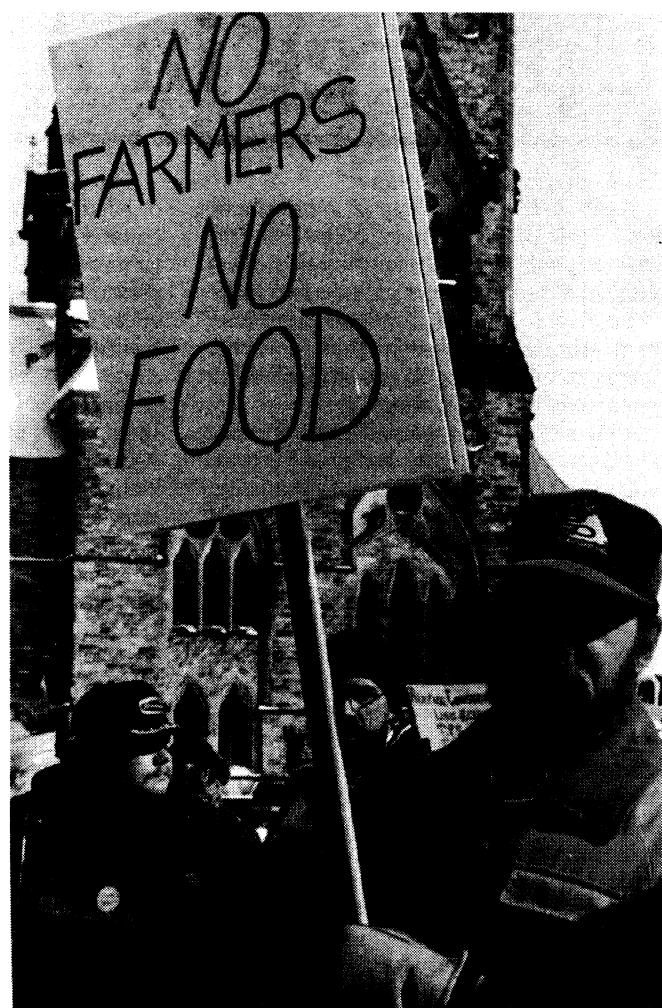
"The Canadian Wheat Board and the system of compulsory price pooling it embodies won't be given up without a fight," Saskatchewan grain farmer Howard Brown said in a recent interview. "Compulsory pooling is one of the core gains the farmers' movement has fought for and defended over the decades."

"Defense of the wheat board was a main theme in the big rally of 13,000 farmers held in Saskatoon four years back," Brown said. "That was part of beating back an attack on the board by the Tory government of the day. This past summer saw a series of smaller but substantial rallies and picket-line actions in defense of the board across the prairies. Those actions no doubt led Ottawa to exercise some caution in its plans for weakening the pooling system."

Many of the wheat board's defenders pose their arguments in nationalist terms, as though working farmers had some interest in defending "our homegrown" grain companies from "outsiders" like Cargill. Their debates imply working farmers should aim to more effectively compete with farmers abroad. "An organization like the CWB ... ensures the money stays at home," said Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Minister Eric Upshall, for instance.

"The big merchants in grain want the grain marketing monopoly to themselves," says Brown, "and from our standpoint it makes no difference whether they're based in Minneapolis or Winnipeg. Price pooling gets in the way of the private trade in setting farmers in competition with each other to drive down farm prices. Instead, it helps to unite producers against corporate agribusiness."

Many board defenders, as well, attempt to paper over the conflicting interests that



Militant/Monica Jones  
Thirty thousand farmers demonstrated in Ottawa in 1992

divide large farmers from small and medium-sized producers. "We all have to keep together. We can't afford to crack up. If we fragment our market to where we're all just individuals, we'll all lose," said Lorne Hehn, the CWB's chief commissioner.

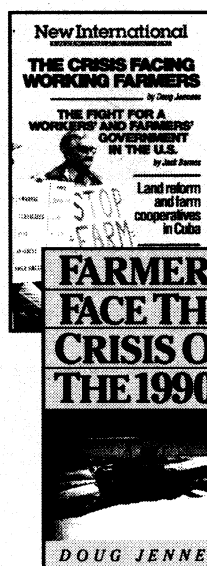
"The reality is that the price pooling gets in big farmers' way in asserting their competitive advantage over their smaller neighbors," said Brown. "Their so-called 'right to sell their own grain' is nothing more than their 'right' to eliminate smaller rivals. The board marketing system doesn't prevent the larger farmers from using their capacity to deliver grain in volume to get preferential treatment in grading, dockage, trucking charges, and so on. But it forces them to accept the same basic price for board grains as ordinary farmers get. And in that sense, as well, the fight to defend price pooling draws class lines in the countryside."

The battle over the Canadian Wheat Board reflects the growing class polarization in Canadian politics that flows from the deepening crisis of the capitalist economy. The attack on the board by the private grain trade and its allies among big farmers is part of the generalized offensive by big business against the rights and living standards of workers and small farmers alike.

The CWB is one of the social advances made by working people in resisting the impact of the 1930s Great Depression and World War II. With other gains such as unemployment insurance, social welfare, and the Canada Pension Plan under growing attacks, workers defending their social wage can count on allies among the farmers currently defending the CWB. The class tensions emerging in the countryside will not be solved by the current plebiscite on barley. The CWB will remain an important political question in Canadian politics over the next period.

Michel Dugré is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

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# Upsurge in Albania

Continued from front page

Shkodra — the largest city in the northern half of this Balkan country, 55 miles north of the capital, Tirana. According to the Associated Press, the dead include two military officers. At least 22 people were hurt from mine explosions in that incident. Rebels burned a garrison and stripped three armories of weaponry there.

A showdown also loomed inside Tirana, where gangs, reportedly backing Berisha, took guns from a vacated military academy. The police looked on calmly as the men walked out with AK-47 automatic rifles slung over their shoulders on March 12. Hours later, Albanian state television reported that a group of people had stormed the Yzberisht barracks in a Tirana suburb and seized weapons, though it was not clear whether they were supporters or opponents of the regime.

According to Greek TV network Antenna, an Olympic Airways plane on its way to Tirana to pick up Greek Ambassador Constantinos Prevedoulakis could not land at the Tirana airport. Albanian authorities said March 13 that the country's main airport is now closed.

With the situation growing more grave for the Berisha administration, which Washington has backed with economic and military aid since 1992, the U.S. State Department announced March 12 it is ordering home more than 160 nonessential U.S. government personnel in Albania. Several European Union governments took similar steps.

At the same time, imperialist powers are hunting for a pretext for direct intervention, aimed at shoring up Berisha or another regime to Washington's liking and eventually restoring capitalism in this workers state through naked military force.

An article in the March 12 *Financial Times* of London concluded with the following statement: "Western military intervention may be needed to ensure the June elections are carried out fairly and to disarm supporters and opponents of the government, western observers said."

## Socialist Party joins new cabinet

On the evening of March 11, Berisha named 35-year-old Bashkim Fino of the opposition Socialist Party as the new prime minister. Fino was mayor of Gjirokastra, one of the rebel-held towns in southern Albania, from 1992 to 1996. A day later the president announced a new caretaker government and said he agreed to new elections by June. The cabinet includes Belul Celal of Berisha's Democratic Party, who was given the post of Interior Minister, and Shekir Vukaj of the SP as Defense Minister.

On March 9, the state-run television announced that its director, Qemal Sakajeva, had resigned. Protesters had demanded he step down because the station had been calling the rebels "terrorists."

In another attempt to quell the revolt, Fino met with rebel leaders in the south on March 12. He acknowledged, however, that it is impossible for now to force rebels to put down their weapons.

Meanwhile, the Albanian parliament declared a general amnesty for all insurgents the same day. According to the law, rebels have until March 20 to turn in their weapons, which insurgents have so far refused to do until Berisha resigns. "I'm keeping my gun until we have a new leader in Tirana," said Kosta Kutzi, a 31-year-old protester in Vlore, the port city in southern Albania that has been the focal point of the rebellion. "There is no way we can trust Berisha."

Acknowledging the value of luring the Socialist Party into salvaging Berisha's presidency, imperialist governments heaped praises on the newly named administration.

Marisa Lino, the U.S. ambassador to Albania, made an appeal on Albanian state television, saying that Washington backed Fino's appointment as prime minister. "Democracy cannot be built from violence," she stated.

"You can't replace somebody with nobody," U.S. Rep. Eliot Angel, a Democrat from New York who specializes on U.S.-Albanian relations, told the Associated Press, referring to Berisha. "At this juncture, I don't see anyone else."

The SP is the former Communist Party, or Albanian Workers Party, which ruled the country until the opening of the 1990s. The former Stalinist regime shattered under the pressure of mass mobilizations for democratic rights and better economic and social conditions. Berisha's Democratic Party came to power in March 1992.

Since then Berisha has implemented measures aimed at a more rapid integration of Albania into the world capitalist market, including loans from the International Monetary Fund and austerity measures such as slashing social services. These "market reforms" fueled a deep economic crisis in one of the poorest countries in Europe.

Both the SP and the Democratic Party represent competing interests among the petty-bourgeois and aspiring bourgeois layers that form the ruling bureaucratic caste. This caste has been in power since the degeneration of the Albanian revolution in the late 1940s. At the end of World War II, workers and peasants in Albania defeated the occupying Nazi armies.

Through a popular uprising they installed their own regime, nationalizing the major means of production, carrying out a radical land reform, and instituting a monopoly of foreign trade and economic planning — establishing a workers state by 1946. Despite the subsequent degeneration of the revolution due to the Stalinist misleadership of the Albanian Workers Party, the noncapitalist social relations remain to a large degree in place until today.

Berisha's most recent capitalist venture, promotion of and enrichment from "pyramid schemes," sparked the current rebellion. Over 500,000 Albanians out of a population of 3.2 million invested in these get-rich-quick scams — many selling their houses or land or depositing savings from jobs abroad — which began failing in January, ruining financially hundreds of thousands of workers. Working people are now demanding their money back and the resignation of the president.

## Who is leading the revolt?

"We won't rest until there is a new government, and our money is returned," Albert Shyti told a recent rally of 3,000 people at the main square of Vlore.

Shyti, 27, worked in Greece as a laborer, like hundreds of thousands of his countrymen. He returned to his hometown in January to see what was happening with his remittances home that he had deposited in one of the pyramid schemes. But the owners of two of these fraudulent funds based in Vlore, known as Kamberi and Gjallica, had fled to Italy and Turkey, apparently taking the depositors' money with them.

Shyti now heads the citizens council that runs the rebel-held city, where the uprising began after a February 28 gun battle between antigovernment protesters and agents of SHIK, the hated secret police.

Jane Perlez, reporting for the *New York Times* from Vlore, described this worker as a "nattily dressed man in red shirt and black leather jacket." In an article published March 9, Perlez stated, "Mr. Shyti appeared suddenly as a rebel leader on Friday [March 7], apparently because none of the better known politicians from the political parties wanted to come forward."

"We have been asked to give up our weapons, but until our demands are met we will not," Shyti told an applauding crowd of thousands at the main square of Vlore. The military arm of the citizens council includes army defectors and retired officers and is organizing the defense of this port city of 100,000. An effort by Berisha to send in loyal army troops by helicopter against the insurgents failed when the soldiers ran into the hills after being confronted by armed and angry residents.

Tons of ink has already been consumed by the big-business press to describe the capitalist rulers' contempt for people like Shyti and other workers involved in the rebellion. The March 12 article in the *New York Times*, by the same reporter, was headlined "Anarchy of thugs menaces Albania."

Here's another diamond from Perlez's collection of "news that's fit to print," as the front-page *Times* logo goes: "While others were searching for food, the leader of the so-called Committee to Protect Vlore, Albert Shyti, a 27-year-old laborer who



International Women's Day was also down-with-Berisha day in southern Albania. Above, women demonstrate in Saranda March 8 as armed workers routed government soldiers, securing control of the area.

drives a new Mercedes with a Kalashnikov in the front passenger seat, enjoyed vermouth on the terrace of a hotel at 10 this morning [March 11]. He was talking with a group of associates about how to divide the spoils of the revolt." Perlez did not offer any quotes from Shyti or his associates to support her claim.

While most reports in the capitalist media describe the rebels as "mobsters," "looters" and "criminal bands," some articles acknowledge that thousands of working people are among those who have taken up arms to bring down Berisha, angry about government collusion in the pyramid fraud. "The same chaotic conditions that enabled Albania's emerging criminal element to flourish also ensured the downfall of honest working people," said an article in the March 11 *Washington Post*, titled "New world disorder."

"Strangers to capitalism, with no experience with investments or securities, they leaped at the impossibly high profits promised by the pyramid schemes," the article continued, "but did not realize that the schemes would collapse when the pool of new investors dried up."

There is no indication that the rebels are led by any political party or that they are homogeneous politically. In fact, in the northeastern town of Tropoje, about 9,000 people reportedly took over armories in preparation to defend the faltering regime of Berisha, according to AP and the *Financial Times*. "Political parties apparently are getting out of the game," said Pandeli Mjko, foreign affairs secretary of the Socialist Party. "It's a very grave situation, we don't have contact with our local leaders [in the south]."

In the south, however, the center of the revolt, there is increased cooperation of rebels groups from a number of cities.

## Defense councils form coalition

Eight rebel town councils met in Gjirokastra March 12 and formed a "National Front for the Salvation of the People." The coalition demanded Berisha's resignation and said Front representatives must be part of the negotiations in the capital if any political solution is to be found, according to Greek TV network Antenna.

Some of these newly formed councils appear to be well organized. "Saranda already has a leader, a defense council, and a surprisingly effective chain of command," said an article in the March 10 *Christian Science Monitor*. "Communication and supply channels have been established with the Greek island of Corfu less than two miles away, and there's a ban on careless waste of ammunition." Saranda is another major port city in the south, near the Greek-Albanian border.

"There's a very simple order: no one can shoot unless it is against Berisha's people," said Gjevat Koucia, a retired army colonel who was called upon to organize the defense council. More than 5,000 heavily armed men from the town's population of 25,000 now take turns for security and enforce the self-imposed 10 p.m.-to-dawn curfew. "Vlore, Delvina, and other towns are starting to do now what we did from the beginning," Koucia told the *Monitor*. "People know that we are organized and ready to fight. We will not attack, but we are not letting anyone near here until Berisha resigns." Former Albanian army officers who have

joined the rebellion are part of defense councils in other cities. "Berisha knows what type of weapons we have. That's why he is scared to attack," said Enver Sadicu, an army lieutenant who stayed in Vlore.

As an increasing number of army units have deserted the government, rebels have been taking control of towns closer and closer to Tirana. In Kucove, for example, 60 miles south of the country's capital, armed local people took over an air base, capturing more than a dozen Chinese-made MIG fighter jets. They were aided by 25 pilots who defected from the air force. Defecting army units have also handed over tanks, heavy weapons and thousands of guns to the rebels.

On March 13, insurgents overtook the armory at the oil refining center of Ballshi, just 50 miles south of Tirana. "Chechnya, Chechnya!" shouted some youth in the area, in identification with the popular and successful struggle for independence of Chechens in Russia. The government's hold on Elbasan, a strategic center on the road to Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece, only about 33 miles from the capital, appeared shaky March 11, according to the *New York Times*.

## Hunting pretext for intervention

Meanwhile the imperialist powers, in awe of a mushrooming insurrection, have poised themselves to intervene militarily if they can find the appropriate pretext. Some are courting rebel leaders to see what mileage they can get. Some editorials in the big-business press are also trying to dismiss the rebellion as a ploy of the Socialist Party to regain power.

"There is persuasive evidence that what we are witnessing in Albania is *not* the popular uprising that broadcast reports have described, but instead an underhanded strategy of the Albanian Socialist Party that has so far been astonishingly successful," said an editorial in the March 11 *Wall Street Journal*. "And claims that Albanians have lost faith in free market capitalism are right out of the Socialist playbook," the editors of the financial daily quipped.

The Italian press reported that eight rebel leaders met with Rome's ambassador to Tirana, Paolo Forresti, aboard the Italian warship San Giorgio in the Adriatic just off the port of Vlore recently. A subsequent Italian government statement said the rebels "undertook to favor the immediate handing back of weapons in the hands of the citizens of Vlore and to ensure public order and progressively restore normal administration to the town." Italian authorities reportedly tried to lure the rebels to give in by offering "humanitarian aid" to a city that already faces food and other shortages.

Rebel leaders, however, quickly denied that any such deal had been struck. They said they simply tried to see if they could secure some food and other needed supplies for the city's residents.

U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen, visiting U.S. troops at NATO bases in Italy, said Rome and Washington are "prepared to work together to help resolve that situation," referring to the revolt in Albania.

An article in the March 12 *Washington Post* said that anonymous diplomats from "western countries" are increasingly saying that "an international force of some kind would likely have to coordinate the recovery of weapons."



# Albania revolt scares Greek imperialists

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece — "Save North Epirus," cried a headline in the right-wing daily *Adésmeftos Típos*. "Fears for North Epirus," wrote the conservative *Apoyevmatini* in an article accusing the government of "standing by and watching." The lead article in the liberal daily *Eleftherotipia* was titled "Three Greek fears," referring to alleged worries for the safety of the ethnic Greek minority in southern Albania, securing the Greece-Albania border, and the possibility of thousands of new immigrants entering the country. These were some of the screaming headlines in major newspapers here on March 3.

"North Epirus" is the term used widely in the media here, especially in the conservative and rightist press, to describe the southern part of Albania, home to a large Greek-speaking minority, which, according to the *Athens News*, numbers 250,000 out of a population of 3.2 million. This terminology is one of the clearest signs of the expansionist visions of sections of the Greek bourgeoisie. Epirus is the name of the Greek province bordering Albania. "We must have dynamic intervention so that we can shape the developments," wrote George Kyrtos, owner of the rightist daily *Eleftheros Típos*. "Now is the time for us to strengthen our role in the Balkans."

Tens of thousands of Greek-speaking Albanians, however, have taken part in the rebellion against the administration of Sali Berisha, a regime Athens has backed, dashing the hopes for intervention by Greek capital and sparking a steep plunge in the Athens stock market.

In the initial days of the anti-Berisha revolt, the insurgents were portrayed in the Greek media as armed drug traffickers with connections to the Italian Mafia and hoodlums likely to vent their anger against the Greek-speaking minority in southern Albania. The Albanian crisis has stayed on the front pages of all major newspapers for more than a week and has led most radio and TV news reports.

"Greece has vital interests [in the region] because of the Greek minority living there, which we must protect with all means possible," stated Miltiádis Evert, leader of the opposition New Democracy, the major conservative party.

The Greek government of the social democratic Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) hurriedly called for a European Union (EU) meeting "with the aim of adopting a plan of action for Albania," European Affairs Minister George Papandreou told reporters March 3.

"I believe these developments are negative," stated undersecretary for foreign affairs Yiánnos Kranidiótis the same day, speaking of the spreading rebellion in Albania. "There is a Greek element in Albania and we have every interest to support it.... We have friendly relations with Albania and there is no guarantee that this anomaly will not upset the political system of that country completely." Initially, the group Omonia, a political party claiming to represent the ethnic Greek minority of Albania with three members in the Albanian parliament, called on Greek-speaking Albanians to stay at home and "not get caught in the settling of accounts between the government forces and the rebels."

## Many ethnic Greeks part of rebellion

"Greece must not forsake the minority," said Omonia leader George Lambobitiádis. The group insisted that ethnic Greeks were not involved in "the rioting," a claim that many news reports from the scene have proved false. The Greek consulate in Gjirokaster, a city now in the hands of the rebels, was shut down after its police guards abandoned their posts.

The 8th division of the Greek army, based in Ioánnina, the provincial capital of Epirus near the Albanian border, was reinforced. Border patrols to stop Albanians trying to enter Greece have been beefed up. The Greek parliament, including the deputies of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), voted unanimously to express its concern over the fate of the minority.

The towns in southern Albania that are the center of the rebellion, however, are the



Albanian immigrants rally outside embassy in Athens March 2 calling for Berisha's ouster

very cities where most of the Greek-speaking Albanians live. Protesters interviewed by TV stations more often than not speak in Greek, whether they are ethnic Greeks or former immigrants.

"We are not afraid of the young people who have rebelled," one Greek-speaking Albanian crossing the border into Greece told *Eleftherotipia*. He asked to be anonymous fearing reprisal by Greek authorities. "They [the rebels] are not hitting the people. But we are afraid of the army and Berisha's police."

"Greeks and Albanians have the same enemy: Berisha. We are fighting together," was a common comment to Sky radio by several Albanians in downtown Athens March 7. "Now people are demanding more than just their money. They want democracy," said Toma Sava, an immigrant from Himara, southern Albania.

"This is a spontaneous revolt of the people," Thanásis Gótsis from Fieri, Albania, who is now living in Athens, said in an interview with the *Militant*. "Regardless of the political parties, like the Socialist Party, which are involved in it, nobody is in control. Most Albanians support this just movement," he stated, "although the lack of leadership is a problem and the results are uncertain."

During the interview, Gótsis said he was very concerned about the calls by some of the rebels for European Union intervention. Participating in the discussion, Kamani, a Kurdish student, stated, "Just like in Kurdistan, just because a people has illusions about help from the West, it doesn't mean that their cause is not just."

Although no deportation figures have been given, *Militant* reporters have wit-

nessed increased harassment of Albanians by Greek police in the central squares of Athens. Kamani, traveling from the Greek island Crete to Athens in early March, reported seeing nearly 100 Albanian deportees on the boat. According to police commanders at the border, not only has the flow of immigrants into Greece not increased, the number has actually declined.

Two demonstrations of several hundred Albanians each have taken place in Athens so far. One was called by forces supporting the rebels, including supporters of the Socialist Party. They rallied outside the Albanian embassy in Athens March 2, angrily demanding Berisha's resignation. This was the first time Albanian immigrants without documents have demonstrated here.

The other action was organized by associations of ethnic Greek Albanians in Athens and included demands for Greek government intervention.

These demonstrations are only the tip of the iceberg of the real ferment and political polarization among Albanian immigrants in Greece. Fear of deportation still keeps most Albanians away from public meetings or rallies here. But dozens gather around the central kiosks in Athens every day, where Albanian-language newspapers arrive. Hands gesticulate excitedly and the name of Berisha echoes in the discussions.

There are signs that an increasing number of Albanians here identify with the rebellion. Unemployed Albanians, for example, who sing on a daily basis in the Athens city subway to raise money, were heard by this reporter proudly singing in their native language for the first time.

An estimated 350,000 Albanians live and

work in Greece without work permits. They face the most degraded conditions and receive the lowest wages of any group of immigrants. They are routinely scapegoated in the big-business press for the rise in crime in Greece and, along with other immigrants, are fingered as the cause of unemployment.

Despite the slanders, the inescapable images of youth taking up arms, raising democratic demands, turning against the government's forces of repression, taking over towns, and beginning to organize their administration have not been lost on working people here.

## Greek capitalists in gloom

For Greek capitalists, hopes of reviving their sagging profit rates through larger investments throughout the Balkans have been dealt a great blow. Greek companies there, including large development companies working on reconstructing the airport and the military hospital in Tirana, and a major tobacco company, did \$320 million worth of business with Albania in 1996. Now all this is on hold. "In addition to the adverse political and economic situation they face," *Eleftherotipia* commented, "[investors] must also face the intense interest that businesses from other countries are showing."

"In the past three sessions," reported the March 4 *Athens News*, "the Athens stock market has lost an unprecedented 17 percent. More than a trillion drachmas [US\$3.7 billion] have been wiped off its capitalization. Until last Wednesday [February 26], the bourse was in the midst of a bull run which had seen it rise 55 percent since the beginning of the year."

In an attempt to not be shut out by the rapid developments, the Greek government has toned down talk of danger for the Greek-speaking minority in Albania in recent days.

"We believe that the minority is not threatened... [I]t is a terrible political mistake to see the crisis in Albania on the basis of it being a minority issue," stated government spokesperson Dimítris Répas March 6. Athens joined the EU in calling for new elections and an interim government in Albania. Meanwhile, some politicians such as PASOK deputy Stélios Papatthemelís continue to call for military intervention.

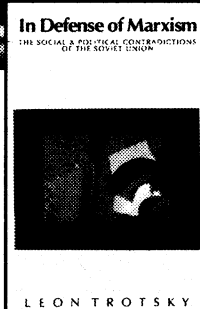
According to *Eleftherotipia*, the Greek government has proposed to Tirana a disarmament plan, which includes opening camps in northern Greece, just across the border, where rebels could come and turn in their weapons. Athens has also pushed back a planned visit by Berisha to Greece to May or June. These plans, however, may prove nothing more than wishful thinking as the revolt has spread in southern Albania and the rebels are gaining confidence in their effort to oust the procapitalist regime in Tirana.

## for further reading



### The History of the Russian Revolution Leon Trotsky

The social, economic, and political dynamics of the first socialist revolution. The story is told by one of the principal leaders of this victorious struggle for workers power headed by the Bolshevik party. Also available in Russian. Unabridged edition, 3 vols. in one. \$35.95



### In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union

Leon Trotsky

Writing in 1939-40, Leon Trotsky replies to those in the revolutionary workers movement who were beating a retreat from defense of the degenerated Soviet workers state in face of looming imperialist assault. He describes how the rising pressures of bourgeois patriotism in the middle classes during the buildup toward U.S. entry into World War II were finding an echo even inside the communist movement. And he explains why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can steer a steady revolutionary course. \$24.95. Also available in Spanish.

### The Balkan Wars (1912-13)

The War Correspondence of Leon Trotsky

On-the-spot analysis of national and social conflicts in the Balkans, written 80 years ago, sheds light on the conflicts shaking these countries today. \$32.95

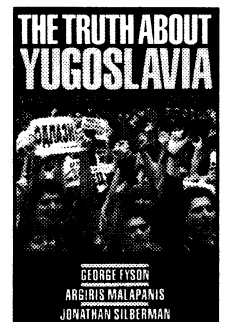
### Class, Party, and State and the Eastern European Revolution

Joseph Hansen, Tom Kerry, and others \$7.00

### The Truth about Yugoslavia Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention

George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman

Examines the roots of the carnage in the Yugoslav workers state, where the U.S. and European powers are intervening militarily to advance their competing interests. Explains how groups of would-be capitalists — fragments of the former Stalinist regime — are fighting a war for territory and resources. \$8.95



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# Plans get off ground for youth festival

BY JACK WILLEY

HAVANA, Cuba — More than 130 people from 55 countries met here for the Second International Coordinating Committee (ICC) meeting for the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students. The February 19-22 meeting heard reports from preparatory committees across the globe and decided the program and schedule for the festival.

The youth festival, which will be held in Cuba July 28 - August 5, is shaping up to be a gathering of several thousand people who will discuss and debate a range of political questions confronting the working class, including: anti-imperialist struggles, the environment, the fight for women's liberation, national liberation struggles, employment, education, labor resistance, and how to fight against fascism.

In addition, social groups of rural youth, young religious believers, journalists, artists, entrepreneurs and professionals, young parliamentarians, and trade unionists will meet during the festival.

The meeting reaffirmed the slogan of "Anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship" as the theme of the event. In addition, the festival is dedicated to Ernesto Che Guevara. This year marks the 30th anniversary of that revolutionary's murder by the U.S.-backed Bolivian army. The final declaration adopted at the meeting encourages all youth and student groups opposed to imperialism to attend.

Victoria Velásquez, National Secretary of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba, ended the closing ceremony of the meeting with a speech about the struggles ahead. She explained that through these struggles, youth will play a major role in leading the fight to end imperialism and will struggle to build the "new man," as described by Che Guevara.

Preparatory committees have formed in over 40 countries so far. Cuban youth leaders have toured roughly 30 countries and are slated to travel elsewhere in the coming months in preparation for the festival. In France, organizers are setting up concerts to raise money for delegates to go. Groups from the Middle East and Africa plan to send people from several countries by boat to increase participation and cut down on costs.

Some half dozen different organizations from Chile sent representatives to the ICC meeting. Coming out of the meeting, they pledged to join efforts in forming a preparatory committee to bring a broad range of youth to the festival.

In Cuba, preparations for the festival have already begun. ICC meeting participants visited the Camilo Cienfuegos District in Havana del Este, one of the many neighborhoods where delegates will stay with Cuban families for part of the festival. In and around Havana City, large murals for the youth festival have been painted.

Delegates for the festival are being chosen throughout Cuba among students, workers, and professionals. So far, individual Cubans have contributed over 4 million pe-

sos and several thousand dollars of their income toward funding the festival effort.

## Building delegation from United States

Leslie Cagan took part in the ICC meeting on behalf of the U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival. The Organizing Committee was initiated by the National Network on Cuba. Organizations participating in it include Committees of Correspondence, Pastors for Peace, Socialist Workers Party, Workers World Party, Young Socialists, and Cuban-American groups such as the Association of Workers in the Cuban Community in Miami and Casa de las Américas in New York.

Representatives of the Communist Party-USA and Young Communist League also attended the ICC meeting. These organizations have refused to join in a united, nonexclusionary coalition to build the festival, and are promoting a separate National Preparatory Committee.

The U.S. Organizing Committee is holding a national preparatory meeting March 15 in New York City that will include a report on the ICC meeting in Havana and discuss the organizing efforts for the U.S. delegation. Activists in the Organizing Committee have begun meeting with youth and student groups in their regions who are involved in actions and struggles, including those fighting for Chicano rights, independence for Puerto Rico, young feminist groups, Black student organizations, trade unionists, and student body leaders.

For more information or an application, write to the U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival at 2565 Broadway #236, New York, NY 10025, or call (212) 866-7270.

*Jack Willey attended the Second International Coordinating Committee meeting representing the Young Socialists.*



Militant/Marc Lichtman

Deirdre McAliskey spoke for her sister's defense at picket in New York March 8

## Free Róisín McAliskey, says rally

BY MARC LICHTMAN

NEW YORK — "International Women's Day: Free Róisín from Holloway," and "Irish woman, English jail — let Róisín out on bail," were some of the chants as 400 people picketed the offices of Lufthansa, the German semi-state airline on March 8. A large demonstration was held in Dublin, Ireland, the same day.

Róisín McAliskey, the 25-year-old daughter of Irish nationalist and human rights activist Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, is being held in Holloway Prison in London, facing extradition proceedings that could force her to stand trial in Germany on frame-up charges of taking part in an Irish Republican Army attack on a British military base there.

McAliskey is 7 months pregnant and has serious health problems. She has been held in isolation, denied proper medical care, and strip-searched daily. Both the

British and German governments have argued against releasing her on bail.

Carrying roses, chains, and placards, the demonstrators marched over to the British Consulate, where a rally was held.

The main speaker, Róisín's younger sister Deirdre McAliskey, told the crowd, "This isn't an issue for the Irish community — this is an issue for the human rights community." She announced that under pressure from protests, the British government had just changed her sister's status from Category A high-security risk to normal security risk.

This means that she can associate with other prisoners and will be strip-searched less frequently. She was recently allowed open visits — that is without a partition — with her companion Sean McCotter and her mother. The British government has not yet announced if it will let her keep the baby in prison, or take it away from her.

## 'Protest denial of visas to Cuban youth'

BY ANDY BUCHANAN

BOSTON — Dania Murgado and Rolando González, two youth leaders from Cuba, were informed on March 7 by the U.S. Interests Section in Havana that their applications for visas to travel to the United States were denied. Their applications were returned stamped "rejected," without an explanation. Murgado, a leader of the Federation of University Students, and González, a researcher at the Center for the Studies of José Martí, were scheduled to start an 11-city academic visit to the United States on March 21. They had been invited to present lectures by over 70 professors and student organizations at 56 educational institutions.

The Boston-based Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, the body coordinating the projected tour, responded to this

attack on academic freedom by launching a protest campaign demanding that the State Department reverse its decision. A letter mailed by the committee to over 250 academics and student groups around the country urging them to send protest messages.

In the letter, Faculty-Student Committee board member Tom Reeves, a professor who heads the Caribbean Focus Program at Roxbury Community College, noted, "This is the second time in a year that the State Department has denied visas to Cuban youth leaders we hoped to bring to the U.S. It follows stepped-up attempts to intimidate and threaten academics and others who wish to travel to Cuba. This blockade of ideas and exchange goes against the democratic values we cherish and safeguard. It goes against freedom of speech that the U.S. Constitution itself protects."

Previous speaking tours of Cuban youth leaders in the United States "have helped establish a direct dialogue with Cuban students and researchers in a climate of open discussion of views and ideas," Reeves continued. "We all know how essential intellectual freedom and exchange is to the process of learning and ideas. The State Department's action deprives us, in a fundamental way, of that freedom."

Supporters of the Faculty-Student Committee plan to work with Cuba solidarity activists in the July 26 Coalition to organize other protest activities. A day-long educational conference to be held at Roxbury Community College on the theme "Cuba Today," which was to have been the first public engagement for the young Cubans will go ahead as planned March 22. Johana Tablada, Third Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., will be the featured speaker. Reeves will present a workshop on fighting against government restrictions on the right to travel to Cuba.

The Lectures Committee is urging academics, politicians, and other prominent individuals to send protest messages to:

Michael Ranneberger  
Coordinator for Cuban Affairs  
U.S. State Department  
2201 C Street NW  
ARA/CCA Room 3234  
Washington, DC 20520  
Tel: (202) 647-9273  
Fax: (202) 736-4476

Madeleine Albright  
Secretary of State  
U.S. State Department  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Copies of protest letters should be faxed to the committee at (617) 566-2861, or mailed to Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, c/o Caribbean Focus Program, Tom Reeves, Room 3-353, Roxbury Community College, 1234 Columbus Ave., Boston, MA 02120.

*Andy Buchanan is a member of the United Auto Workers.*

## Bipartisan attack on abortion rights spurs interest in young feminist summit

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Several young people here have come on board to attend the Young Feminist Summit being held April 11-13 in Washington D.C. The summit is sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW). The latest issue of the *NOW National Times* has a front page article featuring the conference and organizers project around 1,000 will attend.

Interest in the summit has been heightened by the bipartisan steps in Congress and the White House to criminalize intact dilation and extraction abortion, which comes on the heels of the recent bombings of women's clinics in Atlanta, Georgia, and Tulsa, Oklahoma. If the legislation now being discussed in Congress is passed, it would be the first time any type of abortion would be made illegal in the United States since 1973.

A recent "Festival of Ideas" at West Virginia University in Morgantown included

several lectures by prominent feminists on the state of the women's liberation movement today. Speakers included Naomi Wolfe, Rebecca Walker, and Candice Gingrich. Hundreds attended these lectures, and the discussion reflected a desire on the part of many young men and women to defend the gains of the women's movement.

Young Socialists member Diana Newberry spoke in these discussions about the summit being a place where young fighters can discuss where these attacks are coming from and how to organize to defend women's rights. In just a few weeks several youth have decided they want to attend and help build a sizable contingent from West Virginia.

The Morgantown chapter of NOW has offered to work with young women who want to go and need financial assistance for travel, the \$35 conference registration fee, and hotel expenses. The chapter is planning a meeting to help get things organized. In

addition Rebecca Walker told the audience at her lecture that the Third Wave Fund would help get a couple of West Virginians to the conference. A professor from the Women's Studies Department at WVU said she will work at getting support from the department for conference participants.

A similar response is taking place around the county. Where initiatives are being taken, young fighters clearly welcome the chance to meet and work with others who want to build this summit. Opportunities to build the gathering exist on high school and college campuses and at protest actions against attacks on democratic rights.

Information about the Young Feminist Summit is available by contacting NOW at 202-331-0066 extension 362. Fax 202-785-8576. E-mail: conference@now.org Web: <http://www.now.org/foundation> or write Young Feminist Summit, NOW Foundation, 1000 16th St., NW Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036.



# N.Y. protest: 'the police are just assassins'

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

CORONA, New York — Family, friends, and neighbors immediately organized protests demanding justice after José Antonio Sánchez was killed by Richard Soto, a New York police officer. Sánchez was a 56-year-old cook and comedian originally from the Dominican Republic.

Librado Sánchez, as he is known in this neighborhood in Queens, was shot and killed by Soto February 22 at 2:30 a.m. during a raid by plainclothes cops on El Caribe restaurant where Sánchez was working as a cook.

The police stated they raided the restaurant, which was shut down in August and September for operating a cabaret without a license, because they found that the club had reopened and was again letting patrons dance. The police also said the restaurant was selling alcohol without a liquor license. The cops claim that Sánchez was brandishing a knife when Soto shot him.

A memorial to Sánchez of flowers and signs for justice in front of the restaurant, shut down by the police after the killing, has served as the gathering point for several protests that then marched to the 115th police precinct. The day after a demonstration of 300 people on March 2, both New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir defended Soto's actions in the killing of Sánchez.

The police account is contradicted by many witnesses who say the cops entered without identifying themselves, turning over tables and causing disorder.

"All the witnesses are saying the same thing — that he didn't have a knife in his hand," said one of Sánchez's nephews, José Martínez. "The police are just assassins."

An independent forensics expert has determined the cook's moves were not aggressive. Bullet holes through Sánchez's left



Militant/George Chalmers

Protesters demonstrate March 2 against cop killing of Dominican worker in raid on restaurant in New York. More protests are planned against cop slayings in the city.

forearm indicate the cook "was in a defensive position," said Steve Hoffner, a lawyer for the Sánchez family.

Another lawyer, Gustavo Medina, said the family intends to file a civil suit.

Many participants in the March 2 protest told the *Militant* that this was the first protest they had participated in. Francisco Rodríguez, a relative of the Sánchez family, said, "Before this I took an outside approach to police brutality. I thought it was exaggerated by family members and friends.

Now it is not just in the news."

José Fernández, a 26-year-old worker and a patron at El Caribe restaurant, was also attending his first protest. "They should bring the police to court. We need more protests."

At a March 3 meeting to protest police brutality, Edwin Sánchez, a nephew of José Sánchez, said, "My uncle was a victim of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The cops arrested more than 40 people, everyone there. They didn't let anyone out-

side. They didn't call an ambulance to see if he was still alive. They didn't call the family. They changed their stories" about the direction in which the bullet went.

"We want a thorough investigation," Sánchez told the *Militant*. "I want my uncle's name cleared."

Families of other victims of police brutality have also been involved from the beginning in the protests against the police killing of Sánchez. At the March 2 rally, the father of 18-year-old Anthony Rosario, who was killed by cops in the Bronx in December 1995 along with his 21-year-old cousin Hilton Vega, told the *Militant*, "Police brutality is on the rise. We have names of victims on our house and will add José Sánchez." He, his wife Margarita, and other families of victims of police brutality are encouraging people to attend a "Rally For Racial Justice" March 31, at 5 p.m. at City Hall in Manhattan.

Altagracia Mayi, the mother of Manuel Mayi, a 19-year-old student killed by a racist gang in 1991, was one of the many speakers at the March 2 rally. "We will not rest until we get justice," she told participants in front of the 115th precinct. A march for justice for Manuel Mayi is scheduled for Saturday March 22 at 2 p.m. at the corner of 108th St. and 36th Ave. in Queens.

Relatives of Anthony Báez also participated in the protests. Báez, 29, was killed by police officer Francis Livoti in 1994. Livoti was acquitted in Báez's death last October. On Feb. 7, 1997, a deputy police commissioner convicted Livoti of using an illegal choke hold and recommended he be dismissed. Police Commissioner Safir made the final decision to fire Livoti February 21, denying him a police pension.

Mirta Calderón, the mother of Aníbal Carrasquillo, another youth killed by the police, also came to the protests against the killing of Sánchez.

Families of victims have organized Parents Against Police Brutality to fight for justice and solidarize with victims of new cases of police brutality. The organization is urging people to join in both the March 22 and 31 protests.

Meanwhile, Safir announced March 3 that the New York Police Department would begin using hollow-point bullets, which are more lethal than those currently in use. A hollow-point, or dum-dum, bullet expands on contact with human flesh. The cops assert these bullets are safer for the "public" because they ricochet less. A day after Safir's announcement, Mayor Giuliani stated he wanted to study the issue further before approving the change. But, Chief of Department Louis Anemone told reporters the police had already earmarked \$500,000 to buy 9 million of the deadly bullets.

Deborah Liatos is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 25.

## Chicago cops riot at housing project

BY JOHN STUDER

CHICAGO — Chicago police rioted at the Cabrini Green public housing project here March 4, wounding three residents and nearly killing Fernanda Royal, the president of the tenants' association in one of the high-rise buildings at the housing complex.

During an argument with residents of the housing complex, a Chicago Housing Authority cop pulled his gun and shot directly into the crowd, hitting Royal. The cop fled and Chicago city police, including dozens of squad cars and a police helicopter, began to converge on the area, where they were joined by units from the Illinois State Police.

Claiming they were shot at by "snipers" from the housing complex, the cops fired dozens of times into some of the high-rise buildings. After the shootings, cops invaded the buildings, accompanied by police dogs, and used sledge hammers and battering rams to break down apartment doors.

The confrontation ended after hundreds of residents, overwhelmingly Black, gathered for over an hour to yell at the cops, protesting their harassment and brutality.

The police attempted to downplay their attack, but the local daily papers challenged the cops' story.

CHA police chief LeRoy O'Shield claimed the cops were not armed with shotguns. "Officers were observed carrying shotguns Tuesday night," the *Chicago Tribune* reported, "and were captured on television footage with those weapons."

The cops claimed they did not fire at the buildings. "Once again," the *Tribune* reported, "evidence at the scene — dozens of empty shell casings lying in the street and in front of the building — seemed to contradict O'Shield's account."

The cops claimed the incident was provoked by an officer being attacked in the course of a drug investigation. Annie Royal, the mother of the woman most seriously wounded by the police, told the *Tribune* the cop "took out his gun and shot right through the crowd. He shot my daughter for nothing."

"The police are out of order over there," Regina Stewart, a Cabrini resident wounded by flying glass from the police riot, said. "And everyone is letting them because it's Cabrini. It's our homes, and we're human beings."

The next day, the Chicago Housing Authority announced it would remove their entire police and security force out of Cabrini-Green, give them "sensitivity training," and assign them to other areas.

Edwin Eisendrath, CHA chairman, claimed the move was not a condemnation of the 28 cops, but a "fresh start." Other cops were rotated into Cabrini.

The outcry over the police riot has led to a public debate between cop agencies. O'Shield, the head of the CHA police, charged that it was city cops, not his officers, who fired into the Cabrini high-rises. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley responded by accusing the CHA cops of cowardice, claiming that when the shooting started they "went on the lam, they went south, they ran." He added that it was the CHA cops,

not the Chicago police force, who "fire[d] the weapon that injured the other person."

This police riot erupted at the same time Chicago cops and Daley are demanding increased firepower and greater latitude in police spying. The authorities argue that these steps are needed to meet the threat of drug dealers and "gang bangers."

The mayor has called for relaxation of a federal consent decree the city signed in 1981, placing some limits on police spying and disruption operations. The court agreement led to the dismantling of the Chicago cop "Red Squad," which compiled files on an estimated 258,000 people in the 1960s and '70s.

John Studer is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011.

## 'There is a failure condition on Boeing 737s'

BY ROBBIE SCHERR

SEATTLE — Somewhere in the world — every six seconds — a Boeing 737 jet takes off. Yet the world's most widely used passenger jet would not be certified to fly if it were applying for a federal license today, according to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). This was the evaluation made in a 10-page February 20 letter from the NTSB to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the agency responsible for approving and monitoring those licenses. The Boeing 737 airplane was certified for service 30 years ago.

An unnamed NTSB investigator told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, "There is a failure condition on the 737s that is not on any other airplane. This needs to be fixed right away."

NTSB chairman Jim Hall urged the FAA to take "expeditious" action to replace the rudder systems.

For some time it has been known that the rudder systems on the 737s are subject to malfunction, a defect that is suspected of causing at least two plane crashes that together killed 157 people. The rudder is the movable flat panel in the vertical tail section that helps direct an airplane from right to left.

The FAA maintains that the 737 is one of the safest planes flying and claims it would

easily meet the standards of certification. But in March 1994 the FAA ordered the redesign and replacement of the rudder control systems on all 737s, setting a 1999 deadline. The Boeing Co., which manufactures the airplane, has agreed to pay for the repairs while at the same time insisting that the 737 is safe. According to the manufacturer, the repair could be done overnight. So far, not one of the planes has been fixed.

Boeing's view is echoed by the airline industry. Amy Lyons, a spokeswoman for Southwest Airlines, argued there is no rush since "in 25 years of flying, we have never, ever experienced a rudder anomaly." Southwest Airline's entire 245-plane fleet is made up of Boeing 737s.

Travel industry consultants have spoken out in defense of the 737 in an effort to bolster the rapidly declining public confidence in air travel.

Despite the conclusions about the 737's safety stated in its February 20 letter, the NTSB stopped short of calling for the grounding of aircraft, saying the letter speaks for itself. Grounding planes would be financially devastating to many airlines, such as Southwest.

The controversy about the 737 is occurring at the beginning of a sharp upturn in the airplane production industry. Boeing is boosting its 1997 monthly production rate

to the highest level in the company's 81-year history. By the end of the year Boeing hopes to produce — through continued large-scale hiring and speed-up — more than 40 airplanes a month at its Renton and Everett, Washington, factories. More than half of those jets will be 737s.

The subtitle on a March 3, 1997, article in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* summed up the quandary felt by the regulatory agencies, who have the dubious challenge of pretending to represent public safety while doing the bidding of the airplane industry and airlines. It read, "Grounding world's most popular jet not an easy call."

Robbie Scherr is a member of International Association of Machinists District 751 and works at Boeing's Everett factory.

### Prisoner Subscription Fund

The *Militant* offers reduced subscription rates to prisoners. A 6-month subscription to the *Militant* costs \$6, and one year costs \$12. We send a free sample copy on request. Help spread the *Militant* among workers behind bars. Send your contribution to The *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

## ALABAMA

### Birmingham

**The Origins of Women's Oppression.** Speaker: Betsy Farley, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, member of United Steelworkers of America. Friday, March 21, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Expanding NATO: New Step Toward War.** Militant Fund Benefit. Sat., March 22, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### San Francisco

**Pornography and Free Speech.** What stance should workers take on this question? Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. at Mission St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

**Free Róisín McAliskey and All Irish Political Prisoners!** Panel discussion. Friday, March 21, 8 p.m. 780 Tremont St. (Corner of Mass. Ave.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 445-3987.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**What Does It Take to Win Strikes Today?** Panel includes: Holly Harkness, Socialist Workers Party, and member of United Auto Workers; locked-out Detroit newspaper worker; Mario Vázquez, member of United Auto Workers at Johnson Controls. Fri., March 21, 7 p.m. 7414 Woodward. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**The Fight for Immigrant Rights and Against Deportations.** Speakers: Eridania Pérez-Jaquez, member of Latin American Law Students at Rutgers Newark; Bob Miller, Socialist Workers Party gubernatorial candidate, member United

Auto Workers. Hear about plans for the April 1 Immigrant rights demonstration in Newark. Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m.

**Rebellion in Zaire.** Speaker: Fred Feldman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 28, 7:30 p.m. Both events held at 87A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad, 2 blocks north of Raymond Blvd. at Linden St.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**Washington's Drive to Expand NATO.** The imperialist march toward war against Russia. An evening to celebrate and fund the *Militant* newspaper. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party, and member of United Transportation Union. Sat., March 22, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6:30 p.m. 59 Fourth Avenue (corner Fourth and Bergen). Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Pittsburgh

**NATO Expansion and the Threat of War.** Speaker: Estelle DeBates, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m. Reception at 6:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St., Southside. Donation: \$5. Tel: (412)381-9794.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Showing of the Film Panama Deception.** Followed by a presentation with Arturo Griffith, Panamanian political activist. Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m. 1930 18th St., NW (at 18th & Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**'Compulsory Savings' — An Attack on Retirement Pension Rights.** Speaker: Terry Coggan, Communist League. Fri., March 21, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

# Women say Army coerced charges against Blacks

BY MEGAN ARNEY

On March 11, five female soldiers said that Army investigators at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland attempted to bully and badger them into accusing their military superiors of rape. The women said they had been compelled to make statements after promises of immunity from prosecution and under threat of retaliation if they did not.

One of the women, Pvt. Brandi Krewson, said, "I agreed to tell them what they wanted to hear in order for them to leave me alone." Another woman, Kathryn Leming, who was discharged from the Army, said, "I never admitted that I was raped." She was told, however, by military investigators that consensual sex was considered rape under military law. The five women refuse to say if they had consensual sex with any instructors.

The women spoke at a press conference arranged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP has claimed the Army has unfairly targeted Black soldiers based on complaints of white female recruits. All eight men criminally charged with sexual misconduct at Aberdeen are Black. The NAACP has called for an independent investigation of the allegations of sexual abuses that surfaced late last year.

A lawyer for the NAACP, Stuart Jay Robinson, said that some of the women might have engaged in consensual sex — which is prohibited between officers and recruits under military rules — and that the Army had goaded them into calling it rape.

In response, Lieut. Col. Gabriel Riesco, said accusers also include Black women so, "Race has never been an issue in this investigation. It is an investigation of sin, not skin."

So far, at least 50 women have made official complaints of sexual abuse at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, including 27 rape complaints.

One officer and 20 noncommissioned officers, mostly drill sergeants, have been implicated. One of the women, Pvt. Darla Hornberger, said that although the women soldiers who were at the press conference had not been raped, some at the post have been.

Of the 14 men accused of sex crimes at

Aberdeen, six face courts-martials, two have received discharges in lieu of court martial, four have been fined, demoted or otherwise disciplined, and two were acquitted. The day before the press conference, the eighth instructor was criminally charged. Staff Sgt. Herman Gunter, who is Black, is accused of rape, assault, sexual harassment, and other offenses involving recruits.

The charges of sexual abuse at Aberdeen surfaced last November, setting off a major scandal in the armed forces.

Assertions from thousands of women included a series of complaints of misconduct, rape, extortion, assault, and threatening military personnel at bases across the country. When a toll-free number was set up by the U.S. Army after the first allegations came to light, some 3,100 calls were logged in the first few days. The Army's Criminal Investigative Division has opened new criminal cases in response to at least 155 of these calls.

In one 1995 Pentagon survey of 90,000 female soldiers in various branches of the military, 60 percent said they had been subject to sexual harassment, and nearly 10 percent reported being sexually assaulted.

The five women did not come forward to discount the entire scandal at Aberdeen, Hornberger noted.

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## —CALENDAR—

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Demonstration to Defend Immigrant Rights!** Tue., April 1, 4-6 p.m. In front of the Federal Building, 970 Broad St. For more information, call: (201) 643-1924 (American Friends Service Committee).

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Enfield

**Black Land Loss Summit.** March 20-21. Stop the trend of African American land loss and the disappearance of family farms. Establish a regional network in support of the sustainable economic development of rural resources. Held at the Franklinton Center. Registration: \$75. For more information contact the Land Loss Fund, P.O. Box 61, Tillery, NC 27887. Phone: Gary Grant (919) 826-3017. Fax (919) 826-3244. E-mail Tillery@aol.com



Oh — The Pentagon says three-quarters of the chemical weapons logs kept during the Gulf War are gone. Half may have been wiped out



Harry Ring

by a computer virus in some computer games an officer brought to Gulf headquarters. Additional disks seem to have been lost from U.S. military safes.

**Sunday's for praying** — California's capital city, Sacramento, is suing a religious charity, demanding that it stop serving meals to the homeless on Sundays.

**But not to worry** — Nuclear bomb scientists at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico got tired of listening to an alarm signaling a radioactive leak. Assuming — but not verifying — it was a false alarm, they made a silencer out of an empty blueberry muffin mix can, a Styrofoam cup, and a respirator filter. The feds say they're investigating.

**Face and wallet lift** — Con-

cerned about wrinkles? Check out Estée Lauder's Re-Nutriv intensive lifting creme. Available at Saks Fifth Avenue in a 1.7 oz bottle. \$150.

**'Friends of labor'** — A White House task force has drafted what one report describes as a "pioneer effort" to deal with sweatshops abroad that supply U.S. apparel companies. The group will propose that the regular work week be 60 hours and that overtime pay beyond that be at least equal to the regular rate.

**Soft on (some) crime** — The Montana legislature gave initial

approval to a bill to exempt industries from prosecution if they reveal — with minimum details — that they violated an environmental law and promise to clean it up. Proponents said the measure would ensure that industry would no longer feel guilty until proven innocent.

**It's a guy thing** — Protest did not abate when the all-male Vienna Philharmonic took harpist Anna Lelkes, a 26-year temp, into full membership. Suggesting that readers see both sides, *New York Times* music writer Bernard Holland explains that the Philharmonic folks don't think that women will make the orchestra "better or worse, but

that they will make it different.... There is, many say, a shared sense of phrase and accent that gives this orchestra special qualities."

**Now hear this** — Holland adds: "Opinions are fine, support is fine, but direct pressure from without is a tricky business. One analogy is the Helms-Burton Act, which has enraged the world by trying to force other countries to think about Cuba the way we think about Cuba. There are, not surprisingly, a lot of countries that think they can figure out their own values without our interference.... Is this the situation we want to set to music?"

# Women and the fight to keep affirmative action

During Women's History Month in March, Pathfinder Press has an extra-special offer on *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation: Documents of the Socialist Workers Party, 1971-86*, a three-part publication that is part of the Education for Socialists series. It pulls together in one place some of the most important resolutions, reports, and articles that come out of the involvement of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in the fight for women's rights since a new feminist movement arose at the end of the 1960s.

The excerpt below, focusing on the question of affirmative action, is from a portion of a report by SWP national sec-

Black struggle. When the Civil Rights Act was being debated in Congress in 1964, the southern senators tried to prevent its passage by outlawing discrimination in employment on the basis of sex as well as race. They figured that made Title VII, as that clause of the act is known, so ridiculous, even northern liberals would have to vote against it. But it was passed.

This provided a legal opening for the affirmative-action drive by women. It gave women a legal club to use to force their way not just into jobs, but into basic industry, with its higher wages and greater unionization. Thousands of suits were filed. One stride forward came with the 1974 consent decree in the basic steel industry which established plant-wide seniority and set hiring goals for women and apprenticeship goals for women, Blacks, and Latinos. From 1975 to 1979, women made a big push into auto, mining, and steel.

## Women get into industry

Jobs in industry are key to women for several reasons. One is that secretaries, teachers, and social workers simply do not have the raw power that industrial workers have when it comes to winning women's rights or anything else.

But it's more than that. Opening the doors to basic industry has a powerful impact on the consciousness and self-confidence of women, and on the way that men view their female co-workers. Many deeply ingrained attitudes change rapidly. The interconnections between the workers' struggle against class exploitation and women's struggle for economic independence and full equality come to life. Sexist prejudices begin to break down.

The women's movement needs to make the same kind of shift that is necessary for the Black and Chicano movements. To win the

ERA [Equal Rights Amendment], abortion rights, and the other demands of women today will take a stronger, different kind of movement than a decade ago, with a different kind of leadership. But the forces exist to build such a movement.

Working women, and especially women in industry, have to lead this process, orienting the women's movement towards a strategic axis that can push the movement forward. This includes, of course, the fight against discrimination and harassment on the job. It's not sexual harassment only. The term is too narrow. The fight against sexual harassment is one aspect of the much broader fight of working women — the fight against the harassment of women as a sex, against discrimination, and for the right to get jobs, to hold them, and to have full rights on those jobs.

At the same time that working women need to become involved in the women's movement, they must also take their struggles into the unions, to win support for abortion rights, pregnancy benefits, the ERA, and other needs....

## Affirmative action helps whole class

Affirmative action is vitally and directly in the interests of the working class as a class. Affirmative action is not a charity to make up for the past. It's not — as some argue — a morally correct position but materially disadvantageous to males and whites.

Workers are better able today to grasp aspects of the political economy of discrimination — that discrimination does not mean an extra buck for some workers at the expense of women or of Blacks,

Chicanos, or Puerto Ricans; instead, it drags the whole class down in terms of real wages and job conditions, and saps the collective ability to fight back against the bosses.

More and more workers are waking up to their class interests, which do not lie in seeking privileges for some. As this happens, they become more capable of seeing the difference between class struggle and class collaboration, between themselves and the union bureaucrats. It becomes clear that it *strengthens* the union to bring in more Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and, yes, women, to make sure that everyone gets the *same treatment*.

There are more and more openings for us to explain and move forward along this axis of struggle.

But we must add the point we made in the March 30, 1979, *Militant* editorial: The kinds of struggles that established the principle of affirmative action will not be sufficient to defend or extend it. More powerful forces and a more conscious leadership are going to be necessary for that.

The *Militant* editorial noted that the civil rights laws were won without the unions really entering the fray. The editorial continued: "This is a new period, in which the capitalist economy is wracked by crisis; in which the employers are driven to harsher and harsher antilabor attacks in order to defend their profits. This is a period of polarization of class forces.

"The only class that has an interest in defending affirmative action is the working class. And the fight to defend affirmative action must be taken right to the center of the only mass organizations of the working class — the unions."

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

retary Jack Barnes titled "New Stage of Revolutionary Working-Class Politics." It was adopted by the SWP National Committee on April 29, 1979. The entire report also appears in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics — Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, which is also on sale at a special discount. *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation* is copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

### BY JACK BARNES

Key to the road forward is the transformation, the revolution, that is taking place as women in the labor force push their way into industry. This transformation began as one of the repercussions of the gains of the

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## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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**THE MILITANT**

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

### March 24, 1972

The reverberations of the Bangladesh national liberation struggle continue to shake both India and Pakistan as other oppressed nationalities demand their national rights.

The most significant motion is among the Pathans of Pakistan. Occupying the Baluchistan and North-West Frontier provinces in West Pakistan, the Pathans are excluded from many areas of Pakistani life by the dominant Punjabi minority. The Feb. 27 *New York Times* carried a dispatch from Peshawar, Pakistan, stating that the Pathans "are ready for war if their demands are not met. During the past week the police here, mostly Pathans, have smashed the local headquarters of [President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's] Pakistan People's party...."

On Feb. 27 a massive armed demonstration was held in Peshawar, calling for the end of martial law and for Pathan self-government within Pakistan. *New York Times* correspondent Malcolm W. Browne, reporting from Peshawar on Feb. 27, said the crowd numbered more than 10,000 and "bristled with rifles and shotguns...."

The Pathans are traditionally a military people and even in normal times are highly armed with modern weapons made in small factories in their country. Police in both the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan are thought to side with them, and large portions of the Pakistani regular

army also support the Pathan movement. Bhutto has had to rely in large part on the People's Guard, a paramilitary group organized to bolster his regime.

**THE MILITANT**

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

### March 22, 1947

Truman's demand for authority to send military supplies and missions to Greece and Turkey represents a long step down the road to war with the Soviet Union. Truman has served notice that U.S. imperialism will stop at nothing, including atomic war, to secure world domination. Hereafter no nation will be free from the threat of intervention by Washington. Workers struggling to establish socialism in other countries will have American imperialism as well as their own capitalists to contend with.

Truman reported to congress that Britain's economic crisis necessitated withdrawal or reduction of her "commitments" in many countries, including Greece and Turkey. He therefore asked for 400 million dollars to be used in propping up their governments and armed forces until July 1948. He also asked for the authority to send American military and civilian personnel to supervise the use of this money and to train Greek and Turkish personnel.

He made no bones about his unqualified support of the Greek and Turkish governments. Disregarding the well-known facts about the brutal dictatorships in these countries, he went out of his way to paint them up as free and democratic regimes.

# U.S., Greek hands off Albania!

The statement below was released by the Committee of Communists in Athens, Greece, on March 11.

Working people of Albania deserve the wholehearted solidarity of their brothers and sisters in Greece, the Balkans, and around the world. Albanians who have rebelled against the pro-imperialist regime of Sali Berisha are not armed criminals and Mafia operators as the Greek government, which until yesterday supported Berisha, incessantly echoes. They are workers, peasants, youth and other layers of society who have been deeply affected by the economic crisis and are taking their destiny into their own hands.

Ninety percent of industry in Albania is idle. People subsist thanks to the remittances of immigrant workers that account for 50 percent of Albania's gross domestic product. These are the results of the pro-capitalist measures of the Berisha administration. The mobilizations that started as protests after the collapse of the "pyramid schemes," were detonated due to the desperate economic breakdown in the country. Working people have also put forward broader democratic demands and turned against the secret police and other forces of repression.

The armed protesters have taken control of major cities in the south and sections of the army have joined them. The Berisha government has tried unsuccessfully to drown the uprising in blood.

The insurrection of the toilers is the greatest obstacle to the attempts to restore capitalism. The mobilizations show that despite whatever illusions Albanian working people may have had in the "miracle" of capitalism — illusions created by the extreme isolation of working people during the Stalinist police state of Enver Hoxa — they resist mightily when capitalist barbarity cuts into the skin. Until now Berisha was the man of U.S., Italian, and Greek capital.

The parties of Berisha and imprisoned Socialist Party leader Fatos Nano have the same basic program. They have the perspective of the restoration of the market system, of capitalism in Albania. They differ only in the tempo in which such a perspective can be carried out. They have successively ruled the country and have represented the interests of the same social layer, the privileged bureaucratic caste that has controlled the political and economic life of the country for decades and shut out working people from politics.

The workers state in Albania, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, has been horribly deformed by the betrayal of the Albanian revolution by the Stalinist regime. The bureaucratic methods of planning and management of the parasitic caste in power led this state to a long-term crisis. However, it's one thing to betray a revolution and another to overthrow it. No matter how much these states have been deformed, the uprising clearly shows that the pro-capitalist policies of the bureaucratic regimes, the introduction of a few capitalist enterprises, and the opening up of their markets to foreign investment are not sufficient for the restoration of capitalism in the Balkans. The overturn of nationalized property relations can occur only with a catastrophic defeat of the toilers through a bloody imperialist military assault.

The dream of international capitalism for an immedi-

ate exploitation of the markets and of the labor power in Eastern Europe has been transformed into a nightmare. In its efforts to bring back these countries within the sphere of stable capitalist exploitation, imperialism has and will continue to face the wrath of working people.

We must oppose imperialist intervention no matter what pretext is used for it. Whether in the name of "restoring order," "humanitarian aid," "evacuating foreign nationals," or "support for democratic elections," an intervention by the European Union (with the participation of the Greek government) or by Washington, will be used against the workers of Albania. U.S. and Italian troops are already in Albania. The American, Italian and Greek fleets are in the Adriatic. A strengthened Eighth Division of the Greek army is patrolling the Greek-Albanian border with fingers on the trigger.

Behind the calls for the protection of the Greek-speaking minority in southern Albania, lies the vision of Greek capitalism for expansion in the Balkans. The uprising of the Albanian people has caused panic among Greek capitalists — an occasion for workers to celebrate! Some of their enterprises have been targeted as symbols of exploitation. The government in Athens tries to convince us that the interests of the large manufacturing, commercial and tobacco businesses that have set up shop in Albania are also the interests of workers in Greece. There is nothing further from the truth.

It is the policies of the Greek government that place in danger the Greek-speaking minority and other citizens of Albania, as well as workers and farmers in Greece, by fanning the flames for imperialist intervention. Greek imperialism sees the Greek minority as pawns in its foreign policy. Greek capitalism has never given up on its historic goal of carving up southern Albania as its loot. These aims were dealt a death blow with the revolution of the Albanian workers and peasants in the 1940s.

Various Greek political parties shed crocodile tears for the Greek-speaking minority; at the same time they refuse to vote for giving these same people complete political rights when they step into Greece.

The press is sounding the alarm on the dangers the minority faces and the dangers of a new wave of Albanian immigrants into Greece. What is really happening is the preparation by the Greek government of the pretext for intervention under the cover of the European Union. They are doing all they can so that workers in Greece are unable to recognize that the Albanian insurgents are our natural allies. To no avail.

The Albanian workers are giving us a taste of the struggles that will increase in the future in many workers states. Through such battles the workers there will construct new revolutionary parties capable of leading them to find their way back to communism, giving an impetus to struggles that can lead their brothers and sisters in Greece, and other capitalist countries in the region, to take political power out of the hands of the wealthy exploiters. Working people should demand:

U.S., Italian, and Greek hands off Albania!  
Solidarity with the rebellious workers of Albania!  
No to deportations!  
Equal rights for Albanian and other immigrants!

# Oppose racism, sexism in army

It should come as no surprise that in investigating charges of rape and sexual abuse of female recruits at U.S. Army training camps, military officials have overwhelmingly targeted Black drill sergeants. At the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, where the charges of widespread sexual abuse first erupted, all of the officers criminally charged to date are Black.

On March 11, five women who trained at Aberdeen said that Army investigators attempted to bully and badger them into accusing their military superiors of rape. They said the military brass used threats and coercion to get the desired response to their questions.

Racism is a fundamental feature of class oppression in the United States. It permeates all the institutions of capitalist society, including the military. From the time that George Washington's order instructing recruiters "not to enlist Negroes" was overturned, Blacks have played a major role in the history of the U.S. armed forces. Many fought and died in the two world imperialist slaughters, touted as wars for democracy by the U.S. rulers. At the same time lynchings and race riots against Blacks at home were rampant. Military units were subject to official Jim Crow segregation until 1954, and de facto segregation for much longer.

In 1972, the NAACP's Task Force Report on Administration of Military Justice reported that, "systematic racial discrimination exists throughout the Armed Forces and in the Military Justice system." Black youth join the military in hopes of obtaining job training and education,

but are disproportionately pushed into serving as cannon fodder for the imperialist army. Today, Blacks make up 27 percent of the Army, more than double the percentage of the U.S. population that is Black.

While accusing Army investigators of pressuring them to make false rape charges — including threatening them with prosecution for alleged consensual sex — the five women who spoke out also made clear that sexual harassment and abuse in the military is a reality. Although they themselves had not been raped at Aberdeen, other women had.

For decades the U.S. military brass has been responsible for some of the largest-scale prostitution around the world in the areas surrounding Washington's military bases. The degradation of women bred and perpetuated by capitalist society, which gets a particular vicious twist in an imperialist army, including taking the form of the abuse of enlisted women.

By standing up and fighting, through the civil rights and women's liberation movements, Blacks and women have won substantial gains against discrimination, including in the military.

Fighting to defend affirmative action and the other gains of these struggles is essential to maintaining and advancing those gains. At the same time working people should demand a full investigation of all the sexual abuse complaints, oppose any racist discrimination in prosecution of the charges, and condemn the attempts to coerce testimony.

# Immigrant rights march in L. A.

Continued from front page

my dad got sick, like many of us who had to go back home. When he died, I couldn't go back (to Mexico.) My wife has cancer and I can't even go back to see her."

In most cases, the 1985 law denied people amnesty if they returned to their native country before the process was completed.

Justice for Janitors had a spirited contingent, and members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees helped organize a contingent of 40 with union T-shirts and banners.

The new anti-immigrant legislation calls for doubling the number of border patrol guards from 5,000 to 10,000 over five years, in yearly increments of 1,000; denies new visas for 10 years to immigrants convicted of entering the United States illegally or overstaying a previous visa; establishes a national database and expedites the deportation process for undocumented immigrants convicted of crimes in this country; creates a telephone verification pilot program to determine the eligibility of applicants for jobs and public benefits; denies most federal benefits to immigrants without papers convicted of crimes in the United States; restricts benefits to legal immigrants by making sponsors financially responsible for a longer period of time.

The welfare reform law basically eliminates most legal resident noncitizens in this country from all federal assistance programs.

Many articles have appeared in the local media since the passage of the two major pieces of legislation, focusing on the devastating effect both will have on the elderly and children. Many retired workers who have legal residency status in the United States, who never became citizens because of a desire to return to their homeland as citizens, or who couldn't meet the English language proficiency requirements for citizenship, are now facing a total cutoff from their only source of income — a monthly government Supplemental Security Income (SSI) check.

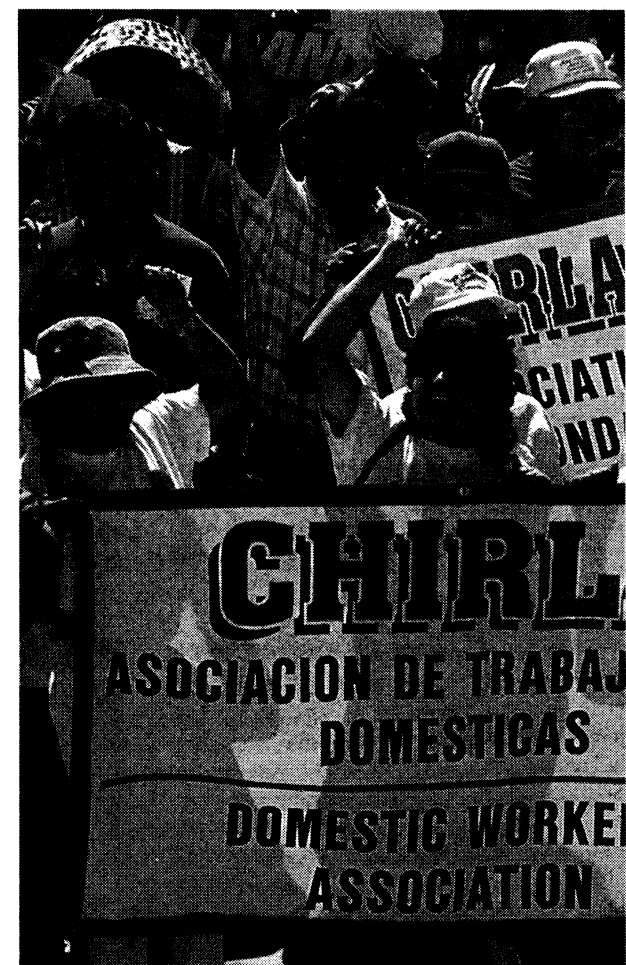
Federal estimates are that 200,000 elderly and disabled legal resident noncitizens in California will be cut off completely from the SSI program, including almost 100,000 in Los Angeles County alone.

Sponsored by a broad coalition of forces opposed to the new anti-immigrant legislation, the march and rally represented months of weekly planning meetings by groups representing most immigrant rights social service organizations, a broad range of Latino and Asian organizations, as well as welfare rights groups and several unions. Sponsors included API-FIRE, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), One Stop Immigration, La Coordinadora '96 (the group that organized the October 12, 1996 march on Washington for Immigrant Rights), the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialists, La Resistencia, Service Employees International Union Local 660, and many others.

Craig Honts, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, participated in the march and rally. None of his opponents, including State assemblyman Thomas Hayden, attended.

The coalition that organized the march will continue to meet every Tuesday at 6 p.m. to plan further activities. For more information, call (213) 353-1333.

Barry Fatland is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1544.



Militant/Carole Lesnick  
Domestic workers join the demonstration in support of immigrant rights in Los Angeles March 9.



# Pilots union, Air B.C. have tentative agreement

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

Canada to get rid of several routes. "We want equal treatment. Why should we go to the bottom of the seniority list if we transfer over to Air Canada?" Jeff McLellan, a 10-year pilot with Air B.C., told this

lines, like the bus drivers in ICTU (Independent Canadian Transit Union). For many of us it was the first time on strike. It was great."

## ON THE PICKET LINE

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 about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Two hundred forty striking Air B.C. pilots and their supporters, including flight attendants, rallied at the Vancouver International Airport on January 27. Marching outside the terminal and handing out flyers to passengers they chanted "Fairness and Equality Now" and "No Scabs."

The striking Air B.C. pilots are among the 900 pilots across the country who are on strike against Air Canada's regional airlines — Air B.C., Air Ontario, Air Alliance (Quebec), and Air Nova (Maritimes). As of submission of this article, a tentative settlement had been reached at Air B.C. and Air Nova. The Air B.C. pilots were scheduled to vote on the offer on March 9.

Picket lines are up in Toronto, Halifax, and Montreal, as well as Vancouver. The bosses are taking a hard stance against the pilots, pressing their attack on the wages, working conditions, and job security of all the workers at the regional airlines. The main issues are the right to be integrated into a main seniority list with pilots at Air Canada, as well as stopping the attempt by Air

reporter. "It's unfair. Air Canada's regional airlines are profitable, yet the workers are paid less. There's a second tier wage structure here. We're fighting for job security."

"Air Canada wants to get rid of several regional routes like Portland and cities in Alberta," added McLellan

Dawn Thompson, a flight attendant and member of Teamsters Local 31 who was at the rally, said, "We're supporting this rally because this fight is not just about pilots' jobs, it's about our jobs. It's about Air Canada contracting out jobs."

Pilots at Air B.C. are organized by the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) and have recently voted to join the 45,000-member International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations. Pilots at Air Canada split from ALPA last year over the issue of a merged seniority list

Air B.C. flight attendant Linda Gendron explained that a two-week strike by flight attendants in December ended in a victory. Kathy Peters, a representative of Teamsters Local 31, told the *Militant*, "We got a substantial pay raise of over \$1.21 per hour, plus our hours of flying time were cut back from 85 to 75 per month. With the wage increase, flight attendants are getting the same or more take home pay. Plus, contract language was cleaned up and the company was forced to take back proposed concessions."

Thompson added, "We got a victory because the company was feeling the heat. We struck during holiday season and they felt it. And other unions respected our picket

### Florida shrimp workers protest company abuse

DEERFIELD BEACH, Florida — About 175 people demonstrated here February 13, against the abuses by Kitchen of the Ocean, a shrimp processing plant. About half were from the company's workforce and others included union retirees and staff people.

The rally was organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) to protest the company's refusal to negotiate with the newly unionized workforce. In September 1996, the workers at Kitchen of the Ocean voted 173 to 18 to join UNITE. The only response from the company was to fire nine workers who were leaders of the unionization effort.

The majority of the workforce of 230 are from Haiti, and many at the demonstration said that this is part of the reason the company discriminates against them. Ludovic Laferriere is one of the workers who has been fired. "We want a place to sit down and better working conditions, and respect," he said. Laferriere is fighting his firing.

"There are no decent bathrooms, no running water, no place to store food," said Jean Claude Jean. Most workers there make \$4.75 an hour.

### Unionists back fight by musicians for better pay

SEATTLE — Hundreds of union



Militant/Scott Breen

On February 22, some 700 people picketed the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle. Musicians and their supporters were demanding a wage increase.

members, including Longshoremen, Teamsters, Machinists, and dozens of others, packed the sidewalk in front of the Fifth Avenue Theatre here February 19.

The theater had canceled the opening night performance of the musical "Beauty and the Beast." The company had flown in non-union musicians from around the country to replace 18 unionized musicians who had gone on strike February 12.

The musicians, organized in the American Federation of Musicians Local 76-493, were demanding a new three-year contract increasing their salary to \$106 per performance, an increase of \$13 from the present \$93 per show. The Fifth Avenue Theatre bosses offered only \$96.

After the mass picketing, theatre management agreed to meet with the union to continue negotiations.

At the next evening's performance, 400 people showed up to

protest and picket, although the performance did go on.

A third mass picket line, this time with 700 people packing the street around the show, was organized for the Saturday night performance. The spirited picketers chant of "No contract, No peace, No Beauty and the Beast!" loudly echoed through downtown Seattle. They were accompanied by a street band of supporting musicians and cars honking their support as they drove down the narrow streets.

These mass pickets had a big impact on the morale of the strikers. "I'm excited about the turnout tonight," Dewey Marler, a striking musician, told the *Militant*. "This demonstrates that we've got mass community support."

Ned Dmytryshyn, member of IAM Lodge 764 in Vancouver; Rollande Girard in Miami; and Scott Breen, member of IAM District 751 in Seattle, contributed to this column.

## LETTERS

### Struggle in Bougainville

In a dramatic, and desperate, escalation of its nine-year war against independence fighters on the island of Bougainville, the Papua New Guinea government headed by Sir Julius Chan has hired mercenaries from Executive Outcomes, an outfit that had carried out operations in Sierra Leone and Angola.

In a \$A30 million deal Executive Outcomes subsidiary Sandlines International, which recruits heavily from former soldiers of the apartheid-era South African army, will send a reported 150 mercenaries to assassinate leaders of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, which is leading the independence struggle. They are also charged with freeing five Papua New Guinea soldiers captured by rebels last September, and moving on the Panguna copper mine, closed for eight years by the fighting.

As the deal was being negotiated the Chan government began moves to buy out the majority share-holding in the mine owned by giant Anglo-Australian corporation RTZ-CRA.

The BRA reported March 3 that the offensive had begun with mortar fire near the capital Arawa, following several days of increased helicopter reconnaissance activity. Some 40 white mercenaries and 150 black soldiers in PNG Defence Force uniforms, some of whom could also be mercenaries, have landed on Bougainville at six locations, the BRA reported, with one unit moving to within 10 kilometers of the BRA-held mine site.

The mercenary operation follows a series of military and political di-

sasters for the Chan government on Bougainville. A military offensive against the BRA in the middle of last year was defeated within weeks. Then after assassinating Theodore Miriung, the Chan-appointed premier of Bougainville October 12 on suspicion of collaborating with the BRA, soldiers of the PNG army killed more than 20 civilians in a series of massacres in southern Bougainville in December. Some 200 soldiers refused to go back to Bougainville after returning to Papua New Guinea for their Christmas leave.

Canberra, the former colonial power in Papua New Guinea, has distanced itself from Chan's hiring of mercenaries, declaring it "unacceptable." Long accustomed to being the policeman of the region, Canberra is concerned about the impact political instability in Papua New Guinea will have on the \$A4 billion that Australian companies have invested in the country. At the end of an official visit to Port Moresby, PNG's capital, February 19-21, Australia's minister of foreign affairs, Alexander Downer, stated the Australian government's view that an assault "on hardline rebels and any reversion to military solutions is simply going to be unsuccessful."

Francis Ona, the president of the Bougainville Interim Government, declared February 23 from BRA-held territory on Bougainville, that "the coming of the mercenaries is not going to change anything. We are fighting for our social, political, economic, cultural rights and self-determination, and nothing will change our people's resolve."



Addressing himself to Chan, Ona said, "You will go down in history dishonored by this infamous act, loathed by all moral people of goodwill."

Bob Aiken  
Sydney, Australia

### 'People vs. Larry Flynt'

Evidently the new film, *The People vs. Larry Flynt* has generated a sharp debate about the question of First Amendment rights and the exploitation of women. I have not seen the film and have no intention of doing so. However, some important questions have been raised by the various forces in this discussion and some clarity needs to be brought to the matter.

The defenders of the film, including *Chicago Tribune* columnist Mike Royko, want to give some sort of credit to Larry Flynt [publisher

of the pornographic magazine *Hustler*]. Royko puts it this way: "But the movie isn't dishonest when tossing honors Flynt's way. There are constitutional experts who agree that as unworthy a guy as Flynt might be, his successful court battles were important defenses of our free speech rights."

Those on the other side point out, correctly, that Flynt's magazines represent violent, despicable and abusive images and portrayals of women.

However, the nub of the matter is elsewhere. In the first place rights are neither won nor lost in court battles of any kind. They are won through public, social protest and mobilization. After rights have been won in this arena, often the ruling class is forced to permit their codification through legislation or court decision. However, as the Larry

Flynt case proves once again, the aim of the ruling class through its agents in the court system, even in the face of defeat, will make yet another attempt to minimize and undermine the right in question with their court decision.

In this case they took the most offensive case dealing with the issue and let that be used as the supposed yardstick. Their goal in this was to confuse the issue as much as possible and, therefore, undermine the liberty in question and any further efforts to extend it. Not a few people must have had the response at the time, and even more so now with the movie, that if that is what free speech means, then I am not so sure I am for unrestricted free speech.

Larry Flynt's case did not establish any rights at all. And the wide publicity his case received was intended to do as much damage to free speech as possible in the context of a right already secured by efforts of the working class. Obviously, as the ruling class moves to the right, dragging various sectors of the middle class like directors and producers of the ilk of Milos Forman and Oliver Stone along with them, a vigorous response clarifying the matter is in order.

John Votava  
Chicago, Illinois

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.

## Rebels take more ground in Zaire

BY MEGAN ARNEY

As the *Militant* goes to press, the rebel forces of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire are rapidly advancing on the eastern city of Kisangani and have just captured the Lake Tanganyika port city of Moba. It looks increasingly unlikely that the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko will survive the crisis.

The rebel army, estimated to have as many as 40,000 troops, says it has surrounded Kisangani from three sides. Depending on different news reports, the rebels are between 10 and 30 miles from that economic center. On March 7, rebels and the government's army clashed at the airport — a mere 10 miles north of the city.

Since the conflict started last October, the rebel forces have captured a 900-mile-long swath of territory in eastern Zaire, and won wide support. They now control about one-sixth of the country, including areas that contain gold reserves worth \$1.47 billion. They are only 300 miles north of Lubumbashi, the hub of the cobalt and copper belt, and are close to Mbuji-Mayi, the country's diamond capital.

By all accounts, if the city of Kisangani falls into rebel hands, President Mobutu would be forced to abdicate. Its location makes it militarily and economically strategic. The city sits on a main river artery — the Zaire River — and a major railway. It is also surrounded by diamond and gold mines. The Zairian army has concentrated its forces and resources there. Kisangani is a major depot for arms and ammunition that would fall into rebel hands along with the city.

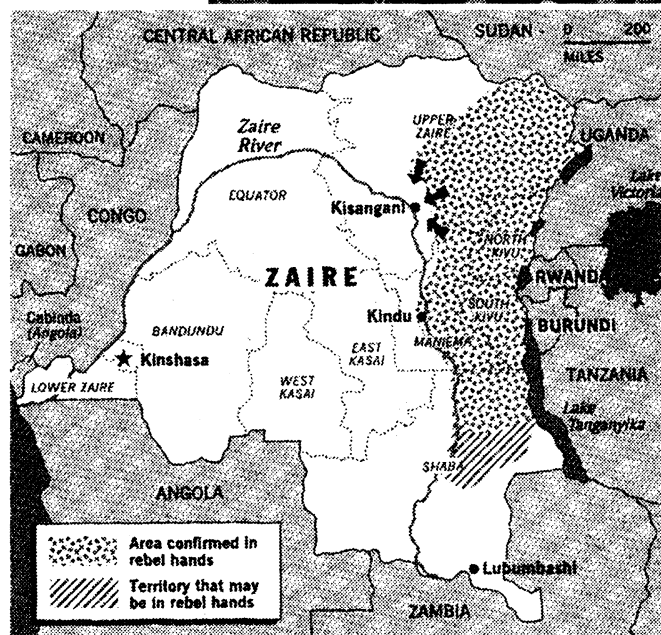
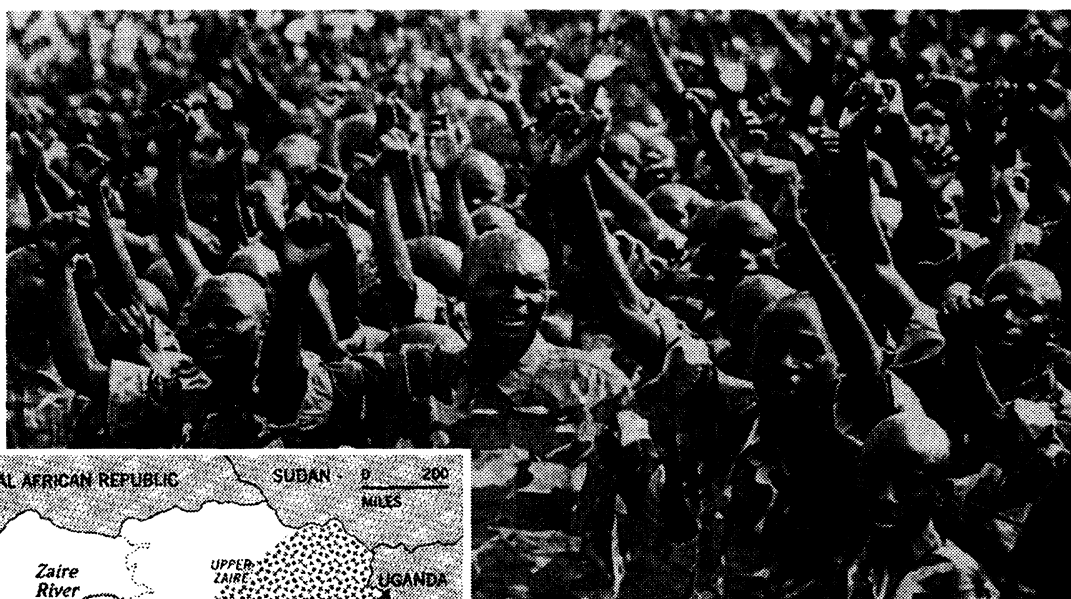
In most areas the rebel forces have taken the cities quite easily, as the demoralized Zairian army flees. But in Kisangani there has been some resistance by the government troops and foreign mercenaries. It has been widely reported that up to 300 Serbian and other foreign mercenaries are in Zaire. Pro-government forces have mined the approaches to the city and are drilling with attack helicopters. Nevertheless, the *New York Times* reported March 7 that the mercenaries had pulled three leased fighter jets out of the area to avoid their capture if the city falls.

The population of Kisangani seems to be eagerly awaiting the rebels. The city has long been the center for anti-government views. In the 1950s, revolutionary leader Patrice Lumumba forged a base there for his anti-colonialist political party, and in the mid-1960s, rebels established a revolutionary government in Kisangani.

On March 5, the Zairian government said it would accept a five-point United Nations plan, which includes a cease-fire, the withdrawal of foreign fighters, and an international conference. According to Reuters news agency, on March 8 the rebels said they would accept the plan as a basis for more discussions, but that a cease-fire could only come after talks. Three days later, government officials in the capital city of Kinshasa rejected the talks unless the rebels disarm.

### Rebels gain popular support

Articles in the big-business press have remarked on the military strength and "stunning maneuvers" of the rebel forces, explaining that they must be guided by a "Rwandan or Ugandan ... a well-schooled officer and masterful strategist," as the *New York Times* put it. What is clear, however, is that what started as a rebellion in eastern Zaire has exploded, and won broad support among workers and peasants. On March 10,



The rebels in Zaire are recruiting by the thousands, as they advance farther west. Above, some 5,000 new recruits march in the city of Goma on March 6. Map shows rebels' gains.

the Associated Press reported that 20,000 new troops have joined the struggle. In addition, civilians give the rebels crucial support, carrying goods toward the front, showing them shortcuts through the jungle and giving them food.

The government army, on the other hand, is utterly demoralized. While foreign mercenaries are reportedly being paid up to \$10,000 for a three-month stint, the Zairian army soldiers have not been paid, and are increasingly deserting.

Even though state-run news broadcasts have virtually ignored the conflict in the eastern part of the country, people in the capital city of Kinshasa, about 700 miles west of Kisangani, are talking about the rebels. Juliet Muamba, an unemployed worker, told the *Washington Post* that rebel leader Laurent Kabila "will not have to fight for Kinshasa. We will welcome him here." The government has banned demonstrations in the capital.

### Imperialists consider intervention

Most big-business commentators and diplomats are loudly proclaiming concern that the conflict could split the country and the region. Writing for the *Washington Post*, Stephen Buckley warned the fighting could lead to "political anarchy." The *New York Times* quoted an unnamed African diplomat saying, "The dismemberment of Central Africa's largest country, if it were to happen would be the ugliest disaster we have seen yet."

The regime of Mobutu is clearly collapsing. While Washington appears to be resigned to this fact, it continues probes for possible intervention in order to stabilize the situation, using the facade of "humanitarian aid" for refugees from Rwanda who are in eastern Zaire.

In response to this, Kabila said on March 8 the rebels would open up safe corridors to allow refugees to march back to Rwanda. The United Nations began an intervention operation March 9, under the pretext of finding hundreds of Rwandan refugees lost in the Zairian jungle. On March 10, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan and U.S. assistant secretary of state George Moose met to discuss the possibility of a "multinational force to protect refugees," according to the Associated Press.

But by the next day, state department

spokesperson Nicholas Burns said that while Washington was meeting with officials from the UN, the White House was not ready to participate in a military operation. "We'll agree to continue to discuss it if other countries wish to discuss it," Burns added. Several European governments have said they would consider taking part if Washington supported the idea.

The French government has been pushing for intervention to back the regime in Kinshasa. Paris has long seen Central Africa as part of its "sphere of influence," and sees Washington's latest role there as a threat. On March 11, French president Jacques Chirac accused other imperialist powers of a "complicity of silence" regarding Zaire.

In a public statement February 5, Washington warned Zaire's neighbors — Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi — to stay out of the fighting. In the British daily *Financial Times* on March 10, Michela Wrong reported that "a secret Pentagon paper... envisages splitting the nation from north to south at the level of the town of Kananga." Burns responded the next day that "Zaire is one of the biggest and one of the most important countries in Africa. We believe that Zaire's territorial integrity must be respected."

Another point of contention is the role of the Angolan government in the conflict. The *New York Times* asserted March 9 that the Angolan government is supporting the rebel forces by flying exiled Zairian rebels and military supplies to eastern Zaire. Mobutu has also accused Angola of massing troops from eastern Zaire in the Angolan border city of Cabinda in preparation for an attack on Kinshasa. In early March, Washington publicly warned the Angolan regime to stay out of the Zairian war. For two decades Washington and the Mobutu regime backed the counterrevolutionary National

Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which attempted along with apartheid forces of South Africa to overturn the newly independent Angolan government beginning in 1975.

### History of Zaire

The Congo (now Zaire), with 38 million people, became a Belgian colony in the late 1870s. It was prized for its natural resources. Today, the country's mineral-rich Shaba region in the south produces about two-thirds of the world's cobalt. Zaire leads the world in industrial diamond production. Zinc, tin, manganese, gold, silver, iron ore, and uranium are also found, as well as some 13 percent of the world's total hydroelectric potential, oil reserves and coal deposits.

The Congo won its independence in June of 1960. A general election gave a majority of seats in the new parliament to the movement headed by Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the independence struggle and later the prime minister. When the Belgian government backed a counterrevolution led by Moise Tshombe, Lumumba appealed to the United Nations. The first UN "peacekeepers" disarmed Lumumba's forces, effectively aiding the Belgian troops and Tshombe. In September of 1960, with the backing of Washington, a section of the Congolese army led by Col. Mobutu Sese Seko seized power in a coup against Lumumba. The revolutionary leader was murdered in 1961. UN troops withdrew in 1964, leaving Mobutu in power.

Washington, Paris and other imperialist powers have relied on Mobutu's dictatorial rule ever since to maintain Zaire's superexploitation as a semicolonial country. Despite the country's incredible natural resources, conditions for the overwhelming majority in Zaire are desperate. Two-thirds of the population is employed in agriculture, mostly as subsistence farmers producing small crops like corn, bananas, and rice. Real wages in the early 1990s were less than 10 percent of those in 1960. The banks in Kinshasa have not been open since 1991, while teachers have not been paid in three years.

Many big-business newspapers report that the conflict in Zaire started with the refugee crisis and the so-called ethnic tribal war in Rwanda. The recent conflict in eastern Zaire, however, erupted last October when local politicians in southern Kivu province announced a plan to push ethnic Tutsi who had lived in Zaire for more than two centuries, known as Banyamulenge, into Rwanda. Residents in the area fought back and then kept going. While at first the main core of the rebel forces was reportedly Tutsi, the momentum of the rebels' advance and the general hatred for the Mobutu regime have bolstered the rebel ranks with fresh recruits of all ethnic backgrounds.

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