

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

What was the difference
between Stalin and Trotsky?

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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California: 25,000 rally to back farm workers

BY NICK SANDS

WATSONVILLE, California — A crowd of 25,000 farm workers, trade unionists, and youth marched here April 13 in support of the United Farm Workers (UFW) effort to organize this state's 20,000 strawberry pickers.

Buses began arriving before dawn in this small city in the heart of California's strawberry fields. Participants were greeted by signs on many lawns saying "Con unión se vive mejor" (With the union we live better). UFW supporters were still arriving at noon as the march, abounded with Mexican flags and UFW banners, stepped off from the local high school and wound its way around town for more than two and a half hours.

The UFW organizes some 26,000 farm workers today. At its peak in the 1970s, the UFW had 80,000 members. The strawberry workers' organizing campaign is a major project of the AFL-CIO.

There are some 270 growers in the nearby Pájaro and Salinas valleys, many of whom have relatively small plots. The union is targeting the large growers, such as the Monsanto-controlled Gargiulo Inc., which has 1,000 workers on its 500 acres. Also targeted are the cooler companies, which control virtually all the marketing for the industry. For several months, the UFW and its supporters have been leafleting supermarkets with the objective of having these markets pressure the growers and the cooler companies to sign contracts with the union.

Thousands of farm workers participated in the April 13 action. Many could easily be identified marching behind UFW banners. Others came alone or in small unidentified groups, and still others stood on their lawns as the march went by, carefully checking it out as they considered whether or not to join the union's organizing effort in the fields. Farm workers also attended from the Yakima Valley in Washington State and the Rio Grande Valley in Texas.

The average pay for strawberry workers today is \$6.25 an hour. In 1985, the average pay was \$6.55 an hour. When inflation is factored in, real wages for the pickers have fallen sharply. Manuel Hernández, 22, has picked strawberries for three years in the Salinas-Watsonville area. He told the *Militant* he is being paid \$4.25 an hour. "We need better pay for the hard work we do," said Hernández. Both he and Raúl Montoya, a strawberry worker and member of the UFW for more than 20 years, said the strawberry growers try to intimidate the workers.

"They say there will be no jobs if we go with the union," Montoya emphasized. "The majority are still scared, but today will help show

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Many youth participated in April 13 demonstration

Militant/Carole Lesnick

Health and safety are key issues in auto workers' strike in Oklahoma

BY BARB GRAHAM
AND LEA SHERMAN

OKLAHOMA CITY, Oklahoma — Lots of rain and cold weather hasn't dampened

the spirits of the 3,600 members of United Auto Workers Local 1999, who went on strike against General Motors (GM) here April 5. GM is the largest auto maker in the world.

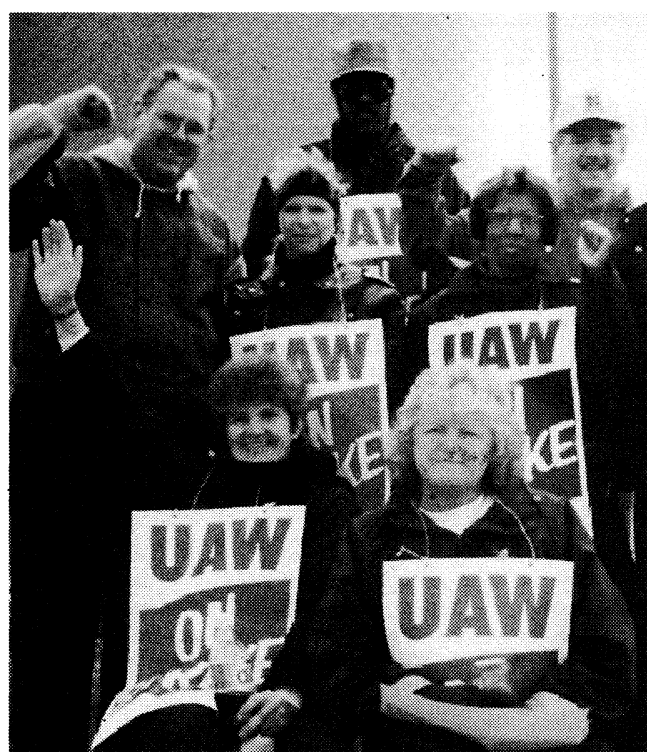
Oklahoma City workers make the 1997 Chevrolet Malibu and the Oldsmobile Cutlass. The Malibu model was named *Motor Trend's* Car of the Year. Both models are "key to regain market share in U.S. sales of midsize cars," according to the Associated Press.

The union hall, right across from the plant, is a hubbub of activity. At the eight picket sites surrounding the car plant, strikers were upbeat and wanted to talk about the issues in their strike — the first walk-out in the union local's 18-year history.

By the April 5 deadline, workers were ready to strike. "I don't think that management thought that we were going to walk," said UAW member Shirley Lester. "Everybody wore black T-shirts and walked out at 11:59, day and night

shift together, skilled trades, everybody." Johnny Lee, who works in the trim de-

Continued on Page 11



Strikers picket GM plant in Oklahoma City April 10

Militant/Barb Graham

Zaire: strike halts capital as rebels gain ground

BY MEGAN ARNEY

As rebels of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire continued their advance, the Zairian capital of Kinshasa was brought to a halt by a general strike April 14-15. The strike and victories of the rebel forces — who have captured over half the country — highlight the weakening of the despised dictatorship of Zairian president Mobutu Sese Seko. Meanwhile, imperialist forces are camped just miles away in the Congo capital of Brazzaville, looking for a chance to intervene and stabilize the situation to protect big-business interests in Zaire.

The strike on April 14 closed shops, offices, schools, and street markets throughout Kinshasa. The action was built as a *ville morte*, or dead city, protest. Few pedestrians were on the streets and taxis, buses, and cars were scarce, according to reports in the

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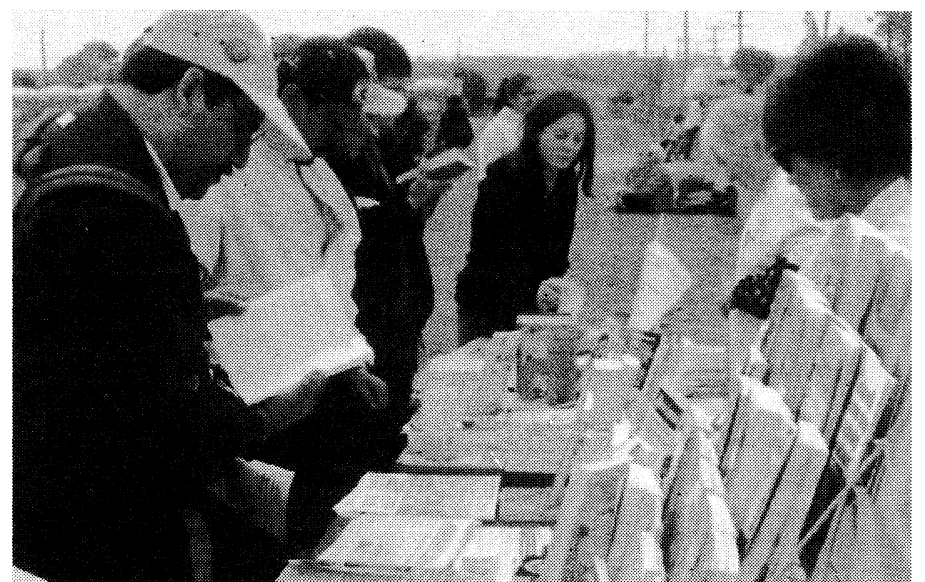
Imperialist occupation force lands in Albania

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — Despite overwhelming opposition among Albania's working people, the governments of Italy, France, and Greece are spearheading an imperialist intervention in the Balkan country of 3 million. The first 1,200 troops — from Italy, France, and Spain — have already taken up positions in the Albanian port of Durres and the nearby capital, Tirana. As we go to press, troops from Greece and Turkey are also on their way to join the occupation force, which is projected to rapidly reach 6,000.

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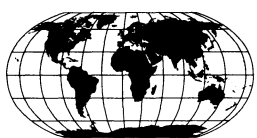
All out to sell 'Militant' and Pathfinder books



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Supporters of the *Militant* are in the home stretch of an international subscription drive and stepped-up sales of Pathfinder books (see article on page 5). Participants at April 13 farm workers rally (above) bought more than 60 subscriptions to the *Militant* or the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Cubans declare determination to resist U.S. attacks — page 8



Washington steps up pressure against Pyongyang

U.S. government officials have escalated imperialist propaganda against north Korea, highlighting a report issued by the regime on 134 children who died of starvation and famine stalking the country. During a two-day visit to Seoul, U.S. defense secretary William Cohen suggested April 11 that Pyongyang was seeking food aid "to keep its citizenry fed while its military continues to function and soak up what limited resources they have." That same day, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John Shalikashvili commenting on north Korean military pilots conducting training maneuvers, remarked in Tokyo, "If they are in such great difficulty, as they claim they are, and if they are in need of assistance, why are they spending their resources on this kind of military exercising?"

Meanwhile, Washington maintains a military force in south Korea that includes 37,000 troops stationed across the border.

Pakistanis demand wheat

Hundreds of Pakistanis, fed up by wheat shortages, stormed a government warehouse April 6 in Peshawar. Cops beat protesters back with sticks. On April 5, just a day before, thousands overtook flour mills and halted trucks carrying wheat. Nearly three weeks had passed since capitalists made wheat available in Peshawar. Claiming a shortage, the government barred exports of wheat to neighboring Afghanistan.

Romania truck plant workers strike against profit squeeze

Some 6,000 Romanian workers at the Roman truck plant in Brasov went on strike to protest the lack of state subsidies to the industry, and the bosses' attempts to sell off parts of the factory. Strikers blocked off the main road to the capital city of Bucharest during the second week of April.

Workers were responding to the Romanian government's plan to deepen its campaign of downsizing and "restructuring" to satisfy demands of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These imperialist financial institutions are also press-



Palestinians continued to protest against the Israeli regime's push to build more Zionist housing settlements in Jerusalem, which the Palestinians claim as their capital. Palestinian security forces were unable to restrain demonstrators from marching into downtown Hebron April 11. Above, Palestinian police struggle to prevent youth from hurling stones and bottles at Israeli troops in Hebron during March protest.

ing for the liquidation of state-owned enterprises as conditions for loans. Bucharest has plans underway to get rid of ten state-run "loss makers," the *Financial Times* reported.

Among those on the chopping block are two refineries, a brewery, a textile plant, and others. Managers of these factories are scrambling to prove their profitability. The Craiova car plant is laying off workers for two weeks due to a sharp drop in sales.

Miners in Siberia win back pay

Miners in southern Siberia forced bosses to promise pay for some of the back wages owed after their 16-hour protest action shut down the Russian trans-Siberian railway April 9. The miners set the railroad tracks ablaze near a southern Siberia town called Kemerovo. Unrest is growing in Russia as

workers battle Moscow to pay their wages. Some 22,000 teachers are striking for back wages, according to the teachers' union there. In the northern city of Arkhangelsk, several dozen thermal plant workers are waging a hunger strike for five months back pay. In the Ural mountains, 300 workers building a subway tunnel under the city of Yekaterinburg refused to return to the surface — their last paycheck received was in November.

Belgian auto workers end strike

Auto workers at the Renault plant in Vilvoorde, Belgium, decided to return to work April 10, after occupying the plant for six weeks. Immediately after the vote, they went to the Volvo factory in Ghent to hold another protest. Workers will continue to occupy the Renault factory's parking lot, where 5,000 new cars sit, ready for sale.

The strike began right after Renault officials announced February 27 they would be closing the factory in July, leaving 3,100 people jobless. That decision by the auto bosses sparked a wave of protests, including a demonstration of 50,000 workers through Brussels.

Strikes barrage bosses in Italy

Workers in Italy have organized a barrage of labor actions in April. Air traffic controllers in 11 Italian airports struck April 7 for eight hours, affecting international flights. The next day, electrical workers held a four-hour work stoppage in protest of plans to privatize the state-run company, Enel. Train

engineers have called a 24-hour strike for April 19, and ferry workers plan several days of strikes in the same week.

Prison rebellions rock Colombia

Inmates took over the prison in Velledupar, Colombia, April 3. They demanded freedom and safe passage out of Colombia and seized 13 hostages. Over the past two months, prisoners in Colombia have rebelled in at least eight prisons calling for better conditions and an end to corruption. The Velledupar penal facility, which houses 600 prisoners, was designed for 120 inmates.

Prisoners strike in Puerto Rico

Protesting the lack of medicine for ailing prisoners and mistreatment of relatives who visit them, thousands of inmates at Las Cucharas prison in Ponce, Puerto Rico, struck for a day. The April 8 action was part of an island wide inmate strike. Corrections administrator Zoe Laboy, denied accusations of harassing visitors, but did not comment on the accessibility of medicine for inmates. She claimed prisoners are treated respectfully, but "I'm not going to lie, there are always exceptions."

Clinton to apologize for syphilis study on 623 Black men

Mary Glynn, a White House spokeswoman, said April 8 that U.S. president William Clinton will issue an apology on behalf of the government for conducting a 40-year syphilis study on 623 Black men. The experiment was conducted from 1932 to 1972, which had an aim of studying the effects of untreated syphilis.

For the 40-year duration of the experiment the men were never told they had syphilis, a disease that causes mental illness and death, and were never given the penicillin treatment — even after it became a standard treatment in 1947. Fred Gray, the attorney for victims who filed a lawsuit against the government, remarked, "To allow men to suffer and die in the name of science is insidious and vile." In an out-of-court settlement in 1974, the government paid \$37,000 to each survivor of the study and \$15,000 for the heirs — a paltry sum of \$10 million to more than 6,000 people.

Florida court delays execution

The Florida Supreme Court postponed the April 15 execution of Leo Jones, after the inmate appealed on the ground that another prisoner, Pedro Medina, suffered horribly during his state-sanctioned murder on March 25. A mask worn by Medina caught fire, producing foot-long flames that scorched his scalp and other parts of his body.

The court ruled April 12 that a hearing should be conducted to investigate the claim of "cruel and unusual punishment" since the March 25 electric chair fire was the second in recent years. In 1990, another prisoner's head caught fire as he was being executed.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

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'I am honored to support *The Militant* newspaper and its importance to grassroots organizations like the Land Loss Fund and its parent organization, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT). The information that *The Militant* conveys through the stories that are covered transcends cultural, geographical, political and socio-economical boundaries.'

Gary R. Grant, Executive Director, The Land Loss Fund, Inc., Tillery, North Carolina.

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Steelworkers resist job cuts in Germany

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

When Krupp-Hoesch, the German steel company, announced March 18 that it intended to take over its larger competitor, Thyssen, Chief Executive Officer Gerhard Cromme of Krupp was met by thousands of protesting steelworkers at the company headquarters, who shouted "Job killer!" The next day the company said it was putting the takeover bid on ice and forming a joint steel venture.

Cromme was hiding behind a riot-shielded police force who sheltered him from flying eggs as he tried to present his plans to the crowd. He was dubbed "Job killer" in 1991, when he organized the merger of Krupp and Hoesch and eliminated several thousand jobs. According to union officials, the merger would threaten tens of thousands of the remaining 110,000 jobs at Thyssen.

Officials at Thyssen, who have trimmed their workforce 9.3 percent over the last five months, vowed to fight Krupp's "wild west" tactics and the hostile takeover attempt. London's *Financial Times*, however, denounced Krupp's withdrawal as a "cop-out.... They should have expected the political reaction and having launched the bid, should have been prepared see it through."

The unfriendly bid by Krupp-Hoesch on Thyssen was welcomed by business analysts in Germany who praised the effect combined operations of steel production would have on German auto industry, and hoped that it would put pressure on the whole steel industry in Europe to sharpen its competitiveness. Shareholders were happy with the bid, which would grant them 435 D-Marks per share — 25 percent above the value on the Frankfurt stock market. The bid was backed by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (the Deutsche Bank's investment bank in London), Dresdner Bank, and Goldman Sachs.

An estimated 9 billion D-marks was Krupp-Hoesch's bid to obtain control of Thyssen. The merged company would have become Europe's third largest steelmaker after British Steel and the French Ucinor Sacilor, and the world's fifth after the Japanese and South Korean giants Nippon and Posco.

Company mergers through unfriendly takeovers peaked in the United States in the end of the 1980s when according to the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, 2,730 companies were taken over between 1987 and 1989. *Der Spiegel* ran a substantial piece in its March 17 issue describing a new trend in German business circles — higher profits at the expense of jobs. The article reflected the divisions within the Germany ruling class over the Krupp-Hoesch bid and other moves toward downsizing by the capitalists, which are sparking fears of growing labor unrest over the high unemployment.

Der Spiegel reports that since 1991, some



More than 20,000 IG Metall unionists marched in Frankfurt March 25 in front of Deutsche Bank, against job losses.

2-3 million jobs have been lost in Germany. In February 1997, unemployment was slightly higher than January's figure of 4.658 million reaching 4.672 million people. Germany's jobless rate of 12.2 percent, reportedly a record level since World War II,

was remarked in several big business dailies to be the highest since Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933.

A number of jobs were eliminated in the eastern parts of Germany after reunification, but 1.2 million jobs have also been chopped in west Germany since 1991, as high labor costs and a high D-mark has reduced the competitiveness of west German industry. Automakers like Daimler Benz and steelmakers like Krupp-Hoesch and Thyssen are now on a downsizing drive to increase their competitiveness, while unemployment rates are at record levels. Unfriendly takeovers have been rare in Germany and Chancellor Helmut Kohl criticized Krupp-Hoesch's methods.

Steelworkers were not calmed by Krupp-Hoesch's retreat on the hostile bid. On March 25, some 20,000 steelworkers surrounded the Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt — Germany's financial center — protesting the bank's involvement in the takeover. In Dortmund, where the steel mill that is most likely to be closed is located,

6,000 steelworkers marched in the streets. In both Thyssen's and Krupp-Hoesch's steel mills, production was down, reported the German daily *Die Welt*.

After Krupp-Hoesch had publicly to declared that they had withdrawn their bid on Thyssen, negotiations over cooperation between the two steel companies continued. On March 26, chief executives announced that they would form a joint steel company and assured workers this would not mean layoffs. Krupp-Hoesch promised investments to create new jobs in Dortmund, where more cuts are expected. The union estimated that 8,000 steel jobs will be eliminated by this fusion.

The day before the announcement, some 5,700 steelworkers at Thyssen in Dortmund went on strike indefinitely, followed the next day by 3,000 steelworkers at Krupp-Hoesch steel mills in Bochum, and 2,500 workers in Siegen and Krefeld.

On March 28, the strikes ended after the union received an agreement from the new company that no layoffs will be made because of the merger, although the new company will be able to cut 6,600 jobs until year 2002.

The Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* commented March 27 that for the German banks and shareholders, Krupp-Hoesch's bid was a fiasco. It shows that Germany's leading bank, Deutsche Bank is not able to accomplish the same bold takeovers as the banks in London and New York.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union at Scania truck factory in Södertälje outside Stockholm, Sweden.

New Zealand government steps up offensive against social entitlements

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — On April 1, new rules came into effect that place additional restrictions on the availability of welfare benefits. These are part of a stepped-up offensive against social entitlements by New Zealand's coalition government, which was formed at the end of 1996.

Single parents on the domestic purposes benefit are now required to look for work or training once their youngest child reaches the age of 14. Any failure to take up a job or training opportunity without "good and sufficient reason" will be penalized. Those with children aged 7-13 years must attend a yearly planning meeting to make plans for getting a job when their children turn 14.

People receiving the Widows Benefit and partners of people on the Unemployment Benefit are also subject to the new rules.

The penalties for failing the work test are based on a "three-strikes-and-you-are-out" formula. Failing a work test includes not going to an interview, not taking up an offer of "suitable" employment, not complying with an action plan agreed with the Employment Service, or not attending the yearly planning meeting.

For the first failure to comply, a person's benefits are to be reduced by 20 percent. For the second instance, the reduction is 40 percent, and 100 percent if the situation continues for more than 28 days. On the third failure, the benefit is canceled, and the person is ineligible to receive a benefit for three months.

The government is seeking an exemption from the Privacy Act for data passed from the Employment Service, (which will do the work test) to Social Welfare, (which pays the benefit), so that any cut in income would come out of the next benefit payment.

The new rules immediately affect about 60,000 people, predominantly women. In response, the Wellington People's Resource Centre organized a lunchtime protest on April 1 in Wellington.

Protest organizer Catriona Ross called on the government to provide affordable child care and after-school care to assist beneficiaries who wanted to work. Punitive measures would not create jobs where none existed, she said.

Government spokespeople claim the work tests have been introduced because of concern that beneficiaries are unable to find jobs because they have become dependent on welfare. In mid-March, the Social Welfare Department hosted a major conference called "Beyond Dependency," which promoted this theme.

Contempt for unemployed workers

Comments by Margaret Bazley, the Director-General of Social Welfare, highlighted the contempt for jobless workers that ran throughout the conference.

Bazley said that 25 percent of children in New Zealand have no parents in paid work, with the figure for Maori children 48 percent and for Pacific Island children 45 percent. This, she claimed, is causing an intergenerational dependency problem, so now "we have got children whose only fantasy, whose only dream, is life on a benefit."

The focus, she said, had to be on "the people who have lost their living skills, they're living in a chaotic state. They don't go to bed at a decent time, they don't get up in the morning, they don't get their kids to school, they don't feed them, they don't give them lunch so those kids are doomed to that same life-style."

Bazley denied there was a problem with a lack of jobs. "I think the reason that they are not in jobs is not because the jobs aren't there. It's because other people are more attractive to employers."

their babies are 12 weeks old.

The other was Connie Driscoll, who runs a shelter for homeless women in Chicago and advocates a time limit on welfare, with charities as the only fallback for those in need.

Beneficiaries organizations and social policy researchers organized a counter-conference called "Beyond Poverty," and protest rallies were held outside the official conference.

Sue Bradford of the Auckland Unemployed Workers Rights Centre, stated, "There are hundreds and thousands of adults who want jobs and don't have them. That is the primary cause of people and kids being benefit dependent."

The official jobless rate in December 1996 was one in 10 people of working age. For workers who are Maori and Pacific Islanders, the rate is one in seven. In January 1997, for every job notified to the Labour Department's employment service there were 22 people registered as unemployed.

The government is planning to implement a "work-for-the-dole" scheme for those on unemployment benefits.

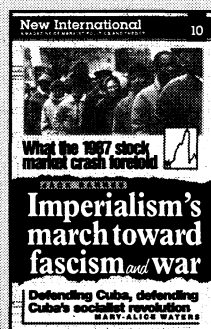
Rightist Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters has also been prominent in attacking those on benefits. In a speech to Bay of Plenty business people outlining changes to government agencies dealing with unemployed, Peters declared that "the days of sitting on the beach drawing the dole are over." In an earlier speech he said, "Welfarism is a drug that saps individual and national vitality."

The government has indicated it plans to cut other entitlements won by working people. One proposal floated is to do away with accident compensation coverage for so-called minor injuries, which would force victims to pay for their own medical expenses or face higher insurance premiums. These minor injuries make up 90 percent of claims covered by the current accident compensation scheme.

In September, a referendum is scheduled to be held on whether to introduce a compulsory savings scheme for retirement. Regardless of the results of this, government ministers have been declaring that the existing old-age pension is unaffordable and needs to be cut, such as through means-testing or raising the eligibility age to 70.

Janet Roth is a member of the United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union.

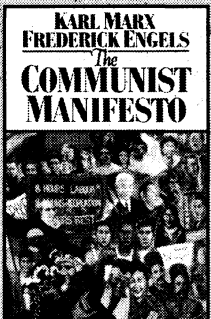
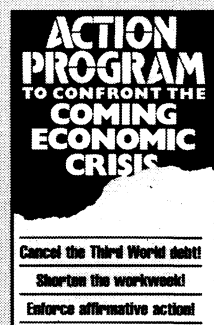
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25,000 march to back farm workers

Continued from front page
them that we have support. That we don't have to be afraid."

The United Farm Workers is demanding a living wage. The union says a five-cent raise to the workers for every basket of strawberries picked would result in a 50 percent increase in the berry pickers' wages. The UFW is also demanding clean drinking water and bathrooms in the fields, job security, health insurance coverage, and an end to sexual harassment of female farm workers.

The big support that exists among other unionists for the farm workers' fight was reflected in the size of the crowd. The farm workers' struggle is being boosted today as it was in the 1960s and early 1970s by a rise in Chicano and Latino nationalism and is increasingly popular among youth.

The big turnout was also fueled by anger over anti-immigrant moves by the federal and the California state government; by the federal court decision in the week before the march upholding California's anti-affirmative action Proposition 209; and by the California labor board's decision on April 11 to rewrite the rules so that overtime pay does not begin after eight hours on the job, but only after 40 hours have been worked.

Trade union buses were organized to the march from across California, with a particularly big turnout by unions from the Los Angeles area. Other union delegations proudly identified themselves as having

come from Montana, Oregon, Arizona, New Mexico, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Colorado, Oklahoma, and other states. Substantial contingents marched behind the banners of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, the machinists union, the oil workers, several construction unions, the Teamsters, the Service Employees International Union, the United Auto Workers, the Seafarers, and many others. Nurses from Kaiser hospitals in California, who are organizing a one-day strike on April 16, leafleted the crowd.

Chapters of MEChA — the Chicano Student Movement of Atzlán — from California and other states organized buses and carried their banners in the march. "I wanted to be part of history being made right now," Rafael Nolasco, 19, from the University of California at Irvine explained.

As the march stepped off, a group of Aztec dancers broke out in front of the throng and made their way down the street to cheers from many gathered on the sidewalks.

Immigrant rights organizations were prominent in the march. Many political groups also participated. Applause went up along the route when a handful of banners went by reflecting NAACP chapters. Also welcomed by the crowd were activists from the Irish-American Unity Conference, who brought along an Irish bagpipe troupe. These activists campaigned at the demonstration for freedom for Róisín McAliskey,



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Many union contingents participated in the demonstration supporting strawberry pickers in Watsonville, California. Above, members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) lend their support at the march.

an Irish political activist imprisoned in Britain and fighting extradition to Germany. Several top union officials were at the front of the march, including AFL-CIO president John Sweeney, UFW president and vice president Arturo Rodríguez and Dolores Huerta, and others, along with Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson.

Also carrying banners were the Green Party, Democratic Socialists of America, International Socialists Organization, the Labor Party, and others. The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists carried a banner that read in English and Spanish, "Support the strawberry workers. Equal rights for immigrants. Defend the Cuban Revolution."

A few rightists intervened in the day's activities. Several supporters of fascist Lyndon LaRouche handed out copies of the *New Federalist* newspaper and other material. A small group of right-wingers led by local radio talk show host Rob Roberts backed the growers and heckled the march chanting, "Labor unions go home."

The growers have formed an organization dubbed the Strawberry Workers and Farmers Alliance to counter the UFW. The SWFA claims to have a membership of over 6,000, most of whom they say are strawberry workers.

With the strawberry season just getting under way, and building on the momentum generated by the huge outpouring of support, the UFW is sending several dozen organizers into the fields to sign up new members.

'Militant' supporters push to collect the rest of \$110,000 fund drive goal

BY VALERIE JOHNSON
AND DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — From farm workers marching in Watsonville, California, to young feminists meeting in Washington, D.C. and demonstrators protesting racism and police brutality in New York and Philadelphia, the response to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* shows that fighters who are looking for ways to respond to the deepening attacks on our rights and living standards are interested in a socialist analysis.

This is where the Militant Fund comes in. The fund drive is needed to continue the indispensable coverage that only the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* provide.

Some \$10,000 came in to the *Militant* office over the last week; we now need to collect about \$22,000 a week for the last two weeks of the drive to meet the international goal of \$110,000. The challenge before all *Militant* readers and supporters is to redouble our efforts to ensure every area meets their Militant Fund goals and com-

pletes this drive in full and on time by the April 26 deadline. We can go well over this by collecting all outstanding pledges and continuing to reach out to workers, young rebels, and others who value the role of the *Militant* but have not yet made a contribution to the fund.

Over the last couple weeks, *Militant* supporters who work on the railroad have raised several new contributions on the job. These include donations of \$25 in Seattle, \$40 in Philadelphia, and \$14 in New York. A textile worker in North Carolina who is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees also gave \$15, and a member of the same union in Atlanta kicked in \$5, when asked by a co-worker who supports the fund.

Partisans of the socialist press in Boston sent a letter to potential contributors appealing for support to the Militant Fund. The letter was co-signed by Wendy Schwartz, a postal worker and member of the National Association of Letter Carriers; Carol Thomas, the coordinator of the July 26 Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba; Jarad Friedman of the Young Socialists; and Gary Cohen, director of the Militant Fund efforts in Boston.

An April 15 note from Tom Fiske in the Twin Cities reported on the success of a special fund meeting there. "Forty-five people attended the meeting, at which *Militant* reporter Argiris Malapanis was the featured speaker. The audience included seven students from the University of Minnesota, six of whom were new to attending events at the Pathfinder bookstore. They came as a result of the extensive tables that had been kept up at the University in order to build the event.

"We collected \$1,240 — raising our total so far to \$4,380. We raised \$340 in new pledges, so that the amount pledged is \$6,690 towards a local goal of \$6,000. What made the meeting especially attractive was the eyewitness report by Malapanis of the rebellion in Albania. People in attendance were most interested in the fighting capacities of the working people of Albania and an accurate, first hand description of what they are fighting for."

The experience in the Twin Cities reaffirms that when supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* organize a consistent campaign and reach out broadly, we will get an enthusiastic response and can meet and surpass the \$110,000 goal.

Watsonville marchers snap up socialist press

Socialist workers from California, Washington state, New York, New Jersey, and Minnesota had a big day selling revolutionary literature at the April 13 Watsonville march.

A total of 123 books and pamphlets were sold to march participants. This included 15 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* in English and Spanish. Books and pamphlets on the Cuban revolution were also among the most popular titles. A Teamster union member from Wisconsin stopped at a table staffed by socialist trade unionists from Los Angeles and bought all four volumes of the Teamster series by Farrell Dobbs and the *Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes.

Socialists sold 32 subscriptions to the *Militant* at the event along with 31 subscriptions to the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. More than 150 single copies of the *Militant* were also sold to march participants.

Fifty people attended an open house after the march and rally hosted by the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party. The more than 20 youth who attended came from several California cities and from Washington state. Craig Honts, who was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles in the recent election, and Paul Pederson from the Young Socialists in St. Paul, Minnesota, urged all who attended to join the socialist movement.

— N.S.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE MILITANT FUND			
Country/City	Goal	Paid	%
France	\$350	\$275	79%
United States			
Denver	\$40	\$40	100%
Other	\$683	\$658	96%
New York	\$12,000	\$10,630	89%
Atlanta	\$3,500	\$3,005	86%
Detroit	\$4,750	\$3,542	75%
Peoria	\$1,800	\$1,323	74%
Philadelphia	\$4,000	\$2,850	71%
San Francisco	\$9,000	\$6,190	69%
Houston	\$4,000	\$2,561	64%
Greensboro	\$2,250	\$1,420	63%
Salt Lake City	\$2,000	\$1,190	60%
Miami	\$2,000	\$1,135	57%
Washington, D.C.	\$2,800	\$1,587	57%
Los Angeles	\$9,000	\$5,069	56%
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$2,680	54%
Cleveland	\$2,500	\$1,335	53%
Des Moines	\$2,000	\$1,066	53%
Twin Cities	\$6,000	\$3,140	52%
Newark	\$7,500	\$3,653	49%
Boston	\$4,500	\$2,160	48%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$2,655	38%
Birmingham	\$2,300	\$822	36%
Chicago	\$7,500	\$1,970	26%
Morgantown	\$1,500	\$315	21%
U.S. Total	\$103,623	\$60,995	59%
United Kingdom			
London	\$750	\$577	77%
Manchester	\$750	\$105	14%
UK Total	\$1,500	\$682	45%
New Zealand			
Christchurch	\$1,750	\$926	53%
Auckland	\$3,500	\$1,393	40%
Wellington	\$140	\$0	0%
NZ Total	\$5,390	\$2,319	43%
Canada			
Toronto	\$1,440	\$1,000	69%
Montreal	\$2,000	\$433	22%
Vancouver	\$1,080	\$0	0%
Canada Total	\$4,520	\$1,433	32%
Australia	\$1,000	\$0	0%
Sweden	\$200	\$0	0%
International Total	\$116,733	\$65,704	60%
Should Be:	\$110,000	\$85,800	78%

\$110,000!

\$100,000

\$90,000

\$80,000

\$70,000

\$60,000

\$50,000

\$40,000

\$30,000

\$20,000

\$10,000

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

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

WEEK 5

All out to sell 'Militant,' books

BY GREG McCARTAN

"We're on a drive now!" reports *Militant* salesperson Barb Graham from Houston. That is the spirit from socialists around the world following the target week in the March 8-April 26 *Militant* subscription drive. From a rally against racism in Australia to the 25,000-strong march backing farm workers

in California; from the MEChA conference in Michigan to protests against police brutality in New York and the Young Feminists Summit in Washington, D.C., socialists met and won new readers to the revolutionary press and to Pathfinder books in large numbers this week.

With two weeks to go we have a big challenge: selling 700 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 261 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 317 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* to co-workers and other unionists, those involved in protest action, and youth attracted to the fight for socialism.

As the reports this week printed below describe, reaching out with the *Militant* has been aided by socialists going on a campaign to sell thousands of revolutionary books and pamphlets distributed by Pathfinder Press over the coming months. Pathfinder has invoiced several dozen orders for thousands of books, pamphlets, and Education for Socialists bulletins as part of a "supersaver" sale to Pathfinder bookstores which are passing along the savings to those seeking revolutionary literature.

This was our best week so far, with 217 subscriptions to the *Militant* sold, along with hundreds of books and pamphlets.

It will take a daily campaign by socialists and other supporters of the *Militant* between now and April 26 to meet or go over local goals so we can reach our international goal in full and on time. Supporters report plans for the next two weeks include all-day and regional teams, special literature tables at political events and protest actions, door-to-door teams in working-class neighborhoods, and follow up on those who purchased a single copy of the paper to see if they want to subscribe. Socialists in Miami are planning to go to Puerto Rico and seeking others who want to join a team there the last weekend in April.

This past Saturday I was able to get together with socialists in Chicago. Before going out on sales teams, we took some time to look through the *Militant* as well as books by Pathfinder that we wanted to sell to people in the city that day. It helped a lot to go over what is in the *Militant* on the events in Albania and Yugoslavia, and to discuss the books and Education for Socialists bulletins available from Pathfinder on the revolutions in those countries and why working people should oppose imperialist military intervention.

We also discussed the events in Zaire covered in the *Militant*, and reviewed rich material in speeches by Ernesto Che Guevara and Malcolm X on the struggles of workers and peasants against colonial rule in that country. These are published in several Pathfinder books and pamphlets. Getting to know what's in Pathfinder titles makes a big difference in explaining to other fighters why they need to read them to be effective in their struggles today.

One sign of the upturn in the sales campaign and the political results we are getting from reaching out are the number of enthusiastic short articles supporters are sending in. Information on classes being organized as part of this effort will be useful in the coming weeks. Also, readers are encouraged to write about sales of the 14-volume series *Writings of Leon Trotsky* — which contains hundreds of articles, letters, and works not available in other books by the Russian revolutionary leader — and of sales of *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*, a six-volume set documenting the fight for and proceedings of the Third International led by Lenin and the leadership team of the Bolshevik party.

From Sydney, Australia, Joanne Kuniansky sent this note: "The highlight of our sales target week was on Saturday at a rally against racism and at a meeting on Ernesto Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution. We did special offers on "supersaver" Pathfinder titles for 50 percent off with a subscription to the *Militant* or a Pathfinder Readers Club membership at both events. We sold 53 single copies of the *Militant*, three new *Militant* subscriptions and three renewals, two *New Internationals*, and 10 Pathfinder titles this week! Tomorrow we

Continued on Page 14

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

Countries/Cities	March			Previous Months		
	Goal	Sold	%	Feb	Jan	Dec
GREECE	13	43	331%	23%	46%	54%
FRANCE	25	41	164%	96%	20%	84%
AUSTRALIA	36	38	106%	44%	175%	136%
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta	48	75	156%	88%	117%	115%
Boston	65	89	137%	55%	100%	111%
Washington, D.C.	64	86	134%	67%	84%	106%
San Francisco	110	124	113%	168%	243%	63%
Miami	41	44	107%	144%	117%	62%
Philadelphia	50	51	102%	54%	88%	18%
Chicago	77	75	97%	84%	103%	108%
Houston	65	63	97%	128%	34%	42%
Pittsburgh	54	52	96%	49%	71%	49%
Los Angeles	120	113	94%	95%	81%	73%
Greensboro	41	37	90%	20%	22%	70%
Detroit	54	48	89%	233%	123%	50%
Seattle	80	67	84%	79%	84%	30%
Newark	171	130	76%	57%	51%	17%
Cleveland	50	35	70%	94%	66%	44%
New York	245	147	60%	43%	45%	41%
Peoria	27	15	56%	52%	130%	58%
Birmingham	50	22	44%	78%	106%	30%
Salt Lake City	27	8	30%	74%	50%	70%
Twin Cities	104	30	29%	43%	41%	46%
Morgantown	32	6	19%	69%	56%	25%
Des Moines	45	7	16%	71%	31%	31%
U.S. Total	1620	1324	74%	71%	74%	48%
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%	100%	100%	100%
NEW ZEALAND						
Auckland	45	28	62%	41%	100%	91%
Christchurch	35	18	51%	100%	136%	28%
NZ Total	80	46	80%	61%	112%	68%
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	146	97%	78%	141%	46%
Manchester*	78	0	0%	0%	46%	13%
UK Total	228	146	64%	36%	95%	28%
CANADA						
Toronto	80	43	54%	40%	226%	118%
Montreal	80	32	40%	46%	61%	54%
Vancouver*	41	0	0%	34%	154%	34%
CANADA Total	201	75	37%	38%	146%	78%
SWEDEN*	55	0	0%	109%	69%	110%

*No new report

IN THE UNIONS

	Goal	Sold	Total	Feb	Jan	Dec
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	2	50%	100%	50%	125
CANADA						
IAM	8	2	25%	88%	113	125
USWA	12	5	42%	60%	25%	163
CAW*	6	0	0%	0%	17%	17%
Total	18	7	39%	81%	72%	79%
UNITED STATES						
UFCW	6	11	183	67%	17%	33%
UMWA	3	4	133	100%	67%	0%
UAW	50	35	70%	82%	94%	38%
USWA	46	15	33%	48%	22%	26%
UNITE	26	8	31%	23%	69%	42%
OCAW	44	12	27%	27%	16%	25%
UTU	94	25	27%	0%	15%	12%
IAM	59	12	20%	58%	39%	32%
U.S. Total	322	122	38%	37%	37%	26%
UNITED KINGDOM						
TGWU	7	2	29%	100%	0%	0%
AEEU	10	1	10%	40%	40%	40%
RMT	8	1	13%	0%	50%	0%
Total U.K.	25	4	16%	44%	33%	15%

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

	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
NEW ZEALAND							
Auckland	35	26	74%	2	1	14	4
Christchurch	25	15	60%	1	1	10	6
Wellington	3	1	33%			1	0
N.Z. total	63	42	67%	3	2	25	10
SWEDEN	15	9	60%	7	1	10	6
UNITED KINGDOM							
London	45	25	56%	8	6	25	16
Manchester	21	10	48%	2	0	10	4
U.K. total	66	35	53%	10	6	35	20
UNITED STATES							
Tucson	4	4	100%	2	0	0	0
Peoria, IL	25	24	96%	3	2	10	12
Miami	30	24	80%	15	12	20	14
Washington, DC	42	33	79%	15	9	15	12
Boston	30	22	73%	10	8	20	21
Greensboro, NC	30	21	70%	15	9	10	11
Atlanta	27	18	67%	14	10	16	14
San Francisco	70	46	66%	30	24	35	24
Houston	50	29	58%	20	9	20	7
Twin Cities, MN	70	40	57%	10	4	15	9
Los Angeles	100	57	57%	50	28	50	28
Salt Lake City	24	13	54%	10	9	8	11
Birmingham, AL	32	17	53%	5	3	15	2
Seattle	60	29	48%	25	4	25	12
Detroit	40	19	48%	7	2	15	6
Pittsburgh	45	20	44%	4	0	15	14
New York	150	62	41%	75	32	65	20
Des Moines	40	16	40%	25	3	20	3
Philadelphia	35	12	34%	10	3	10	12
Chicago	70	21	30%	25	10	30	21
Denver	4	1	25%	4	2	3	0
Newark, NJ	130	30	23%	45	20	60	11
Cleveland	35	8	23%	7	2	10	2
Morgantown, WV	27	2	7%	2	0	10	0
Cincinnati	5	0	0%	1	0	0	0
Spokane, WA	10	0	0%	2	0	6	0
YS convention							317
U.S. total	1185	568	48%	431	205	503	583
AUSTRALIA	18	8	44%	3	1	10	8
GREECE	5	2	40%			3	1
ICELAND	10	4	40%	1	0	4	1
CANADA							
Vancouver	40	20	50%	5	0	15	8
Toronto	30	7	23%	7	2	10	0
Montreal	35	8	23%	10	2	35	24
CANADA total	105	35	33%	22	4	60	32
PUERTO RICO	1	0	0%	3	0	2	1
International totals	1468	703	50%	480	219	652	662
Should be	1400	1000	71%	450	321	600	429

IN THE UNIONS

CANADA							
USWA	11	5	45%	2	1	7	1
IAM	8	3	38%			7	0
TOTAL	19	8	42%	2	1	14	1
NEW ZEALAND							
MWU	6	2	33%	0	0	0	0
UFBGWU	3	1	33%	0	0	0	0
EU	7	2	29%	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	16	5	31%	0	1	0	0
UNITED STATES							
UTU	55	21	38%	4	4	28	7
IAM	72	23	32%	16	6	37	6
USWA	42	11	26%	8	3	31	2
UAW	45	9	20%	10	3	20	5
UNITE	21	4	19%	15	6	15	4
OCAW	28	5	18%	5	0	18	0
UFCW	14	1	7%	10	3	6	2
UMWA	2	0	0%			2	0
TOTAL	279	74	27%	68	25	157	26
AUSTRALIA							
AMWU	4	0	0%			3	1

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.

Young Socialists demand: Stop police brutality

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

The following statement was issued by the New York Young Socialists

Stop Police brutality! The recent killings of Kevin Cedeno and Librado Sánchez should be condemned and the cops put on trial and sent to jail.

The fight against police brutality has become a major issue in New York City. Through this struggle, many people have been rudely awakened to the brutal nature of cops. It has become clearer to many fighters over the past year that the police are an

enemy of the working class. They prowl through our neighborhoods, harassing and beating up young people, especially youth from oppressed nationalities.

The big business media attempts to portray workers and youth as criminals to justify the cops' role as judge, jury, and executioner on the streets.

Far from being crime fighters and defenders of justice, cops perpetrate and participate in criminal activity. This gang also sells drugs and guns, and terrorizes working-class communities. The police force is a racist and sexist organization through and through. There aren't "just a few rotten apples" in the police force, as they want us to believe. The entire organization is rotten and corrupt.

As the capitalist system sinks deeper into crisis, the rulers of these countries compete intensely with each other to

maximize profits. Part of this competition includes going after the social gains of the working class and squeezing more money out of our hides.

The attacks on welfare and other entitlements like social security, closing down factories and laying off of workers, destroying unions, assaults on affirmative action, cutting funds for education, chipping away at women's right to choose abortion, and the superexploitation of immigrant workers are all a part of this offensive. But as the attacks on our standard of living intensify, growing numbers of workers and youth begin to resist these measures.

The ruling class is aware of this, so they deploy more cops on the streets, while at the same time clamping down on basic democratic rights, like the right to assemble, freedom of speech, freedom from illegal search and seizure, and other rights. The

police serve the interests of the capitalist ruling class, and enforce these crackdowns. Whether they're breaking up a picket line of striking workers or brutalizing young people who are trying to defend an abortion clinic from rightist forces, the cops will always be defending the enemy of working people.

How do we end police brutality once and for all? Cops under capitalism guard the property and interests of the wealthy. They uphold the capitalist state. As we struggle against police brutality, gaining confidence in our capacity to fight and win, we must link up with other fighters and build a movement capable of overthrowing this bourgeois government and creating a new society based on human solidarity.

Workers, youth and all those fighting against injustice should demand: "Jail the Guilty Cops!"

March condemns racist attacks in Philadelphia

BY PETE SEIDMAN

PHILADELPHIA — One thousand people marched through the Grays Ferry neighborhood April 14 protesting a racist assault by some 20-50 white thugs on the family of Annette Williams.

Part of the march route went through areas that racists are trying to preserve as segregated enclaves, where Blacks passing through have been attacked for years. Some neighborhood bigots boasted that they would outmobilize the demonstrators by three or four times. A few hundred racists were in the streets. They stood along the march route with their backs turned towards the disciplined demonstrators, who refused to be provoked. Most of the protesters were from the nearby Black sections of Grays Ferry, with a significant number of supporters from around the city. One group had driven all the way from Detroit to show solidarity.

The marchers demanded the city arrest all those involved in the February 23 attack. City officials did not respond to the assault until Charles Reeves, director of the Grays Ferry West Community Action Committee, with the initial backing of Nation of Islam Minister Rodney Muhammad, called the April 14 march.

The city administration, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and area churches launched a major campaign pressing the Nation of Islam and Reeves' organization to call off the march. They claimed it would encourage more racist violence. At the same time, the march put pressure on these forces to take unaccustomed action. The cops had initially refused to go after the racist mob,

but later began to make arrests (now numbering nine).

Grays Ferry members of the clergy from both Black and white churches organized an April 2 prayer meeting and candlelight procession attended by Mayor Rendell and Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua. Nearly 1,000 people attended this event, where organizers violence-baited the proposed April 14 demonstration and presented their gathering as a peaceful alternative.

Philadelphia NAACP president Jerome Mondesire had brokered a meeting March 16 where city officials offered Reeves substantial funding if he would call off the demonstration.

When this failed, Rendell approached the Minister Louis Farrakhan and offered to join

him at a city-sponsored alternative indoor prayer meeting April 14 in exchange for the Nation of Islam's agreement to pull out of the demonstration.

Farrakhan accepted the mayor's offer. The two scheduled the prayer service to occur at the same time as the demonstration in a different part of town.

In his speech, Farrakhan offered a three-part solution to the situation in Grays Ferry. He called for justice for the Williams family; a civilian review board for the police department; and the promotion of more Black cops within the department.

Pete Seidman is a member of Local 125 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Youth in U.S. prepare for festival in Cuba

BY JACK WILLEY AND MEG NOVAK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — At conferences and protest actions across the country over the last week, dozens of young activists learned about the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, which will take place in Cuba July 27-August 4.

Participants in the Young Feminist Summit, April 11-13 in Washington D.C., spoke in workshops and classes to publicize the festival. The D.C. Committee for the World Youth Festival had an information table at the summit throughout the conference, and over a dozen people signed up their groups to get more information on the festival. Groups such as Feminist Voice in Durango, Colorado, requested more information so they can help build the festival by running ads in local publications and publicizing the festival in their areas. Representatives from the United Tenants' Party in Blacksburg, Virginia; the Feminist Action League in Ithaca, New York; and others agreed to take this information back to their groups and encourage them to endorse the festival.

At the national conference of the

Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), which took place in East Lansing, Michigan, April 11-13, the Detroit Justice for Cuba Coalition set up an information table about the festival. Over a dozen people from ten MEChA chapters and other groups signed up for more information about participating. Activists are setting up meetings with them to follow up on the discussions at the MEChA conference.

In Minneapolis and St. Paul, efforts are under way to get broad support for an informational meeting taking place April 30 at La Raza Student Cultural Center at the University of Minnesota. Activist Jennifer Molina, a member of the Chicano student group La Raza, is working along with members of the Young Socialists to get endorsement from organizations. Meetings were held with University of Minnesota Africana Student Cultural Center and the University Young Women group. Members of University Young Women first heard about the festival at the Young Feminist Summit.

Roxanne Gould, a Native American activist in Minnesota, is meeting with some American Indian organizations in the area and working with two youth to attend.

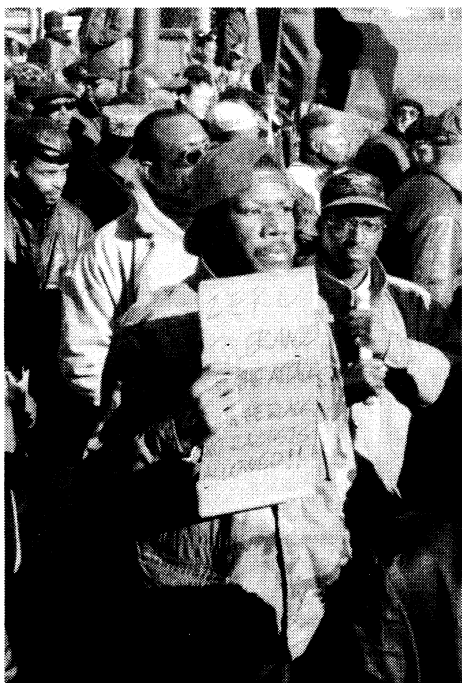
The World Festival of Youth and Students will involve several thousand young people from all over the world. Organizing committees are working to build it in more than 50 countries, and participants are expected from almost 100 nations. The event, dedicated to revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara, will include workshops and discussions on a wide range of themes, including: Peace, security, nuclear weapon-free world, and international cooperation and friendship; Anti-imperialist struggle, solidarity, national liberation, sovereignty, and self-determination; Democracy and participation; Environment and sustainable development; Employment; Education, science, and technology; Childhood; Young women; Health; Culture and social communication; Discrimination, racism, and neo-fascism; International youth and student movements; and Human rights and peoples' rights.

The U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival has recently sent out a three-page "Festival Organizing Update." This useful piece of literature explains what the festival is and how to join in the U.S. delegation. It also announces the next na-

tional meeting of the U.S. Organizing Committee, which will take place in New York City on May 4.

The total cost for the festival is \$600 for those who apply by May 15, which covers all expenses for the trip except airfare from the United States to Nassau, Bahamas or Cancun, Mexico, the meeting points for U.S. participants. Applications must be accompanied by a \$50 deposit, and full payment is due by June 30. There will be an additional \$25 charge for those who apply between May 16 and June 30.

Following the youth festival, the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) is hosting an International Workers Meeting Confronting Neoliberalism and the Global Economy, August 6-8. Trade unionists and others from around the world will be participating. The U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange is organizing a delegation from the United States to this meeting. For more information and an application, write to U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange, P.O. Box 39188, Redford, MI 48239. Phone/Fax (313) 836-3752.



Militant/Pete Seidman
Protesters march through Grays Ferry in Philadelphia April 14.

California court upholds Proposition 209

BY HILDA CUZCO

A federal court in California has upheld the cynically named California Civil Rights Initiative, better known as Proposition 209, which was adopted in a state ballot referendum last November. The measure bans affirmative action programs in public hiring and education. Campaigners for Proposition 209 use the terms of "racial quotas" and "racial preferences," when referring to affirmative action, to try to give the reactionary measure a progressive veneer.

The April 8 ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ordered the lifting of an injunction that had halted implementation of Proposition 209. The injunction was issued by Judge Thelton Henderson last December.

The three-judge Court of Appeals panel declared the measure was indeed constitutional, as it supposedly bars the government from discrimination based on race or gender. "Proposition 209 does not violate the U.S. Constitution," opined Judge Diarmuid

O'Scannlain. "It is one thing to say that individuals have equal protection rights against political obstructions to equal treatment. It is quite another to say that individuals have equal protection rights against political obstructions to preferential treatment."

Ward Connerly, a black businessman and member of the University of California Board of Regents who led the campaign for the proposition to end affirmative action, was pleased with the ruling. "The decision puts a little spine in those states that have been wondering if they should enter the arena," said Connerly.

Campaigns for similar anti-affirmative action measures are under way in the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington. In addition, Republican representative from Florida Charles Canady has said he will sponsor a bill in the U.S. Congress in a few weeks that would roll back federal affirmative action programs.

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Land fight galvanizes village in Mexico

BY BOB BRAXTON
AND MARLA PUZISS

TEPOZTLÁN, Morelos, Mexico — The first thing you notice is the barricade of paving stones blocking vehicles from using the main street into the town. When you finally do arrive at the main square, the front of City Hall is covered with murals denouncing the country club and celebrating Emiliano Zapata, peasant hero of the Mexican revolution. No policemen or police cars are in sight; City Hall is guarded by an old woman fixing tortillas. Welcome to Tepoztlán.

For the last two years, the citizens of this small rural town of 15,000, about 45 miles southwest of Mexico City, have been engaged in a hard-fought struggle to prevent the construction of a country club on 500 acres of communal land abutting the town.

In late 1994 the Kladt Sorbino group (KS), a consortium of Mexican and international investors headed by U.S.-based GTE and VISA, announced their plan to build a \$54 million tourist megaplex here. Centered on a professional-caliber golf course, the development was to include 800 condominiums, a five-star hotel, and an executive conference center. With investors including prominent associates of then president Carlos Salinas, the plan immediately won the support of the governor of Morelos, who, like Salinas, is a member of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Despite KS promises to create jobs and generate tax revenues, opposition in Tepoztlán grew quickly as it became clear the proposed country club would be built on communal lands guaranteed by the Mexican constitution. Illegally acquired decades earlier by cartel investors, these communal lands are vital for the livelihood of some 800 area families. Further studies revealed

that the country club would drain the scarce water supplies of area farmers.

Citizens formed the Tepoztlán Unity Committee (CUT), which held almost weekly marches, demonstrations, and meetings against KS and the country club through 1995. In an interview, José Antonio Rodríguez, a member of the town's city council in 1994-95 who opposed the project, summarized the majority's attitude as one of "defense of our rights, a fight for defense of our ancestral lands and to use our own natural resources." Despite overwhelming opposition, the municipal president and a majority of the city council — members of the PRI — met secretly in the lobby of a hotel and authorized construction of the golf course on Aug. 22, 1995.

The reaction of working people of Tepoztlán was immediate. The next day, 8,000 outraged Tepoztecos stormed City Hall and expelled the municipal president and council majority from their posts for betraying the people's wishes. Barricades blocking the main entrances to the town were erected and citizen guards were established. The defense guard, made up of older male and female volunteers, kept a 24-hour watch on the municipal offices; other guards (the *vigilancia*), composed of younger male volunteers, functioned as a makeshift police force in the town's eight barrios.

A month later, on Sept. 24, 1995, Tepoztecos held new municipal elections, unsanctioned and unrecognized by the state government. Political parties were not allowed; candidates ran not as party representatives but on the basis of their own actions and reputation. CUT activist Salvador Guzmán Zapata pointed out to us that "under Zapata, people were elected in this manner. It's an example of direct democracy."



Militant/Marla Puziss

Residents rally in Tepoztlán March 9 against construction of country club

More than 6,000 voters, the largest number in the history of Tepoztlán, elected a new town government firmly committed to fight the country club.

State unleashes violence

The and federal authorities refused to recognize the new city council, cut off all state and federal funds going to Tepoztlán, and insisted that new, state-sponsored elections be held. Activists and newly elected officials were served arrested on trumped-up charges.

On Jan. 18, 1996, CUT leader Gerardo Demesa Padilla, a teacher, was violently arrested in the offices of the teacher's trade union in Cuernavaca and jailed for murder — a frame-up charge stemming from an incident in Tepoztlán the month before. On Jan. 26, 1996, 20,000 teachers demonstrated in Cuernavaca protesting Demesa Padilla's arrest.

Working people of Tepoztlán mobilized, marching on the Morelos capital of Cuernavaca as well as Mexico City, joining regional and national demonstrations for land rights, and carrying on a multitude of

other protest actions. These have included 40 marches in the last two years, according to Antonio Rodríguez. Committees supporting the people of Tepoztlán were set up in Mexico City, throughout Morelos state, and elsewhere. The Tepoztlán struggle also received solidarity and delegations from Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and various human rights and indigenous peoples associations around the world.

State violence culminated April 10, 1996, in a police attack on a multi-car caravan of Tepoztecos traveling to Tlatizapán to commemorate Emiliano Zapata. The caravan was stopped and assaulted by police in the village of San Rafael. Dozens of townspeople — including old people, women and children — were wounded, 32 were arrested, and 20 vehicles were damaged. One activist, 65-year-old Marcos Olmedo Gutiérrez, was killed by a bullet in the neck.

Struggle results in victory

In the national uproar following this unprovoked attack, KS announced it was canceling the country club project.

But the struggle in Tepoztlán continues. According to Antonio Rodríguez, the citizens of Tepoztlán insist that the cancellation of the KS country club be put in writing, that communal lands be formally restored to the community, and that the four political prisoners be released. "One hundred fifty-six legal charges have been brought against our citizens, many of which are still pending," Antonio Rodríguez pointed out, "and there are still four political prisoners." Demesa Padilla remains in jail on murder charges; three others are awaiting trial for kidnapping cops.

At the time of our visit, the CUT had adopted a new tactic and was supporting a "People's Slate," composed of CUT activists, for Tepoztlán town council in official statewide elections. The slate, running on a platform opposing the country club, was overwhelmingly elected March 16.

"The most important thing about our struggle," emphasized Guzmán Zapata, "is that we have won back our dignity as a people. By taking power back into our own hands, we have recovered an important part of our culture."

200 denounce cop killings in Toronto

BY JOHN MUNORU
AND MITRA SHARMA

TORONTO—More than 200 protesters, many of them young, demonstrated here at the Ontario provincial legislature on April 12 to protest the most recent in a series of cop killings. They demanded the police be charged with murder.

Hugh Dawson, a 31-year old Black man from Jamaica, was shot by the East Field command drug squad March 30, on the Easter Sunday weekend. This happened in the east Toronto township of Scarborough.

Seven cops used unmarked vehicles to box in Dawson's car, effectively trapping the Honda against the sidewalk. Rushing with their guns out they ambushed Dawson, who was alone and unarmed, and shot him several times. Workers in a donut store about 200 meters away from the scene witnessed the killing. One of them, Zafar Qaryzada, 18, told the *Toronto Star* that he saw "several people surround a black car, most of them on the passenger side. One smashed the car's rear window with something long while another pointed a long gun, probably a shotgun or a rifle at the passenger window."

The facts around the shooting have been spilling out daily in the Toronto media. Metropolitan Toronto police chief, David Boothby, who was at the scene shortly after the incident, issued a statement that claimed cops shot Dawson when he violently tried to seize a police officer's weapon and this allegedly led to two cops shooting him. The police and a section of the Toronto media so far have tried to portray Dawson as a violent drug dealer and an illegal immigrant. "Cop-Shooting Victim Foiled Deportation" said a headline in the *Toronto Sun*, a right wing daily.

Dawson's younger brother, Errol Brown, called these claims by the police baseless. "There was no cause for this, nobody's life was threatened but his," he said. "These guys wanted to plant stuff on him. I tell you these guys went to kill him."

Rick Shank, one of the cops involved in the killing, was the one who shot and killed Ian Coley, 20, another Black man, after a foot chase in 1993. He was never charged or convicted of murder. The Ontario provincial government's Special Investigations Unit (SIU), which investigates police killings and is responsible for laying charges,

cleared Shank of any wrongdoing.

In the inquiry of the Dawson killing, the SIU initially focused its investigation on Shank and another cop. SIU officials now say, however, that two more cops will be investigated. So far, none have been charged. For the first several days after the shooting, all of the cops refused to talk to the SIU, although they met among themselves various times.

This is the second police killing here in five weeks. On February 20, police shot Edmond Yu, a Chinese immigrant, in a Toronto city bus. Police officers have shot 14 people in the greater Toronto area since 1990, most of them Black and some who were mentally ill. No cop has ever been convicted of these murders.

In response to the latest shooting, the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC) immediately held a press conference outside of its headquarters demanding that the SIU lay charges against the cops responsible

for the death of Hugh Dawson. In reading a statement, BADC leader Dudley Laws charged that the racist cop killings in Toronto and across Canada are, identical to the actions and attitudes of Canadian soldiers who murdered Black youths in Somalia."

The Jamaican Canadian Association and the East Indian Defense Committee joined the Toronto Black Leadership Coalition in condemning the latest Metro police shooting. Also, more than 30 people from the Coalition Against Racist Police Violence met as an emergency response on April 3 to discuss and draw up a course of action. A protest public rally was held April 10 with more than 100 people. Relatives of victims of police killings were the main speakers.

John Munoru is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1295; Mitra Sharma is a member of United Steel Workers of America Local 5338.

Women protest harassment in N.Z. navy

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — The abuse of women that permeates all imperialist military forces has been highlighted by recent complaints women have issued in the New Zealand Navy.

On the television documentary *60 Minutes*, screened here March 16, Larissa Turner, a 21-year-old former naval gunner, described almost daily incidences of verbal and physical abuse that she experienced on the New Zealand frigate *Wellington* during a six-month voyage to the Persian Gulf during 1995-96. The frigate, crewed by 25 women and 225 men, was sent to the Gulf to help police Washington's blockade against Iraq — the first operational mission in which a New Zealand frigate has been sent overseas with a mixed-sex crew.

A female radio operator, still in the Navy, described on the program how a junior rating supervising her offered to let her off certain work tasks in return for oral sex. A sample of a T-shirt worn by a number of crew members was also displayed. On the front, in vertical lettering, was the word B-I-T-C-H-E-S, and, alongside, the words "Biggest Inconvenience The Crew Has Ever

Suffered." One of the male crew members appeared on the program to back the women's claims.

Turner has now laid a complaint against 13 male crew and officers with the Human Rights Commission. Three other similar complaints, including one from the radio operator, have apparently been dealt with informally. Turner has also criticized the reluctance of the Navy command to act on such complaints, including not taking disciplinary action against some crew members who have admitted carrying out these acts. She has also reported an incident of rape of a female sailor at the Devonport Naval Base in Auckland.

The reports have attracted comment on whether women should be expected to see such harassment as simply part of the job. Captain Corry Beentjes, now the highest ranking woman in the New Zealand defence forces, reported how when, 26 years ago, she encountered sexual harassment as a young recruit, she was told by a senior woman officer to "lie back and enjoy it". Though she claims that attitudes in the Navy have changed, she also stated that such instances were probably inevitable when one group

dominates over another. Ronald Mark, a New Zealand First member of parliament, added his view in a radio interview. "When you put men and women together in certain roles, you do open up possibilities for such things to happen," the rightist politician said. "Not every male, not every female is as strong as the one standing next to them."

Women in the military like Larissa Turner, who refuse to accept that she should be expected to endure such harassment, have been able to win some gains by fighting such discrimination.

Following the publicity around these complaints, Chief of Defence Force Lt-General Anthony Birks was hauled before Parliament's foreign affairs, defence and trade select committee. He told the committee that the defence force was responding to the allegations by setting up a toll free number for complaints about sexual harassment, appointing equal employment opportunity coordinators in the armed forces, and increasing numbers of anti-harassment advisers.

Felicity Coggan is a member of the Engineers Union in Auckland.

'We will never accept orders from U.S.'

250,000 Cubans sign Declaration of the 20th Century Independence Fighters

Below is the Declaration of the 20th Century Independence Fighters, which was signed by 250,000 officers of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), the reserves, and the Ministry of the Interior in the several weeks leading up to its March 15 presentation. The declaration is the revolutionary response to a report released by the White House January 28 as part of the cynically named Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, often called the Helms-Burton law, which ratchets up Washington's economic war against the Cuban revolution. The report suggested that Havana could receive up to \$8 billion in loans and aid if a "transition government" were established that did not include President Fidel Castro or Raúl Castro, head of the FAR, and was willing to bow to Uncle Sam's dictates. This translation of the declaration appeared in the March 26 issue of the Cuban weekly *Granma Internacional*. Footnotes are by the *Militant*.

As long ago as 1889, José Martí¹ warned us that the United States planned to frustrate our Cuban Independence Revolution through "another, more tenebrous plan than any we have ever known." They wanted to provoke a conflict on the island "to have a pretext to intervene, and with the authority of being mediator and guarantor, to keep Cuba. Such an arrogant thing has never been encountered in the annals of free people; nor has there been such cold malevolence."

The scheme suffered changes and postponements, but its strategic aims remained intact: in 1898, the United States intervened in Cuba when Spain was at the point of being defeated by our heroic *Mambi* independence fighters. The United States managed to divide our patriotic forces, disarm the Liberation Army, and impose the Platt Amendment and neocolonial domination.²

Now, 100 years after that first U.S. invasion, once again the government of that country, which maintains a criminal blockade against our nation, has elaborated a plan that attempts to convert Cuba into its colony, with the substantial difference that now it would exercise an even more merciless control than before.

Twenty pages of slander against the Cuban Revolution. It is filled with hypocrisy, cynicism and deceitful propositions. In a gross and disrespectful manner, they propose that we capitulate, in order to be deserving of their pardon and assistance.

They offer us U.S. society as a model, about which Jose Martí told us over a century ago: "In the United States, instead of the forces of unity being tightened, they are loosened; instead of the problems of humanity being solved, they are multiplied; instead of local communities being integrated into national politics, they are divided and inflamed; instead of democracy being strengthened and the people ridding themselves of hatred and the misery of monarchies, democracy is corrupted and lessened, and hatred and misery are menacingly reborn."



Militant/Laura Garza

Student rally at University of Havana Sept. 7, 1994, to defend the Cuban revolution.

They are now offering us that society, rotted away by drug addiction, violence, gangsters, pornography, child prostitution, criminality, alienation, discrimination, selfishness and greed.

They want to appropriate homes, land, factories, hospitals, schools, and numerous social installations that the Revolution turned over to our people. They want us to resign ourselves to the massive privatization of all of our riches.

They suggest to us that we put the destiny of our children, our women, parents and grandparents and that of our country in their hands.

They urge us to renounce our glorious history and the eternal respect that we have for those who died for the independence and sovereignty of our homeland and in defense of the Socialist Revolution.

They encourage us to blemish our own honor and dignity as free people and instead accept betrayal, cowardice and disgrace.

They ask us, in short, to hand over our homeland to the United States and to the counterrevolutionary and annexationist mafia in Miami, so they can break it into pieces. "Such an arrogant thing has never been encountered in the annals of free people; nor has there been such cold malevolence," Martí could have repeated in the face of this repulsive imperial plan.

They want to meddle in our internal affairs, when they are not even capable of solving the grave problems that afflict their society.

They offer us a return to the past: cheap politicking, administrative corruption, organized crime, children living in the streets who have no schools, *campesino* [peasant] evictions, police who torture and repress workers and students, racial and sexual discrimination, sick people who cannot get treatment. They want us to renounce everything that we have fought for, and most importantly, to give up our hopes and those

of hundreds of millions of human beings who hope to live in a better world.

What kind of men and women do they think they are dealing with?

As our president stated: "It is infuriating that someone could imagine that the freedom and dignity of a people could be

'They want us to renounce everything we have fought for and to give up our hopes and those of hundreds of millions of human beings for a better world...'

bought."

For the members of the uniformed population, the U.S. government's plan makes us particularly angry, by stating that the Armed Forces could undertake a potentially positive role in Cuba's transition to capitalism and by proposing the disintegration of the Ministry of the Interior.

Every honorable man and woman who is a patriot of our people, of which we form a part, rejects that insult, because it is unacceptable that they should dictate orders to our country as if it were a colonial appendage of the United States. We do not accept and will never accept orders from Washington or anybody else because, in our country, since January 1, 1959, only the sovereign decision of our people is exercised.

We, the fighters of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, whom nobody can divide, together with all other Cubans:

Ratify our unconditional loyalty to the Commander in Chief and to the Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, our undisputed leaders. We reiterate to them, in the words of Comandante Camilo Cienfuegos,³ that "it would be easier for us to stop breathing than to stop being faithful to your trust."

Reiterate to the U.S. government that in order to apply the projected plan, it would first have to send in its armies and be prepared to receive the well-deserved, prolonged and invincible response from an entire armed and trained people.

Proclaim that there is no gold nor force in the world capable of making us lay down the sword we have inherited from our forebears and which has been wielded with such dignity by 300,000 internationalist fighters in other parts of the world, which demonstrates what we are capable of doing to defend our own country. As Comrade Fidel recently noted, the mere fact that they think these heroic soldiers could serve U.S. imperialism for even one day is offensive to us.

Resolutely support the Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Solidarity Law.⁴

Affirm that together with the people and under the direction of the Party, we are and always will be an indestructible pillar against which all the plans, legislation and maneuvers of U.S. imperialism and its allies will shatter.

Demand the unconditional return of the territory occupied illegally by the U.S. na-

val base in Guantánamo. Our sovereignty is not negotiable.

Affirm that we will continue to be the Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior of the Socialist State, of the working people, and under the leadership of the only Party of the Cuban nation: the Communist Party of Cuba, the faithful continuation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party that José Martí founded to the Necessary War for our national independence.

Declare that we are the independence fighters of the 20th century and that we shall continue to be those of the 21st century, because in the same way that the Cuban Revolution has been one and the same since 1868, it has also had a single army - initially called the Liberation Army in the war of independence; then named the Rebel Army at the time of our national liberation. And now, with socialism, we are the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and will continue to defend the same anti-imperialist ideas that we have defended up until now. We will continue to give irrefutable proof of our unflinching loyalty to the people from whom we have emerged.

This time, the Liberation Army will not be disarmed. Nobody will be able to disarm our people, or divide it, or impose on it a new Platt Amendment to nullify our sovereignty.

Every honorable Cuban will reject this offensive recolonization plan.

Today we pay tribute to José Martí, the

apostle of our independence and our dignity, and assure him that we will never betray his example and his teachings.

In the face of this new maneuver, we heed the ever-present warning of General Antonio Maceo:⁵

"Whosoever attempts to appropriate Cuba will gather up the dust of its earth drenched in blood, if he does not perish in the battle!"

Notes

¹ José Martí is Cuba's national hero. He launched the 1895-98 war for independence from Spain, and was killed in combat in 1895.

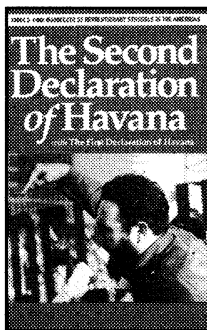
² *Mambi* is a Cuban term referring to the 19th century independence fighters against Spanish colonial rule. The Platt Amendment was a provision forced into the Cuban constitution by Washington at the turn of the century stipulating conditions for U.S. intervention in Cuban affairs and permitting the U.S. government to lease land for a naval base at Guantánamo. After interventions in 1906, 1912, 1917, and 1920, the treaty was abrogated in 1934, but Washington retains the Guantánamo base to this day, against the wishes of the Cuban people.

³ Camilo Cienfuegos was a commander in the Rebel Army that led the fight to overthrow the Batista dictatorship. He was killed in a plane crash in October 1959, soon after the triumph of the revolution.

⁴ The Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Solidarity Law was adopted by Cuba's National Assembly on Dec. 25, 1996, in response to provisions in the Helms-Burton law allowing U.S. citizens who had owned property in Cuba that was expropriated by the workers and farmers there to sue companies that now do business in Cuba. The Dignity and Solidarity Law allows Cubans to sue Washington if they have been "victims of physical harm or property damage caused by actions supported by the United States," including "murder, injury, and economic damage suffered under torturers and assassins of the Batista dictatorship or criminals on the payroll of North American imperialism."

⁵ Antonio Maceo was a leader of the Cuban wars for independence in 1868-78 and 1895-98.

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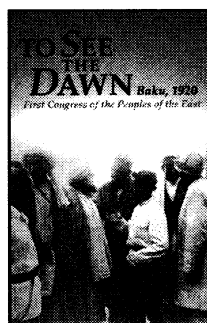
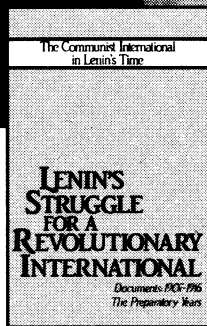
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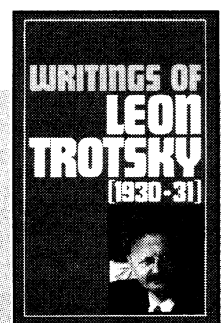
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Writings of Leon Trotsky is a fourteen-volume set covering the years 1929-40, consisting of material not included in Trotsky's other books from these years. All together, the volumes contain 1,700 separate items, amounting to more than 7,000 book pages.

Zaire: strike halts capital as rebels gain

Continued from front page

Washington Post. The two-day work stoppage was called by the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDSP), an opposition party headed by Étienne Tshisekedi. The opposition forces also called for an April 16 antigovernment demonstration.

The strike action by hundreds of thousands of workers and students in this city of more than 4 million reflects the widespread opposition to the Mobutu regime. According to Associated Press, many people in Kinshasa say they would welcome the arrival of rebel troops. There is strong support in the capital for the Alliance leader, Laurent Kabila, and for bringing down the dictatorship. "We want change. We're willing to accept anyone... if it will bring change," Willy Kashama, who participated in the strike, told an AP reporter.

After a special Mobutu cabinet meeting on April 14, Information Minister Kin-Kiey Mulumba said authorities had been instructed to enforce the law "scrupulously" and with "full force." Forces loyal to Mobutu cracked down on the second day of the strike. Truckloads of government soldiers patrolled the streets and set up barricades around the university, enforcing the state of emergency imposed by Mobutu in early April. A planned demonstration by students who oppose the regime did not take place due to the stepped-up army presence.

Government opposition in Kinshasa

Leaders of the government opposition, angling for a position in the new government to come, said the actions sent a message that the UDSP has a strong base in the city. "It is to show the political class that it is not in communion with the people. And it is to show Kabila and anyone else that we are here and we have waged a struggle," said Marcel Mbayo, a top aide of Tshisekedi. The *New York Times* quoted an unnamed Western diplomat as saying, "Tshisekedi knows that unless he acts decisively, he risks irrelevance."

Tshisekedi, who has served as prime minister under Mobutu three times, was dismissed in early April after only a week in office. Ten thousand people protested his removal, in a demonstration that was attacked by government troops. Mobutu then implemented a state of emergency.

Tshisekedi is often touted in the press as a long-time opponent of Mobutu. In fact, few people have been so central to the current regime in Zaire. He was an important architect of the Mobutu dictatorship, only to later split to form an opposition party in 1980. As a senior government official, Tshisekedi helped in the removal of revolutionary leader Patrice Lumumba from office in 1961. Lumumba was elected prime minister after Zaire won independence from Belgium in 1960. He was assassinated after Mobutu — then the army chief of staff and a paid CIA operative — waged a coup d'état and took over the government.

Much has been made in the big-business press of the possible power struggle between Tshisekedi and rebel leader Kabila. On April

3, Tshisekedi offered a coalition government with the rebels, earning his dismissal by Mobutu. The Alliance, however, rejected the offer. After Tshisekedi was removed from his office, Mawampanga Mwana, the Alliance's economic minister commented, "He never had any power anyway."

The strikes and demonstrations underscore the desire of the overwhelming majority of Zairian people for Mobutu to go. Whereas antigovernment demonstrations last October called for stepped up war moves against the rebels — who were then presented by UDSP leaders as Rwandan invaders — the sentiment now seems to be in favor of the Alliance. Reporting for the *Washington Post* in Kinshasa, Lynne Duke writes, "Over the past few months, the tide of opinion has turned, and Kabila is now widely viewed as a liberator capable of ending Mobutu's rule."

Economics of imperialist intervention

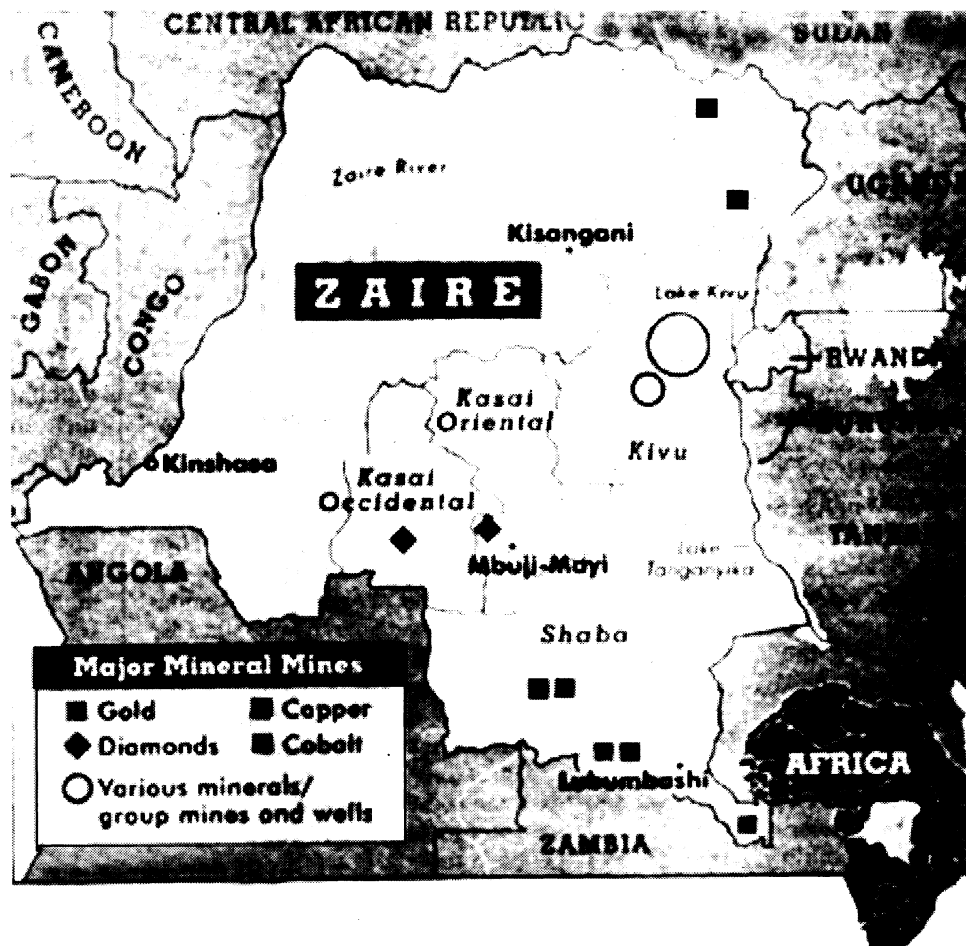
Alarmed at the momentum of the rebel advance and the political space it has opened even in Kinshasa, the imperialist powers are contemplating whether and how to intervene in the situation. Thousands of U.S., French, and Belgian troops are positioned in Brazzaville, while the *USS Nassau*, with over 1,300 U.S. marines, is just off the Atlantic coast. For decades, Washington backed and funded the Mobutu dictatorship until his imminent downfall became clear.

The bourgeois press often describes the situation in Kinshasa now as a "calm before the storm." This underlines the not so thinly-veiled threats of military intervention, and "inevitable conflict." The *Christian Science Monitor* has headlined several articles along this line, including one from April 11 titled, "Zaire's Zero Hour — Will America Be Ready?"

The big-business press has also continued its propaganda campaign to win acceptance for the idea that intervention is needed. Pictures and articles about the suffering of Rwandan refugees in eastern Zaire abound. These are used to bolster the imperialists' argument for intervention in the name of "humanitarian aid."

There are huge economic stakes in Zaire, and some capitalists have openly begun dealing with the rebels as the new power in large parts of the country. De Beers mining company of South Africa and the state-run diamond company, Société Minière de Bakwanga, have recognized the Alliance. The recently conquered Shaba province is the world's leading cobalt producer, with 65 percent of the total reserves. The latest Alliance victories in Kasai province give it control over the second-largest industrial diamond producing area after Australia. Zaire also has an estimated \$1.48 billion in gold reserves.

International mining companies have maneuvered to make deals with the Alliance — some publicly stating that they have met with Kabila himself. These include Penke Mining Corp. of Vancouver and London; American Mineral Fields of Hope, Arkansas; the International Panorama Re-



source Corp. of Vancouver; and Swedish capitalist Adolf Lundin, who owns 55 percent of Tenke Fungurume, one of the world's largest and richest deposits of copper and cobalt.

Washington and Brussels — both long-time backers of Mobutu — have now publicly washed their hands of the dictator, acknowledging his inescapable departure. On April 9, White House press secretary Michael McCurry said, "Mobutuism is about to become a creature of history." The next day Belgian foreign minister Erik Derycke stated that Zaire was "a military dictatorship revisited."

The *Washington Post* editors hollered for "Burying Mobutuism," on April 13, and called for Washington to "give a chance to the democratic opposition movement that has been led for more than a decade by Étienne Tshisekedi."

Even in Zaire younger members of the Popular Movement for the Revolution, Mobutu's party, are calling for him to resign.

On April 14, a former French foreign aid minister called Mobutu "a dinosaur who should leave." But the French government, which has come into increasing conflict with Washington over who will be the dominant imperialist power in the region, has not been so hasty to totally dump the Zairian dictator. French prime minister Alain Juppé suggested that "Rather than try to find someone to blame" for the situation in Zaire, "it would be better to sit down at a table and try to stabilize things." In addition to its forces at Brazzaville, Paris has 9,000 troops regularly stationed in Africa.

Rebels take second-largest city

So far Mobutu's response to the Alliance's request negotiate or to step down has been condescending. On April 12 — just days after the rebels took over Lubumbashi, the second largest city in the country — Mobutu

called Kabila a "gang leader," and declared he would only begin discussions with the Alliance if the rebel leader "asks me politely." This comes from the man who once defined the post-Mobutu era as "après moi, le déluge" (after me, it's ancient history).

The Alliance forces marched into Lubumbashi, the southeastern regional capital and a mining center, on April 9. Rebel leader Kabila appointed an Alliance governor instead of calling for elections, in contrast to previous provinces where the Alliance has taken over.

Opposition leaders whined about the appointment, but according to news reports most of the thousands of Lubumbashi residents who met Kabila as he entered the city did not mind the move. "We don't care who the governor is, provided they bring peace and security," Charles Nshimba, an English teacher, told the *New York Times*. Matthew Ilunga, also a teacher, said, "Everyone is waiting to change. And that change must be radical."

The Alliance reports that some of its forces are just 160 miles northeast of Kinshasa, after taking the city of Kananga. According to the *New York Times*, the rebels are also about to capture the city of Kikwit, which is approximately 250 miles southeast of the capital.

Meanwhile, the Mobutu regime is seeking to blame the embarrassing military losses to the rebels by accusing former prime minister Leon Kengo wa Dondo, along with several other finance, budget, and economy ministers, of pilfering millions of dollars from state funds.

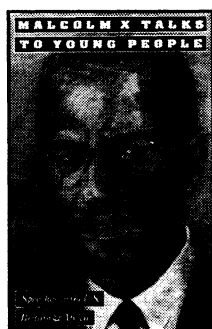
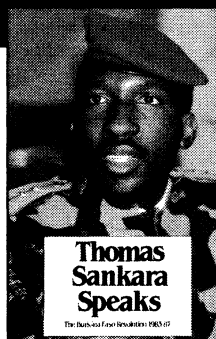
The United Nations also announced that it will begin airlifting the first of 100,000 Rwandan refugees back home on April 18. Various imperialist powers have been probing, since late last year, the possibility of using a UN "rescue mission" as a pretext to intervene.

...from Pathfinder

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EU, U.S. government try to reach compromise on Helms-Burton

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Officials of the European Union (EU) and Washington reached an agreement "in principle" aimed at heading off a clash in the World Trade Organization (WTO) over the misnamed Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, or Helms-Burton law, which U.S. president William Clinton signed last year. The law, which tightens Washington's economic embargo on Cuba, includes provisions penalizing companies in third countries that "traffic" in property expropriated by the Cuban workers and peasants after their 1959 revolution.

Capitalist governments in Europe and elsewhere have objected to these aspects of the act as a violation of their sover-

eignty. The EU had brought a complaint against Washington in the WTO over the matter. Under the agreement, which must still be ratified by the 15 EU governments and the U.S. Congress, the EU would suspend its complaint in return for a pledge by Washington to limit the extra-territorial provisions in the law, including those denying U.S. entry visas to executives of companies that do business in Cuba.

"This was as good as could be got given the U.S. situation," one unnamed EU diplomat was quoted as saying by the *Financial Times*. "But that doesn't mean that we are happy or that we no longer think that Helms-Burton is a problem."

Auto workers strike GM in Oklahoma

Continued from front page

partment, said, "The Teamster drivers and railroad workers who haul freight in and out of the plant are honoring the picket lines." Many workers in the area have stopped by with sodas, donuts and coffee to show support.

UAW members here have been without a local contract since last September. They are not alone, as GM has more than 30 UAW locals without local agreements. Although the national UAW-GM contract was signed in December, it did not settle questions such as manpower, health and safety questions, outsourcing, and other local issues.

"The biggest issue in the strike for me," said Marcus Long, who works in the body shop, "is getting jobs back and not getting people cut." The workforce, now around 3,600, is down from 6,000 in 1986.

Several strikers explained that in August 1996 GM laid off 900 temporary workers. The company claimed that the new car, which began production in September, required less labor and parts to assemble. To prepare for the new model GM brought in upgraded automation and cut jobs to the bone. The union says there are 480 "overloaded jobs," so they are demanding that the company hire 500 workers to alleviate the situation.

Health and safety is another major concern to strikers. "We fight for our health more than anything else," said striker Karl Moyer.

"They are pushing people too far," said Jeannie Lewis, who has almost 18 years in the plant. "Three years ago I got hurt on the line and had to have shoulder surgery." Lewis was harassed for going to the medic.

"To me, the safety violations are the most important issue," said Adolph Long, who works in the body shop. In describing his job, Long explained that he grinds silicone in weld joints, which causes a lot of dust. Workers have to breathe the dust, a real health hazard. Long said it would be safer if the cars were washed down, thus removing most of the dust.

According to the *Daily Oklahoman*, "As many as 3,000 workers compensation court cases are pending against the GM plant." About 4,000 cases have been filed against GM there in the past 12 years.

Don Wolf, a member of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and a professor at the University of Oklahoma, said the Oklahoma facility "has the worst safety record of any plant owned by GM."

Strikers report that it is difficult to get vacation time. "I put in for two weeks vacation and got two days approved," said Gary Breeden, who has been in the plant since it opened in 1979. "In the paint department, 195 people put in for vacation and only 4 got a complete week's vacation."

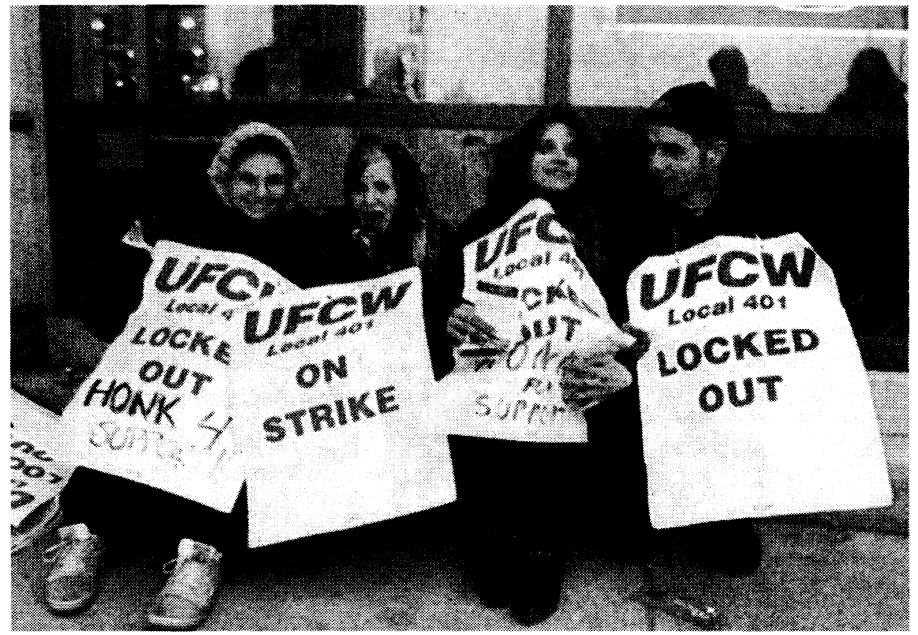
The big-business press now refers to the strike as a "showdown" with wide consequences for what *Time* magazine called "GM's brutal cost-cutting crusade." GM is in the midst of a \$45 million advertising blitz for the new Malibu. Despite this, according to an article in the *Daily Oklahoman*, GM said "it would rather lose production — and risk sales in the crucial spring selling season — than reverse productivity gains that have made Malibu and Cutlass profitable where their predecessors lost money."

Oklahoma City strikers expressed a variety of opinions on the strike. "I think we've got the upper hand on 'em here, because they want what we're producing," said Jerry Richardson, who works in the paint department.

"We keep losing and losing every year," said Dennis Meyers, who transferred to the plant from Flint, Michigan. "We're down from 6,000 to 3,600 people. We've given back too much to the corporation and we're not getting a fair deal. We're doing the same work with 3,600 as when 900 temps were working."

"It's a privilege for me to be out here," he continued. "My grandfather and father

10,000 grocery workers strike in Alberta



Ten thousand members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) have set up picket lines at 73 Safeway grocery stores in the Canadian province of Alberta. The main issues include regaining wage concessions and preventing a further decline in the ratio of full-time to part-time positions. This strike comes after 12,000 workers across British Columbia struck Safeway last summer for five weeks. Workers have been without a contract since March 1996.

were both out here 30 years ago on strike at other auto plants."

"The strike should have happened sooner. I'm disappointed that it went this long before it came to this," said Thomas Rodarte, from the trim department.

Ed Johnson, of the body shop, said the union should have struck back in the early 1980s, when Roger Smith, the company's

former CEO, was around. "We gave away too much," he stated. Referring to the strike, Johnson said, "This is the best thing that has happened to our local, going out now."

Lea Sherman is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 15 in Houston Texas. Rich Stuart and Melissa Harris contributed to this article.

Chrysler strikers fight to defend jobs

BY TONI GORTON

DETROIT — "Pay is not the issue. The issue is health and safety, job security, and being fair," stated Thomas Brown, a jobsetter on strike at Chrysler's Mound Road engine plant in Detroit.

Roy Wright, a machine operator added, "I feel good about the strike. I've worked here 28 years. The plant is dirty, dusty. You can hardly see in certain areas. They won't clean the filters. Its pathetic. People are dying shortly after retirement from the quality of the air in there. You tell them and they won't listen."

On April 10, the 1,800 members of United Auto Workers Local 51 went on strike after several months of bargaining for a local contract. Local TV news showed

workers excited and determined as they marched out of the factory. Visiting the picket lines over the week *Militant* reporters found their mood unchanged, with strikers waving their placards to the supportive, horn-blowing traffic flowing by. As of April 15, negotiations to end the strike had broken down.

The Mound Road plant builds V6 and V8 engines for Chrysler trucks and vans. The strike immediately stopped production at four other plants, affecting some 12,000 workers. Chrysler shut down its Dodge City light-duty truck plant in Warren, Michigan, and the Jefferson North assembly plant, also in Detroit. A van plant in Windsor, Ontario, and light-duty truck-assembly plant in St. Louis, Missouri, are also idled. Overtime

stopped at the company's Kokomo, Indiana, factory, which supplies transmissions for the truck plants.

According to Wall Street analysts, the strike could cost Chrysler as much as \$67 million a week. The number-three U.S. automaker posted record profits of \$1.04 billion during the first quarter of 1997. As the strike began, Chrysler released the salaries of its top executives. Chairman Robert Eaton pulled in \$12.6 million last year. As a group, Chrysler's top five executives garnered a total of \$21.1 million in salaries, bonuses, and other compensation in 1996, up 79 percent from the previous year. Last year, Chrysler's income was at near-record levels, and up 74 percent from 1995. Nevertheless, the auto giant faces stiff competition from its rivals, and seeks to further boost its rate of profit.

Roosevelt Thomas, a pin grinder and picket captain, explained that a new plant is opening in 1998 at Mack and St. Jean nearby. "That plant will hire new people at the basic \$12 an hour. It is in an economic 'empowerment zone,' so the company gets \$3,000 [from the government] for everyone hired. This situation is very profitable for the company, more than bringing in workers from this plant at \$19 or \$22 an hour. The Mound Road plant will close down and these workers will be scattered everywhere, instead of going to the new plant. They won't get another job until a vacancy occurs through death, retirement, or quitting. The strike is about saving jobs here and about seniority rights."

Chrysler is planning to outsource to a Dana Corp. plant — a nonunion shop that pays \$6 an hour — the production of rear-wheel-drive prop shafts, now handled by more than 200 workers at the Mound Road plant. A number of the pickets also referred to ongoing problems of favoritism and discrimination, with management not allowing women to take certain jobs.

The *Oakland Press*, a regional newspaper, quotes Sam Nardicchio, president of UAW Local 51, as saying that the bosses "think the UAW membership is weak. But we're not. We know we have to stick together. Without the union we're nothing."

According to the *Oakland Press*, Local 51 officials spent weeks preparing for the strike and carefully explaining the issues to other locals and campaigning for their support. This paid off with quick support from the locals affected by the strike, including the Canadian Auto Workers Local 444 in Windsor, which has about 2,000 members idled.

Boston conference on Cuba protests denial of visas to youth leaders

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON — Eighty people participated in a day-long "Educational Conference on Cuba Today" at Roxbury Community College here on March 22. The event featured Jorge Peña, a representative of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. Two Cuban youth leaders, Dania Murgado and Rolando González, were to have been the main speakers at the conference as part of an 11-city speaking tour of the United States under the auspices of the Boston-based Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee. However, their visa applications were denied without explanation by the U.S. State Department.

Tom Reeves, a professor at RCC and head of the school's Caribbean Focus Program, one of the sponsoring organizations, welcomed participants. He condemned the government's denial of the visas, saying, "Having information and exchanging information is absolutely essential today." He went on to explain that participants in a study tour to Cuba organized last year by the Caribbean Focus Program continue to be harassed by federal authorities.

Reeves was targeted by the Treasury Department and the college administration for helping to organize the tour. A broad national protest campaign last fall pushed back threats to fire Reeves and prosecute him. Recently, other study tour participants were sent letters by the Treasury Department ask-

ing for information.

Nalda Vigezzi of the July 26th Coalition on Cuba, another sponsoring organization, read from messages of protest sent from around the country to the State Department in response to the visa denials. "We are gravely concerned that the State Department's action poses a serious threat to free speech rights and severely inhibits the open exchange of ideas valued by our academic institutions.... The ACLU of Utah requests that you reconsider your decision," wrote Carol Gnaide, the executive director of that organization.

Howard Zinn, Professor Emeritus at Boston University, wrote the Department of State, "It is ironic that the United States accuses Cuba constantly of violating democratic rights and then proceeds to do just that."

"The denial of the visas to Cuban visitors is yet another of the lawless actions that Washington has taken with regard to Cuba," said Noam Chomsky, a prominent writer, in a written message to Conference organizers.

Peña's presentation detailed what he termed "continued trends toward recovery" in the Cuban economy since the crisis provoked by the end in special trade relations with the Soviet Union. He cited a growth of 7.8 percent in the Gross Domestic Product in 1996, after registering 2.5 percent gain in 1995. He also stressed on-going hardships, compounded by the U.S.-imposed

trade restrictions. Despite this, he said, the Cuban people are "proud of the 200 doctors they have in South Africa today." All expenses of these internationalist volunteers are borne by Cuba.

More than a dozen young people attended the workshop called "Challenges Facing U.S. and Cuban Youth and Building the 14th Worldwide Conference of Youth and Students." Elena Tate and Jared Friedman, high school students from the Boston area, convened the workshop.

Other participants included two youth from Connecticut who are going and have already started organizing fund-raising in their area; the vice president of a Latino student organization at Bates College in Maine; high school students from Attleboro, Massachusetts; and several others.

Peña explained in the workshop how the Festival was building in Cuba and around the world. Festival organizing committees have been established in 27 countries, he reported. Cubans are preparing to welcome thousands to Havana and other cities during the July 27-August 6 activities. Youth in the workshop took on the goal of building the World Youth Festival in New England. They have set a planning meeting for April 20.

Other workshops took place on agriculture and the environment, issues facing Cuban workers and their unions, and the fight in this country for the right to travel freely to Cuba.

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Report Back from Young Feminists Conference. Discussion with a panel of summit participants who attended from Birmingham: Eartha Al-Sugi and Mary Conner, Birmingham National Organization for Women (NOW) and Birmingham Clinic Defense; and April Holland, Young Socialists. Fri., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Israel Fuels Palestinian Rebellion. Speakers: Fuoad Barakat, president Orange County American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC); Nader Abuljebain, president, Los Angeles ADC; Dan Dickenson, Socialist Workers Party. Also showing of video documentary "Seeds of War." Fri., April, 25, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

tion: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Current Attacks on Political Rights: How to Fight Back. Panel discussion. Fri., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Translation into Spanish. Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Rebellion in Zaire. Speaker: Chuck Guerra, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., April 25, 7 p.m. 7414 Woodward (one block north of Grand Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

How to Fight the Right — A Speak-out

Against Banning Late-term Abortion. Speakers: Megan Arney, Socialist Workers candidate for State Assembly, 29th district; Stefanie Trice, member of Young Socialists just returned from Young Feminist conference in Washington, D.C. Fri., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 87-A Halsey St. (corner of Halsey and Linden). Tel: (201) 643-3341.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Elizabethtown: 'Family Values' and the Religious Right. Speaker: Linda Poss, Parent, Elizabethtown school district; Connie Allen, Socialist Workers Party, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-901. Fri., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Black Farmers Fight Government Discrimination. Speaker: Gary Grant, of the Black Land

Loss Fund, Tillery, North Carolina. Thurs., April 24, 7:30 p.m.

Rebellion in Zaire: No! To Imperialist Intervention. Fri., May 2, 7:30 p.m.

Both events will be held at 1930 18th St., NW (at 18th & Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

CANADA

Montreal

Cuba and the Struggle Against the Helms-Burton Law. Panel followed by a discussion. Fri., April 25, 7:30 p.m. 4581 St-Denis (Metro Mont-Royal) Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 284-7369.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

The Myth of 'Welfare Dependency.' Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League. Thurs., April 24, 7 p.m. 199 High St. (Corner High and Tuam Sts.) Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

Imperialist occupation force lands in Albania

Continued from front page

The aim of the imperialist intervention is to quell the two-month-old working-class rebellion against the pro-capitalist regime of President Sali Berisha, overturn the workers state, and reestablish capitalism in Albania. To justify their course of action, the imperialists say troops are needed to protect humanitarian aid and prepare for elections, currently planned for June. Rome got a three-month mandate from the United Nations for the operation.

On April 11 the first group of Italian paratroopers landed in Albania. Twenty Italian soldiers disembarked from a naval vessel in the western port of Durres, along with five military vehicles. At the same time four Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying 100 soldiers arrived at Tirana's airport. The soldiers, according to the Athens daily *Eleftherotypia*, are "armed with a guide to useful phrases in the Albanian language, such as 'surrender your weapons,'" and have already begun patrolling the road from Durres to Tirana.

The military occupation of Albania was first proposed by the French government, which wanted to send the force under the auspices of the Western European Union. Facing strong objections from Bonn and London, a meeting of European Union (EU) foreign ministers failed to agree on Paris's plan. Then Rome, Albania's former colonial master before the socialist revolution there in the 1940s, took the initiative to lead the current intervention with whichever governments were willing to participate. Italy will provide the largest number of troops, with 2,500. France is sending 1,000, Greece and Turkey 700 each, Spain 450, Romania 400, Austria 120, and Denmark up to 100.

Rome and Athens came into conflict over which parts of Albania each will place its troops in. Initially the Italian government proposed that Athens send forces to the northern part of the country, but this plan was changed after strong objections from the Greek government. Under current plans Athens will position its occupying forces not only in Tirana but also in the southern cities such as Vlore, where there is a large Greek-speaking minority. Athens has long looked hungrily at southern Albania and has tried to whip up support for intervention, suppos-

edly to aid the ethnic Greek minority.

The port city of Vlore has been at the center of the rebellion, which was sparked after government-promoted "pyramid schemes" collapsed in January. Hundreds of thousands of Albanians lost all their savings in the fraudulent investment plans, many of them workers who had emigrated to Greece, Italy, and elsewhere to find employment. The rebels are demanding the resignation of Berisha and that the government compensate them for the losses.

In their endeavor to reestablish capitalism in Albania, the imperialists fear that they may have to confront, militarily, the armed toilers of this workers state. This is particularly true in the southern half of the country, where Berisha's armed forces are largely dissolved and local defense councils are running most affairs.

The occupying troops have been ordered to shoot "if they face dangerous situations." The plan for the imperialist intervention, drafted in Rome by the participating governments, lists potential "dangerous situations." Among them are "involvement in clashes between government forces and the rebels and attacks by armed civilians that may attempt to appropriate the humanitarian aid." Among the "potential problems" that the imperialists expect are planted mines at regional roads and the chance of facing guerrilla warfare."

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OHIO: Cincinnati: P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 662-1931. **Cleveland:** 1832 Euclid. Zip: 44115. Tel: (216) 861-6150. Compuserve: 103253,1111

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

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— CALENDAR —

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Support Black Farmers and Black Land Owners. Join with Black farmers, Black land owners, and other supporters. Gather at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, at 8 a.m. Wed., April 23. For more information, call Gary R. Grant (919) 826-3017 — Land Loss Fund; Tim Pigford (910) 655-4478 — National Black Farmers Association; John Boyd (804) 447-7825 — National Black Farmers Association.

Barefoot and pregnant — Declaring "God intended the home to be the center of a mother's world," the First Baptist Church of Berryville, Arkansas, shut down its



Harry Ring

day care center. The closure announcement also noted that in Titus 2:5, women are instructed to be "good and obedient to their own husbands."

Ultimate fraud — The feds are eye-balling Medicare payments for hospice care. To get into a hospice,

a doctor must certify that you'll be dead in six months. But, the feds charge, some patients are living longer than that. Jean Dennis, president of the California State Hospice Assn., concedes some do, but adds: "At least 50 percent of hospice patients across the country die within three weeks after being admitted. The average length of stay is about a month."

Obsessive or pace-setter? — In a class-action suit, Washington state Taco Bell was found guilty of swindling its workers. Managers ran hourly computer checks to ensure that wage/sales relations met Taco Bell standards. Workers were forced to wait for restaurants to get busy before clocking in, and to work unpaid overtime. A news report said

a lawyer for the workers saw the Pepsi subsidiary as "creating a corporate culture focused excessively on profits."

Megadose — The Pentagon sees a need to escalate such "noncombat" operations as a "peacekeeping," "drug interdiction" and "humanitarian aid." A report said this is necessary to ensure the U.S. status as the unrivaled world superpower. An official tagged it "full spectrum dominance."

But not to worry — Scotland's Environmental Protection Agency has cut the maximum storage time for imported atomic waste. The agency ruled that waste brought into Scotland for recycling must be returned to the country of origin in ten

years, not the present 25.

Should be included with the meal — In Portland, Oregon, Adam McMakin, 13, was suspended from school for a week after a guard saw him swig and swallow some Scope mouthwash. McMakin, who didn't know it contained 18.9% alcohol, said he rinsed to shake the taste of the school lunch and swallowed it because there was no place to spit.

Also after lunch? — In Bremmerton, Washington, 15 students were suspended for passing around Alka Seltzer tablets.

Check it out — We assumed you have to be loaded to buy an island. (A 363-acre spot in the Bahamas, minimum asking price \$3.5 million.) But we didn't realize you can

rent them. For instance, the owners of one Caribbean retreat rent it out — in season, \$11,000 a night, out-of-season, \$8,200.

A gig for Nero? — The London office of Price Waterhouse, the big-time accounting firm, is planning its millennium bash and, reportedly has plunked down a £300,000 deposit for champagne slated to mature in '99.

Helping hand — In the wake of Hurricane Andrew, Florida spent \$600 million in relief funds. We don't know how much went to actual victims, but the *Miami Herald* pointed to some of the beneficiaries. Like, Fort Lauderdale received \$106,312, mostly for the parking tickets it didn't write in the aftermath of the storm.

Is ruling bureaucracy in workers state a new class?

The following is an excerpt from *In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union* by Leon Trotsky. In this book, Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian revolution and the Bolshevik party, responds to the rising pressures of bourgeois public opinion on the middle classes during the buildup toward U.S. government entry into World War II. He explains why working people must oppose imperialist assaults on the degenerated Soviet work-

BOOK OF THE WEEK

ers state. The excerpt below is taken from the document "The USSR in war," written in September 1939. It centers on the question of the character of bureaucratic caste that arose as the ruling strata in the Soviet Union after the degeneration of the Russian revolution. The entire document can be found as the second item in the collection contained in *In Defense of Marxism*. It is copyright © Pathfinder Press and is reprinted with permission.

BY LEON TROTSKY

Our critics have more than once argued that the present Soviet bureaucracy bears very little resemblance to either the bourgeois or labor bureaucracy in capitalist society; that to a far greater degree than fascist bureaucracy it represents a new and much more powerful social formation. This is quite correct and we have never closed our eyes to it.

But if we consider the Soviet bureaucracy a "class," then we are compelled to state im-

mediately that this class does not at all resemble any of those propertied classes known to us in the past; our gain consequently is not great.

We frequently call the Soviet bureaucracy a caste, underscoring thereby its shut-in character, its arbitrary rule, and the haughtiness of the ruling stratum which considers that its progenitors issued from the divine lips of Brahma whereas the popular masses originated from the grosser portions of his anatomy. But even this definition does not of course possess a strictly scientific character. Its relative superiority lies in this, that the makeshift character of the term is clear to everybody, since it would enter nobody's mind to identify the Moscow oligarchy with the Hindu caste of Brahmins.

The old sociological terminology did not and could not prepare a name for a new social event which is in process of evolution (degeneration) and which has not assumed stable forms. All of us, however, continue to call the Soviet bureaucracy a bureaucracy, not being unmindful of its historical peculiarities. In our opinion this should suffice for the time being.

Scientifically and politically — and not purely terminologically — the question poses itself as follows: Does the bureaucracy represent a temporary growth on a social organism or has this growth already become transformed into a historically indispensable organ? Social excrescences can be the product of an "accidental" (i.e., temporary and extraordinary) enmeshing of historical circumstances. A social organ (and such is every class, including an exploiting class) can take shape only as a result of the deeply rooted inner needs of production itself. If we do not answer this question, then the entire controversy will degenerate into sterile toying with words.

Early degeneration of the bureaucracy

The historical justification for every ruling class consisted in this — that the system of exploitation it headed raised the development of the productive forces to a new level. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the Soviet regime gave a mighty impulse to economy. But the source of this impulse was the nationalization of the means of production and the planned beginnings, and by no means the fact that the bureaucracy usurped command over the economy.

On the contrary, bureaucratism, as a system, became the worst brake on the technical and cultural development of the country. This was veiled for a certain time by the fact that Soviet economy was occupied for two decades with transplanting and assimilating the technology and organization of production in advanced capitalist countries.

The period of borrowing and imitation still could, for better or for worse, be accommodated to bureaucratic automatism, i.e., the suffocation of all initiative and all creative urge. But the higher the economy rose, the more complex its requirements became, all the more unbearable became the obstacle of the bureaucratic regime. The constantly sharpening contradiction between them leads to uninterrupted political convulsions, to systematic annihilation of the most outstanding creative elements in all spheres of activity. Thus, before the bureaucracy could succeed in exuding from itself a "ruling class," it came into irreconcilable contradiction with the demands of development. The explanation for this is to be found precisely in the fact that the bureaucracy is not the bearer of a new

system of economy peculiar to itself and impossible without itself, but is a parasitic growth on a workers state.

Conditions for fall of the bureaucracy

The Soviet oligarchy possesses all the vices of the old ruling classes but lacks their historical mission. In the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state it is not the general laws of modern society from capitalism to socialism which find expression but a special, exceptional, and temporary refraction of these laws under the conditions of a backward revolutionary country in a capitalist environment. The scarcity in consumer goods and the universal struggle to obtain them generate a policeman who arrogates to himself the function of distribution. Hostile pressure from without imposes on the policeman the role of "defender" of the country, endows him with national authority, and permits him doubly to plunder the country.

Both conditions for the omnipotence of the bureaucracy — the backwardness of the

country and the imperialist environment — bear, however, a temporary and transitional character and must disappear with the victory of the world revolution. Even bourgeois economists have calculated that with a planned economy it would be possible to raise the national income of the United States rapidly to \$200 billion a year and thus assure the entire population not only the satisfaction of its primary needs but real comforts.

On the other hand, the world revolution would do away with the danger from without as a supplementary cause of bureaucratization. The elimination of the need to expend an enormous share of the national income on armaments would raise even higher the living and cultural level of the masses. In these conditions the need for a policeman-distributor would fall away by itself. Administration as a gigantic cooperative would very quickly supplant state power. There would be no room for a new ruling class or for a new exploiting regime, located between capitalism and socialism.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



April 28, 1972

The revolutionary fighters of April 1965 in Santo Domingo wrote one of the most heroic chapters in the long, blood-stained history of Latin-American resistance to U.S. imperialism. Since April 24 is the seventh anniversary of that revolt, it is appropriate to give some of the background to the Dominican events leading up to and following it.

The 1965 U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic was the fourth time U.S. Marines had occupied that country. The previous occupation lasted from 1916 to 1924. The bloody tyrant Rafael L. Trujillo got his start during that occupation as a procurer of prostitutes for the U.S. Marines. The Marines sent him to a school the U.S. had set up for training a puppet Dominican military establishment. By 1930 Trujillo controlled the Dominican armed forces and was elected president. He maintained his grip for 31 years by cultivating powerful friends in Washington and the Pentagon. He also organized a political patronage system that made his close friends wealthy and simply murdered opponents he thought threatened his rule.

What were the excuses for the U.S. invasion? First, to "protect American lives and property." This was not very widely believed, since not a single U.S. civilian had been killed or wounded, and no one had threatened to expropriate any of Wall Street's sacred holdings in Santo Domingo. The second public excuse was that the Marines were sent to "prevent another communist state in this hemisphere."



April 26, 1947

In Texas City last week the worst industrial disaster in America since the First

World War snuffed out the lives of between 400 and 600 people, with many dead still uncounted, injured 3,000 more and laid waste an entire city. Shudders of horror and apprehension swept over the nation as pictures and reports of this flaming funeral pyre were received. People were shaken not only by the deaths and destruction but by dire foreboding that this Texas catastrophe was a preview of the destructive powers that can be unloosed in atomic warfare.

A fire aboard the explosive-laden French freighter Grandcamp on April 16 blasted the vessel and most of its crew out of existence. This first blast set off a chain of explosions that for three days rocked the Gulf Coast and ripped through the jerry-built-industrial Texas City.

The death toll was highest among the hundreds of workers in the \$19,000,000 Monsanto Chemical plant built at government expense during the war, which sprawled over 30 acres on Galveston Bay. No alarm was sounded in the plant when the Grandcamp fire started and none of the workers evacuated although there was ample time to do so. The plant became a flaming shambles as its chemicals ignited. Other vessels in the Harbor exploded, including the *High Flyer*, also loaded with explosives.

Who is responsible for this horror? The *N.Y. World Telegram* on April 17 states: "It comes in the category of those indefinable acts of God... seemingly there is no one to blame." This is a lie. Evidence is beginning to accumulate that capitalist greed and reckless disregard for the lives and safety of the working people are behind the disaster.

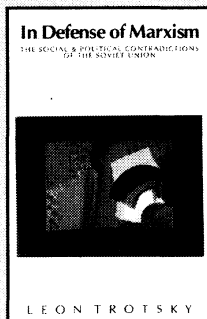
The Texas City workers bore the brunt of the disaster. Their flimsy shacks covering some 70 blocks, were built in an arc of danger around the inflammable chemical plants and oil refineries on the waterfront. Among these workers were many Mexican-American and Negro families. This sector was virtually wiped off the map in the blasts and fires. As an afterthought, when city officials talked about rebuilding the destroyed areas, County Auditor Isidore Predecki of Galveston stated: "This town should be built up four miles from the tanks. That's the only way to insure safety."

FROM PATHFINDER

In Defense of Marxism

Leon Trotsky

Writing in 1930-40, Trotsky replies to those in the revolutionary workers movement at the close of the 1930s who were beating a retreat from defense of the degenerated soviet workers state in face of looming imperialist assault. He explains how the rising pressures of bourgeois patriotism in the middle classes during the buildup toward U.S. entry into World War II were finding an echo even inside the communist movement, and why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can steer a steady revolutionary course. \$24.95



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.

Food aid for Korea now!

"Brutal imperialist hypocrites" most accurately describes the U.S. and south Korean governments in their drive to smash the workers state in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) through starving its people. U.S. defense secretary William Cohen and Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. John Shalikashvili accused Pyongyang on April 11 of wasting resources to build up its defenses instead of feeding its people. Washington uses this mendacity as an excuse to justify withholding food aid, desperately needed by Korean workers and peasants.

Cohen says "you have to ask yourself" why the DPRK maintains a large, well-trained military. It really isn't that complicated. In 1950, Washington launched a war against the Korean people that went on for nearly four years. Massive bombings, including napalm, leveled the country. The peninsula was divided against the will of the Korean people, and 37,000 U.S. troops remain in the south of Korea to this day to enforce that division. The Seoul regime came into existence drenched in the blood of the 2 million combatants slaughtered in the Korean war.

Since then, Washington and Seoul have continued their bellicose stance, staging all sorts of provocations, including violating DPRK air space. And after this history, Washington asserts that north Korea is the aggressor?

The U.S. rulers claim aid is not linked to imperialist demands for the DPRK to neutralize its defenses. Yet one U.S. official after another has made it clear the opposite

is true — corn comes on the tip of an imperialist bayonet.

The Clinton administration has no interest or intention of aiding malnourished Koreans in the north. Instead Washington and Seoul blame the food crisis Pyongyang is experiencing — a result of two consecutive years of severe flooding — on the so-called economic inadequacy of the workers state. The \$15 million worth of corn Washington has "offered" north Korea is chicken feed compared to the UN-estimated \$126 million needed to resolve the near-famine conditions. The onus for the deaths of any Korean children who die of malnutrition rests on the White House door step.

What makes the imperialists hate and fear the workers state in north Korea so much is the ever-looming specter of unification. The Korean people have fought for five decades, both in the north and south, for one sovereign Korean nation. This drive for reunification is a substantial factor in the resistance by working people in south Korea to government austerity and the gradual crumbling of the capitalist economy there, signaled by the collapse of several major steel industries and banks. Hundreds of thousands joined in strikes and protests there in December and January against antilabor and antidemocratic laws the government tried to impose.

Workers, youth, and all those who support the struggle for national self-determination, should call for: Imperialists hands off Pyongyang! Food to north Korea now!

Defend affirmative action

The labor movement should stand up for affirmative action. Unionists — as well as fighters for democratic rights, defenders of the rights of oppressed nationalities and women, those protesting police brutality, and others — should protest the recent decision by a federal appeals court to uphold Proposition 209, or the misnamed California Civil Rights Initiative.

The reactionary Proposition 209 bars "preferential treatment" based on race or gender in public employment, education, and contracting in California. The measure was passed in last November's election by a margin of 54 percent to 46 percent, after an intense debate and many street actions opposing the proposition.

Affirmative action is central to removing barriers of racial and sex discrimination in jobs, education, housing, and other institutions. Capitalist politicians argue against "racial preferences" to justify their assault on programs won by Blacks during the massive civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, and subsequently by other oppressed nationalities and women. But preferences aren't a recent development — it's just the bosses always "preferred" to divide the working class based on race and gender until Blacks, Chicanos, women, and others stood up and demanded equal rights.

The latest attack on affirmative action is a blow to the

union movement and to the working class as a whole. The ruling will put wind in the sails of rightists who scapegoat Blacks, immigrants, and women, while paving the way for deeper assaults. The court action already has spurred similar initiatives in several other states.

Discrimination is institutionalized in capitalist society. Moreover, the very way that capitalism operates day in and day out constantly reproduces and thus reinforces inequalities, to the benefit of the employers. As the economic crisis of capitalism deepens, the bosses are forced to attempt to lower *all* wages. Affirmative action pushes back this attempt to pay some workers less. The employers and their government will never act on their own ensure equality, and will back every discriminatory practice in the workplace, schools, and elsewhere.

Class-conscious workers and youth, along with the union movement, must demand that the employers and their government establish and enforce affirmative action measures — including quotas — to guarantee the inclusion of oppressed nationalities and women in the workplace, college admissions, loans, and housing. This will put the working class in the best position to build the unity needed to fight for jobs for all, a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, to raise the minimum wage, and for other such demands.

'Militant' subscription drive

Continued from Page 5

have an all-day team at a campus protest over education cuts and on the final weekend of the drive we have a regional team planned to Brisbane for the Australia Cuba Friendship Society's national meeting."



"In Detroit students and workers are eagerly buying up the specially discounted Pathfinder titles," reports Holly Harkness. "Over 50 books were sold in the first week of the sale. Volunteers at the Pathfinder Bookstore printed up a list of all the titles on sale along with their discounted prices. A wide selection of titles were available at the Young Socialists table at the National MEChA conference in East Lansing Michigan. Over two days 24 titles were sold, including six copies of *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* because the issue of FBI and police harassment of the Chicano movement was a topic of discussion at the conference."

Harkness adds that at Thorn Apple Valley, a meatpacking plant organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers, where socialists set up a literature table each week at the plant gate, "several workers came by to look at the books. A worker who is Black bought *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches and Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*. Participants at a fund-raising event for locked-out Detroit newspaper workers bought two copies of *Teamster Bureaucracy*."



Maxi Ortiz, a member of the Young Socialists in Stockholm, and Catharina Tirsén, a member of the Metalworkers Union, wrote in about the Pathfinder "Supersaver" sale: "On Friday April 11, the Pathfinder bookstore in Stockholm announced the start of the Pathfinder sale. A total of 23 titles were sold, plus one set of the *Writings of Trotsky* and one set of *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*. Members of the communist movement, especially YS members, used the opportunity to build up their personal libraries."

Five books were sold from book tables in the city and at the bookstore the next day. A customer from Molkom College in Dalecarlia province phoned the bookstore to inquire about the formation of the Israeli state. He was happy to learn about the special offer on Maxime Rodinson's book: *Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?* and ordered it along with the pamphlet *Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation*.



Lea Bockman from Atlanta writes: "We began the target week with a bang — successful door-to-door teams to a Spanish-speaking community where people bought five subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. During the week teams visited members of the Glass, Molders and Potters union on strike against Owens-Corning in Fairburn, Georgia. One striker bought a subscription and several single issues were sold. Two strikers at B.I.T. Manufacturing in Copperhill, Tennessee, bought *Militant* subscriptions from another team visiting that struggle."



Supporters in Tucson are at the top of the chart this week in the United States. Betsy McDonald writes: "I am sending in four *Militant* subscriptions we got at Arizona State University, Tempe. Our trip to ASU was successful beyond our wildest dreams. A Jobs for Justice rally to support the farm workers was the reason our team went. We sold seven Pathfinder books, four *New Internationals*, on pamphlet, and four *Militant* subscriptions."



Back to Houston: "The target week really helped get us back on track to meet our goal of 50 *Militant* subscriptions," Graham reports. "Our goal going into the target week was to get up to the 25 subscription mark by April 13. We had 28 *Militant*, 10 *PM* subscriptions, and 12 *New Internationals* sold by then!"

"We are confident that if we continue with the day-to-day work with some breaks here and there that we will meet our goal."

What was the difference between Stalin, Trotsky?

What interest did Joseph Stalin have in the murder of Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky? asks *Militant* reader Lee Kirsner in a letter printed on page 15. Answering this question gets to the heart of the revolutionary legacy of Trotsky and his political continuity with communist leader V.I. Lenin's final struggle to maintain the proletarian internationalist course with which the Bolshevik Party led the workers and peasants to power over

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

the landlords and capitalists of the former tsarist empire.

With the victory of the October 1917 Russian revolution, the exploited toilers established a workers and peasants government that led the process of overturning capitalist property relations and building the world's first workers state. The Russian revolution soon came under direct military assault by imperialist troops from Germany, France, Britain, Japan, and the United States, combined with attacks by remnants of the tsarist armies.

After years of hardship and famine stemming from the 1918-20 civil war, the Bolsheviks launched the New Economic Policy (NEP) in early 1921, to restore production and trade. The government authorized a private market for peasants to sell produce, and foreign capitalists were encouraged to invest in small industry. Lenin, the central leader of the revolutionary regime, explained that the NEP was a necessary retreat to establish a link with the peasant economy. Under these conditions a layer of petty bourgeois bureaucrats developed, many of them former counterrevolutionaries, who began to join the Communist Party as a way to advance careers. And some of the old Bolsheviks in the government and party apparatuses began to adapt their political views to adjust their lives to these new conditions.

Trotsky pointed out how "Lenin was horrified at the growth of bureaucratism" and began a struggle to confront it before his death in 1924. One of the measures Lenin proposed was "electing 75 to 100 new members to the Central Control Commission. They should be workers and peasants." The purpose of the Control Commission was to combat the bureaucratism and careerism that had crept into the party. It investigated the misuse of positions by party members both in the party and in the soviets, or workers councils, as well as violations of comradely relations and other excesses.

The soviet republic during these years faced tremendous obstacles. The revolutionary workers movement had sustained defeats in Hungary, Italy, and Germany. In Germany, a third attempt at revolution was defeated in 1923 due to weaknesses of communist forces in building a party strong enough to lead the toilers to victory. A restabilization of world capitalism, the imperialist blockade of Russia, the economic toll of the civil war, and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives — including many vanguard workers — led to a retreat in class conscious fighters and revolutionaries. This situation favored tendencies toward conservatism and nationalism.

These pressures and the death of Lenin made possible the consolidation of a bureaucratic caste, which had a petty-bourgeois outlook and promoted its power and relative material privileges against the interests of the working class. Stalin, general secretary of the party, presided over the degeneration of the party and the rise of this parasitic cancer. He sought to justify conservatism tendencies to advance the interest of the bureaucracy.

Trotsky noted that the revolutionary defeats in Europe suggested to Stalin the idea that "the historic mission of the Soviet bureaucracy was to build socialism in a single country." He answered this "theory" in his book *The Revolution Betrayed*, explaining that a "prolonged isolation of the Soviet Union would not end in national communism but in a restoration of capitalism.... If a bourgeoisie cannot peacefully grow into a socialist democracy, it is likewise true that a socialist state cannot peacefully merge with a world capitalist system. On the historic order of the day stands not the peaceful socialist development of 'one country' but a long series of world disturbances: wars and revolutions. Disturbances are inevitable also in the domestic life of the Soviet Union."

Trotsky formed the Left Opposition in 1923 and continued Lenin's antibureaucratic struggle based on revolutionary internationalism, opposing the privileged bureaucracy and their abuse of state resources, mismanagement, and chauvinism against oppressed nations.

The Stalinist murder machine organized the extermination of virtually the entire generation of the Communist Party that led the Russian revolution. Workers and peasants were driven out of politics and bloody purge trials were organized, while censorship and the falsification of history were institutionalized in every aspect of social, political, and cultural life. Trotsky was hounded from country to country before he was finally granted asylum in Mexico. In August 1940, an agent of Stalin's secret police murdered Trotsky in Mexico.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Women advance fight of Wheeling-Pitt strike

BY SHEILA OSTROW

PITTSBURGH — From the day 4,500 workers at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. walked off the job October 1, local women's committees have played a very important role in keeping morale high and helping to organize outreach to other workers for support of the strike. The strikers at Wheeling-Pitt's mills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia are members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Their central demand is for the restoration of the type of guaranteed pension plan that exists at the other integrated steel companies in the United States.

The women's committees are made up of women strikers, along with spouses and others who support the strike.

Gloria Jones is an activist in the Yorkville, Ohio, women's committee. Over 700 steelworkers are on strike at the mill there, and Jones's husband is one of them. "Businesses and others in the area have been very gracious in donating items to be used for fundraising," she said. "This has helped raise funds for the kids. We recently were able to put together Easter baskets for all the children of strikers." The women's committee in Yorkville has also assisted strikers and their families to get donations from food banks and to ward off creditors breathing down their necks.

In the first week of the strike, this reporter was able to go with co-workers to visit USWA Local 1190 in Steubenville, Ohio. There, the women's committee had already drawn up a list of businesses in the area who supported the strike and were willing to give strikers discounts.

An important part of the work of the women's committees has been fundraising. Before Christmas, the committees in both Steubenville and Yorkville collected money for Christmas presents for the children. They each raised thousands of dollars through raffles and other events. Every child was able to get a Christmas present.

Recently a blow was struck against the state of Ohio and Wheeling-Pittsburgh steel, when the 3,700 strikers in that state won 26 weeks of unemployment benefits. Jones explained that this, combined with the stepped up solidarity from USWA locals has eased some of the financial burdens for strikers.

In some of the union halls, the women's committees have organized kitchens, where meals are available for strikers going on or coming off picket duty.

Members of the women's committees have helped on bucket collections at other locals, such as one at this reporter's work site. This gives them the opportunity to explain the strike to other workers. The strike activists have also spoken at union meetings to appeal for support for the walkout. And the women's committee in Yorkville helps to build the weekly informational pickets in front of the Wheeling-Pitt headquarters in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Individual members of women's committee also responded February 4 to calls by the union for emergency pickets when bosses at Wheeling-Pitt attempted to take a truck

load of space compressor parts from the Yorkville tin plate mill.

Andrea Jones, a member of USWA 1843 in Pittsburgh, has been an active supporter of the strike from the first week. "After initially meeting Gloria Jones and the other women in the women's committee, I am not surprised that they are still going strong and raising money to help the strikers," she said.

Meanwhile, strikers face continued intimidation from Wheeling-Pitt bosses and WHX, the company's parent corporation. Negotiations between WHX chairman Ronald LaBow and USWA negotiators broke down in Pittsburgh March 25, according to the *Wheeling News Register*. At the same time, the company announced it would eliminate 350 jobs, including closing its Beech Bottom, West Virginia, a corrugated steel mill; the LaBelle, West Virginia, a cut nail facility; and a production line at the Martins Ferry, Ohio, galvanizing mill.

Recent contract talks have broken down and have failed to produce an agreement on a guaranteed pension for the 4500 steelworkers.

Steelworkers from locals around the country have been organizing bucket collections

NY hospital workers rally for contract



Militant Amy Husk

Over 2,000 members and supporters of the National Health and Human Services Employees Union Local 1199 rallied in front of New York Hospital April 2. They were protesting management's refusal to sign a fair contract with registered nurses.

to support strikers. Many locals have organized buses and car caravans to visit the strikers on the picket lines and at the union halls. Gloria Jones said that seeing members from other locals "makes us feel that we can

last one more day. It gives us a reason to keep going on."

Sheila Ostrow is a member of USWA Local 184 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Prosecution admits keeping evidence from defense in Geronimo Pratt case

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles District Attorney's office, which railroaded Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt to prison 27 years ago, took some solid blows at a hearing to determine if Pratt should be granted a new trial. The former Black Panther Party leader is serving a life sentence for a murder he did not commit. He was jailed in 1970 and convicted in 1972.

Closing summations on the motion for a new trial were heard March 13 by Superior Court Judge Everett Dickey. Arguing against the motion for a new trial, Harry Sondheim, a veteran staffer in the D.A.'s office, ended by philosophizing that Pratt did not get a "perfect" trial, but did get "a fair trial." The TV camera covering the hearing panned in on Pratt staring at Sondheim with astonishment. And Judge Dickey bluntly took issue with some of Sondheim's key arguments.

In his summation, Sondheim conceded that in the trial, the defense had been denied information it was entitled to. For instance, he acknowledged, it should have been told that the DA's office had given \$200 to its key witness, Julius Butler, to buy a gun. Sondheim tried to dance around the fact that the defense — and the jury — had not known that Butler was a police informer. He operated in the Panthers for the FBI, the Los Angeles Police Department, and — only recently disclosed — for the DA's office itself. Judge Dickey had declared he wanted to hear testimony explaining Butler's inclusion in a list of DA informers, "and why that

was not disclosed until now." No serious explanation was offered.

Pratt was convicted of murdering Caroline Olsen and wounding her husband Kenneth Olsen, now deceased, in a 1968 holdup. At the trial, Olsen testified that Pratt was the killer. But the jury was not told that earlier he had identified someone else.

Skeptical of Olsen's value as a witness, the prosecution built its case around Butler. Butler had been expelled from the Panthers in 1969. He then gave a policeman a letter in which he claimed Pratt had confessed to him he had committed the Olsen murder.

When the shooting occurred, Pratt was attending a Panther meeting in northern California. He insisted that with its known tight surveillance of the Panthers, including the tapping of its phones, the FBI could verify he was there and had made phone calls to Los Angeles. The FBI says the pertinent logs are missing.

At the trial, the prosecutor had described Butler's testimony as crucial. He declared, "Julio Butler has testified in this courtroom under oath... to a confession Mr. Pratt made to him If the jury believes Mr. Butler, Mr. Pratt is guilty. The case is over."

But in a significant shift at the current hearing, the DA's office tried to take its distance from its discredited informer. Sondheim declared, "The evidence presented at the trial — independent of Butler's testimony — was so overwhelming that the credibility of Julius Butler is of no consequence."

To illustrate how "overwhelming" the evidence, especially the eyewitness evidence, was, Sondheim noted that after a "protracted" trial, the jury reached a verdict in six days. Judge Dickey took exception. He said the jury, which twice reported itself deadlocked, had obviously not found the eyewitness evidence overwhelming.

Dickey also pointed out that an examination of the record shows the trial was far from "protracted." It spanned a month, he said, but the jury was never brought in until late morning or mid-afternoon. Comparing this to normal court schedules, he calculated that the jury was in the courtroom an equivalent of six days. He said the jurors took as long a time to reach a verdict as they had been given to hear the case.

When Sondheim argued that Butler did not perceive of himself as an informer, Dickey again interrupted, declaring that how Butler saw himself was immaterial. What was decisive, he declared is that "the jury should have been given the opportunity to arrive at their own conclusions about him."

Pratt's attorneys, Stuart Hanlon and Johnnie Cochran, summarized the evidence that had emerged at the hearing declaring that the testimony buttressed their motion for a new trial. Hanlon has represented Pratt over the years. Cochran was Pratt's lawyer in the 1972 trial and returned to participate in the hearing.

Concluding the hearing, Dickey indicated he would try to hand down an early decision.

LETTERS

Trotsky and Stalin

On Page 9 of the April 7, 1997 issue in your advertisement of the Writings of Leon Trotsky you state that "Joseph Stalin ordered Trotsky's assassination." Since both men were Marxists what benefit would Stalin get from Trotsky's murder? Trotsky at that time lived in Mexico far from the Soviet Union. Whatever differences these men might have had (in their plows to further socialism) were voided by geography.

As I understand it, Trotsky believed in world wide revolution to bring in socialism while Stalin wanted to build up Russian so that socialism there could be protected.

A more likely scenario was that agents of U.S. capitalism alarmed at the closeness (Mexico) of so brilliant a revolutionary as Trotsky, murdered him. Please try and ad-

dress my theory.
Lee Kirsner
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Albanian revolution

The March 27 issue of *Workers World* newspaper of the "Marxist" Workers World Party, contained an article about the Albanian upheaval titled "People's Councils lead insurrection against capitalist misrule."

Dierdre Griswold, the author, discussed the liberation of Albania from the Nazis and the establishment of a socialist government at the end of W.W.II in Albania.

She then states: "The revolutionary government (in Albania), led by partisan hero Enver Xoxha, nationalized the land and all key industries. It (Albania) was the most egalitarian of the Eastern European socialist countries."

Isn't this a rather far fetched claim? Was not the Enver Xoxha regime one of the most repressive Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe? Didn't the people rise up to overthrow this regime in the early 90s?

In the same issue of *Workers World*, there are numerous articles on gay rights, as if Stalinists like Xoxha were great champions of defending democratic rights for gay people.

Does *Workers World* suffer from a cognitive disorder? Or am I misinformed?

Nicholas Brand
Cambria County, Pennsylvania

Support Safeway strikers

It doesn't rain, it pours in Alberta. Some 10,000 members of UFCW and the BCTW are out on strike against Safeway's. They are demanding more hours of work for

part timers and a wage increase equivalent to the concessions they gave the company in 1993. To find out more go to the UFCW Strike site at: <http://www.e-view.com/ufcwstrike/>

Email letters of support can be sent to: pgarvin@compusmart.ab.ca

The Alberta Federation of Labour and all the unions in Alberta including those not in the AFL (Building trades, United Nurses of Alberta and the Alberta Teachers Association) have endorsed a boycott of Safeway's for the length of the dispute.

Since we have no anti-scab legislation here, Safeway's has been hiring scabs since before the strike.

Pickets are up across the province, and spirits are high as Safeway's stores are virtually empty of customers. The UFCW has been joined on the lines by other union

members. My own local (CUPE Local 474) has faxed all our members at their schools and over 30 of us have been on the picket lines.

This Easter weekend is a big shopping time for stores, and Safeway is hurting badly due to this strike.

Please let UFCW members know they are not alone. Call them at their 1-800 number listed on their strike page or Email them.

Eugene Plawiuk
Alberta, Canada

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.

Ireland is a key issue in UK election

Communist League candidate says: 'Include Sinn Fein in talks now'

BY MARCELLA FITZGERALD

LONDON — For several days here newspaper headlines have been dominated by the calling off of the Grand National horse race on April 5 because of an Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomb warning.

The Grand National warning had been preceded by IRA activity in Britain and in Northern Ireland. A combination of bombs and bomb hoaxes caused the closing of several main train stations in London on April 4, the disruption of the road transport network in the Midlands on April 3, and the shutting down of the east coast and west coast railways for several hours the previous week.

Leaders of the main capitalist parties rushed to condemn fighters for Irish freedom for what resulted in the postponement of the horse race for 48 hours. Robin Cook, the Labour Party's shadow foreign secretary, who was at the Aintree race course at the time of the hoax, told BBC television that "this shows how low the terrorists will stoop."

Leading trainer Jennie Pitman was prominently featured on the television in tears after the authorities told her she had to leave her horses at the track.

"The media hype has failed to achieve its aim of drawing working people into a chorus of anti-Irish fever," said Ian Grant, Communist League candidate for parliament in the London constituency of North Southwark and Bermondsey, in an interview. "There were calm discussions where I work at Ford, Dagenham. A number of my workmates commented that they thought that Pitman had gone too far — a sentiment reinforced when the same trainer killed one of her horses following an injury during the race."

Grant commented that the major media attention to the Grand National "contrasts with the stand that the press had been taking in the first two weeks of the election campaign, when they'd kept the Irish issue off the front pages." For example, new revelations about the British massacre at a civil rights protest in Derry on Bloody Sunday in 1972 were squashed by all the British media.

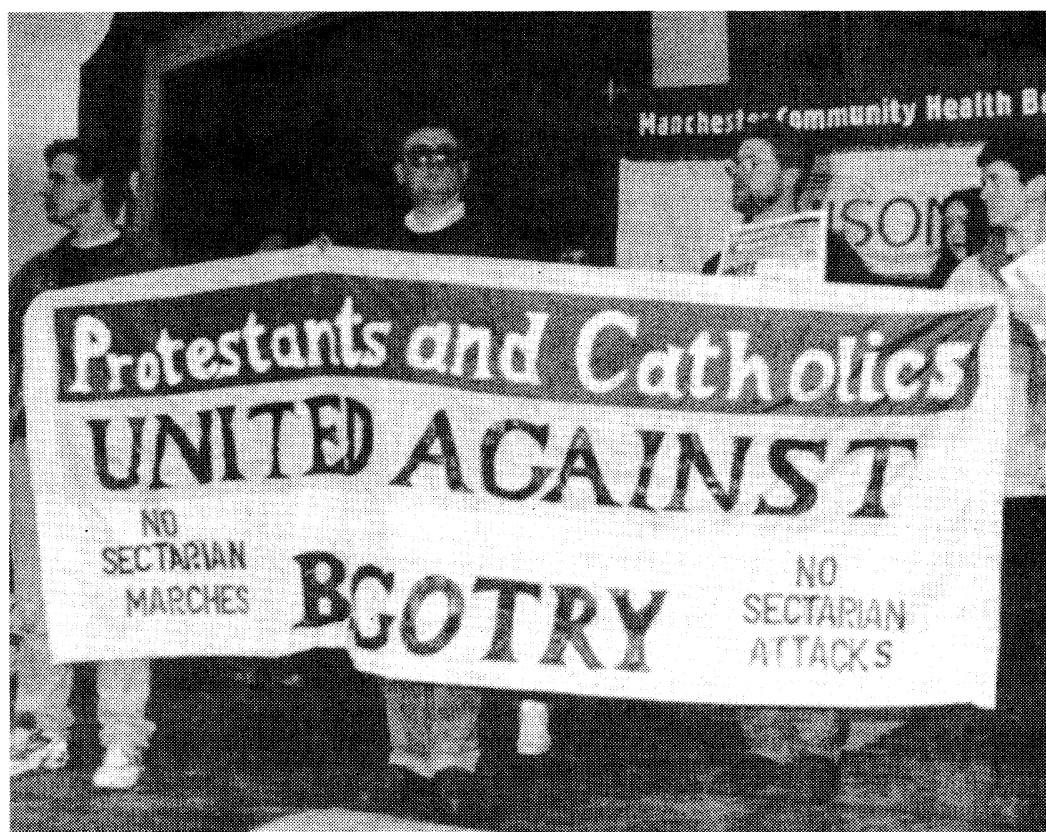
In a March 16 interview with the Irish weekly *Sunday Business Post*, a former paratrooper said the troops had been briefed that they were going to Derry "to get some kills." The soldier said that a cease-fire order given after the first victims were killed was ignored and that some of those shot were standing with their hands in the air. Soldiers used hollow-tip "dumdum" bullets, which are banned under the Geneva convention, he said. At the time, his evidence to the British government's inquiry, the Widgery Tribunal, was destroyed and another version prepared for him.

Crisis of British rule in Ireland

"New revelations about Bloody Sunday are appearing regularly," Grant commented, "reflecting the crisis of British rule in Ireland. This crisis is forcing the Irish issue to the center of the election despite the desires of the capitalist rulers and their parties."

Grant's campaign prominently features the demand for immediate British troop withdrawal from Ireland. "We've just seen another example of the fact that the heart of the problem in Ireland is the British army presence," Grant explained. "On 26 March, members of the British SAS (Special Air Services) shot and seriously wounded 19-year-old Gareth Doris on his way back from church, and also fired on the car of a local priest. The army claimed they were responding to a bomb attack that damaged the perimeter fence of the fortified RUC station in Coalisland County Tyrone. But their real target was revealed as they abused the crowd that gathered in response and then fired plastic bullets to disperse them."

Grant blasted the burning down of five Catholic churches in Northern Ireland



Supporters of United Against Bigotry in Harryville demonstrate March 15

within the space of a week. In addition to sectarian arson attacks, pro-British loyalists have been picketing a Catholic church in Harryville, Ballymena, itself the target of an arson attack some months ago. The weekly Saturday night pickets are the rightists' response to the objections by the local community to loyalist Orange Order parades through Catholic areas in the neighboring village of Dunloy. "Most papers have not touched the issue of the church burning," Grant said. He added that the press and capitalist politicians had also been silent over the gunning down of John Slane, an Irish Catholic living on Belfast's Ormeau road. Gary McMichael and David Ervine, leaders of the political parties linked to the Loyalist paramilitary forces, were asked to comment on the murder as they left for Washington, D.C., to participate in the St. Patrick's day parade, at the invitation of the Clinton administration. They denied that their Combined Loyalist Military Command carried out the killing.

"The fact that Loyalist murders and other violence go unclaimed means that the myth that there is a Loyalist cease-fire is maintained," Grant explained. "Ervine and McMichael keep their seats at the talks being held by the British government, and they are invited to the United States. Meanwhile, the nationalist party Sinn Fein is excluded from the talks and Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams has been denied a U.S. visa on the basis that the IRA is not on cease-fire. So far the Loyalist 'cease-fire' has not been challenged by the British government or mainstream political parties despite the Orange rebellion at Drumcree, the murder of Catholic taxi driver Michael McGoldrick, nor even by the planting of a bomb outside the Sinn Fein office on the Catholic housing estate in New Lodge on Easter Sunday." The bomb would have killed many local residents had it not been defused. As it was homes were damaged in the surrounding area by the controlled explosion of the bomb.

Call to include Sinn Fein in talks

Grant called for the immediate inclusion of Sinn Fein in all-party talks on Northern Ireland. "The Tory and Labour leaderships maintain a bipartisan stand on the question of Ireland, and they have done so ever since the Labour government sent in the troops in 1969. Today, they make Sinn Fein's inclusion in talks conditional upon an IRA cease-fire. But when the IRA's cease-fire was on, the government, supported by the Labour leadership, came up with other conditions."

Grant noted that there are signs that bipartisanism is coming under strains from the Tory right.

British Home Secretary Michael Howard used the occasion of an IRA bomb at Wilmslow railway station near Manchester to attack the Labour Party. Howard said that Labour could not be trusted to uphold the interests of the British state like the Tory party does. Labour leader Anthony Blair countered by underlining his commitment to a bipartisan, agreed on approach to events on Ireland. The *Morning Star*, the newspaper associated with the Communist Party of Britain, backed the Labour Party, labeling Howard's comments a "slur." The paper called for a "thumping majority for Labour" in the British general election and joined the chorus demanding a new IRA cease-fire. The Workers Party, a Stalinist organization in Northern Ireland, was more explicit in attacking Sinn Fein and praising the "new spirit of awakening on the brethren of the Orange Order."

Howard's attack on the Labour Party was repeated later in the week when Labour Party spokesperson on Ireland Marjorie Mowlam stated that should the IRA call a "genuine cease-fire" before the election, Sinn Fein should be allowed into the British government-hosted talks when they resume on June 3.

Mowlam's comments were denounced as naive by Andrew Hunter, chairman of the Tory back bench committee on Northern Ireland. "It is a fundamental error and a matter of great concern," he said. "There will be no bipartisan policy on Northern Ireland in the future if Labour pursues this line. They are determined to get Sinn Fein round the table at any cost."

The *Financial Times* speculated that Michael Howard and Lord Cranbourne, the leader of the House of Lords, will head up moves to break with the bipartisan policy should the Tories lose the election. "This may well be the case" Grant said. "An intransigent stance on the Irish question will be a key pole around which to regroup forces on a more overtly nationalist and rightist program."

"But divisions on Ireland also reflect a lack of confidence among ruling class circles that they can carry through changes in their relationship with Ireland in the face of the unbroken struggle of working people in the Six Counties and the growing support for Sinn Fein," the communist candidate said.

Sinn Fein is using the occasion of the British General election to stand 15 candidates, including party leaders Gerry Adams

and Martin McGuinness. Speaking to a crowd of 5,000 people at the commemoration of the Easter 1916 rising in Milltown Cemetery, Adams said, "For us there is no going back to Unionist domination. There will be no going back to second class rule.... We want to make peace with Unionists: to work with you to accommodate and celebrate our diversity as equals. That is our message to [loyalist leaders] David Trimble and Ian Paisley."

Rifts among loyalist forces

At the same time, the long-term crisis of the organizations of Protestant supremacy is once again resurfacing. "This was already clear in the special Northern Ireland elections called by UK prime minister John Major last year, when no fewer than 17 pro-union parties contested the election. The fierce competition between the Democratic Unionist Party and the Ulster Unionist Party has reemerged."

DUP leader Ian Paisley has charged David Trimble of the UUP with selling out the Union. Paisley is heading further into street politics. At an April 4 rally in Portadown, Paisley said, "We will not surrender, not an inch, to Dublin and not to popery... [Catholics] will not breed us out, you will not burn us out, and you will not bring us down."

Splits have also emerged within the Orange Order. Calls for the resignation of its "Grand Master," Robert Saulter, have come from the "Spirit of Drumcree" faction. The differences focus on how to approach this year's "marching season" — the practice of organizing often violent, supremacist parades through Catholic neighborhoods. Throughout last year's marching season community groups organized to resist these marches and demand that there be no parades without the consent of the local people. The success of this defensive stance led to the desperate stand at Drumcree in July when the rightist organizations laid siege to and rioted against the Catholic community there. This year the mainstream Unionists are anxious not to repeat the political fiasco they suffered from the publicity over Drumcree.

Despite being in the minority, the "Spirit of Drumcree" group was able to physically prevent a meeting of the Orange Order in Ballymena that was scheduled to discuss a proposed agreement calling off the protests that have been going on for six months outside the Catholic church in Harryville.

However, on Easter Monday the Unionist "Apprentice Boys" agreed to turn back from marching down Ormeau Road. This was the opening of the marching season. Last year, the Apprentice Boys march opened the way for a police siege of the area, which in turn sparked the organized resistance by local residents in many areas to the rightist parades.

In Dromore, an agreement has been reached to allow local Orangemen to march on July 12 and to reroute away from the village a larger march from all over Tyrone.

"Such developments are the occasion for celebration," Ian Grant said. "They come out of what working people have won in the streets. Thousands of people were drawn into political activity in Northern Ireland last year in the resistance to the supremacist marches. They are reaping their reward with the compromises made by the loyalists."

The *Morning Star* newspaper saw things differently. An editorial in the April 1 issue of the paper hailed what it described as the "ideological leap" made by the loyalist paramilitaries "in facing up to the reality that fundamental changes are necessary if the prospects for peace are to be realized."

Grant described this as "the hailing of rightist thugs. Rather than celebrating the advances made in struggle by working people the *Morning Star* is tipping its hat to sectarian bigots."