

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Battles continue at Caterpillar  
as workers fight firings

— PAGE 11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 61/NO. 14 APRIL 7, 1997

## GM strikers fight for jobs, dignity

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

FORT WAYNE, Indiana — "Morale in the strike is good," said United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2209 member Bob Grundell. "Today about 25 people from UAW Local 598 in Flint and 35 workers from UAW Local 594 in Pontiac joined us on the picket lines."

Entering their third week on strike against the world's largest automaker, 2,700 UAW members remained solid in their fight for jobs and human dignity. The UAW workers here walked off their jobs March 14 after failing to reach a local agreement.

As the *Militant* went to press, UAW Local 2209 officials announced a tentative settlement in the strike.

"Tomorrow, a bunch of us are going to show solidarity by going to the picket lines at Mattel," said Grundell. On February 17, some 600 members of United Paperworkers International Union Local 7589 struck the toy maker Mattel at its only union-organized plant in the United States. The plant is being run by 300 management personnel and

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## Youth head to Atlanta for socialist convention

BY DIANA NEWBERRY  
AND STEFANIE TRICE

ATLANTA — Young Socialists from around the United States and several other countries are making final preparations for the organization's second national convention, taking place here March 28-30. Young Socialists from around the world have come early to Atlanta to participate in full-time convention-building teams. Armed with the *Militant* newspaper and Pathfinder books, these teams are getting out to farms, campuses, and immigrant communities and fac-

*'Militant' calls April 5-13  
target week for international  
subscription drive*

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tory gates. They are also organizing interviews with local media building awareness about the convention locally.

Leaflets in Spanish and English publicizing the convention and the Saturday night "Eyewitness Report From Albania and Yugoslavia" by *Militant* staff writer Argiris Malapanis, who will have just returned from a Balkans reporting team, have been posted throughout the greater Atlanta area.

YS members Paul Pederson and Gabe Siert flew in from Minneapolis to be part of this effort. The Young Socialists in Sweden have also sent two members of their chapter to build and attend the convention.

Young Socialists in France, Iceland, New

Continued on Page 6

## No U.S. troops to Zaire!

### Rebels prepare to topple Mobutu dictatorship

BY MEGAN ARNEY

As the rebels of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire come closer to toppling the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko, the major imperialist powers — with Washington in the lead — are lining up their armed forces for intervention in Zaire. Dozens of U.S. and French troops are already on the ground there.

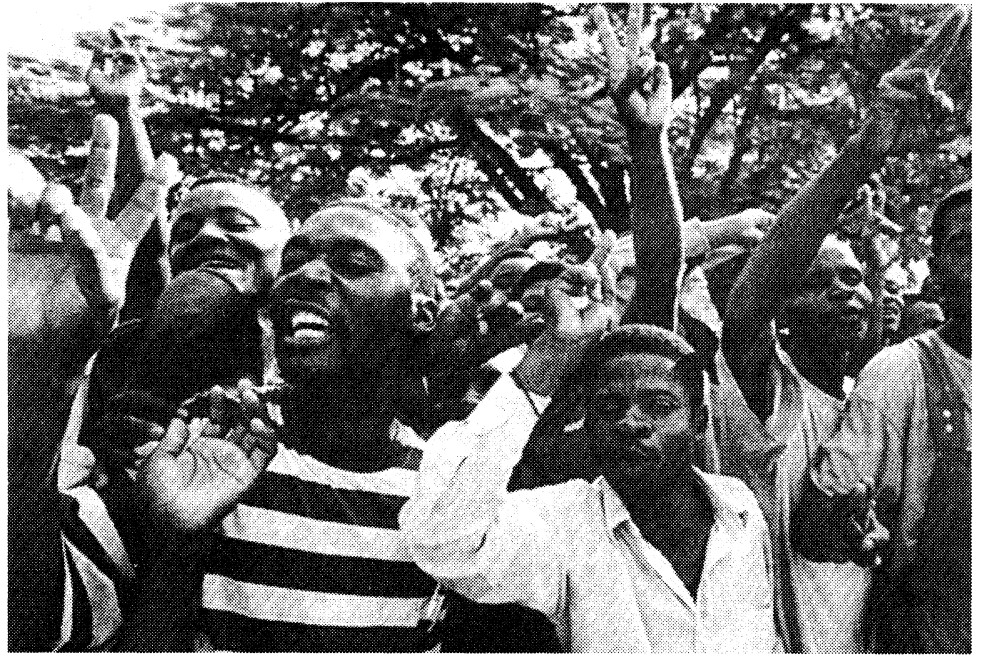
The rebels have seized about a third of Zaire since October of last year. Since then they have grown into a 40,000-strong army, recruiting heavily from the population in seized areas. On March 15 they took Kisangani, the third largest city in Zaire and formerly the government's main stronghold in the eastern portion of the country. The rebels have been hailed as liberators as they capture town after town, sending the soldiers and mercenaries of the Mobutu regime fleeing.

Washington, which played a central role in installing Mobutu in power on the blood and bones of the independence fighters in Zaire in the 1960s, backed the dictatorship until very recently. Now, with Mobutu's days clearly numbered, the U.S. rulers are hunting for a pretext to step in.

On March 23, U.S. Army forces arrived in Brazzaville, Congo. In the name of a possible evacuation of U.S. citizens, Washington has sent about 100 paratroopers to an area that lies just across the Zaire River from Kinshasa, the Zairian capital. The day before the larger contingent of U.S. troops arrived, a 30-member reconnaissance team landed in Zaire along with 100 French soldiers. Defense Secretary William Cohen said March 24 that the Pentagon planned to have more than 600 troops in the region in the near future. Stating Washington's position on intervention, Cohen said, "We stand ready to respond if necessary."

Major Gen. Edwin Smith, the commander

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Zairians cheer in streets of Kinshasa, the capital, as news spread of rebel capture of Kisangani, the third largest city. President Mobutu's ouster appears imminent.

## Washington pushes NATO expansion against Russia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As the big-business media hailed the "warm personal relations" between Russian president Boris Yeltsin and his friend "Bill," U.S. president William Clinton reaffirmed Washington's war preparations against Russia with its plans to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) into eastern and central Europe. At his March 20-21 conference with Yeltsin in Helsinki, Finland, Clinton maintained the U.S. rulers' course. Washington's ultimate goal in this endeavour is overthrowing the workers

state in Russia and reestablishing capitalism there.

Speaking to the Russian parliament two weeks before the Helsinki meeting, Yeltsin said NATO's proposed eastward enlargement would cause "direct damage to our security." Its purpose, he added was "the desire to oust Russia from Europe, to achieve its strategic isolation," and would "have a high cost for the peoples of Europe."

"I have reaffirmed that NATO enlargement and the Madrid summit will proceed,"

Continued on Page 4

## Revolt deals blow to attempts to restore capitalist rule in Albania

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS  
AND BOBBIS MISAILIDES

VLORA, Albania — Through a popular, armed rebellion, working people of Albania have thrown into utter crisis the rule of

the bureaucratic caste that has controlled political power in this workers state for nearly half a century. They have also pushed back imperialist attempts to reestablish capitalism in Albania.

The country's armed forces have been virtually dissolved, with many units and thousands of individual soldiers and officers joining the rebels. The police have been rendered utterly ineffective, with many precincts shut down and police stations burned, particularly in the south. The country's jails have been thrown open and inmates set free. The courts are functioning only in parts of the country, almost every household in Albania now has weapons.

The defense councils that were born in the heat of the rebellion have formed the National Front for the Salvation of the People, which now includes 21 such citizens committees. In the southern half of the country, particularly in Vlora, the Front is functioning as an alternative government. In many municipalities the citizens' committees have replaced in practice mayors and city councils.

This formation, however, is very heterogeneous and has so far been unable to force the resignation of President Sali Berisha — now the rallying cry of most Albanians. The defense councils are comprised of people from different social layers who sometimes have clashing political outlooks. They include young working-class fighters who

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The *Militant* Labor Forum presents an eyewitness report back from

### Albania and Yugoslavia

Why working people should oppose intervention

Speaker: Argiris Malapanis, *Militant* staff writer  
and coauthor of *The Truth about Yugoslavia*

**New York**  
**Saturday, April 5**

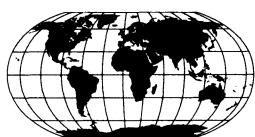
Reception 6:30 pm  
Program 7:30 pm

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## Protests erupt in West Bank

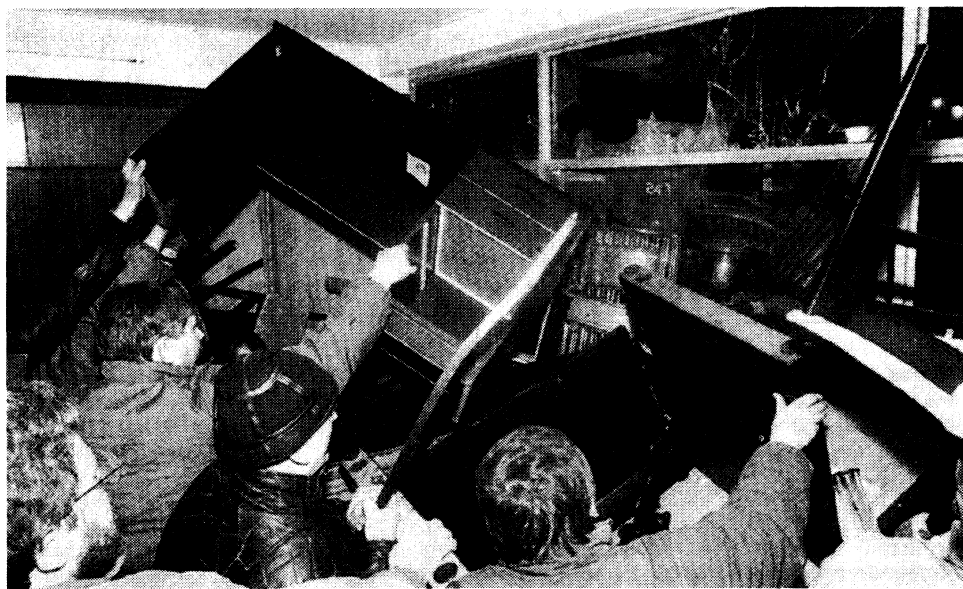
Israeli troops attacked Palestinian demonstrators in the West Bank March 22, injuring 100. The clash came a day after four people were killed in a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, for which the Palestinian organization Hamas has claimed responsibility.

Palestinians have stepped up protests against the Israeli government's decision to build 6,500 housing units for Jewish residents at Jabal Abu Ghneim, in East Jerusalem. The construction would complete a ring of settlements cutting off the Arab portion of the city from the West Bank. Five hundred Palestinian students marched from the center of Bethlehem to the construction site March 20, chanting, "Jabal Abu Ghneim, we're coming to liberate you." Once there, students threw stones at the 150 Israeli soldiers guarding the entrance. Tel Aviv's troops launched tear gas and began shooting live ammunition at the protesters, who had broken through the Palestinian police force, trying to block them. One of the youth was hit by a rubber bullet. The Zionist regime had to send in two more busloads of troops to disperse the crowd.

The next day more than 1,000 Palestinians demonstrated in Hebron, a mostly Palestinian city in the West Bank, protesting the settlements. They hurled firebombs and stones at riot cops, setting one of them ablaze. Israeli soldiers fired live ammo and tear gas into the crowd. Palestinian police with gas masks picked up the tear gas canisters and threw them back at Tel Aviv's occupation army.

## Algerian gov't kills 40 rebels

A dozen Algerian rebels were killed March 11 in a standoff with the French-backed government troops. The Algerian government has stepped up its efforts to extinguish antigovernment forces, killing over 40 rebels in the past several weeks. Antigovernment forces began military operations in 1992, after the government canceled elections that Islamic parties and organizations were expected to win. More than 60,000 people have been killed in the course of the past five years. The government receives support from Paris, which ruled Algeria as



Workers from Gdansk, Poland, barricade themselves in the treasury ministry in Warsaw to protest the planned closing of the shipyards.

a direct colony until being kicked out by a revolution in 1962.

## Italian workers rally, strike

Some 200,000 workers marched through the streets of Rome March 22, demanding the government take action to reduce unemployment. The demonstration was called by the country's three major union federations. Two days earlier, Italian transport workers held a one-day strike to protest Rome's lagging progress in renewing their contract, which expired over a year ago. The strike shut down subways, left few buses running, and brought traffic to a standstill, as taxis, cars, and pedestrians jammed the streets of Rome, Milan, and other big cities.

## Polish shipbuilder unrest swells

More than 1,000 shipbuilding workers in Gdansk, Poland, marched in sub-freezing temperatures March 20 against government plans to shut down the shipyard there and lay off 3,800 workers. Warsaw has refused to subsidize the shipyard, which it owns 60 percent of, declaring it bankrupt and \$136 million in debt. The government did offer a proposal to "save" 2,000 of the jobs, by clos-

ing the Gdansk yard and using the assets to start up another yard. In their eighth day of protest, youth hurled firebombs, paint, and rocks at the government headquarters. Riot police blocked entry into the building and "pleaded for calm over the loud speaker," reports the Associated Press. Cops fired water cannon as they tried to hold off the demonstrators. "Don't try to build a second Albania in Poland," Polish prime minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz nervously warned in a speech to the parliament after the shipyard workers occupied Warsaw ministries March 19.

## Hungarian farmers protest

Hungarian farmers took to the streets March 11 against tax and social security payment increases. Farmers in Budapest halted traffic with lines of tractors, while smaller actions took place in 150 other locations in the country. Protests began in February with wine growers, but according to the *Financial Times* of London, this was "the first time they have reached the capital." Budapest argues that the austerity measures must be taken to reduce the budget deficit, and the "burden of social security contributions on western companies in Hungary," the *Times* reported.

## Ukrainians demand their pay

Reuters reports on March 18, about 85,000 people joined demonstrations across the Ukraine demanding unpaid wages and pensions. "An effigy of a businessman hanging upside down with American dollars falling from his pockets," expressed "resentment against the new dollar-rich class that has emerged since independence [from the Soviet Union] in 1991," the news agency article stated. The rallies included supporters of the former Stalinist regime who called for return of the so-called "Communists."

## Japan exports rise, imports dive

Under a weak yen, Japanese capitalists

have been able to sustain a 6 percent rise in exports, boosting corporate profits there. Companies in Japan like Toyota Motor Corp., Honda Motor Co., and Pioneer Electronix Corp. are taking advantage of the low domestic costs to export cars and electronic products abroad at a bigger profit.

At the same time imports have lagged, raising tensions with their competitors, particularly in the United States, who have lost 4 percent of their export profits while increasing their import expenses 7 percent in relation to Tokyo. The Clinton administration has already begun to complain, saying that Tokyo should buy more in order to spur economic growth.

## El Salvadoran peasants protest

"So that there is corn and beans for the people, cancel the agrarian debt now." This was the slogan of the March 6 mobilization of more than 10,000 peasants in the streets of San Salvador, El Salvador. The demonstration was organized by three major unions of agrarian workers. The current debt of small farmers to the state banks is \$75.6 million — down from the \$252 million almost a year ago, after the government canceled 70 percent of the debt in April 1996.

## Congress approves bill banning late-term abortion procedure

On March 20, with an over two-thirds majority, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would criminalize a type of late-term abortion. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the measure after their Easter recess. Clinton said he would sign the bill, which he vetoed last year, if it provided exceptions for health, as well as life or death reasons. But the measure presented this year is identical to the last one. Rep. Gerald Solomon, head of the House Rules Committee, said Congress should give the president "another chance" to sign the bill, based on testimony on the number of these procedures performed each year.

In addition to criminal penalties for doctors who perform the procedure, dubbed a "partial-birth abortion" by antichoice forces, the bill allows the father of the fetus to sue a woman who has such an abortion for damages. An amendment was rejected that would have prohibited lawsuits by men who abandon or abuse the women involved.

## N.J. Senator: STD + sex = felony

New Jersey senator James Cafiero has introduced a bill to "deal with the problem of AIDS" — making it a felony for people with sexually transmitted diseases to have sex, even if protected. Currently this so-called offense is a misdemeanor, carrying a maximum penalty of a \$500 fine and a month in prison. If the bill passes the penalties would go up to a \$7,500 maximum fine and 18 months in prison. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, about 25 states already have similar laws.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

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"The *Militant* keeps me informed on world and local news. It's precise and the information it gives has helped me a lot over the years since I've been subscribing."

Venus Hannah, Plainfield, New Jersey, anti-police brutality fighter.

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# UK gov't announces May 1 elections

## Fractures show in Tory party, while Labour Party tops shift further to right

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — British prime minister John Major went to Buckingham Palace March 17 and requested that the Queen dissolve Parliament and set the date for the general election for May 1. Under British constitutional arrangements, the Queen as head of state has the power to dissolve Parliament at any time, within a maximum of five years. This meant that the election had to be called by May 22. But in making the announcement six weeks in advance — the minimum is three weeks and the norm is four — Major initiated what will be the longest formal election campaign since 1918.

British politics has been overshadowed by the coming election for months. By deciding to have a longer formal campaigning period, the Tory leader was hoping he could overcome disunity within the Conservative Party, appealing to Members of Parliament (MPs) to put their common interest of winning the election ahead of political differences.

But the rifts in the ruling party are once again laid bare, as they were in 1995, when Major resigned from the party leadership and put himself up for reelection. The prime minister was bruised in that gamble, when 85 Tory MPs voted for his opponent, John Redwood. What has frequently been dubbed a "civil war" in the party continued, including among its central leadership.

A number of prospective parliamentary candidates announced their intention of publishing election manifestos at odds with that of the party leadership, with demands for opposition to closer European integration and for tighter immigration controls prominently featured. Public debate opened as to when Major would resign the party leadership, following the presumed defeat at the polls. Tory MP and member of the European parliament Edwina Currie, for instance, said she hoped Major would go quickly.

The pro-Conservative *Daily Telegraph* wrote March 15 of the party's "disarray" and the *Economist* business newsweekly wrote March 22 that "As a grassroots party, it is in a state of decay. As a parliamentary party, it has disintegrated."

Death and defection have wiped out the party's parliamentary majority, which stood at 21 after the last election in 1992. On February 27, the last parliamentary by-election, in Wirral South near Liverpool, witnessed a 17 percent swing to the Labour Party. Opinion polls have the Tories trailing Labour by 26 percent.

The Tory Party crisis is an expression of the 100-year decline of British imperialism, which is taking a particularly acute form in the depression conditions of the 1990s. Britain's decline has wracked all the institutions of political rule built up in the epoch of Britain's world ascendancy — from the Conservative Party, to the monarchy and established Church, to the fabric of the United Kingdom itself, which is fracturing along its weakest — that is national — seams.

### Debate over Europe

The unbroken resistance of working people in Northern Ireland has opened up an historic opportunity for the Irish freedom struggle. There is a new fight for Scottish independence. In spite of attempts to keep Ireland off the election agenda by the major parties, the issue won't go away. The revolutionary nationalist party Sinn Fein is standing candidates and many political commentators forecast that they will win one or two seats.

In Britain itself, the crisis is throwing up

turbulent changes in the whole framework of capitalist politics. The Tory Party has been the main party of the imperialist rulers. But it has come under growing strains, as the rulers continue with the assault on working-class living standards that they need to restore declining profit rates, and as they search for a new role in the sharpening European and world conflicts.

As Bonn led the way in the fight for European Monetary Union — using the strength of the D-Mark and the stability of the German economy — Britain fought to make London the EU's financial center. Against the overwhelming size of the German economy, the British rulers vainly sought to rely on the historic importance of the City of London in international currency trading and the weight of investment into the EU from America and Japan, of which Britain receives the lion's share.

With the prospect of a monetary union receding fast, following the EU summit in Dublin last December, a new pressure is buffeting the British rulers: Washington's drive to expand NATO to Russia's borders. Defense Secretary Michael Portillo gave the Tory government's immediate backing to Washington's war move, seeking to utilize the "special relationship" with the U.S. rulers as a counter to London's decline. Associated with this, the British government has favored the integration of Turkey, as a strategic NATO member, into the EU.

This foreign policy has received bipartisan support, but the pressures are mounting against what former Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd described as Britain "punching above its weight." This is evidenced by British troops currently being deployed in 22 countries; in Bosnia, London has a contingent second only to Washington. Britain's former world role and its continued position as the world's fifth largest trader makes it particularly sensitive to international developments. But its decline makes it more and more dependent on overseas alliances, which are shifting fast in the conflict-ridden world of the 1990s. The "special relationship" with Washington is much weaker today. It means much more to London than to Washington and increasingly depends on Britain's clout in Europe.

Such developments come to the center of domestic politics, fueling divisions within the Tory party over Europe. Some sections of the ruling class are attracted to the French government's stand against Washington. The Labour Party is promising a "defense and security" review, but has already let it be known that it favors military cooperation in the air with Paris, now a NATO member.

The newly-formed Referendum Party, led by rightist billionaire James Goldsmith, has sought to take advantage of the growing factionalism to strengthen its ties with the Tory right. It withdrew its candidate in Kensington and Chelsea when the right-wing populist former defense minister, Alan Clark, was selected as the local Tory candidate.

The Referendum Party claims to have 100,000 members "with thousands more joining each week." Goldsmith has recently widely circulated a brochure entitled "The Betrayal of Our Nation." The brochure contains the text of a speech in which Goldsmith salutes former French president Charles de Gaulle and argues in favor of a "strong British leader" who will stand up to the "Eurocrats." Goldsmith has expounded sharply racist and anti-immigrant views in his book *The Trap*.

Broader sections of the ruling class have

looked to the Labour Party under Anthony Blair to provide temporary respite from the Tory crisis. Over the last few years, Blair has taken advantage of the retreat of the labor movement to shift the Labour Party significantly to the right, dubbing it "New Labour." As the prospect of victory approaches, the Labour leadership has taken the opportunity to dot the i's and cross the t's in the shift Blair has effected in the Labour Party.

The *Economist* recently wrote that Blair "has made Labour electable by adopting many of the Tories' own policies and, just as notably, much of their attitude, in economics, in social policy, on the welfare state, in dealing with crime, even on Europe and the single currency."

In the last few weeks, the Labour leadership has announced that:

- A Labour government will stick to the limits on public spending and inflation decided by the Conservative government.
- Labour will not change the top rate of income tax in the first five years of government.
- There will be no reversal of any of the government's privatizations and Labour's much vaunted one-off windfall tax on privatized public utilities is to be more restricted than originally projected.

Labour officials are drawing on Adair Turner, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, to help prepare a special Labour "business manifesto."

As the election approaches, there is only one major issue upon which the Labour and Tory leaderships diverge: the question of Scottish devolution — with Labour in favor and Conservatives opposed. But here too there is unity in their common opposition to Scottish independence, and Labour has won support from the Liberal Democrats and some leading Tory 'lefts' for a program of constitutional reform to modernize the institutions of political rule.

The consolidation of Labour's program has been rewarded by the party's endorsement by growing sections of the capitalist rulers. On March 18 the daily *Sun*, owned by international media billionaire Rupert Murdoch, announced on its front-page poster cover "The Sun Backs Blair." The *Sun*, along with the *Daily Mail*, is one of the most right-wing of the popular dailies and sells 3.9 million copies. The news was rapidly followed up with speculation that Associated Newspaper, publisher of the *Daily Mail* and the London *Evening Standard*, would be dropping their traditional support for the Tories.

And the *Financial Times* carried a report March 24 entitled, "Business chiefs 'not worried by Blair,'" of a survey conducted by Reed Personnel Services in which 80 percent of 750 of the biggest businesses in the UK said that the election of a Labour government would either make no differ-

ence to their prospects or would improve them.

But this temporary shift doesn't mean the top bosses have switched their basic preference from Tory to Labour. The same *Financial Times* article reports that a poll from the Institute of Management showed that, while support of company managers for Labour had risen from 13 percent in 1992 to 25 percent now, the Conservatives still hold the allegiance of 40 percent.

### Bosses still leery of Labour

The imperialist rulers are not confident that Labour is, in the longer term, a trustworthy instrument. In a March 24 editorial entitled "Hard Labour," the *London Times* — which like the *Sun* is owned by Rupert Murdoch — wrote that the last two Labour administrations had made far too many concessions to the unions and cautioned that a new Labour government "would be under intense pressure from its supporters to revert to a traditionalist strategy on job creation, workplace conditions and union rights" and could well return to what it called "the old collectivist approach."

The rulers' fears arise out of the nature of the Labour Party, which was formed at the beginning of the century out of the struggle of workers through the trade unions to break from reliance on the Liberals, an open party of the capitalist class. Because of the strength of British imperialism, the rulers were able to make concessions to the working class, which blunted the struggle — especially of better-paid workers — for class independence. The party became the political expression not of the trade unions themselves, but of the trade union bureaucracy — with a capitalist program and structure. This contradiction lies at the heart of the Labour Party to this day and explains why, despite the Labour leadership's record of servility to the rulers, masses of workers continue to push for Labour to be an instrument of struggle for their interests. Blair has shifted Labour away from the labor movement, but has not broken the link.

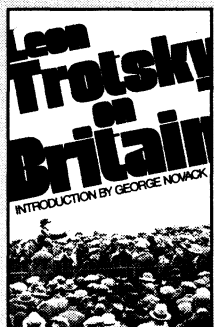
Meeting over the March 22-23 weekend, the Central Committee of the Communist League decided to launch an election campaign that would provide an independent working-class voice. Auto worker Ian Grant will be the League's candidate in the Bermondsey and Southwark constituency in London; chemical worker Tim Rigby will be the candidate in Manchester Central. Their manifestos will be published in time for campaign supporters to hit the streets on the Easter weekend. In Northern Ireland, the League announced, it will be supporting the election campaign of Sinn Fein. The League urged people in British constituencies where no Communist League candidate is standing to nonetheless involve themselves in the League's campaigning; on election day it advised them to vote Labour.

## Palestinian fight heats up in West Bank



As we go to press, battles between Israeli troops and Palestinian youth in the West Bank cities of Bethlehem and Hebron have been taking place daily for a week, sparked by Tel Aviv's refusal to halt plans to expand Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem, and the arrogant announcement that Israeli troops would only be withdrawn from 9 percent of the West Bank. Washington, which has backed the Israeli regime, announced it would send an envoy for "peace talks."

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# Clinton refuses to back off NATO plans

Continued from front page

Clinton declared at a news conference after the Helsinki meeting. He said the meeting addressed the challenge of helping Russia “complete its remarkable transformation to a market economy.”

The NATO conference in Madrid is scheduled for July 7-9, where a formal announcement for new candidates for membership is expected to include the governments of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Plans will be discussed to accept them into the imperialist military alliance by 1999 — the organization’s 50th anniversary. NATO officials say other nations could join the alliance by the end of the decade.

In a joint statement signed by both presidents, Yeltsin reiterated “Russian concerns that NATO enlargement will lead to a potentially threatening buildup of permanently stationed combat forces of NATO near to Russia.” Almost every political figure in Moscow has opposed Clinton’s plan to move NATO troops closer to Russia’s borders. “Russia’s approach to NATO expansion will not change regardless of any summit, bilateral meetings, and negotiations,” Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the presidential spokesman, said on the eve of the Helsinki meeting.

Anatoly Chubais, who was recently appointed deputy prime minister by Yeltsin and is widely touted in the bourgeois media as a pro-capitalist “reformer,” told *Time* magazine the NATO enlargement “will lead to negative consequences for the security of Russia and for the whole of Europe.”

Several days before the Helsinki summit, Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov met with U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright and defense secretary William Cohen to discuss disagreements over missile defenses and strategic arms.

Although NATO issued a pledge claiming it has “no need, no intention, and no plan” to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members, the Clinton administration officials asserted NATO will not promise “never” to do so. The imperialist spokespersons also insisted on the right to send in combat troops whenever they deem necessary and rejected Moscow’s demands not to modernize military installations and equipment in the new member nations.

## Operation Sea Breeze

An article in the March 20 *Washington Post* reporting on U.S.-Ukraine war games scheduled for Aug. 26-31 — just weeks after the Madrid summit — highlighted “ris-

ing Russian distrust” of Washington’s military intentions. According to the article, Clinton administration officials supposedly rejected the original scenario for the military maneuvers called “Operation Sea Breeze,” where a separatist revolt by an unnamed “ethnically based party” is threatening the integrity of Ukraine. The separatists — thinly disguised Crimean Russians — are backed by an unnamed “neighboring country.”

Officials in Washington instead supposedly proposed an alternative plot for the military operation in which civil unrest by unidentified “armed factions” is sparked by an earthquake. Under that scenario the Ukrainian government is supposed to call for a multinational “peacekeeping force” and “humanitarian aid.” Washington then leads a naval convoy on a rescue mission to provide medicine, blankets, and evacuation for the wounded.

News that the U.S. government was organizing a major naval exercise in which the main enemy was Russia provoked an uproar in Moscow. “It’s a provocative scenario,” stated Dmitri Ryurikov, a foreign policy adviser to Yeltsin.

Clinton administration officials claimed the operation is “in the spirit of” NATO’s Partnership for Peace plan and suggested that the Kremlin along with military forces from Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, and other European regimes were invited to participate. A previous U.S.-Ukrainian exercise was conducted in 1995 off the Crimean coast, which went off without controversy given that Washington had not yet presented its military expansion plans.

In response to news about Operation Sea Breeze, Russia’s air defense forces staged a defense maneuver against mock air and territory attacks, the first such war games since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. “The exercises have shown that the air defense troops reliably protect Russian air space and guarantee its national security despite an acute shortage of funds,” remarked air defense head Gen. Viktor Prudnikov to the Russian Tass news agency.

## Military concessions from Moscow

Secretary of State Albright, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Shalikashvili, and several other senior U.S. military officials joined Clinton in arm-twisting sessions to press the Kremlin into swallowing other proposals.

Yeltsin agreed to push the Russian parliament for ratification of the so-called Start II arms reduction agreement, which calls for elimination of Moscow’s land-based multiple warhead nuclear missiles by 2003. These missiles have been the backbone of Moscow’s nuclear arsenal. The parliament has balked at ratifying the treaty, signed in 1993, out of fears that Washington has been pressing for an unfair advantage in nuclear weapons by developing strategic missile defenses. The negotiations allowed Washington to keep its submarine-based multi-warhead missiles and to proceed with all six anti-missile systems currently under development by the Pentagon, including the most advanced, known as Navy Upper Tier.

The Clinton administration tossed a sop to Moscow for accepting some of the military concessions. “We will substantially increase Russia’s role at our annual meeting, now to be called the Summit of the Eight in Denver this June,” Clinton announced at the Helsinki news conference. That meeting of government officials from the Group of Seven major industrialized capitalist countries will still exclude Russian officials from some of the economic discussions. Another bone dangled at Yeltsin was an offer to promote Moscow’s membership in the World Trade Organization by 1998 and the Paris Club of “creditor nations.”

## Politicians continue NATO debate

The debate among ruling-class figures over NATO has continued in the media. Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan added another word of opposition to NATO expansion in his March 19 *New York Post* column. Buchanan’s main objection is that Washington is not “truly prepared for an all-out naval war or nuclear confrontation.”

Another bourgeois “skeptic” of NATO enlargement, *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, said Clinton’s argument that expanding NATO will bring stability to Russia and Central Europe is based on “white lies.” The way to overthrow these workers states is by “bringing these nations

into the EU common market, not by giving them nukes,” he added.

Friedman’s hesitations mirrored those of George Kennan, who warned in a February 5 *New York Times* opinion piece that NATO expansion could “inflamm the nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russia” and constitute “the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold war era.”

Kennan, dubbed the “Dean of American Sovietologists,” was the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1952 and helped formulate the Truman administration’s policy of containment of the Soviet workers state, which heralded the period known as the Cold War. While warnings by Kennan and others may have an effect on bourgeois public opinion on this issue, “all the pressure, in terms of organized pressure, is in favor of expansion,” an unnamed Clinton administration official told the *Washington Post*.

One cheerleader for the imperialist military preparations, columnist William Safire, demanded Clinton stop “apologizing” for the war preparations and instead broaden the expansion by “bringing in the Baltic states.” Safire is pinning his hopes on “Yabloko, the only serious non-Communist party” that is “building a national political organization” to overturn property relations in Russia. He called on Chubais, who helped mastermind Yeltsin’s election campaign, to make peace with Grigory Yavlinsky, leader of Yabloko

Chubais, for his part, tried to assure the imperialists that their war moves are unnecessary. In Russia “there were no massive demonstrations as in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia,” he told *Time* magazine. “There is no huge social tension in Russia.”

Meanwhile, Moscow is \$10 billion behind on paying wages to workers, soldiers, and other layers in society. The unions are planning a national day of protest strikes March 27. London’s *Financial Times* reported March 19 that Russian politician Alexander Lebed “has warned that these protests could ignite an Albanian-style popular revolt.”

# Best week yet for Fund

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — Stepping up the weekly collection and sending in of contributions to the Militant Fund by supporters resulted in the largest weekly collection yet — \$12,938 — bringing the total collected to 29 percent of the \$110,000 goal. We should be at 44 percent, so more work is needed.

Ellie Garcia, who heads the committee to organize the Militant Fund in New York, explained how supporters there have been able to stay on target every week of the drive. “Really we did nothing special,” she said. “We started early. We got pledges from over 60 people before the drive began. We call people who have made pledges each week to remind them to pay regularly on their pledges. I’ve noticed when we do calling we get an increase of money coming in. We tell people it would be best to make weekly contributions towards their pledges even if they are small.”

A note sent in by Garcia states, “The Militant Fund rally here in New York brought in \$2,227. In addition, three new pledges were made, totaling \$220, and three people raised their pledges. We have also raised \$45.10 so far from collection cans on propaganda tables.”

After the Militant Fund Rally in Philadelphia, local supporters sent in \$2,735 in contributions collected at the meeting and before. In addition to regular weekly attention to the Militant Fund campaign, rallies in a number of areas have helped boost collections and draw broader layers of partisans of the communist press to help on the fund. The response to the fund reflects the many people who value the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, its sister magazine in Spanish, which present a working-class viewpoint of the news.

Fernán Morales, a 30-year-old electrician who supports Puerto Rican independence and is active in the defense of the Cuban revolution, spoke at the Militant Fund rally in Philadelphia. “You won’t get the *Militant*’s viewpoint from Channel 6 or the *Philadelphia Inquirer*,” he said. “For example, they claim things are getting better in Haiti. Well, I worked with a Haitian elec-

trician, who described how conditions for working people are worse. The *Militant* is the only one that gives us the real picture.”

Gordon Rawlings, who was one of the bus drivers who struck at Greyhound several years ago, sent a written message to the fund rally. He now works for Conrail and is a member of the United Transportation Union Local 419. “I was introduced to the *Militant* when I was on the picket line and I really appreciate the strike coverage that they gave. It’s a great paper to keep you informed on labor issues worldwide and also on rebel uprisings of minority groups that feel that they are being oppressed by the government,” said Rawlings.

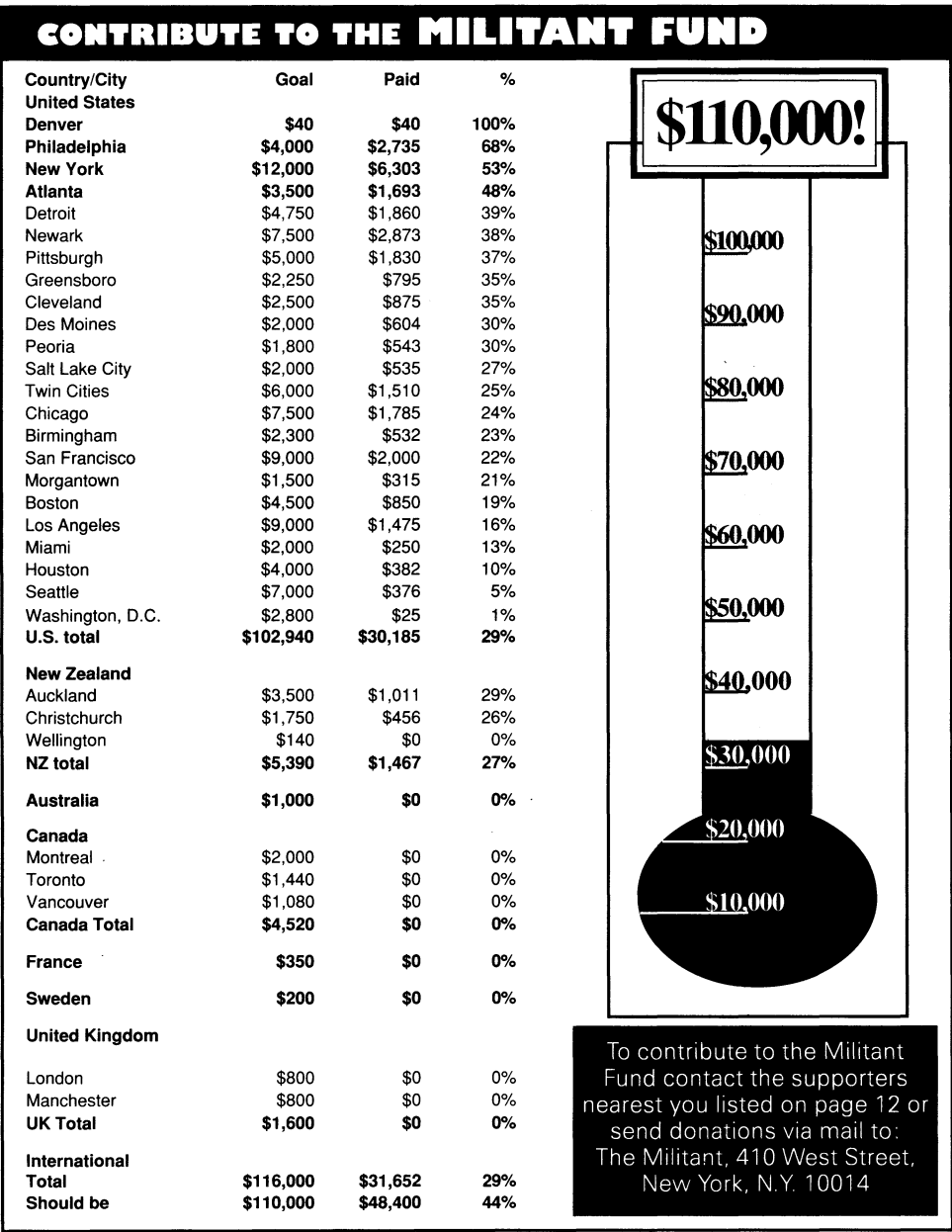
Linda McComus, an Irish-American activist, also sent a written message to the Philadelphia event.

The Militant Fund rally in Pittsburgh heard a statement from Nicholas Brand, an anti-Klan fighter from Cambria County, Pennsylvania, which is headquarters of District 2 of the UMW.

Part of Brand’s letter reads, “This is why I read the *Militant*. It carefully analyzes what is happening to the working class here, the assault on the social wage by the bosses, and also offers the best, and I repeat best, international coverage and analysis of the world capitalist crisis from Belgrade, to Albania, to Ireland, to Israel, etc.”

“Also the *Militant* teaches us how to build a movement independent of the bosses’ parties that can truly challenge the capitalist class war on workers and poor and also, challenge the fascist elements,” continued Brand. “Also, I have found that the *Militant*, in contrast to the other left-wing papers, welcomes questions, disagreements, and will patiently answer a reader’s letter. Everyone interested in changing this world should have a sub to the *Militant*,” Brand concluded.

Dick Geyer sent in a note from Pittsburgh saying that a member of the International Association of Machinists gave \$5 for the fund to *Militant* supporters at the worksite. Also supporters of the socialist press got a \$25 donation to the Fund at a table set up at the airport.





SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

WEEK 2

'Militant' calls target week to step up sales of socialist press

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

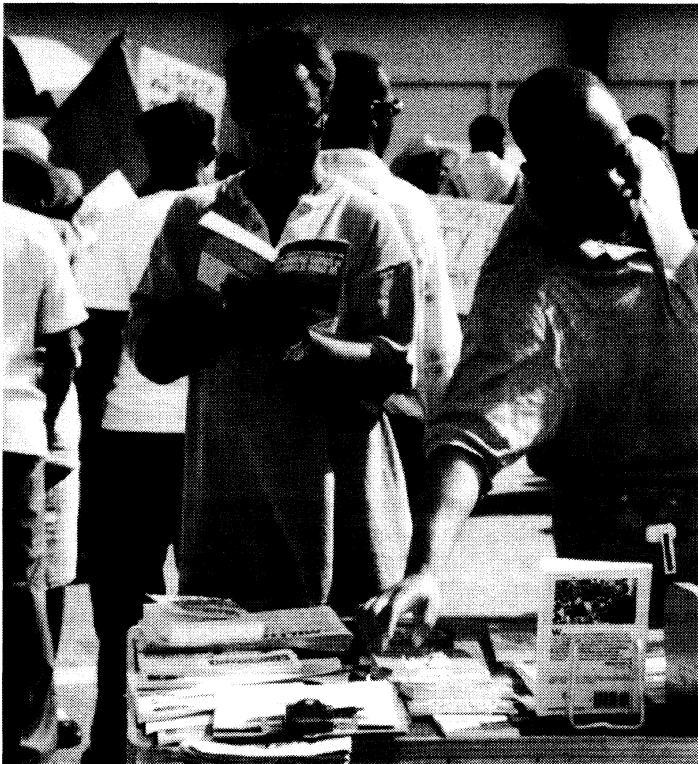
Supporters of the *Militant* are facing a challenge to get on schedule in the international campaign to sell 1,400 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 450 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 600 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. That's why the socialist newsweekly is asking supporters in every city to step up their efforts for a special target week of sales activities starting Saturday, April 5 through Sunday, April 13.

The goal of this special effort is to be on schedule in the international drive by the end of the week, getting partisans of the socialist press in the best position to meet the goals in full and on time by April 26.

In addition to daily sales teams and week-end mobilizations, activists can map out plans for regional teams, some of which can be launched from the Young Socialist convention in Atlanta. Political events like the Young Feminist Summit scheduled for April 11-13 in Washington, D.C., a MEChA Chicano student conference in East Lansing, Michigan, April 10-14, and a rally organized by the United Farm Workers to support strawberry workers fighting for a contract on April 13 in Watsonville, California, will provide huge opportunities to talk to young fighters and win new readers to the socialist press.

One event where socialist activists met a number of people interested in discussing and buying communist literature was the Black Land Loss Conference in Enfield, North Carolina. It was a "lively event," said *Militant* supporter Joan Paltrineri from Greensboro. "We sold six *Militant* subscriptions and seven copies of *New International* to Black farmers." Paltrineri said one farmer bought a *Militant* subscription, the Pathfinder pamphlet *Apartheid's Great Land Theft*, and *New International* no. 4 which features "The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States."

"That farmer is from Georgia and is planning to attend the Young Socialists convention," Paltrineri stated. "He told us he wants to learn more about socialism." Paltrineri said *Militant* supporters who participated in the conference sold almost \$300 worth of Pathfinder titles, including five copies of the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*.



Selling *New International* and other revolutionary literature at immigrant rights protest at INS office in Miami, Florida.

In Peoria, Illinois, "distributors of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* were able to catch up through some campus and community sales," wrote socialist workers Shelton McCrahey and Charlene Adamson. McCrahey said they geared their sales teams to build for the Young Socialist convention. The team contacted a high school student in St. Louis who was a previous subscriber to the *Militant* and is planning to attend the gathering along with a student from Western Illinois University. McCrahey reported two *Militant* subscriptions were sold going door to door around student housing at Bradley University in Peoria. They also sold a total of 10 Pathfinder titles and two Pathfinder Readers Club memberships at the literature tables they set up.

"Door to door canvassing in Beardstown, Illinois, a small city with a large meat-packing plant organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers, netted three *Militant* subs and one subscription to *Perspectiva*

*Mundial* in less than one hour in an apartment complex," Adamson said. She added that on their way home the sales team stopped to see someone they met last year who was from the Dominican Republic. He bought a *Militant* subscription and a copy of *New International*.

Ned Dmytryshyn of Vancouver reports socialists there sold two *Militant* subscriptions going door to door on the campus of the University of British Columbia. Dmytryshyn, a member of the International Association of Machinists, said they also sold a subscription at a fund-raising event for the Young Socialist Fund drive there. "We have a delegation of three YS members going to the convention in Atlanta and a lot of high school students around who would like to attend but can't because of school work."

The *Militant* encourages its distributors to send in reports on their plans for the target week, and keep forwarding photos and stories about good sales opportunities they've had.

SPRING SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE March 8 - April 26  
Militant • Perspectiva Mundial • New International

	Militant			PM		NI		
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	
NEW ZEALAND								
Christchurch	25	9	36%	1	1	10	1	
Auckland	35	8	23%	2	0	14	1	
Wellington	3	0	0%			1	0	
N.Z. total	63	17	27%	3	1	25	2	
SWEDEN								
	15	4	27%	7	1	10	5	
GREECE								
	5	1	20%			3	1	
UNITED STATES								
Peoria, IL	25	8	32%	3	2	10	1	
Boston	30	9	30%	10	3	20	11	
Atlanta	27	8	30%	14	3	16	0	
Los Angeles	100	28	28%	50	0	50	7	
Miami	30	8	27%	15	4	15	6	
Birmingham, AL	32	7	22%	5	1	15	1	
Salt Lake City	24	5	21%	10	3	8	1	
Cleveland	35	7	20%	7	2	10	0	
Greensboro, NC	30	6	20%	15	4	10	9	
San Francisco	70	13	19%	30	6	35	9	
Pittsburgh	45	8	18%	4	0	15	0	
New York	150	24	16%	75	18	65	15	
Detroit	40	6	15%	7	0	15	3	
Philadelphia	35	5	14%	10	0	10	2	
Seattle	60	8	13%	25	1	25	1	
Newark, NJ	130	17	13%	45	7	60	7	
Des Moines	40	5	13%	25	2	20	3	
Chicago	70	8	11%	25	5	30	2	
Twin Cities, MN	70	6	9%	10	0	15	0	
Washington, DC	42	3	7%	15	6	15	9	
Houston	50	1	2%	20	4	20	4	
Cincinnati	5	0	0%	1	0			
Morgantown, WV	27	0	0%	2	0	10	0	
Tucson	4	0	0%	2	0			
U.S. total	1171	190	16%	425	71	489	91	
UNITED KINGDOM								
Manchester	21	5	24%	2	0	10	2	
London	45	3	7%	8	2	25	4	
U.K. total	66	8	12%	10	2	35	6	
AUSTRALIA								
	18	2	11%	3	0	10	1	
CANADA								
Vancouver	40	10	25%	5	0	15	0	
Toronto	30	2	7%	7	1	10	0	
Montreal	35	0	0%	10	0	35	6	
CANADA total	105	12	11%	22	1	60	6	
ICELAND								
	10	0	0%	1	0	4	0	
PUERTO RICO								
	1	0	0%	3	0	2	1	
International totals	1454	234	17%	474	76	638	113	
Should be	1400	400	29%	450	129	600	171	

IN THE UNIONS

NEW ZEALAND								
UFBGWU	3	1	33%					
EU	7	2	29%					
MWU	6	0	0%					
TOTAL	16	3	19%	0	0	0	0	
UNITED STATES								
UTU	55	16	29%	4	2	28	2	
USWA	42	6	14%	8	1	31	1	
IAM	72	9	13%	16	1	37	0	
OCAW	28	3	11%	5	0	18	0	
UAW	45	3	7%	10	1	20	0	
UNITE	21	1	5%	15	4	15	2	
UFCW	14	0	0%	10	0	6	1	
UMWA	2	0	0%			2	0	
TOTAL	279	38	14%	68	9	157	6	
AUSTRALIA								
AMWU	4	0	0%			3	1	
CANADA								
IAM	8	0	0%			7	0	

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.

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books to Non Pathfinder Outlets — February 1997

CITY	FEBRUARY			# of books sold		
	GOALS	SOLD	%	JAN	DEC	NOV
Washington, D.C.	42	122	290%	429	207	1
Los Angeles	95	257	271%	78	100	23
Salt Lake City	40	86	215%	10	170	7
Chicago	60	118	197%	71	223	410
Philadelphia	49	71	145%	81	249	8
Miami	42	49	117%	11	29	100
New York	190	172	91%	417	435	152
Seattle	60	38	63%	7	20	7
Boston	50	22	44%	100	268	42
Atlanta	32	10	31%	3	23	0
San Francisco	74	15	20%	53	275	62
Cleveland	40	8	20%	63	46	1
Twin Cities	67	5	7%	0	26	13
Newark	133	1	1%	66	2	0
Birmingham	50	0	0%	0	10	2
Des Moines	35	0	0%	274	476	219
Detroit	60	0	0%	0	53	5
Greensboro	36	0	0%	65	15	32
Houston	32	0	0%	10	57	40
Morgantown	25	0	0%	20	37	0
Peoria	21	0	0%	13	20	4
Pittsburgh	49	0	0%	31	55	7
TOTAL	1,282	974	76%	1,802	2,796	1,135

# Ontario gov't will close more hospitals

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — An Ontario government commission announced plans March 6 to close nine of Toronto's 39 acute- and chronic-care hospitals. Its plans also include closing one of the five addictions and mental health centers.

The Ontario Health Services Restructuring Commission was set up by the Ontario Conservative government, led by Premier Michael Harris, soon after its election in 1995 to recommend how to carry out massive healthcare cutbacks. The government has said it will abide by whatever the commission recommends.

As of this year, the city has about 40 percent fewer acute-care hospital beds than it did 10 years ago. The Tory government hopes its will save \$430 million annually from the additional closings. The Commission recommended reinvesting only \$50 million in home care and other community services to replace lost in-patient care.

The Toronto hospitals now employ more than 50,000 workers. Sue Colley, executive director of the Health Sector Training and Adjustment Program estimates 10,000 jobs will be cut. She said 18,000 workers in the healthcare sector across Ontario have already lost their jobs since 1994.

More than 600 workers turned out for an emergency meeting called by the Ontario wing of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) March 10 to discuss how to resist the proposals. CUPE primarily organizes healthcare workers such as cleaners, maintenance workers, cooks, and municipal workers across Canada.

Sid Ryan, president of the Ontario CUPE, told the gathering that the government is preparing legislation to override existing union contracts in the hospital sector on contracting out jobs to nonunion outfits.

A proposal put to the meeting called for a symbolic 10-minute work stoppage to be observed in all Toronto and Ottawa hospitals on March 13 and for a province-wide 15-minute stoppage to take place March 24.

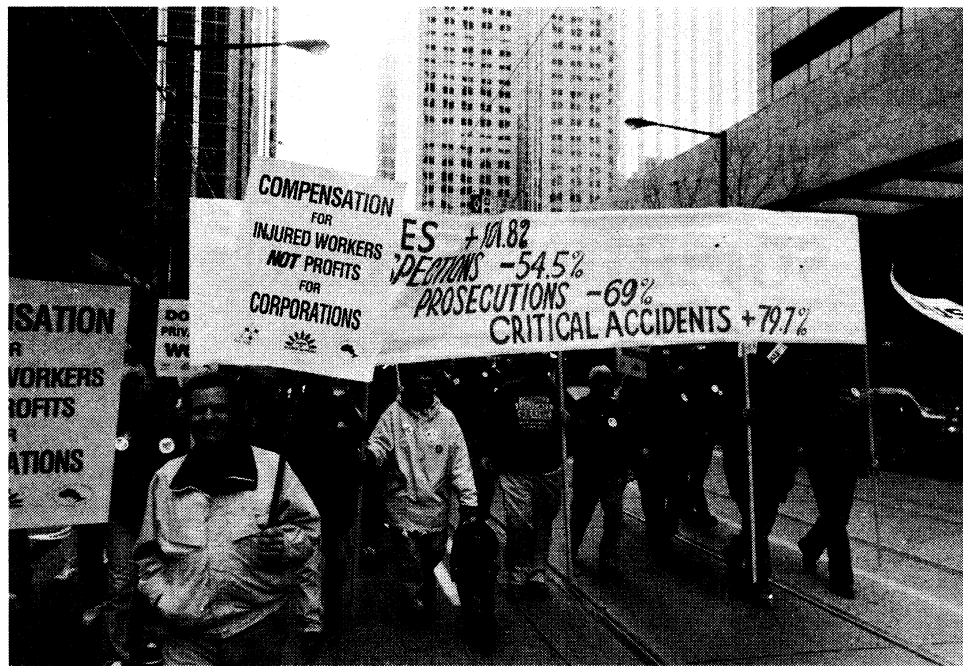
Noel Andaya, a CUPE member who works in the operating rooms at the Hospital for Sick Children, told the *Militant*, "Quality care won't be the same if these layoffs go through. If you have kids you want to bring them to where people can give good care. We're going to show Mike [Harris] we're not quiet."

A few days before the commission's Toronto announcement, it held a press conference in Ottawa to propose closing additional hospitals there including the Montfort Hospital, the only French-language hospital in Ontario. Eastern Ontario, including Ottawa, has a large francophone population. About one third of Ottawa's residents have French as their first language.

French-speaking residents of Ontario are an oppressed nationality, and have fewer services such as education or healthcare in their own language compared to the privileged English-speaking population in Quebec. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Quebec premier Lucien Bouchard both denounced the Montfort proposal.

The Tory government has been campaigning with TV ads claiming moves such as hospital closings are not cutbacks, but a restructuring that will improve healthcare.

However, long waiting lists for a host of in-hospital medical procedures have built up over recent years because of the cutbacks, putting the lie to the government's claims. There is a more than two-month-



Militant/Holly Harkness

The labor movement has held several Days of Action to protest the Canadian rulers' austerity drive. Above, workers demand compensation for work injuries at Days of Action protest last October in Toronto. The latest actions were March 21-22 in Sudbury.

long waiting list for elective heart surgery in Ontario, affecting thousands of patients. Some people have died waiting for surgery. Because of the considerable heat taken on this one procedure, Health Minister James Wilson announced "reinvestment" of \$35 million to reduce the waiting period somewhat, including by hiring more staff.

Another study by researchers at Queen's university showed that because of cost restrictions on treatment for breast cancer, affluent women were twice as likely to get

radiation therapy within one year compared to poor women.

The Ontario labor movement's Days of Action campaign — which has included strike days and mass marches in five Ontario cities to protest against the Ontario government's social programs cutbacks and antilabor laws — resumed in the city of Sudbury March 21-22. Some 150,000 working people marched in Toronto last October 26 to protest against the Harris government.

## YS convention built with int'l effort

Continued from front page

Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom are all sending representatives. These young revolutionaries will be bringing with them the experiences of struggles by workers and youth in those countries, and their perspectives on building the communist movement internationally.

Throughout the United States, regional teams have built the convention through participation in conferences and meetings on issues ranging from defense of the Cuban revolution, farmers fight for land, the fight against racism, and the environment.

Diana Newberry from Morgantown, West Virginia, en route to help organize the convention in Atlanta, went to Miami to participate in a meeting on U.S. policy towards Cuba featuring Felix Wilson, a diplomat from the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, D.C. Two hundred people attended the event and bought a wide range of Pathfinder books, as well as several subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. At the event, Young Socialists had a table from which they sold t-shirts as a fund-raiser for travel to the Atlanta Convention. As part of the political work that week, one person asked to join the YS.

In Enfield, North Carolina, Doug Nelson of the Atlanta YS chapter attended the Black Land Loss Conference. "Workers and farmers are indispensable allies," Nelson said. "We saw the interest of many farmers at the conference in the socialist press." Communist workers and youth sold six *Militant* sub-

scriptions, seven copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*, and \$200 in Pathfinder literature at the conference, and one Black farmer there expressed interest in attending the convention. Nearby in Greensboro, where an environmental youth conference was taking place, John Armstrong from Greensboro and Stefanie Trice from Newark, New Jersey, took part in debates over the question of reforming the capitalist system or revolution, and had long discussions with youth who were trying to figure out the way to fight oppression.

In Los Angeles, Young Socialists member Walter Lopez reported that when Craig Honts, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of that city, spoke at a high school class, there was a heated debate over the campaign's demand for a world without borders, with the overwhelming majority of students speaking in defense of immigrant rights. There was also interest in Hont's demands for "U.S. hands off Cuba," "Defend affirmative action," and "Jobs for all — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay." At the event, four students decided to work with Young Socialists there to fight to get to the Atlanta convention.

In Newark, Young Socialists have been having recruitment meetings almost daily with growing numbers of youth interested in the convention. This includes several students involved in responding to a racist incident that took place at Seton Hall University on March 19. One student planning to attend the convention bought *New International* no. 10, with the article "Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and War," as well as *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, at a book sale held by the YS chapter to raise money for travel to the convention.

### Opportunities to spread socialist ideas

In Atlanta, in the aftermath of the bombing of abortion clinics and a gay and lesbian nightclub, teams publicizing the convention locally are talking to youth about the place of the convention in resisting the onslaught of reactionary forces. Participants will discuss how this reaction is emboldened by the rightward shift of both the Democrats and Republicans. Following the YS convention, an April Young Feminists Summit in Washington, D.C., and the World Festival of Youth and Students in Cuba this summer will be other arenas to explain a working-class approach to the political and economic turmoil of capitalism in crisis.

Since then, however, leaders of several major unions, including the United Steelworkers of America in Ontario, have indicated they no longer support the Days of Action campaigns. And leaders of the Days of Action in Toronto, including the local labor council, have since January campaigned solely against a government proposal to amalgamate six cities and boroughs in Metropolitan Toronto into one "megacity."

The drive by Canada's capitalist rulers to cut the social wage of working people has its headquarters in Ottawa, where the federal Liberal government took another major step on February 14. Finance Minister Paul Martin introduced legislation to make major changes to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), the Canadian equivalent to Social Security in the United States.

Under the plan, CPP taxes will rise as much as \$690 per year from a current maximum of \$945 annually now to \$1,635 over the next six years. Benefits will also be cut by 10 percent over the long term. New criteria mean that fewer workers will qualify for the CPP's disability benefits, and these will be calculated on a smaller base. Death benefits are cut to a maximum \$2,500 from \$3,580. The government will no longer index the \$3500 exemption on earnings for CPP tax calculations, a move that will hit hardest at low-income and part-time workers.

Another section of the CPP changes directs future contributions to the CPP's reserve fund to be invested in the stock market instead of nonnegotiable provincial bonds. A Finance Department official estimated the funds diverted to stocks would total \$10 billion in four years.

Central to doing this is explaining the role of study and propaganda in arming young rebels and working-class fighters for the struggles of today and the future. One special feature at the convention will be a massive sale of communist literature for Pathfinder Readers Club members that will enable youth to stock up on revolutionary ammunition.

"World politics is producing more explosions and resistance to the brutal measures capitalists are trying to force on workers and youth," said Joshua Carroll, the organizer of the Convention Organizing Committee. "Young Socialists will be discussing the opportunities for young fighters around the world to be part of building a centralized, disciplined youth organization that can win youth to socialist ideas and be part of taking power out of the hands of the war-makers."

### What a young communist should be

In explaining the role of organization in building the Young Socialists, Carroll referred to Che Guevara's 1960 speech to the Union of Young Communists of Cuba, entitled "What a Young Communist Should Be." An excerpt of that speech is printed in the Young Socialists' pamphlet on its founding convention last year. Guevara states:

"Without organization, ideas, after an initial momentum, begin to lose their effect. They become routine, degenerate into conformity, and end up simply a memory. I make this warning because too often, ... many great initiatives have failed. They have been forgotten because of the lack of the organizational apparatus needed to keep them going and accomplish something."

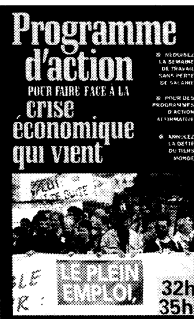
Rallying to this task, Young Socialists from throughout the world who are part of fighting the capitalist offensive will be coming to this convention, having debated and discussed out how to meet the challenges ahead. They are bringing with them other fighters who are looking to advance the struggles of which they're a part. Socialist Educational Conferences, sponsored by the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party that were held in Canada, Iceland, and Sweden over the last few months, have been an important part of advancing the perspective of building an international proletarian youth organization.

Diana Newberry and Stefanie Trice are members of the Young Socialist National Committee presently assigned to the Convention Organizing Committee in Atlanta.

available from Pathfinder

### ENGELS

The Condition of the Working-Class in England



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BY FREDERICK ENGELS

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# Toronto: hundreds protest cop killing

BY JOHN MUNORU

TORONTO — More than 300 demonstrators marched from Toronto's Chinatown to the Metropolitan police headquarters March 1 to protest the killing of a Chinese immigrant, Edmond Yu, by the city cops. The protest was organized by the Toronto Coalition Against Racism, Black Action Defence Committee, and Chinese residents. Several participants sported trade union jackets.

Chanting "Justice for Edmond Yu!" the protesters, many of whom were young, condemned the latest of many police killings. Police shot Edmond Wong Yu dead in a Toronto Transit Commission bus on February 20.

Before the march, protesters held a rally at the corner of a Chinatown street where Yu, who was homeless, used to hang around. Many shops and restaurant workers and operators lined the street to listen to speakers denounce police violence. Speaking in Chinese and English, several Chinese anti-racism activists, including a city councilor, demanded answers for the murder.

A few days after the killing, more than 250 members of the Chinese community had attended a meeting organized to seek justice for Yu. "This shooting raises disturbing questions; the concerns in our community are legitimate," Dr. Joseph Wong, a community activist, said at the meeting. Wong said Yu had three handicaps: he was a member of a visible minority, he was poor and had a mental disorder. "All three have been reasons for discrimination in this country for many, many years."

## Witnesses outraged

Several passengers in a street car beside the Toronto city bus witnessed Edmond Yu's murder. In an interview later with the *Toronto Star*, one of the witnesses, a 59-year-old retired librarian named Isabel Rose, said what happened was outrageous.

The woman said the bus was empty except for the officers who seemed to talk for about five minutes to Yu before retreating.

"When I looked at him to see why this happened, he [Yu] had in his hand a small-sized hammer." She said the man held it in his right hand and "as I watched, he flicked his wrist only. As he was doing that, the policemen were still sitting back. And then, suddenly, these shots." The witness said later said she had heard so many stories about the police shootings. "A person always wonders what went on, well I saw what went on."

Metropolitan Toronto police chief David Boothby later issued a statement backing his officers. The cops involved have refused to talk about it. They merely said that they confronted Yu after the bus driver reported that the man had assaulted a woman on a nearby sidewalk before boarding the bus.

Dudley Laws, a longtime fighter against police brutality and a spokesperson for the Black Action Defence Committee, led the gathering in chanting "Charge the police with murder!" He condemned Boothby and the Ontario government for backing the police in this killing and others that have taken place in Toronto. Over the years, the Toronto police have sought to silence Laws by filing various frame-up charges against him.

## Protesters demand justice

Family members of other victims of police killings addressed the rally. "These policemen have left so many of us sad, so many of us mourning," said Marjorie Williams, the mother of Wayne Williams, a black schizophrenic youth shot by police last June.

Shaheen Kamadia, a Tanzanian of Asian origin and the mother of 16-year-old Faraz Suleman, killed by a cop last June, also spoke. She explained how she had sought police help to prevent her son from being drawn into petty crime.

"Instead they came back with a dead body. I expected them to serve and protect me," she said. Kamadia added that the fight for her son's justice had succeeded in having manslaughter charges brought against his killer. She appealed for supporters to turn up at the courts and show support by wearing a "Justice for Suleman" badge, noting that police are wearing badges in support of the killer cop, Robert Wiche.

Wiche appeared in court on March 6 and pleaded not guilty to manslaughter charges. About 40 supporters of Faraz wearing "Justice for Suleman" badges were in court. More than 100 cops turned up at the court wearing buttons with "We support #87" — the cop's badge number.

Two days before his court appearance, Wiche, who was an acting detective at the time of the shooting, received his promotion, which had been deferred after the killing.

## 'Stop police brutality,' marchers say in Wilmington, Delaware



Militant/Roy Inglee

Some 700 people marched to the police department headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware, March 23 to demand justice for Lawrence Livingston, a prominent Black minister who was beaten and maced by a white cop on March 19. Complaints against the assault triggered the resignation of police chief Samuel Pratcher on March 21.

tion, which had been deferred after the killing. The regional police chief, Bryan Cousineau, was quoted as saying, "As far as I am concerned, Robert Wiche ... will be compensated accordingly."

Police officers have shot 13 people in the Greater Toronto Area since 1990, most of

the Black and some who were mentally ill. Not a single cop has ever been convicted of these murders.

John Munoru is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1295 in Toronto.

# Activists call Pittsburgh anti-Klan rally

BY EDWIN FRUIT

PITTSBURGH — The American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, from Jefferson County, Pennsylvania, plan to rally for "white power" in downtown Pittsburgh, April 5. In response, two counterdemonstrations are being planned. The Coalition to Counter Hate Groups is sponsoring a "Celebration of Unity" in Market Square, several blocks from where the Klan plans to assemble.

Another demonstration being planned by the Grant Street Anti-Klan Coalition intends to demonstrate across the street from the Klan at the City-County Building on Grant Street at 12:30 p.m. This coalition, composed mostly of young people, intends to

conduct a militant, energetic, and nonprovocational demonstration. Endorsers of the Grant Street action include the Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice — which has been the organizer of the movement to gain justice for Jonny Gammage; the Western Pennsylvania Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal; the New Youth Culture; the Campus Women's Organization at the University of Pittsburgh; Socialist Workers Party; Bruderhof Christian Community; and several Anti Racist Action chapters.

According to the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*, both the Pittsburgh police chief and mayor are urging everyone to attend the Market Square rally "for fear that violence could erupt." Elayne Tobin, speaking for the Grant Street coalition, explained, "I do believe you need to be present where the Klan is ... you can celebrate unity and diversity, away from where the Klan is, but it's important ... to say you want a political confrontation, not a physical one."

In addition, the coalition is raising demands that specifically address the issue of racism. "Anybody can be against the Klan. Even Mayor Murphy has been asked to speak at the Market Square rally. But he has been in the forefront of defending the cops," said Carmella Miller, one of the activists who has been campaigning to jail the Pittsburgh-area cops who killed Jonny Gammage. The demands being raised include Stop Police Brutality, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Justice for Jonny Gammage, and Defend School Desegregation.

Activists are planning to build the Grant St. action as widely as possible in the western Pennsylvania region. Two organizing meetings have already occurred and some 30 people have already volunteered to help marshal the demonstration. Members of Anti-Racist Action plan to come from Columbus; Philadelphia; Buffalo, New York; and other cities for the April 5 protest.

Edwin Fruit is a member of the International Association of Machinists. Leroy Watson, a member of the United Steelworkers of America, contributed to this article.

## Speak out against attack on Peltier's rights in prison

The statement below was issued March 21 by the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (LPDC). Peltier is a Native American activist currently serving a life sentence in Leavenworth, Kansas, on frame-up charges.

Today, March 21, 1997 Leonard Peltier lost the use of the telephone for sixty days. Prison officials have decided that during a recent telephone conversation between Leonard and actor/rap singer Litefoot a business transaction was made.

This is completely false!

The conversation dealt with Litefoot's offer to design a new t-shirt for the LPDC and where he would have the shirt manufactured. At no point did Leonard request money from the shirt and at no point did either of them conduct a business deal. Litefoot simply asked for an opinion which is entirely legal! The LPDC and CHS, Inc., specifically state in their by-laws that absolutely no business deals are ever made with Leonard. It is impossible for him to conduct any business.

Isolation from the phone means isolation from friends, family and the LPDC. Anything could happen and it could take days before we would learn of it! This becomes especially important as Leonard has been threatened by two guards employed by the U.S. penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas!

Please voice your concern and outrage by calling Warden True at 913-682-8700, and report this outrageous conduct to the Bureau of Prisons at 202-307-3198.

# Cops' attack on women's march sparks rally of 500

BY MARIA HAMBERG AND MAXI ORTIZ

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — On March 15, some 550 people participated in a demonstration here against police brutality, most of them youth. This was part of an international action day.

The central demand of the action in Stockholm was that police officer Järry Edin resign. Edin was commanding officer of the Södermalm police precinct on the night of March 8, when a "Take Back The Night" demonstration was held on International Women's Day.

Some 50-60 women, many of them, marched shouting "stop pornography." Suddenly they were surrounded by police, who left no exits off the street, 19-year-old Gudrun, told *Militant* reporters. The cops mobilized 17 cars, 4 vans, 3 horses and several dogs. Many cops wore riot gear.

Two young girls, Karin and Therese, told *Internationalen* that the cops used the handles of their batons to beat the demonstrators. While they were beating the women they were laughing and calling them "lebs,"

lesbians, and using obscene language. Male cops carried out body searches on demonstrators who were women, some of whom said they were molested. Several women were injured with at least three having to go to the hospital. One protester had a head wound that needed six stitches.

Passers-by and people living in Östgötagatan, where the incident took place, witnessed the attack and some tried to stop the cops from beating the women. Two of the witnesses went to the police station immediately to file charges against the cops. So far eight charges have been filed against the police, including for assault and battery, sexual harassment, and misconduct.

The police claim the demonstrators were violent, attacking porn stores and breaking windows. The demonstrators state that one person threw a stone, breaking one window. Another "Take Back The Night" demonstration is planned for April 26.

Maria Hamberg is a member of the Metalworkers Union. Maxi Ortiz is a member of the Young Socialists in Stockholm.

# Revolt deals blow to imperialist aims in Albania

Continued from front page

have stepped forward to lead the revolt, former military officers who held high positions in the armed forces under the Stalinist regime of Enver Hoxha and were dismissed by Berisha in the last five years, and officials of the Socialist Party that ruled until 1991.

In Tirana, the country's capital, the Socialist Party has joined Berisha's Democratic Party in a government of "national reconciliation" in an attempt to forestall the overthrow of the president through revolutionary means. Such a development would boost the self-confidence of working people and set a dangerous precedent for all the rival layers of the ruling caste, threatening their parasitic existence and bourgeois way of life.

The rebellion by the Albanian toilers has also posed a threat to the interests of the various imperialist powers and has shed more light on the intensifying competition among them over division of the world's markets.

Paris, Rome, and Athens, in particular, have been pushing for some form of military intervention in Albania to "secure distribution of humanitarian aid," "retrain" the country's police, and "reorganize" its army.

Washington, which backed Berisha's regime with economic and military aid for five years, has rejected requests for NATO intervention by the Albanian president. After the rebellion turned Berisha into a spent vessel, the U.S. rulers decided to let the Western European Union, led by the French government, attempt a military foray, much like Washington did at the beginning of the 1992-95 war in neighboring Yugoslavia.

The goal of all these imperialist powers, regardless of current tactical differences, is to overturn the workers state that was created through a worker and peasant revolution in the 1940s and reestablish the system of wage slavery in Albania. In this attempt, Paris, Rome and other capitalist regimes may have to confront militarily the armed workers and peasants of this tiny Balkan country.

## Opposition to intervention runs deep

"We don't want Europe, Italy or Greece, or America to send their armed forces here," said Renato Tsanos, 25, in an interview on March 21. "If they do, they will face our bullets and will go home in coffins." Tsanos spoke to *Militant* reporters after a rally of 1,000 at the central square of Tepelene, a town of 4,000 people on a mountain slope of southern Albania. He recently came back from Greece, where he worked for two years on the island of Crete as an undocumented immigrant on construction jobs and as a waiter. "The governments in Europe are responsible for the situation we face today. They first said the elections last May were valid. They supported Berisha."

Of the three dozen people *Militant* reporters interviewed there, many of whom were young, most expressed similar opinions. These workers had in their great majority immigrated to Italy, Germany, or Greece for several years and had deposited their savings into the "pyramid schemes." The Berisha administration promoted these scams as an easy way to get rich quickly. These funds offered interests rates of up to

25 percent per month. Working people were lured en masse to put their money there, hoping for a better income than the average wage of \$80 per month. The collapse of the pyramids in January brought economic calamity to most Albanian families — since 500,000 people put money in these fraudulent funds in a population of 3.2 million — and sparked the current rebellion.

Only one person among those interviewed in Tepelene, a student at the police academy, supported foreign intervention. "The solution is a foreign force from all of Europe to bring peace, take the rifles away from the people, and then organize the country," said Fatani Alushi, in his early 20s.

During a week-long trip from March 17 to March 23, *Militant* reporters visited Saranda, Gjirokastra, Tepelene, Ballshi, Fier, and Vlora — six of the rebel-held cities in southern Albania — the villages of Frashatane and Dervitsa in the same region, Durres and Tirana. In more than 150 interviews, it became apparent that opposition to imperialist intervention runs deep, especially among industrial and other workers, shepherds, and farmers.

"We don't want foreign troops or police. We can guard our own refinery," said Fatos Rapae, 24, who works at the state-owned refinery in the oil-producing area of Ballshi, 50 miles south of Tirana. Since working people in the town of Malakstra, adjacent to the oil refining facilities, took up arms in mid-March, the 1,500 oil workers have organized a volunteer 24-hour defense guard of the plant in collaboration with the policemen who did not flee their posts after the revolt. Workers said the same is true throughout the oil producing regions, which all lay in the rebel-held areas. So far, workers there said, they know of only one serious explosion in another refinery near Fier, which appeared to be sabotage. Workers and city residents managed to contain that fire, we were told.

In several cases, working people of older generations related their opposition to foreign intervention now to their experience during the Albanian revolution after World War II. "If anyone from another country comes here with a gun, they'll be shot at," said Spiros Koutsis, 74, a shepherd from the Greek-speaking village of Frashatane, near Gjirokastra. "Just like we did against the Germans and the Italians." Koutsis is a veteran of the successful partisan struggle that defeated Albania's occupation first by Italian and then Greek and German armies in the early 1940s.

The partisans then led a social revolution, putting in power a workers and peasants regime, nationalizing the means of production, distributing land to the poor peasants, and instituting a monopoly on foreign trade and economic planning — in short establishing a workers state. The noncapitalist social relations created by 1946 remain in place to this day to a large degree, despite the degeneration of the Albanian revolution that began in the late 1940s due to the Stalinist leadership of the Communist Party — the main political force among the partisans.

Koutsis recalled with fondness how the Albanian partisans collaborated with Greek guerrillas fighting for the same goals in the 1940s, just miles south of his village across the border with Greece.

This anti-imperialist sentiment and spirit of struggle was the most widespread in Vlora — a city of 170,000, if you count the surrounding villages, and the country's second largest port on the Adriatic after Durres.

"We want Berisha to go, along with his SHIK [secret police]," said Vladimir Sinane, a young doctor who immigrated to Greece for two years in the mid-1990s and worked in the fields there picking tomatoes, "We demand that Europe not support Berisha. They should not mess with our borders," he said, in reference to occasional territorial claims on parts of southern Albania put forward by rightist politicians in Greece. "If Italy or Greece send their army here there will be shooting. The people don't want them. They are armed and they will fight them."

## Vlora: the hotbed of revolt

Sinane spoke to *Militant* reporters on the morning of March 23, after a rally of 4,000 in the town's central square. Albert Shyti, 27, who was a laborer in Greece for five years, is now the organizer of the Committee for the Salvation of Vlora. Shyti, who addressed the rally along with other members of the committee, said the National Front for the Salvation of the People has adopted a firm position against the introduction of EU or other police forces or troops.

"Look at what the European and American troops did in Yugoslavia and Somalia," said Lefteris Likos, 20, another worker who had returned to Vlora in January after four years in Greece. "Albania has plenty of decent sons and daughters, We don't need American, French, or German soldiers. If foreign troops come now they will only serve to prop up Berisha."

After many discussions, it became evident that tens of thousands of these workers returned to Albania between mid-1996 and January 1997, partly because some of the pyramid schemes, like the Vlora-based Gjalica, set a February 6 deadline for withdrawals of large deposits. After years of involvement in the class struggle in the surrounding capitalist countries, many of these workers have found themselves leading the antigovernment rebellion.

Even those favoring intervention — including a few workers interviewed, as well as professionals and small businessmen — often rushed to point out that foreign troops would face resistance in Albania. "It's better to bring forces from abroad here, since there's no army to speak of," said Rolando Bronari, an accountant for the privately owned R.I.A. Servis, a joint venture between three Italian and one Albanian businessman that runs two car repair shops and sells spare parts for automobiles in Tirana. "I'll feel safer for the business. But there will be fighting. And Europe knows this."

Bronari, who was interviewed by *Militant* reporters at the R.I.A. garage in central Tirana March 22, said he returned to Albania in 1989, after 15 years in exile with his family in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. He said his father was an army general who was purged by Hoxha's regime in the early 1960s. Bronari's return coincided with the first "market reforms" carried out by Ramiz Alia, who succeeded Hoxha after the latter's death in 1985. Bronari, a firm advocate of the return of capitalism in Albania, said Berisha's reforms failed. He said he voted for the Democratic Party in 1992 but now favors Berisha's departure, though, as he put it, "not through the demands of armed gangs but through the constitutional process."

## 'Market reforms' bring economic ruin

The Democratic Party was founded in 1990 by pro-capitalist professors, intellectuals, students, professionals, and others. Many of its central leaders were disgruntled government officials or former members of the ruling Communist Party, or Albanian Workers Party, which was renamed the Socialist Party in 1991. Berisha was a cardiologist and a member of the CP.

The SP and Democratic Party represent competing interests among the petty-bourgeois ruling caste and aspiring bourgeois layers in Albania. Both parties joined in a brief coalition cabinet in 1991. This bureaucratic caste — different than a class in capitalist society in that it does not have ownership of the means of production — is interested only in safeguarding its own privi-

leges, diverting workers from acting in their own class interests, and continuing the fruitless attempt to be welcomed as equal partners into the world capitalist system.

After Hoxha's death, Alia began opening Albania's economy to capitalist investment. Alia's regime won the first bourgeois-type parliamentary ballot in March 1991. Later that year, hundreds of thousands of workers struck, demanding wage raises, better economic conditions, democratic rights, and an end to their complete isolation from the rest of the world imposed by the Hoxha regime. Alia was then forced to call new elections, which swept the Democratic Party to power in March 1992.

While the SP adopted a social democratic posture, the Democratic Party favored a more rapid integration into the world capitalist market and espoused right-wing views. Since 1992, Berisha's group has been trying to purge its Socialist Party rivals from the state bureaucracy using the same brutal and corrupt methods employed by Hoxha's secret police. SP leader and former premier Fatos Nano, who was recently released from jail and pardoned by Berisha, was imprisoned in 1992 on charges of embezzling state funds. According to accounts by several former army officers interviewed by the *Militant*, Berisha dismissed thousands of officers who he considered loyal to the SP.

All opposition parties — including the SP; Democratic Alliance, which split from the Democratic Party; the Social Democratic Party; and the Human Rights Union that is mainly backed by some in the ethnic Greek minority in southern Albania — alleged widespread fraud in the May 1996 parliamentary ballot and organized protests demanding new elections. Berisha responded with a brutal police crackdown, beating and jailing many opposition leaders. At that time, Washington and other imperialist powers refused to raise even mild criticism. Now the U.S. government says there was fraud involved in those elections.

During its five years in office, the Berisha regime has implemented austerity measures prescribed by the International Monetary Fund in order to secure IMF loans for imports. These have included cutbacks in social services, selling off shares of state-owned companies to foreign investors, and reversing the nationalization of the land.

The ending of subsidies to state enterprises has resulted in massive closure of industries, throwing hundreds of thousands into the streets with virtually no income. The official unemployment rate of 10 percent does not account for the nearly half-million Albanians who have immigrated to neighboring capitalist countries in search of jobs, most without documents. Many of these workers, especially those who have immigrated to Greece and Italy, go back and forth quite frequently, since they are often deported en masse after police sweeps of factories and other worksites. Every day, however, minivans transporting mostly young men can be seen driving toward the Greek-Albanian border, where many of these young workers cross the mountainous border on foot, lacking proper documents.

Throughout the part of the country we traveled, the economic devastation from Berisha's reforms was obvious. Outside Memalia, a town north of Tepelene, a brick factory that used to employ 300 has been idle for years. A few miles further north, a coal mine where 2,000 worked has been shut down since 1992. Clothing factories, food processing plants, and steel mills can be seen abandoned throughout Albania. Ninety percent of industry is now shut down. Besides oil drilling and refining, Albania's hydroelectric and thermoelectric plants and chrome mines are among the few industries functioning.

## 'Promising money out of nothing'

"Berisha said he would bring investments and new technology from America in five years," said Albert Shyti in an interview in Vlora March 23. "Instead he brought the pyramids with no productive investments, promising to make money out of nothing."

Foreign direct investment in 1996 amounted to \$140 million, mostly in retail outlets and food processing plants. Since the rebellion erupted, many businessmen from abroad have fled the country, at least for now. Construction of a mineral water bot-

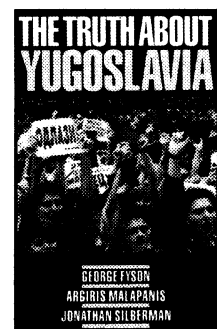
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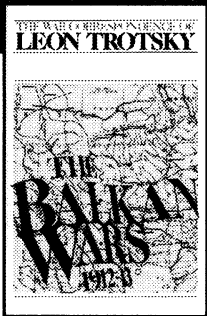
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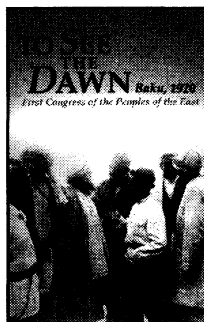
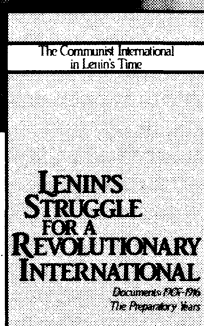
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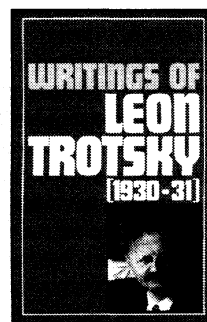
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# Albanian rebel tells how the struggle unfolded in Saranda

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

SARANDA, Albania — Saranda was one of the first cities in southern Albania to revolt. Working people in this city have been devastated by measures that Sali Berisha's government took in its efforts to impose a capitalist "market economy."

The only major industry in the region still operating is the state-owned hydroelectric power plant. Farmers were forced to stop cultivating their land for grain crops. Their fields have been turned into pasture for the few remaining sheep herders. Most people here depend on remittances from relatives working in Greece and Italy. Many invested their money into the "pyramid schemes" promoted by the government, whose collapse sparked the current rebellion.

The devastation of the living standards of working people was compounded by Berisha's police repression.

Militant reporters interviewed Minella Bala on March 19 at his home in Saranda. Bala, a retired truck driver, is a central leader of the town's Committee for the Salvation of the People. During the Stalinist regime of Enver Hoxha, he was sentenced and served nine years in prison for "extremist propaganda serving the interests of foreign powers." He later became president of Berisha's Democratic Party in Saranda and served in that position for two years between 1993 and 1995. To this day, he retains his membership card in this party, although, as he told us, "This is a party but it is not democratic."

We asked Bala to describe how the revolt unfolded in this city. Bala said, "The problems that working people faced were building up and they were not just economic problems but lack of democratic rights."

After the collapse of the pyramids in January, the revolt started in the city of Vlore and spread to other southern towns. On March 2, as Bala described it, "The people by themselves came out in the streets and gathered at Skenderbey Square, chanting 'Down with Berisha.'" Tsagiev Zera, Saranda's mayor, tried to address the people but they didn't allow him to speak. "They mayor was chased away," Bala said. "The mayor then got on the phone, called Berisha, and asked him to send the army and police to crush this revolt." As Bala explained, at that point Berisha's parliament had declared "a state of emergency."

Three days later, thousands of working people were still out in the streets of Saranda, a port town of 10,000 in the southwest corner of Albania near the border with Greece. "The people expected Berisha to send his police and army units, and began discussing how to obtain arms to defend themselves. They decided to march to the police station, the army, and the navy base to obtain arms. Virtually the whole town went," said Bala, "old people, children, men and women, everybody went."

According to Bala very few soldiers and officers were at the base and police station when the people got there. In his opinion "the officers had ordered the soldiers to leave the base." The police officers had left the station and disappeared. The few remaining soldiers joined the rebellious working people.

"Among the people," Bala said, "were some criminal elements" who also armed themselves. In the following days the police station, the Democratic Party offices, and other buildings were burned down. Some shops were looted.

Bala said, "The mayor called me and six former army officers to try to calm the people down." The seven formed the Committee for the Salvation of the People. Bala said that the mayor called him in particular because he enjoyed some respect among working people in the town. Even though he was a Democratic Party official in the past, he had joined the revolt.

The opposition parties approached the Salvation Committee but it decided by vote not to accept any party's intervention. "We have no parties in this committee," Bala said. "We have the people and the people can support different parties. We are all united, Greeks, Albanians, Christians, Muslims, and others."

During the following days, the Committee organized self-defense of the city. Armed guards and tanks were placed at the main entrances to the city and at the power station. "We expected attacks from Berisha's men and from thieves," Bala said.

Berisha sent Hisen Arapi, an army officer, with 60 soldiers to Saranda. One guard saw them coming and notified residents, dozens of whom poured into the streets with rifles to confront the soldiers. "There were two sides confronting each other," Bala said, "the people on one side and Berisha's men on the other, and they were ready to clash." Gjevat Koucia, a former army colonel and the de-facto president of the defense committee, went to the middle and tried to prevent bloodshed, but in the end some fighting took place and four people were wounded. "The people soon chased Berisha's men away," Bala said.

Berisha also sent a group of agents of SHIK, the secret police, to Saranda. The civil defense units chased them away too, but in the process were able to capture one. The rebels made him explain his story — that he was sent by Berisha and had a list of people to kill — in front of 4,000 people at the town's main square. While many people would have lynched the cop on the spot, Bala said, the Committee proposed to the rally that he be sent to Vlore to be tried and punished. This was eventually accepted by the protesters.

## Revolt makes capitalists nervous

Continued from Page 8

ting plant, started by an Italian firm north of Gjirokastra, for example, is now halted after the owner took off for Italy recently, our taxi driver Flamur Stroka said, as we passed by the site on the way to Tirana. "They are scared of the Kalashnikovs in our hands," Stroka commented, with a laugh. Most of the hotels in central Tirana, frequented by such harbingers of capitalism, were basically empty at the end of March, except for a few journalists, hotel workers told us.

Many of the country's basic necessities, like flour, are now imported and inflation since January exceeds 20 percent annually.

The Democratic Party-dominated parliament passed laws giving parcels of farm land to individual farmers, amounting to 3-5 stremas per family member [1 acre = 4 stremas]. Arable land, previously organized in collectives by the Hoxha regime, can now be bought and sold in the market. Several farmers said, however, that they did not receive land they used to till and their allotments are most times divided into several plots away from each other, making it hard to cultivate crops for commercial use. Favoritism was used in the land redistribution, with Berisha supporters getting better lands. Farm machinery was also sold off, making it less accessible to most farmers. With the ending of state aid for cheap credit to get fertilizers and seed, grain production in the south has virtually disappeared. Cultivation is still going on to some degree in the central plains by the Adriatic coast, where the land is more fertile. Mostly people in their late 40s and older are left in many southern villages, as virtually all younger people have immigrated abroad. Most of the country's majority rural population live below the poverty level.

When the pyramid schemes collapsed, and the government blatantly lied by promising some compensation for the losses that never came, working people revolted.

How defense councils came into being

"Initially people began demonstrating peacefully to demand their money back," said Alberty Shyti. Over 15,000 people turned out in Vlora in the initial demonstrations in early February. "But after blood was shed, working people shifted to fighting for the resignation of Berisha, to minimize the bloodshed." Shyti was referring to the confrontation between 10,000 soldiers with tanks deployed by the government to quell the growing protests in Vlora on February



Workers and other opponents of Berisha have organized self-defense units in several cities in the south. Above, rebel forces take over a police tank in the capital, Tirana.

In the following days, Bala said, the Committee "lost control. Looting and stealing increased and we could not control that. So this is where we are at today." He said the biggest challenge before the Committee at this point is using the self-defense units to organize order and put an end to looting and robberies.

Bala was asked what are the next steps to be taken to win the demands of the revolt. He responded, "The issue is not money." Although the revolt started after the collapse of the pyramids, he said, "what we are fighting for is the freedom of speech, to say what we think, in the streets, in the newspapers, radio, and TV stations, without having the police or the SHIK over our heads. We don't want a one-party state. This is how it was

under Hoxha and continued to be under Berisha."

Bala said that working people of Saranda "don't need foreign intervention and humanitarian aid should not be sent at this time." Bala said that much of this aid "ends up in the hands of thieves and they give it to their own people."

"Berisha is a finished man," Bala continued, "but it's undemocratic to remove him with arms. It should be done through elections." Bala is also against working people giving up their arms. "We will accept only a government that comes out of elections," he said. "We can organize the collection of the arms and we will keep them in our homes and our stores. But let's have elections."

9. After one worker was shot dead by the troops, virtually the entire population of the city stormed the stunned soldiers with stones, disarming them within half an hour. While dozens were injured, no one else was killed that day.

Shyti, who returned from Greece January 30 to try to withdraw his savings from Gjilica, was in the front lines of the daily protests. After the routing of Berisha's troops, he stepped forward and asked for volunteers to serve on a citizens' council to organize defense of the insurgent city at a rally of several thousand on February 14. The initial core of five volunteers was expanded to a 35-member council within a week, by including a few workers who led the revolt, representatives of all political parties and prominent figures who supported the demands of the rebels, and army officers who deserted allegiance to the government.

The committee, which has since been meeting daily, now organizes not only security but distribution of food, medicines, and information of developments around the country. Daily rallies are organized in Vlora's Square of the Flag, where committee members exchange information with thousands of citizens. The Committee for the Salvation of Vlora has since met with representatives of the European Union on an Italian warship near the city's port—but out of Albania's territorial waters—and has rejected all appeals to call for the return of the weapons, now in the hands of citizens, until Berisha resigns.

"Vlora has a tradition of resistance," said Idaet Beker, an SP leader in Vlora who addressed the March 23 rally in the city's central square. "Just like it was a center of resistance against the Italians and the Germans during the second World War, it is now a center of resistance against Berisha." Beker was imprisoned under Berisha and was freed when the jails broke open recently. "We took up guns because Berisha sent his SHIK against us. We don't have arms to kill one another but to defend ourselves. We should not give up our arms." He demanded that parliament be dissolved and said, "We want a government that will give us our money back and guarantee jobs for all."

(A more detailed account of the revolt in Vlora will appear in an upcoming issue, based on interviews with Shyti and other leaders of the rebellion in that city).

By the first week of March, similar councils were formed in seven other cities throughout the south, although they each

came into being in different ways. In Saranda, a defense council of seven, made up of six former army officers and a truck driver was formed, after the frightened mayor of the city appealed to these people who took part in the rebellion to try to contain it. The mayor there is often invited to meetings of this committee, which uses the city hall.

In nearby Gjirokastra, the defense council of 15 is largely made up of "army officers and intellectuals," said Isuf Cepani, one of its members. The mayor and some politicians of opposition parties there, meet separately, trying to maintain their authority as the local government.

In Tepelene, north of Gjirokastra, elected local officials are included in the civilian arm of the defense council, while its military arm is organized separately solely by former army officers. Artillery and other heavy weapons from the nearby garrison have now been placed in strategic points in town, ready to defend it from possible attack by pro-Berisha forces.

In Fier, the citizens' committee is headed by local Socialist Party chairman Petro Koca.

The country's small navy and air force is to a large degree in the hands of rebels.

Even in Tirana, the army command has been largely dissolved, and most armories have been emptied by civilians. When one of the main prisons in the capital was attacked by relatives and associates of inmates in mid-March, the army did not respond to pleas for reinforcements by prison guards. The jail, like most other prisons in the country, was thrown open after an overnight battle.

Throughout the country, schools have been closed for the last month. Most banks have been shut down and have hired extra guards to watch them on a 24-hour basis. Many functions of the state, like payments of pensions, have ceased for a few weeks.

Police stations have been a particular target of vengeance by angry citizens, with dozens having been burned down across the southern half of the country. Even in Tirana, where a 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew is enforced by cops using armored vehicles in the center of the city, everyone one interviewed said the police often abandon their posts at night out of fear of being attacked. The R.I.A. garage, for example, uses private security guards for its property. One of those guards, who identified himself only as Alekos, said he led many people in his neighborhood,

Continued on Page 14



# Fight over firings continues at Caterpillar, company moves to open nonunion plants

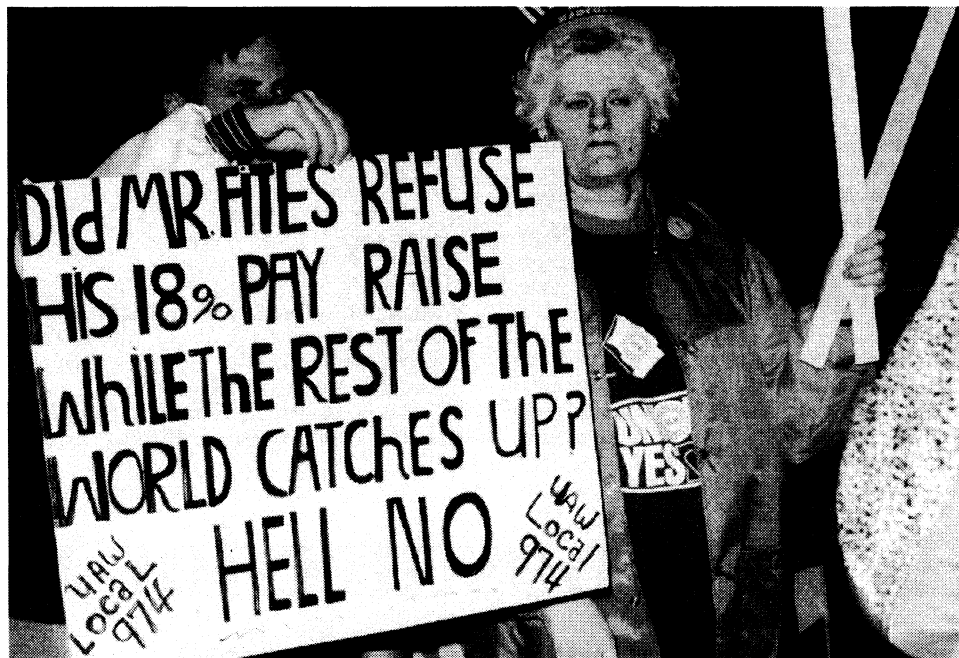
BY JOHANNA RYAN

PEORIA, Illinois — On March 19, a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) judge ordered Caterpillar Inc., the world's largest heavy equipment manufacturer, to reverse disciplinary actions taken against 179 members of the United Auto Workers in the aftermath of their 1991-92 strike. The workers had been disciplined for wearing buttons or T-shirts reading "Permanently Replace Fites" and other slogans criticizing the company and its chief executive officer, Donald Fites.

The ruling upheld Caterpillar's disciplining of other workers who displayed messages aimed at those who crossed picket lines during the strike. NLRB judge James Rose also ruled against one worker fired for wearing a button that said "One more drink and I can run Caterpillar," calling that "a personal and vicious attack" against Fites. "Depicting Fites as a lush cannot conceivably advance the union's cause in the labor dispute," Rose stated.

Both the company and the UAW called the ruling a victory; however, each indicated that the appeals may continue on aspects of the nearly five-year-old case.

The March 19 ruling is the latest in a string of NLRB rulings on the over 300 charges of unfair labor practices filed against Caterpillar to date. Many have upheld the



Caterpillar workers and supporters target CEO Donald Fites at 1992 strike rally. Labor board rulings and company's plans to move production to nonunion plants are just the latest round in a more than five-year struggle.

UAW's complaints, while others have backed the company. The bulk of them remain tied up in appeals which may take several more years.

The current battle between Caterpillar workers and their bosses goes back to September 1991, when the last contract with the UAW expired. Workers struck from Novem-

ber 1991 to April 1992. That walkout ended when UAW officials ordered the unionists back to work, after the company threatened to permanently replace strikers. In June 1994, after a series of walkouts and in-plant protests of worsening company harassment, an "unfair labor practice" strike was launched. Chief among the complaints the workers wanted settled were the firings of over 100 prounion workers on trumped-up charges.

In the 17-month battle that followed, over 9,500 of Caterpillar's 13,000 unionized workers stayed on the picket lines. But the company was able to maintain production using the 25 percent of workers who crossed the lines, joined by replacement workers and salaried employees. In December 1995, Caterpillar workers again returned to their jobs at the direction of their union tops. At the same time they overwhelmingly voted down the company's contract offer.

By January 1996, Caterpillar had recalled all the strikers except the 100-plus "illegally terminated" workers and laid off most of the scabs, but harassment of the union didn't end. From January to August, 79 workers were suspended and 22 were fired, mainly for violations of a company-imposed "code of conduct." Billed as a measure for keeping the peace between returning strikers and line-crossers, this code placed sharp restrictions on freedom of speech and union organizing. The wearing or display of slogans related to the strike was prohibited, and a ban was imposed on any use of the word "scab."

In the past months Caterpillar has sought to pressure its Illinois workforce using a barrage of publicity around the outsourcing of jobs from its York, Pennsylvania, plant, which is scheduled to close for good this year. The company has announced plans for four new nonunion parts plants in Kentucky, Mississippi, and the Carolinas, which will employ a total of about 500 workers.

Workers at the big Mossville, Illinois, engine plant charge that Caterpillar management has used the news to press the UAW for wage and benefit cuts as the price for preventing the outsourcing of jobs there. On March 24, the company announced plans for a fifth new plant in West Plains, Missouri, to take over production of high-pressure hoses currently being made by 113 workers at the Mossville facility.

Johanna Ryan is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 787 in Bloomington, Illinois.

## GM strikers' heads high in week three

Continued from front page  
plans are afoot to bring in scabs on March 31.

UAW strikers on the picket line here are determined to put up a fight. The importance of this strike goes far beyond the city of Fort Wayne. Of GM's 123 locals, slightly more than half have local contracts. The big issue everywhere is jobs.

GM has made it known that the company's goal is to cut tens of thousands of jobs. GM has high stakes in this strike as it drives to lower its costs through layoffs, plant closings, selling of plants that GM deems unprofitable, and speed up.

The Fort Wayne Assembly Plant produces full-size pickup trucks. Demand for the trucks has slowed in recent months, swelling the inventory to more than an 80-day supply (60 is considered the norm).

At the six gates leading into the sprawling truck plant, the strikers have organized around-the-clock picketing. There is a steady flow of hot coffee, food, and warmth from the barrels of burning logs.

Teamster drivers, who haul the trucks on and off GM property, continue to support the strike, as do construction workers who are building a new body shop for a new GM truck model. In addition, strikers report that phone calls of support have been received from other locals in the United States and Canada.

### Strikers demand: hire more workers

Since the strike began, there has been little progress in negotiations. The main union demand, to hire more workers to give some relief from heavy overtime schedules and to allow workers to take days off and vacations when they want them, has been rebuffed by GM.

GM is looking to slash 300 jobs at the plant. The union is demanding that the company hire 500 workers.

"The main issue in the strike is manpower," said Charles Reason, a 20-year veteran, who got his start at the Fort Wayne plant after being laid off from GM's Electro-Motive plant near Chicago in the mid-1980s. "Our people can't get vacation time, can't get days off, and have to fight to get off the line to get to the bathroom."

The work shortage is so severe that workers have been prevented from taking 4,600 scheduled vacation days, which is a violation of the contract and has led to hundreds of unresolved grievances.

"This situation has caused a lot of stress and hardship to our families," said Reason. "Most workers' families are out of state, only a few hundred live in the Fort Wayne area."

UAW member Bob Chapman, who transferred to Fort Wayne from the Janesville,

Wisconsin, GM plant after being laid off, said, "We have workers here from Framingham, Massachusetts; Tarrytown, New York; Van Nuys, California; Flint, Michigan; and from other places."

"Most weekends I drive home to Flint," said Grundell, who came to Fort Wayne after job cuts in GM's operation in that city. "Many workers have families in Cincinnati, Louisville, and St. Louis and go home most weekends."

Unlike other recent strikes by the UAW, this labor battle for the most part has received scant national media coverage. Some local coverage, including a March 23 front-page article by Julie McKinnon of Fort Wayne's *Journal Gazette*, has been favorable to the strike.

Several workers this reporter interviewed in the union hall and on the picket lines referred to this as a "blackout." Some strikers say they are getting ready for what may turn out to be a fairly long strike. They point to the large inventory of unsold trucks, which unlike the auto parts industry does not have the same effect on GM's overall operations.

"I think the strike will last a long time, but I hope I'm wrong," said striker Fred Hamman, "GM has drawn the line. They don't want to hire anybody. The most important thing to them is the \$17 billion in profits they made last year." After being laid off at a GM foundry in Defiance, Ohio, Hamman transferred to the truck plant when it opened in 1986.

"I'm here on strike for the duration, whatever it takes," said Hamman. "I'd like to see some of GM's other truck plants go out with us, that would move things along." Hamman said he thought the local should have gone on strike in the fall when the Canadian Auto Workers struck GM in Canada.

For the past year the union has been preparing for a strike. Some of the strikers reported that last fall around 200 workers staged a walk-out protesting forced overtime. GM responded by selectively firing workers. According to Hamman, "many of the people fired were young new-hires who had been in the plant for a short period." The union was successful in getting these workers their jobs back.

As local talks were taking place, UAW members organized a "white shirt" day to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Flint sit-down strikes. Said UAW striker, Don DePew, who helped initiate the idea, "The majority of workers, about 60 percent, wore white shirts on February 11. This was a big success because it brought us together and gave us a sense of solidarity."

Meanwhile, other signs of resistance to GM's offensive against the union are surfacing. A strike by members of UAW Local 662 in Anderson, Indiana, against Delco

Remy America (DRA) was narrowly averted March 22 when a tentative agreement was reached four hours after the strike deadline.

DRA, spun-off from GM in 1994, is the largest supplier of starter motors for GM cars and light trucks. The auto parts maker employs 1,400 workers at six plants in Anderson and 500 at two plants in Meridian, Mississippi. A strike at DRA, according to the *Indianapolis Star*, "Could have forced production shutdowns at GM."

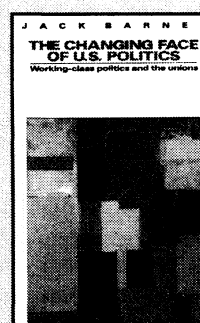
The UAW was demanding that DRA pay workers the same wages and benefits earned by its members in the Big Three, and that 440 temporary workers be given permanent status and full benefits. *The Herald Bulletin*, an Anderson daily, reported that Local 662 president Patrick Smith said, "The company agreed to place the temporary workers on permanent status," and that the "agreement was pretty much in line with the GM contract."

As in the Fort Wayne strike, UAW members were prepared to strike. "Right at the deadline, some workers ... at DRA Plant 3 walked off their jobs, but were quickly returned to work by union officials," according to *The Herald Bulletin*. The ratification vote is set for March 27.

In another development, just outside Dayton, Ohio, in Kettering, members of the International Union of Electronic Workers Local 755 voted to authorize a strike against GM, according to the Cincinnati *Post & Enquirer*. The main issue is GM's outsourcing of jobs so that the auto giant can "meet its profit goals."

Earlier this year, 4,300 members of IUE Local 801 waged a three-day strike against GM in Moraine, Ohio.

Frank Forrestal is a member of United Auto Workers Local 551 at Ford in Chicago. Joel Britton, a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-507, contributed to the article.

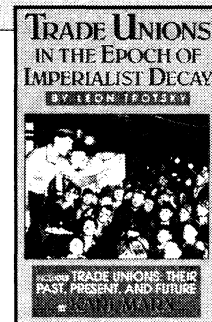


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## CALIFORNIA

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**Hear the Socialist Candidates.** Campaign rally featuring Craig Honts, Socialist Workers nominee for mayor and his running mates. Sat., April 5, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: \$5. p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

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**U.S. and French Troops Out of Africa!** Fri., April 4, 7 p.m.  
**What's Behind Washington's Drive to Expand NATO?** Fri., April 11, 7 p.m.  
*Both events to be held at 915 N. Western. Donation: \$4. Tel: (309) 676-2472.*

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**Defend Immigrant Rights.** Panel discussion. Fri., April 4, 8 p.m. 780 Tremont St. (corner of Mass. Ave., Mass Ave. stop on the Orange line). Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 445-3987.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**Rebellion in Albania: What Next in the Balkans?** Speaker: Doug Douthat, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Auto Workers union. Sat., April 5, 7 p.m. 7414 Woodward. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

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**How to Fight Against Racist Attacks and For Affirmative Action.** Speakers: Ted Tulloch, member Seton Hall University Black Student Union; Brock Satter, Young Socialists and participant in anti-racist struggles at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Fri., April 11, 7:30 p.m. 87A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad, 2 blocks north of Raymond). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Washington's War Drive on Russia and the Crisis in Albania.** Rally for the Militant Fund. Speaker: Norton Sandler, member of National Committee, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 5, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 5:30 p.m. 3260 South Loop West. Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (713) 349-0090.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**NATO Expansion and the Threat of War.** Rally for the Militant Fund. Speaker: Megan Arney, staff writer the Militant. Sat., April 5, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:30 p.m. 1930 18th St. NW (at 18th & Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$5. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

## CANADA

### Vancouver

**Rebellion in Zaire.** Speaker: Grant Elgaard. Fri., April 4, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

## NEW ZEALAND

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**The Myth of "Welfare Dependency."** Speaker: Janet Roth, Communist League. Fri., April 4, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

# Imperialist troops posture for war in Zaire

## Continued from front page

of U.S. forces deployed to Central Africa, said he will soon have 200 troops in Brazzaville and another 100 in Libreville, Congo. The U.S. State Department has ordered an estimated 1,250 army, navy and air force troops to the region of Zaire.

## Imperialist forces converge in region

Meanwhile, the United States Navy maneuvered the amphibious warfare ship *USS Nassau*, carrying 1,000 marines, to hover just off the African coast. The ship came from the Eighth Fleet in the Adriatic, which has been prowling along the coast of Albania. The *Nassau* is equipped with Cobra helicopter gunships, Harrier attack fighter jets, and transport helicopters.

French military forces are also being moved into the region. The French defense ministry says three C160 Transall, a single C130 Hercules transport aircraft, and two Puma helicopters, in addition to the 100 troops, have been sent to Congo and Gabon. There were already about 600 troops stationed in Gabon at one of Paris's seven military bases in its former African colonies — totaling 9,000 troops. The imperialist power also maintains "military cooperation agreements" with 23 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Paris' second-largest military installation is in the Central African Republic, which borders Zaire to the north.

The Belgian government has also said it would send 600 troops.

This is not the first attempt by Washington and other imperialist forces to militarily intervene in Zaire in recent months. In early November, Ottawa, Paris, and Washington led a drive to send an international intervention force of 15,000 to Zaire, in the name of a United Nations "humanitarian aid" mission to help the refugees fleeing the fighting in eastern Zaire. Underlying the wrangling over this plan was Washington's maneuvering to attempt to replace Paris as the dominant power in the region. However, the imperialist powers were forced to "reassess" their intervention when hundreds of thousands of the refugees left Zaire for Rwanda.

Washington has a long history of supporting the dictatorship of Mobutu Seso Seko. Since 1960, when Mobutu seized power — with the help of UN forces — in a military coup d'état, Washington and Paris in particular have used the regime to serve their capitalist interests in the area.

There are very material reasons for this interest. Zaire is a large country that is extremely rich in mineral resources. Some 60

percent of the earth's cobalt and much of the world's supply of industrial-grade diamonds are there, as are large amounts of zinc, copper, manganese, and gold. Some 13 percent of the world's total hydroelectric potential is in Zaire.

Despite such natural wealth, in 1994, the per-capita Gross National Product in Zaire was \$125 — about 70 percent lower than it was in 1958. Prices rose by an average of 23,773 percent, the highest inflation rate ever recorded anywhere, while industry runs at 10 percent capacity. Some 80 percent of the population can not find jobs. Real wages in Zaire in the early 1990s were less than 10 percent of those in 1960.

## Crisis of Mobutu's regime

In face of numerous calls to implement a cease-fire, the rebels have refused to put down their arms. Recently, Zairian president Mobutu Seso Seko — who appears to be dying from cancer as quickly as his regime is dying — tried to stop the wave of instability by tightening the reins of government. On March 24, Mobutu accepted a parliamentary vote of censure of the highly unpopular Prime Minister Kengo wa Dondo. Later that evening, Kengo resigned.

The *Washington Post* cited one unnamed Western diplomat as expressing concern over the move, saying that Kengo's ouster

could lead to "more political disorder" in Kinshasa.

The next day government spokesmen said Mobutu was willing to negotiate an end to the fighting and share power with the rebels. Alliance leader Laurent Kabila has shown no interest in the offer, however, and has said no existing political party will be allowed to participate in the transitional government to be formed when the rebels take power.

Meanwhile, opposition politician Étienne Tshisekedi has come forward in recent days,

hoping for a piece of the action. Tshisekedi served as prime minister until Mobutu removed him in 1993. Many ruling-class figures who prospered under Mobutu are now supporting Tshisekedi, anticipating the collapse of the dictator's reign. "If he can be flexible and act like the father of a family, we can work with him. In any case it is the last chance to stop the progression of the rebellion and find out what Kabila really wants," said Bemba Salona, one of Zaire's wealthiest businessmen and a longtime ally of Mobutu.

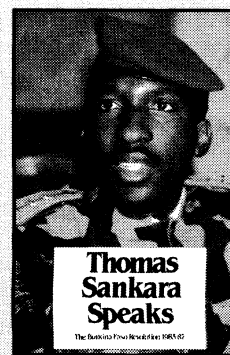
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# —CALENDAR—

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

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

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Pittsburgh

**Take a Stand against Hate — Anti-Klan Demonstration.** Sat., April 5, 11:30 a.m. Grant St., across from the courthouse. Sponsored by Grant St. Anti-Klan coalition. *For more information, call Joel at (412) 621-9801 or Elayne (412) 361-6905.*



**Un-American** — The Democratic National Committee decided to return \$107,000 donated by two impoverished Oklahoma tribes who believed it would get them back an



Harry Ring

area of stolen land. The Democrats said the tribes seemed to think you have to pay to get the government's ear.

**Who's on first?** — Washington tells Wal-Mart it's violating the embargo by selling Cuban-made

pajamas in its Canadian stores. The PJs come off the shelf. Canada says this violates its law penalizing those who abide by Helms-Burton. The Canadian chain says it's putting them back. The U.S. office says no. Some suspect a charade. Washington says the Wal-Mart action is based on the original Kennedy embargo, not Helms Burton. Stay tuned.

**Why there's an embargo** — In Havana, 800 international guests attended a \$500-a-plate benefit dinner for Cuba's health care system. A special crafted humidor with 90 choice cigars and autographed by Fidel Castro was auctioned off for \$130,000. Mused Fidel, "For two of these we could have paid the entire expense of our ground militia."

**No gratitude** — Philip Morris must have been put off when Liggett copped a plea, saying, yes, it's true, tobacco is an addictive killer. Suspecting the smaller company might buckle, PM had been footing part of its legal bills. We predict a new stress on the industry's keenest argument — they save the taxpayers money by killing off people before they reach retirement age.

**'You'll die for your country'** — To help balance Italy's budget the employment minister suggested that the pension age for soccer players be boosted from the present 45 to 60, the country's standard retirement age.

**That old bottom line** — A single wide-body plane, especially one of the older ones, can belch out

100 pounds of poisonous fumes on each take-off and landing. In 1993, the total at U.S. airports was 350 million pounds. Yet Washington and U.S. airlines along with Russia, said no to a modest international proposal to cut new-engine emissions 16 percent. They said it would up the cost of planes and mean less miles per gallon.

**Flexibly rigid** — The Vatican reminded divorced Catholics not to have sex with new spouses. Not recognizing divorce, the church views subsequent nonplatonic unions as a state of sin.

**Meanwhile** — Priests were instructed to give absolution to couples who admit using contraceptives, even if reportedly. The only proviso is that they confess each

time.

**Cloned or canned?** — Towers Perrin creates corporate workplace "diversity" programs. With fees of up to \$360 an hour, they do one-on-one interviews with company execs and peruse employee surveys. Now some clients are squawking because they found that apart from the name of the company, the studies and recommendations seem to be identical.

**We agree, bum rap** — A Towers Perrin person says their findings and proposals seem identical because so many of the companies have the same policies. Right. Do they want a report that says: "Your practices are racist and sexist. Don't be surprised when your workers do something about it."

# Women's role in the origin of industry, science

**Why are women oppressed? How did that oppression begin? Why are opponents of women's rights so determined to perpetuate laws and customs that deny women an equal role in society? Who benefits? What social forces have the power to end the second-class status of women, and have common interests in the fight for women's liberation? These are the questions addressed in *Problems of Women's Liberation*, a collection of essays by Evelyn Reed, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party and author of many works on the origins of women's**

at least half a million years ago, before humanity became fully human. Regarding this major conquest, Gordon Childe writes:

In mastery of fire man was controlling a mighty physical force and a conspicuous chemical change. For the first time in history a creature of Nature was directing one of the great forces of Nature. And the exercise of power must react upon the controller.... In feeding and damping down the fire, transporting and using it, man made a revolutionary departure from the behavior of other animals. He was asserting his humanity and making himself. (*Man Makes Himself*)

All the basic cooking techniques which followed upon the discovery of fire — broiling, boiling, roasting, baking, steaming, etc. — were developed by the women. These techniques involved a continuous experimentation with the properties of fire and directed heat. It was in this experimentation that women developed the techniques of preserving and conserving food for future use. Through the application of fire and heat, women dried and preserved both animal and vegetable food for future needs.

But fire represented much more than this. Fire was the tool of tools in primitive society; it can be equated to the control and use of electricity or even atomic energy in modern society. And it was the women, who developed all the early industries, who likewise uncovered the uses of fire as a tool in their industries.

The first industrial life of women centered around the food supply. Preparing, conserving, and preserving food required the invention of all the necessary collateral equipment: containers, utensils, ovens, storage houses, etc. The women were the builders of the first caches, granaries and storehouses for the provisions. Some of these granaries they dug in the ground and lined with straw. On wet, marshy ground they constructed storehouses on poles above the ground. The need to protect the food in granaries from vermin resulted in the domestication of another animal — the cat. Mason writes:

In this role of inventing the granary and protecting food from vermin, the world has to thank women for the domestication of the cat.... Woman tamed the wildcat for the protection of her granaries. (*Woman's Share*)

It was the women too, who separated out poisonous and injurious substances in foods. In the process, they often used directed heat to turn what was inedible in the natural state into a new food supply....

Manioc, for example, is poisonous in its natural state. But the women converted this plant into a staple food supply through a complicated process of squeezing out its poisonous properties in a basketry press and driving out its residue by heating.

Many inedible plants and substances were put to use by the women in their industrial processes, or converted into medicines. Dr. Dan McKenzie lists hundreds of homeopathic remedies discovered by primitive women through their intimate knowledge of plant life. Some of these are still in use without alteration; others have been only slightly improved upon. Among these are important substances used for their narcotic properties. (*The Infancy of Medicine*)

Women discovered, for example, the properties of pine tar and turpentine and of chaulmoogra oil, which today is a remedy for leprosy. They invented homeopathic remedies from acacia, alcohol, almond, asafoetida, balsam, betel, caffeine, camphor, caraway, digitalis, gum, barley water, lavender, linseed, parsley, peppers, pomegranate, poppy, rhubarb, senega, sugar, wormwood, and hundreds more. Depending upon where the natural substances were found, these inventions come from South America, Africa, North America, China, Europe, Egypt, etc.

The women converted animal substances as well as vegetable substances into rem-

edies. For example, they converted snake venom into a serum to be used against snake bites (an equivalent preparation made today from snake venom is known as "antivenin").

In the industries connected with the food supply, vessels and containers of all types were required for holding, carrying, cooking, and storing food, as well as for serving food and drink. Depending upon the natural environment, these vessels were made of wood, bark, skin, pleated fibers, leather, etc. Ultimately women discovered the technique of making pots out of clay....

The industries of women, which arose out of the struggle to control the food supply, soon passed beyond this limited range. As one need was satisfied, new needs arose, and these in turn were satisfied in a rising spiral of new needs and new products. And it was in this production of new needs as well as new products that women laid down the foundation for the highest culture to come.

Science arose side by side with the industry of women. Gordon Childe points out that to convert flour into bread requires a whole series of collateral inventions, and also a knowledge of biochemistry and the use of the micro-organism, yeast. The same knowledge of biochemistry which produced bread likewise produced the first fermented liquors. Women, Childe states, must also be credited with the chemistry of potmaking, the physics of spinning, the mechanics of the loom, and the botany of flax and cotton.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

oppression and the fight for their emancipation. The excerpt below is from "The myth of women's inferiority." The book is copyright © 1969 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY EVELYN REED

The first division of labor between the sexes is often described in a simplified and misleading formula. The men, it is said, were the hunters and warriors, while the women stayed in the camp or dwelling house, raised the children, cooked, and did everything else. This description has given rise to the notion that the primitive household was simply a more primitive counterpart of the modern home. While the men were providing all the necessities of society, the women were merely puttering around in the kitchens and nurseries. Such a concept is a gross distortion of the facts.

Aside from the differentiation in food-getting, there was virtually no division of labor between the sexes in all the higher forms of production — for the simple reason that the whole industrial life of primitive society was lodged in the hands of the women. Cooking, for example, was not cooking as we know it in the modern individual home. Cooking was only one technique which women acquired as the result of the discovery and control of fire and their mastery of directed heat.

All animals in nature fear fire and flee from it. Yet the discovery of fire dates back

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### 25 CENTS THE MILITANT

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

April 7, 1972

SAN FRANCISCO, March 27 — "Not guilty!" As this verdict was read today, John Cluchette, Fleeta Drumgo, and their attorneys embraced. Spectators shouted and wept with joy, while the prosecutors, Ed Barnes and William Curtiss, buried their faces in their hands.

Cluchette and Drumgo, along with George Jackson, had been framed for the Jan. 16, 1970, murder of Soledad prison guard John Mills. The state viewed the case as a method of crushing the growing radicalization in the California prisons. George Jackson, an established leader of the prison movement, was their primary target.

George Jackson's murder by San Quentin guards two days before the trial was scheduled to open provided the pretext to make the courthouse an armed camp. The intimidating searches administered outside the courtroom were designed to convince the all-white jury that Cluchette and Drumgo were exceedingly violent men, and to discourage spectators from viewing the state's paltry "evidence." Cluchette and Drumgo were characterized as being so dangerous that Judge Spiro Vavuris ordered them to be flown to the trial every day by helicopter, with their hands and legs shackled.

The Soledad verdict was a reflection of the public's growing anger at the brutal conditions in California's prisons. The lack of a functioning defense committee, however, placed severe financial limitations upon the

defense attorneys. It also resulted in low attendance at the trial and enabled the prosecution to monopolize the mass media. A significant movement must now be built to free the San Quentin Six and other political prisoners.

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
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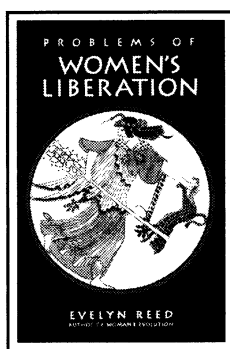
April 5, 1947

APRIL 1 — The nation's soft coal mines shut down today as 400,000 members of the United Mine Workers began six days of mourning for their 111 comrades murdered in the Centralia mine explosion.

The memorial for the 111 and the protest against the criminal negligence of government officials that led to their death was called by UMW President John L. Lewis on March 29. Some 35,000 miners began the memorial a day in advance. This action indicated how thoroughly the miners approve the six-day memorial and agree with Lewis' explanation of the need to throw a spotlight on government failure to enforce safe operating provision....

This mine blew up last Tuesday afternoon [March 25]. The surviving miners and rescue squads from all over the state worked frantically till Saturday trying to reach the victims. Their rescue work was hampered by the incompetence of the State Mine Director, who endangered the lives of the rescue crews by ordering the electric current turned on in the gas-filled mine.

One rescue worker told him "You're either too damn ignorant or you ain't satisfied with killing them, you want to kill us too."



Women's History Month special from Pathfinder

### Problems of Women's Liberation

Evelyn Reed

Explores the social and economic roots of women's oppression from prehistoric society to modern capitalism and points the road forward to emancipation. **25% off — \$9.75 for members of the Pathfinder Readers Club** (Regular price \$12.95)

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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write **Pathfinder**, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

# Australian hands off PNG

“Send Aussie Troops Now!” was the blaring headline on one Sydney tabloid March 23, beating the war drums for intervention in Papua New Guinea in response to a reported request by PNG prime minister Julius Chan for Australian action to prop up his increasingly isolated government.

The Chan regime’s crisis — the sharpest since Papua New Guinea won independence in 1975 — is the cumulative result of the failure of the nine-year war against the people of Bougainville, and the growing social catastrophe at home, fueled by world capitalism’s depression conditions. Not only did PNG lose 40 percent of its annual export earnings with the closure of the Panguna mine in Bougainville, but growing numbers of body bags began coming back from the war. This developed alongside swelling numbers of unemployed, rampant government corruption, and austerity demands imposed by Canberra and the imperialist banks. Those protesting Chan’s mercenaries sensed that their success on Bougainville would lead to the hired thugs staying on to use those methods to rub out opposition at home in PNG.

This emergency has Canberra deeply alarmed — not about “democracy,” but about stability for its exploitation of PNG’s patrimony. With characteristic imperial arrogance, Australia’s prime minister John Howard and opposition Labour Party head Kim Beazley, whose party formulated the response to the Bougainville independence fight from the start, expect their warnings, threats, and orders to PNG, a sovereign nation, to be heeded. Canberra supplies over \$A320 million (US\$250 million) in annual “aid” and the New Zealand government some \$NZ5.9 million (US\$4.1 million), which the imperialists think also entitles them to interfere in PNG affairs.

Howard proclaimed Chan’s mercenaries “sordid,” hoping to divert attention from two facts: that Canberra sent helicopters to Bougainville, which were converted into gunships and piloted by Australian and New Zealand “civilian” pilots throughout the war, and that mustering Australian troops to intervene in PNG’s affairs today is itself a mercenary act on behalf of Australian big business.

From the turn of the century Australian colonialism grew rich from trade in cash crops grown with superexploited Papuan and New Guinean labor. After the conflict with rival Japanese imperialism over PNG in World War II was settled, Australian imperialism also began plundering the minerals and oil that are the patrimony of the Papua New Guinean people.

Bourgeois commentators argue that the current crisis shows that the people of PNG are not capable of governing themselves. But the exploited producers have never had that opportunity — until now. Instead, the newly emerging capitalist class has dominated post-independence political life. Above all, the events since March 17 demonstrate that fellow producers are now engaging in politics in the only meaningful sense: in massive numbers in the streets.

Workers and farmers, especially in Australia and New Zealand, who themselves are coming into increasing conflict with the same bosses that exploit PNG, have every reason to oppose any and all forms of intervention into the affairs of PNG and Bougainville.

The international labor movement should demand:

Australia, New Zealand hands off PNG and Bougainville!

No aid to the PNG government! Cancel PNG’s foreign debt!

Independence for Bougainville! No imperialist “peace-keepers!”

# Fight attacks on abortion

Every supporter of women’s right to choose abortion should be speaking out against Congress’s moves toward banning a type of abortion procedure. This represents a direct attack on the right to abortion that was won by the rising women’s movement and codified in the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court ruling in 1973.

Working people should reject every argument of the right-wing forces pushing this legislation and the liberals who tail-end them by saying, “Well, maybe this one type of abortion is too horrible.”

This is all aimed at shifting the question from one of a woman’s right to control her own body to a supposed moral debate. Likewise the question of how many such procedures are performed each year is completely irrelevant.

If this move by the government is allowed to go unanswered, it only emboldens rightist forces like those who have bombed and blockaded abortion clinics. Supporters of women’s rights can and should take the initiative to organize pickets, speak-outs, and public forums to answer this latest attack on women’s rights.

# Most Albanians oppose intervention

Continued from Page 10

overwhelmingly against Berisha, into a nearby armory where they took over the weapons. In Tirana and elsewhere, armed robberies and lootings have been on the rise. Some of these incidents are reportedly carried out by pro-Berisha gangs. In Vlora, where defense is organized tightly by the rebels, such actions have been minimized. In other rebel-held towns, this remains a big challenge for the defense councils. So far, about 150 people have been killed around the country since the rebellion began, including antigovernment protesters and pro-Berisha forces. Some have been killed by random fire.

## Rebel initiatives cause frictions

On March 21, representatives of 21 defense councils met in Tepelene. It was the largest meeting of the National Front for the Salvation of the People, which was formed by eight such committees in Gjirokastra March 12.

Earlier, the Front had set a deadline of March 20 for Berisha to resign, the same deadline set by the Democratic Party-controlled parliament for providing amnesty to rebels who would turn in their weapons. Neither side budged, however. So at the Tepelene gathering the Front presented new demands that include the formation of a presidential commission to de-facto replace Berisha. The rebels proposed that the commission include representatives of the National Front, the government of national reconciliation, and all political parties willing to join. Such a commission would organize new elections and eventually make proposals on the reorganization of the armed forces and police. The Front also demanded that control of the state media and the secret police be transferred from the Berisha-controlled parliament to the new government.

On March 22, Shyti and other leaders of the Vlora committee traveled to Tirana and met with prime minister Bashkim Fino of the Socialist Party and other politicians to present these demands. Fino, who had earlier postponed indefinitely a visit to the south to meet with rebel leaders, did not commit to an agreement.

Fino expressed willingness to meet with individual local committees, but not with organizations claiming to represent broad regions, like the National Front. On March 21, Interior Minister Belul Celo said the government would not recognize the rebel councils.

The rebel initiatives have caused frictions within the current government in Tirana. On March 24, Fino threatened to resign if parliament refused to pass laws he has repeatedly submitted to transfer control of the media to the government. And Berisha attacked the Democratic Forum, the umbrella coalition of most opposition parties, for reiterating the demand for his resignation.

Berisha has also tried to wage a counteroffensive, using the degree of cooperation he has been able to secure from his Socialist Party rivals to stay his ground. He has repeatedly stated he will not resign unless his Democratic Party loses elections in the future and claims he still enjoys majority support in the country’s north. Berisha’s men still control the secret police, which the president has been using to build a core of armed units to defend the interests of the layer of the ruling caste he represents.

Recently, a group of pro-Berisha thugs calling itself the Committee of National Salvation — in a rather obvious attempt to sow confusion with and counter the creation of the National Front — announced its existence. The group warned that it would mobilize thousands of supporters to fight those who insist on the president’s removal. On March 16 and 23, Berisha’s supporters held two “peace rallies” in Tirana, where men and women with flowers demanded the turning in of weapons to state authorities. State media claimed 3,000 people turned out for these gatherings.

“A few weeks ago, these people carried guns around terrorizing workers,” commented our taxi driver Flamur Stroka. “Now that everybody has a Kalashnikov they try to fool us with flowers.”

Inside the Democratic Party headquarters, party chairman Tritan Shehu seemed eager to speak to the press March 22. He hasn’t been getting many requests for interviews lately. Shehu was foreign minister and deputy prime minister in the previous government, which Berisha decided to dismiss March 11 to draw the SP into quelling the revolt. On January 25, Shehu was chased by angry demonstrators in Lushnje and had to lock himself in the changing rooms of the town’s soccer stadium with his body guards and 10 riot policemen.

“A coup d’etat was organized against our government by extreme left forces, including sections of the army,” he said in an interview. “It was organized by the extreme left and of the former Communist Party and its secret police. These are Marxist people who believe in coming to power through proletarian and revolutionary means, not through democratic elections,” he stated. Shehu washed the Democratic Party’s hands of responsibility for the pyramid fraud and said that this crisis was simply manipulated by “terrorists.” His eyes lit up when asked about possible military intervention by the European Union or NATO. Acknowledging “some problems” with Washington, he said, “the presence of foreign troops is very much needed to organize the army and the police.”

## Debate on imperialist intervention

Fino has also called for an international police force. The prime minister said this is needed to make sure the EU humanitarian aid is distributed properly, warning that the country’s food reserves could be exhausted in 10 days. European Union ministers, meeting in Brussels March

24, could not agree to send such a military force supposedly to ensure delivery of aid. The EU meeting gave a cautious blessing to such an intervention force if it proves necessary to “create a secure environment for the safe provision of international assistance.” That is to be determined through another “fact-finding mission,” that is, further testing of the waters in search for possible cracks among those opposing imperialist intervention.

The government of Italy has offered to provide the bulk of some 3,000 troops with possible contingents from France, Greece, Spain, Austria, and Denmark. “France is ready to support such a security mission to Albania,” French foreign minister Herve de Charette declared. Paris has spearheaded this proposal, arguing that such a force should be under the command of the Western European Union, the EU’s military arm that the French rulers are pushing as an alternative to NATO hegemony in Europe.

Bonn and London said they would not participate. “Albania has to create the conditions for an humanitarian aid mission and for the security of advisers,” said German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel. “No-one is talking any longer about military intervention in the Albanian political situation,” said British foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind. “I accept that there may be the need for a force to protect aid organizations, although the International Red Cross has said it does not want military protection.”

Rome, Albania’s colonial master prior to the revolution of the 1940s, has become the most aggressive militarily so far. An Italian warship escorted an Albanian warship with over 400 refugees back to the Albanian coast north of Durres on March 21. Since then, the Italian navy has been patrolling Albanian territorial waters to prevent an exodus of refugees, with orders to turn back boats by force if necessary. Up to 12,000 Albanians have arrived in Italy in March. Rome, which originally said it would offer refugees temporary permission to stay for up to three months, has reversed its position.

Greek imperialism has also aggressively been seeking to take advantage of the situation to increase its influence in the Balkans. The Greek minister of defense, Akis Tsohantzopoulos, announced March 21 that his government had received a formal request from the Fino administration to help reorganize the shattered Albanian army. Tsohantzopoulos said that Athens has already responded positively, describing the request as a “golden opportunity,” and plans to send military advisors to Tirana to start planning the structure of the Albanian army.

Greek government officials have carried out numerous visits to Albania over the last month, especially in the south where there is a substantial Greek-speaking minority. They have attempted to sow divisions among rebel forces and gain acceptance for some form of imperialist intervention.

In an interview in the March 20 Greek-language weekly *Economicos Tahidromos* (Financial Review), Tsohantzopoulos said that the “experiment of transition from totalitarian regimes to a market economy and parliamentary democracy in some Balkan countries has failed. For this reason, the active intervention of the European Union is a necessity,” he stated. “A new Marshall plan is now needed to reestablish market economies throughout the Balkans.” A setback of the rebellion in Albania would open such opportunities for Athens, and Greek capitalists are working overtime to make the most of the possibility.

## Revolt inspires Albanians in Macedonia

The Albanian revolt has given impetus to the struggle for national rights of the Albanian minority in the neighboring Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. Albanians there, comprising 23 percent of the republic’s population of 2.2 million, are concentrated in western Macedonia, near the Albanian border. They have recently stepped up demands for autonomy.

“The situation is deteriorating because the problems are not being resolved,” said Aladin Demiri of the Party for the Democratic Well Being of Albanians, the recently elected mayor Tetovo, a Macedonian city 35 miles west of the capital city of Skopje. Some 75 percent of the population there are of Albanian origin. “Our language is not recognized and the government in Skopje is doing its utmost to deny our basic rights. We want recognition of a university we founded in 1994 but the government adamantly rejects it,” Demiri said.

The government of Macedonian president Kiro Gligorov recently shut its border with Albania. The border has been totally unguarded on the Albanian side since the revolt began. Gligorov has also promoted student demonstrations in Skopje against Albanian “separatism.”

Smack in the middle of this are 500 U.S. troops, part of a 1,100 United Nations force deployed there since 1992. Some of these troops were recently moved from the border with Serbia to the one with Albania. Washington issued a statement opposing any division of Macedonia.

On March 19, Greek foreign minister Thodoros Pagalos visited Skopje and lent the Macedonian government support in its treatment of the Albanian minority. This was a first for a high government official from Athens, since diplomatic relations between the two regimes barely exist. Pagalos then visited Belgrade and assured the regime of Slobodan Milosevic of his government’s support in denying autonomy for Kosovo.

The efforts of the imperialist powers intervening in the region, notwithstanding, the rebels in Albania continue to take initiatives to press their demands. A nationwide rally has been called in Vlora on March 28, where insurgents expect to bring representatives of Albanian cities in the north, which Berisha claims as his stronghold.



# Oil workers protest Tosco's concession demands

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

work rotating shifts. Spencer said that many already put in hundreds of hours of overtime each year. Tosco is also demanding that operators perform a wide variety of maintenance work while running

they'll have to deal with Rodeo, Tormey, and Crockett."

Kasha Kessler, who lives in Crockett, told the crowd, "We're 100 percent behind you. Your work is really important to us. We don't want cutbacks, nor contract laborers" at the plant. Kessler was one of a number of activists from local community and environmental groups at the rally. Others included Julia May, of the Communities for a Better Environment, based in San Francisco, and Henry Clark, of the Richmond-based West County Toxics Coalition.

Participants also included some workers from the Avon refinery, located about 10 miles east of here. Many OCAW members at Avon sense that they will be next to face Tosco's antiunion attacks, and are seeking to find out what is happening at Unocal. Union officials have done little to keep workers there informed of developments at Unocal, although anything unionists do learn is quickly passed around the plant and discussed at length.

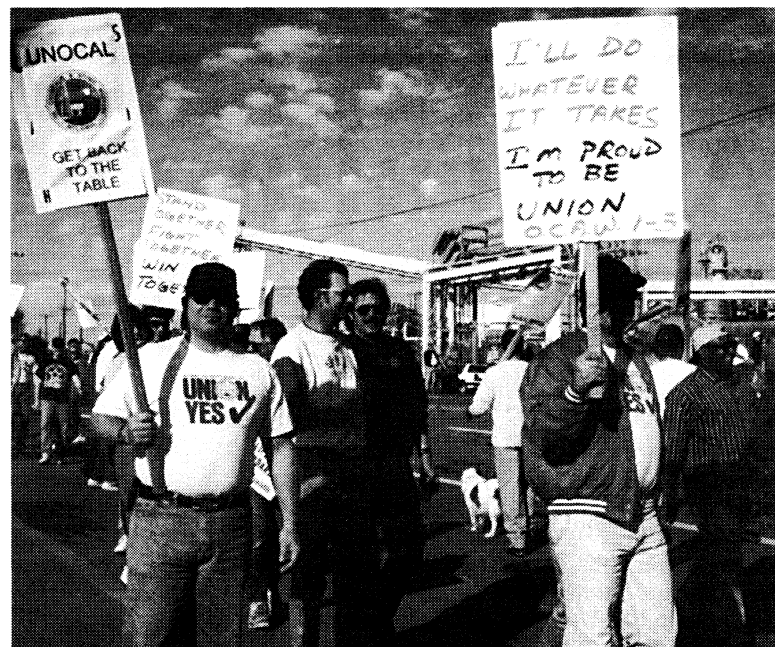
## Orchestra musicians win their strike in Seattle

SEATTLE — Orchestra musicians who are members of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) local 76-493, won a strike here against the Fifth Avenue Theater February 25. The strike captured the attention of the labor movement and received broad support in the Seattle area.

The musicians struck primarily over wages and working conditions after management resisted meaningful negotiations. The Fifth Avenue Orchestra had been one of the lowest paid orchestras in the country, at around \$93 per musician, per performance. The orchestra consists of a pool of 40 musicians who play various performances at that theater.

The AFM, with the help of other unions in the city, organized large and vocal picket lines in front of this downtown theater when management announced they would open the show *Beauty and the Beast* with scab musicians from out of town. The previous week's performances, including opening night, had been canceled due to the strike.

On February 19, management



Militant/Barbara Bowman

About 125 oil workers and activists from around the San Francisco area protested Tosco's safety cuts

attempted a second opening night, this time with a scab orchestra. Close to a thousand enthusiastic strikers and supporters joined the picket line. Within an hour management announced that they were canceling the show that night, stating that there had been a bomb threat. Pickets took over the street in celebration and held a spontaneous victory rally.

For a week hundreds of unionists, professionals and youth turned out nightly, despite prominent news coverage that focused on frightened children, wading with their parents through walls of chanting pickets, to see the show.

Striker Doug Solowan, speaking at the Militant Labor Forum three days after the settlement said, "This victory strengthened the labor movement more than 100 organizers could have. The sheer power of the picket line scared the pants off of management."

Solowan, a violinist in the orchestra, described the serious character of the Fifth Avenue Theater's union-busting campaign in the context of record profits that Broadway shows have been making across the country in the last 5 to 8 years.

Theater management had hired Larry Levien, a lawyer who works for the notorious union-busting law

firm that was used by airline boss Frank Lorenzo during the Eastern Airlines strike. They also brought in Pinkerton guards who escorted the scabs in and out, and harassed stage hands during the show. Levien's swift departure after a few days of mass picketing, was followed by a resumption of bargaining with the union.

"Everybody has other jobs. This doesn't pay a living wage," Solowan said. He explained how the musicians have no health insurance through the theater, and have been struggling for years to change unsafe workplace conditions in the orchestra pit, like the lack of a second exit in case of fire. Shows like *Beauty and the Beast*, which have pyrotechnic special effects, are a particular fire hazard for musicians.

Strikers won a 20 percent increase in wages over the three-year life of the contract, and the language they had sought guaranteeing them compensation for their recorded performances.

Jim Altenberg, member of OCAW Local 1-5 at the Tosco refinery in Avon, California, and Emily Fitzsimmons, member of United Transportation Union Local 845 in Seattle, contributed to this week's column.

## 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.

RODEO, California — Some 125 oil workers and activists from communities surrounding Bay Area oil refineries, demonstrated in front of the Unocal refinery here March 5 to protest moves by the Tosco Refining Company to gut hard-won union rights and safety practices at the plant. Tosco purchased Unocal's four California refineries and is to take over the facilities at the end of March.

The company has refused to recognize the existing union contract, and plans to selectively "rehire" only those workers it chooses for jobs in its newly-owned refineries. Tosco's owners are demanding that the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers (OCAW) submit to a series of sharp cuts in the work force, job combinations, and the elimination of the fire and safety department.

Howard Spencer, president of OCAW 1-326 at the refinery, explained to the crowd what Tosco has demanded. He said that the company wants to immediately cut 15 percent of all operators' jobs at each of the four refineries, while reorganizing the work schedule to incorporate a 24 percent increase in forced overtime hours for those operators who are left.

Operators, who monitor and control the various process units in the plant 24 hours a day and must be alert to deal with problems that might develop at any time, already

their units, which prevents them from closely watching the equipment and control panels. The union president said that if the company doesn't back down on its demands the workers could strike all four Unocal plants March 31.

Tosco's planned elimination of the fire and safety department would place responsibility upon operators for issuing permits for welding, vessel entry, or other work that involves special hazards or potentially dangerous conditions, said Art Bertz, the union local's safety representative in the plant. "Tosco thinks safety is a numbers game. The more numbers they cut, the safer they think it will be," he said. Bertz pointed out that without the fire and safety department, neither workers nor surrounding communities will have round the clock protection in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Over the past few years, leaks and fires at Unocal have dropped poisonous chemicals, hydrogen sulfide, hydrocarbon vapors, and soot on the nearby towns of Rodeo, Crockett, and Tormey.

The response from area residents forced Unocal to install fence line monitors and heightened public awareness of issues around refinery safety. Tosco's moves to cut refinery staffing and attack working conditions are being closely watched by many people in the area, particularly in the wake of a January 22 explosion at the Tosco Avon refinery, which killed an operator and injured 44 others.

Community activists have sought for years to involve the OCAW in their efforts to improve plant safety, and were happy to lend their support to the union. "OCAW is keeping the plant safe," said Janet Pie-George, a community activist at the rally. "If they want to get rid of you

## LETTERS

### O.J. Simpson I

I want to take issue with one point made in Naomi Craine's As I See It column on the O.J. Simpson civil trial in the March 10 *Militant*. I think the general points she makes to claim that civil trials are inherently less democratic than criminal trials represent "throwing out the baby with the bath water." The two differences between civil and criminal trials she points to are guilt "by a preponderance of the evidence" and without a unanimous jury verdict required in a civil trial, while a criminal trial requires a unanimous verdict which is "beyond a reasonable doubt" to find a defendant guilty.

Since a civil suit cannot seek imprisonment of a defendant found guilty or liable, but generally damages (money), defendants in civil suits are more often wealthy individuals, corporations, government bodies or officials than in criminal trials. Over the last decade or two, we have seen the proliferation of "class action" lawsuits, where hundreds or thousands can join together to take on a corporation or government agency. I believe that the vast majority of cases where police brutality has been proven have not been criminal cases where the guilty cops were locked up in jail, but in civil suits where individual cops and often their employers are forced to

cough up some money to the victims.

It seems to me that the small minority of cases where our class has won some justice from the capitalists' courts have been overwhelmingly in civil cases. From the descendants of interned Japanese-Americans and nuclear weapon guinea pigs to victims of Love Canal, the Dalkon shield, nicotine and asbestos, to Ramona Africa and Mark Curtis, the only justice they found through the courts was in civil cases where a judge or jury (the latter not necessarily by a unanimous vote) found their charges credible by a preponderance of the evidence. In arguably the greatest legal victory for the democratic rights of our class and its vanguard in modern times, a federal judge ruled for the plaintiffs Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance (among others) and against the defendants including the U.S. Attorney General, FBI, and CIA by a preponderance of the evidence in a civil lawsuit organized by the Political Rights Defense Fund.

While a criminal trial requires an indictment or charges filed by a grand jury or district attorney (i.e., an agent of the capitalist state) acting in the name of "the people," any worker who can find a lawyer can file a civil suit. I agree with the points Craine's article makes spe-



cifically about the Simpson case, especially in highlighting the issue of "double jeopardy," but I think the critique of the standards of civil trials needs to be re-examined.

Gary Boyers  
Detroit, Michigan

### O.J. Simpson II

This will probably be one of many letters to the *Militant* concerning your characterization of O.J. Simpson's life as a "social parasite." While I agree with your overall sen-

timent that the second Simpson trial placed him in double jeopardy, I strongly disagree with your characterization of his life.

There are huge layers of the population in the United States that produce absolutely nothing of value. Insurance companies, banks, advertising agencies, investment houses all absorb tremendous amounts of capital, but produce nothing that working people need or want. Therefore, should we label everyone who works in these enterprises as a "social parasite?" I

don't think so.

Harry Ring pointed to the real social parasites in a quotation from the *Los Angeles Times*. "Assets of the world's top 358 billionaires exceed the combined annual income of almost half the world's people...." These billionaires, and those who approach their wealth, live off the labor of working people and are totally alien to our interests. Although O.J. Simpson is a millionaire, his assets don't even come close to those people who own half of the world's wealth.

Simpson, at various times in his life, was a professional athlete, an actor, a sports-caster, a promoter of Hertz Rent-A-Car, and someone who made money on investments. In my opinion, this is reflective of a person who is a part of the middle class. Although individuals who are a part of the middle class frequently are not involved in producing the goods and services we all need, it is not useful to label them as "social parasites."

Steven Halpern  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## Australian gov't uses mutiny to intervene in Papua New Guinea

BY BOB AIKEN  
AND DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — The antigovernment mutiny by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) that began March 17 has sparked the sharpest governmental crisis in Papua New Guinea since its independence in 1975. Two days of protests and riots ensued March 19-20 in the capital city of Port Moresby, which spread to the provincial capitals of Lae, Mount Hagen, and Goroka, and resumed in Port Moresby, March 22.

**As we go to press: Mass protests on March 26 forced PNG prime minister Chan to temporarily step aside pending an inquiry on the mercenary deal.**

The Australian government reacted to the crisis in its most prized former colony with stepped-up imperial bullying — announcing preparations for the use of Australian troops to “protect” or “evacuate” some 12,000 Australians in PNG, and increasing “peace” rhetoric regarding Bougainville, an island where there has been a nine-year war for independence from PNG.

Meanwhile, the Australian ABC radio news reported late March 22 that PNG Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan had reportedly requested Canberra send Australian troops to intervene. Peti Lafanama, national general secretary of Melanesian Solidarity, which has been centrally involved in the anti-Chan protests in Port Moresby, condemned the prospect. He called intervention a “grave mistake” and pledged, “We the people will join our soldiers in defending our sovereignty,” in an immediate letter to the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby.

Underlying the crisis is the failure of successive PNG governments to defeat the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), despite the backing of Canberra. The BRA has led the nine-year guerrilla war for Bougainville independence that shut the giant Australian-owned Panguna copper and gold mine in 1988.

In January, facing military defeat on Bougainville, the PNG government contracted mercenaries from Sandline International to prepare a new offensive alongside the PNGDF.

In face of the mutiny, Chan “suspended” the mercenary operation March 20 “for two weeks.” Events continued to outpace his attempts to save his government’s skin, however, as mutinous troops escorted most of the mercenaries to the airport, where they were expelled March 21.



Some 6,000 protesters rallied outside army barracks in Port Moresby on March 20, before being attacked by riot cops. Map shows how Papua New Guinea contains some of the world’s largest gold deposits.

A crowd of up to 6,000 gathered all day March 20 at the Murray Barracks in Port Moresby. Carrying banners reading “Mercenaries out of PNG,” “Bougainville today, PNG next,” and “People’s Coup, enough is enough,” protesters were blocked from marching on Parliament House by the police, a paramilitary force larger than the PNGDF that has remained loyal to Chan.

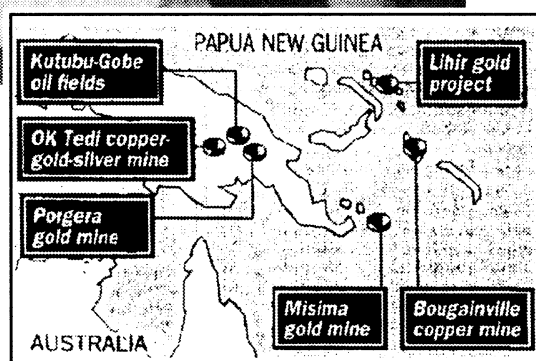
Widespread fraternization between protesters and soldiers has occurred, with enlisted men also addressing crowds.

Police fired tear gas and ammunition at the crowd and into the Murray Barracks on the evening of March 20, wounding at least five soldiers and scores of protesters. PNGDF officers who are part of the mutiny drew sidearms to block soldiers from arming themselves to return fire.

### General Singirok acts

With mercenaries already in the country training PNGDF units with his initial active approval, PNGDF commander-in-chief Brigadier-Gen. Jerry Singirok announced March 17 that he had “decided to call off joint operations with Sandline and demand that the prime minister, his deputy and the defense minister resign within 48 hours and make way for a commission of inquiry.”

Over 4,000 soldiers and officers — almost all of the PNGDF — signed a petition demanding Singirok’s reinstatement shortly after Chan sacked him later that day.



The mercenary operation would “inevitably result in people not only on Bougainville but throughout PNG turning against the Government and the Defence Force if more innocent civilians are lost,” Singirok said, adding, “there is no military solution to the Bougainville conflict.”

Opposition to paying Sandline some \$US36 million — including a reported \$A127,500 (\$A1=US\$0.78) to each mercenary for three months’ duty — was also one of the factors in the revolt. Singirok made further allegations that Chan, a multimillionaire, was using the situation to further line his own pockets.

Earlier this year some 200 PNG soldiers refused to return to active duty on Bougainville following Christmas leave, part of ongoing discontent over pay and conditions in the army, as well as battlefield defeats on Bougainville since March 1996.

The protests were also fueled by the deepening social crisis — the infant mortality rate in PNG rose between 1980 and 1994 from 72 to 83 per 1,000 live births — and popular anger at the austerity program being imposed by the World Bank and other imperialist creditors as a condition for loans to the government.

“I am acting on behalf of all Papua New Guineans,” Singirok stated March 17. “When the country’s health clinics, roads, hospitals, schools and airports were all collapsing, how can we justify the recruiting of a mercenary group that just walks away with all that money?” If the government does not resign, he said, “I will plead to Papua New Guineans to join hands to force them to resign.”

While Singirok “accepted” his sacking and the appointment of his replacement — even intervening to prevent soldiers from blocking both moves — he continued to command the loyalty of his troops and remained in the commander’s residence at Murray Barracks.

On March 21, Singirok renewed his demands that Chan resign — this time by March 25, before Parliament sits again — and that a caretaker government be appointed until the elections, already set for June. This instability has created the greatest threat to the direct interests of Australian imperialism since it fought in World War II to regain New Guinea from its Japanese

imperialist rival.

Canberra has played a central role throughout the Bougainville war, supporting both military and “negotiated” efforts to block the independence struggle. However, the deal with Sandline and moves to use the mercenaries in combat on Bougainville, in particular, sparked a public rift between Chan and Canberra.

### Australian imperialism

The superrich families that rule Australia have \$A4 billion directly invested in PNG — in gold and copper mining as well as oil and gas fields in particular.

The March 18 *Australian Financial Review* editorialized, “Thousands of Australians still live in PNG and their welfare — along with their business interests — should figure preeminently in Canberra’s thinking. Even before yesterday’s events, law and order in PNG was fraying at the edges.

Australia’s close involvement in the PNG economy gives it a direct interest in ensuring that the rule of law ... is maintained.”

A company of 130 soldiers from the First Royal Australian Regiment in Townsville was quickly put “on heightened alert,” with a full battalion also on standby. Townsville is 750 miles from Port Moresby.

Australian Liberal Party prime minister John Howard sent a team of three envoys led by Philip Flood, head of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, who met with Chan in Port Moresby, March 20. In exchange for increased military aid, they reiterated three demands on the PNG government that Howard made in a March 9 meeting with Chan in Sydney: no use of mercenaries on Bougainville, no new military offensive, and a commitment to resume the peace process.

Earlier, in the first hours of the mutiny on March 17, a spokesman for Howard explained, “It is this sort of destabilization that we feared the introduction of such mercenaries into PNG and the region might cause.”

Howard told Parliament in Canberra March 18 that the Australian government “deplored the attempts by Singirok to defy the authority of the duly elected Government of Papua New Guinea” and, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, “gave his blessing” to Chan’s move to sack Singirok as “understandable and justifiable.”

At the same time, Howard said that PNG would face “serious consequences” if Chan didn’t reverse his decision on use of the mercenaries. Kim Beazley, leader of the Labor opposition in the Australian government, agreed with Howard and called for “turning up the Bunsen burner” on Chan. PNG receives \$A320 million in annual “development aid” from Canberra.

Calls for “peacekeeping” intervention in Bougainville have also been made. A March 20 *Australian* editorial advised, “Australia should offer Port Moresby its diplomatic resources to explore avenues for peacemaking efforts through the UN and the South Pacific Forum. But we should acknowledge that any pacification of Bougainville requires military activity to secure, hold and expand areas of Government control.”

According to Moses Havini, the Sydney-based international representative of the pro-independence Bougainville Interim Government, the BRA would “view very suspiciously” any additional military equipment or training by Australia for the PNGDF.

“The war on Bougainville is already lost and PNG should accept that,” BRA leader Francis Ona said from Bougainville, March 18. “The only solution is for the total withdrawal of the PNG forces ... and for some kind of mechanism so that Bougainvilleans can decide for themselves [their] political future.”

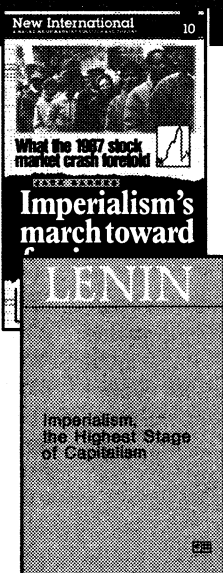
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