

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

'Militant' supporters sell 1,278 subscriptions, raise \$124,000

— PAGES 4-5

VOL. 61/NO. 19 MAY 12, 1997

## Washington steps up war preparations in Europe

'We will enlarge NATO whether Russia agrees or not'

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright ratcheted up the Clinton administration's war preparations against Russia another notch during her bellicose testimony in favor of expanding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). "NATO is still the anchor of our engagement in Europe," she asserted before the Senate Armed Services Committee April 23. It is "the only organization with real military might."

"I am a diplomat," Albright declared. "And I know that a diplomat's best friend is effective military force and the credible possibility of its use." She pointed to slaughter of the Iraqi people during the Gulf war and the imperialist occupation in Bosnia as a "lesson we must remember in Europe."

Albright has been the White House point person in pressing the foreign policy of the U.S. rulers ever since she launched a nine-country world tour in Rome February 16, to campaign for NATO enlargement. Her mission reflected the imperialists' accelerated moves toward their aim of overthrowing the workers state in Russia and reestablishing the system of wage slavery there.

Championing the extension of NATO's military infrastructure, Albright testified before the Senate committee together with Defense Secretary William Cohen. A few days later, Cohen boasted of Washington's military prowess during a speech to students at the University of Georgia April 28. "We don't want to engage in a fair fight," he declared. "We want to dominate across the full spectrum so that if we ever do have to fight we will win on our terms."

Cohen's talk in Georgia referred to a defense review by Pentagon officials, whose stated policy is to ensure Washington's capacity to wage two large regional wars at the same time, both on the scale of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The review could include slight troop cuts from the roster of active duty troops — which now number 1.5 million — along with upgrading the massive

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Imperialist troops patrol the port town of Durres, Albania, April 19.

## Occupation of Albania stirs discussion among workers

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

VLORE, Albania — As the gate of the Italian warship *Vittorio Veneto* opened at 7:30 a.m. on April 24, another contingent of Italian troops marched into the port of this city. The Italian forces have established a military base here and raised the Italian flag in the port. About a dozen Albanians, mostly youth, were observing the arrival of the imperialist occupation forces.

"Why are they coming here," asked Alban Goci, 24, who worked in Greece as a construction worker for three years, as he watched the disembarkation. "If we ourselves cannot solve our own problems and establish order, why should they be able to?"

The Italian, Greek, and other governments that are part of the intervention force have supported Albanian president Sali Berisha before, Goci noted. "If they just bring us food and medicines, it will be OK," he said, "but they are not here to help us."

The military occupation comes in response to the revolt of Albania's working people against the pro-capitalist Berisha regime. Under the guise of "humanitarian assistance," its aim is to quell the revolt, and deal a blow against the gains of the 1944-46 revolution in Albania, with the ultimate goal of restoring capitalism in that country.

Vlore, the hotbed of the revolt, is a central target. Imperialist troops now guard the

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## Auto bosses still won't talk with strikers

BY TONI GORTON

DETROIT — As 1,800 members of United Auto Workers Local 51 head into their third week on strike against the third largest U.S. automaker, talks between the union and Chrysler remain deadlocked. So far the strike by the engine plant workers has shut down 19 plants and brought the number of Chrysler workers idled by the labor dispute to nearly 25,000 in the United States, Canada, and Mexico — about one-third of Chrysler's U.S. workforce.

This is the first walkout at a Chrysler plant in three years and the longest strike in more than three decades. UAW Local 51 is the only union local in the United States that hasn't reached an agreement with Chrysler. Although the company supposedly had "generally amicable" relations with the union, both sides have met only briefly since the strike began April 9. The strike is costing \$16 million a day in lost profits. It's apparent Chrysler is willing to take a strike.

At issue is Chrysler's plan to "outsource" some operations to a nonunion plant. The striking local has called a rally for May 2, and is asking other UAW locals to participate.

Meanwhile, the strike by 5,900 UAW Local 594 members at GM's big truck and

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## Quebec is central issue in Canadian elections

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE AND JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL, Canada — Taking advantage of an economic upturn and the lack of any national alternative to his party's rule, Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien called parliamentary elections on April 27 to take place on June 2. The government still had a year and a half to go in its five-year term of office.

Central to the elections will be the question of the right of the Quebecois to determine their own future, including the right to their own country. The Canadian ruling class suffered a major political defeat when they avoided a majority yes vote for sovereignty by the thinnest of margins in a referendum held in Quebec on Oct. 30, 1995. When the votes were tallied, 49.4 percent voted yes. Since then the movement toward Quebec independence has remained the biggest challenge to capitalist rule in Canada.

The Quebecois are a French-speaking oppressed nationality representing 80 percent of the 7 million people living in Quebec. The discrimination they suffer on the basis of the language they speak and the denial of their right to self-determination has been a pillar of capitalist domination in Canada for over 150 years.

In an April 15 speech to the Canadian Club in Toronto, former Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney put the issue

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## 'We reject going back to exploitation,' say Cubans preparing for May Day

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

SAN DIEGO, Villa Clara Province, Cuba — "Mister Clinton, there won't be any transition to capitalism here!"

This was one of the most popular chants at a march of 1,500 people here April 24. Many workers and farmers carried homemade cardboard signs with similar slogans as they paraded through the streets and into the soccer stadium for a rally in this town of 8,000, where the surrounding sugarcane fields stretch to the horizon.

The demonstration was one of many taking place in cities, towns, and villages throughout this Caribbean island in preparation for May Day, the international working-class holiday. Everywhere, the mobilizations have become an opportunity for Cuban working people to express their response to the latest threats and pressures from Washington against their revolution.

The celebration in San Diego was festive and defiant. Contingents of workers from

all the local trade unions marched through the streets to the beat of an Afro-Cuban band. Interspersed was the singing of the *International* — an anthem of the working-class movement dating back to the Paris Commune — and the anthem of the July 26 Movement, the organization headed by Fidel Castro that led the revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed tyranny in 1959 and opened the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Most prominent were the sugar workers, who marched behind a sugar cane combine

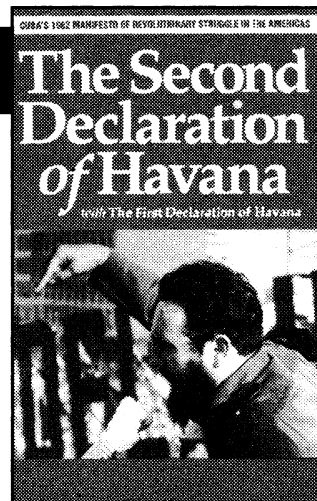
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More brutal details come out on Peru massacre — page 9



## Workers rally for jobs in Berlin

Thousands of public sector workers filled the streets of Berlin March 24 to demand an end to government-planned job cuts. At a rally held that day, union officials explained that up to 13,000 jobs were on the guillotine. The following day the state government was set to entertain a proposed bill that would decentralize the federal pension agency, which employs 23,000. Unemployment in Germany has risen in the past years to 12.2 percent — its highest level in half a century.

## São Tomé protest raps price hike

Electrical shortages and a government-ordered 140 percent hike in gasoline prices provoked demonstrations of hundreds in São Tomé and Príncipe, an island nation 150 miles off the west African coast, May 21-22. Government troops and riot police attacked protesters, arresting 12. The Associated Press reports that one man who was driving through the capital where the action was taking place was shot point-blank in the stomach by a soldier during an argument. Prime Minister Raul Neto declared that he would use force, if needed, to stop the protests.

## French Guianans say: Political prisoners out of jail now!

Hundreds of people in French Guiana held an April 24 rally against the jailing of nine government dissidents, who included opposition party members, labor activists, and others. That day, protesters held an all-night vigil in front of the cop headquarters, blocking the main street in the capital city, Cayenne. The nine people arrested were charged with attempting to burn down the home of Guiana's chief public prosecutor in actions last November. A week earlier, police fired tear gas on crowds of demonstrators. Nine cops were injured in the latest confrontations. Paris has flown in 150 police officers help put down protests.

## Dominican troops attack protest

Students at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo demonstrated April 24 and burned U.S. flags. The protests in the

Dominican Republic capital commemorated a 1965 revolt and subsequent invasion of the country by 23,000 U.S. troops. At least eight demonstrators were injured in this year's action after five Dominican navy soldiers opened fire on the them. The students fought back, hurling rocks at the troops and setting vehicles ablaze, including several telephone trucks. Minutes later, some 100 riot cops came onto the scene, launching tear gas grenades and firing live ammunition.

## U.S. base in Caribbean protested

On April 10, three-quarters of the 1,000 people living in Petit Martinique protested U.S. plans to construct a Coast Guard base on the island, located right next to Grenada. A day earlier, when U.S. land surveyors entered the region, they were met with opposition. Protesters erected a barricade that took police 30 minutes to break through, built a fence around the area to be surveyed, and demonstrated against the presence of agents of U.S. imperialism. It took 100 baton-wielding, armed riot cops and soldiers to guard the surveyors, who finished their work April 10. According to one reporter present, some soldiers were pointing their automatic assault rifles at the protesters. Petit Martinique prime minister Keith Mitchell assured *BBC Radio* that Washington was only there to build the base. A squadron of 100 U.S. Marines will be the constructors. The cop force on that island has been beefed up from eight to 13 officers.

## Brutality of Chile army exposed

The killing of Pedro Soto, a 19-year-old draftee, has brought to light the inhumane treatment meted out to military conscripts in Chile. Soto disappeared last December. His corpse, found three months later, had been beaten, knifed, shot, and dismembered according to medical reports. This incident and others have prompted youth, the parents of the abused conscripts, and others to organize demonstrations all over the country demanding an end to obligatory military service. There have been 536 cases of abuse in the military officially reported in this past year alone. Some of the protests are directed at Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who headed a brutal military dictatorship from 1973 to

1990, and remains the commander of the Chilean armed forces.

While all 18-year-olds must register for the draft, most of those forced to serve come from poor families; wealthier families get their children college study exemptions. In Soto's case, army officials claimed Soto was slain by a group of homosexual recruits who feared he would reveal their sexual orientation. "We do not believe this to be an isolated incident, but that it reveals serious deficiencies in the system," said Patricio Walker, president of the Christian Democratic Youth.

## Lebanese fighters bomb Israeli military

Guerrillas fighting the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon launched Katyusha missiles into areas controlled by Tel Aviv April 25, aiming at two military installations in Lebanon. Israeli army commander Amiram Levine said his troops suffered a couple of injuries. Israeli forces responded with artillery fire. The latest exchange took place the day after two Lebanese civilians were injured by gunfire from an Israeli helicopter. Tel Aviv claims the civilians were hit by a Lebanese guerrilla shell. For a dozen years, Hezbollah has been fighting to rid Lebanon of the Zionist occupation.

## Palestinian bulldozers go toe-to-toe with Tel Aviv's

Hundreds of Palestinians demonstrated in the West Bank town of Kfar Kedumim April 25, protesting the latest land grab by Zionist settlers. Israeli soldiers fired rubber bullets and stun grenades at the demonstrators, who pelted them with stones. In the Gaza Strip a day earlier, bulldozers from the settler regime were confronted by Palestinian bulldozers. The Zionists were trying to level a 1.5 acre stretch of beach front, supposedly to construct a military observation tower. The protesters say the land belongs to Palestinian farmers and was seized to expand another Israeli settlement. Israeli troops arrested the two Palestinian bulldozer drivers and fired shots into the air to disperse the crowd. The next day, 150 Palestinians returned to organize a sit-in and erected five tents. The Zionist troops brought out a tank, but did not resume their leveling.

As these protests continued, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution April 25 demanding an immediate halt to construction of Zionist settlements. Only Washington, Tel Aviv, and the delegate from



Thousands protest job cuts in Berlin April 24

Micronesia voted against the resolution. Adding to the woes of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, some Israeli reporters have accused him of stirring up violent attacks on journalists who have given him unfavorable coverage.

## Bombing trial undemocratic

The trial of Timothy McVeigh, accused of the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, began April 24. The first day of the trial was taken up with describing the bombing in gruesome detail. Meanwhile, it has come out that police handled McVeigh's clothing and other items in a way that allowed for possible contamination. Much of the government's case rests on forensic evidence from an FBI laboratory recently cited for issuing sloppy reports and lying against defendants.

In a violation of usual democratic safeguards, the trial judge has ruled that families of those killed or injured in the bombing can witness the trial proceedings, without disqualifying themselves from testifying in the sentencing portion of the trial, if McVeigh is found guilty.

—BRIAN TAYLOR

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Tomás Villanueva  
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# 11,000 farmers protest in Quebec

BY MARIA ISABEL LeBLANC  
AND KATY LeROUGETEL

QUEBEC CITY, Quebec — More than 11,000 farmers demonstrated here April 16, a quarter of all Quebec farmers, in an action organized by the Agricultural Producers Union (UPA), the provincial farmers' organization.

Tractors and other agricultural equipment ringed the demonstration area in front of the National Assembly. "For the right to produce," "Treat us with respect," read several signs. "Does unemployment smell good?" asked another. Quebec Environment Minister David Cliche had angered farmers days before by calling pig farmers "pork barons" and declaring that he would not stink up the Quebec countryside in order to feed ham to the Japanese, nor would he let his daughter get married in a place smelling of manure.

Three main demands were raised at the rally. Farmers were protesting the latitude given to municipalities in applying environmental regulations. They also protested the unilateral decision taken a few months ago

allowing margarine to be colored to resemble butter. They voiced concern about the revision of income insurance sold to farmers by the provincial government and 16 percent cuts in agriculture budgets.

"You can't regulate Mother Nature," said Pierre Fabry, a young dairy farmer from Henryville. "When people come to the countryside, they know there are certain things that go on here." He was referring to the mobilizations by residents in rural areas demanding strict limits on the spreading of manure. According to UPA communications director, Sylvie Marier, 95 percent of Quebec pig farms are family ventures. There are five or six industrial-sized pig farms of over 3,000 animals, although none approach the size of those south of the border, she said.

A pork producer who did not want to identify himself, explained that the income insurance was a "double-edged sword." It helps protect producers somewhat from losses. On the other hand, it is expensive and "does nothing to stabilize prices, which are determined by market fluctuations. And



Militant/Maria Isabel LeBlanc

Farmers protest in Quebec. Sign above reads: "Degregation = 3,000 jobs lost."

those fluctuations don't take into account the thousands of human being who die of hunger every day."

Since the April 16 action, Agriculture Minister Guy Julien has said that the CAN\$64 million set aside for the insurance program will be maintained, but that "these programs must take into account the government's capacity to pay." Julien was

booed at a meeting of 200 milk producers April 17, after refusing to meet demands on the coloring of margarine. The minister maintains that farmers must learn "to do more with less." He also apologized to the farmers for his remarks on pork producers.

Maria Isabel LeBlanc is a member of the Young Socialists in Montreal.

## Swedish gov't tries to deflect resistance to austerity

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — With unemployment reaching record levels and elections coming up next year, the Social Democratic government here is attempting to deflect working-class resistance, while at the same time continuing its austerity measures.

Prime Minister Göran Persson has promised to cut unemployment in half by the year 2000. The Social Democratic Party, which had been firmly opposed to shortening the workweek to fight unemployment, is now opening a discussion on a shorter workweek with less pay. Although the economy still is supposed to be in an upturn, in March this year unemployment reached 8.4 percent, up from 7.4 percent a year earlier. If workers in government job relief programs are added, the level rises to 13.3 percent.

Among construction workers, who in January organized a demonstration in Stockholm of 8,000 protesting unemployment, 35 percent are jobless. Recently Ericsson, one of the world's biggest telephone companies, announced it would close a big part of its operation in the Swedish town of Norrköping. Some 1,700 workers will lose their jobs in Norrköping.

Strikes and protests called by the unions have become more frequent over the last two years, which is rare at a time when the social democrats are in government. In most cases the employers have had to make some concessions to the strikers. The bosses have responded with a campaign for restrictions on the right to strike, portraying themselves as victims of strong unions that cripple them in the competition on the world markets.

Recently eight unions, including the metal workers, signed an agreement with four employers' organizations giving a so-called neutral chairman the power to postpone strikes that have been called. The government has also proposed a review that would lead to increasing the powers of government-appointed labor mediators.

The Social Democrats, who took office in 1994 with more than 45 percent of the votes, have had less than 30 percent support in recent polls. Meanwhile, the Conservatives headed by Carl Bildt have polled more than 30 percent, up from 22 percent at the time of last elections. The next general election is scheduled for September 1998.

It is in this context that the Persson government has promised some 4 billion kronor this year and 8 billion in 1998 to local governments, supposedly to create jobs. A decision to raise unemployment benefits from 75 to 80 percent of pay in October, while tightening eligibility requirements, is also aimed at winning electoral support. Likewise, the government is discussing raising sick-leave payments from 75 to 80 or even 90 percent of pay.

The minister of taxes, Thomas Östros, argues that government austerity policies must continue in order to achieve a budget surplus and create jobs. The jobs he is talking about are supposed to come from hav-

ing people work for their benefits, replacing workers who accept early retirement.

To govern with a minority in parliament, the Social Democrats have sought an alliance with the Center Party, which is based in the small agrarian bourgeoisie in Sweden and has gained the support of some "environmentalist" middle-class urban layers. To cement that alliance, the government announced in February it plans to close two nuclear power plants in Barsebäck, outside the southern town Malmö. The decision was in line with a national referendum that was adopted in 1980, which calls for decommissioning nuclear power facilities in Sweden by the year 2010. So far, virtually nothing had been done to start the decommissioning of the 12 nuclear power plants that supply half of Sweden's electricity.

The government ran into a hail of criticism for the nuclear decision from both employers and the union officialdom. One hundred company executives issued a public letter criticizing the government, saying it was dealing a blow to employment and economic growth.

Uncertainty over the planned European monetary union (EMU) is also a cause for concern for the Swedish rulers. Between late February and mid-March, currency markets across Europe were hit with waves of speculation, set off by rumors of possible delays in the EMU and doubts as to whether Italy and Spain would be among the countries that will qualify.

This was a moment of truth for the social democratic government in Sweden. Was the economy as strong as they believed? After a meeting of the European Union finance ministers in Brussels March 17, Swedish finance minister Erik Åsbrink complained, "Interest rates have gone up in several countries in Europe, but we have been affected a bit more than others and this is cause for concern. Our economy is fundamentally in good order and our goal is unchanged: a balanced budget in 1998 and after that a surplus. I therefore see no real reason why the interest rates are going up."

The SGZ bank in Frankfurt, however, has estimated if the EMU is delayed, the Swedish krona and the Finnish markka will be hardest hit of the currencies in Europe, because these currencies have benefited the most from the fantasy that the monetary union would come to pass. Looked upon with sober eyes, they will be lumped together with Italy and Spain, as they were during the crises that rocked the currency markets in Europe in 1992-93.

Meanwhile, both the Social Democrats and their Conservative opponents have stepped up their anti-immigrant rhetoric, scapegoating workers from other countries for the high unemployment. The government has offered 10,000 kronor to each person who returns to where they came from. This is especially directed at the 55,000 Bosnian refugees in Sweden, the 12,000 refugees from Somalia, and about 2,000

from Kosovo. Deportations continue, as do protests against them. The Conservative party is campaigning for more open borders, but with the proviso that immigrants should not have the same rights as Swedish citizens.

Stockholm has played a big role in the imperialist intervention in Yugoslavia, both providing troops for the NATO occupation force and having former Swedish prime minister Bildt head up the so-called civilian side of the operation in Bosnia.

So far, Stockholm has not provided any troops for the military intervention in Albania. "We are prepared to organize humanitarian operations and a police force if it is necessary," Persson said after a meeting with Italian prime minister Romano Prodi at the end of March. Later, Stockholm decided to send 10 police and a dozen military officers as advisers, and promised to send supervisors for the elections there. An editorial in the conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet*, headlined "Italy acts, Sweden talks," criticized the social democratic government for not having responded more decisively to the calls for military intervention in Albania. "The next time Sweden talks about conflict-preventing missions in an international context, it will be this kind of discrepancy between word and deed that other countries will put their finger on," the paper declared.

Carl-Erik Isacson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

## UK guards beat prisoners in Ireland

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — In the aftermath of discovering an escape tunnel on March 23, prison guards dressed in riot gear administered beatings to Irish Republican prisoners being held at the Maze prison near Belfast, Northern Ireland.

According to *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 66 prisoners were beaten. They include Joe Doherty and Jimmy Smyth, two well known Republican fighters who were extradited back to Northern Ireland from the United States — at the request of the British government — after their legal appeals to remain in this country were denied by the federal courts and the White House.

Smyth and dozens of other inmates escaped from prison in Northern Ireland 1983. He was arrested here nine years later.

Following the discovery of the new escape tunnel, the leadership of the Irish prisoners had worked out an agreement with prison authorities on how they would allow the authorities to search their cells.

Republican prisoner Robert Crawford told *An Phoblacht* what happened next: "The agreed search procedure that had been in place for quite some time was that we take off our tops, put them back on, take off our jeans and 'shake out' our underwear.

Anything beyond this is unnecessary for search purposes and it has no purpose other than to attack a person's dignity."

Crawford explained that the guards came into his cells and demanded he take off all his clothes. Crawford responded by saying the guards could carry out the usual search but that he was not going to remove his underwear. The riot squad then descended on the wing Crawford was being held in, going from one cell to the next.

Crawford said three guards in riot gear entered his cell. He was stripped, handcuffed, and driven in a van to another wing where he was tossed "face down in the cells." After twisting his legs, the guards left. "They injured my right shoulder and lower back and my joints," said Crawford.

After being held incommunicado for a few days, Jimmy Smyth was able to phone his wife here in San Francisco. He explained he too was forced to the ground with his arms twisted behind him for 30 minutes. Smyth suffered torn ligament in his right arm and numbness in his right hand and was bruised across his body.

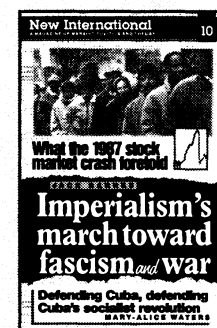
During Smyth's extradition trial here, British prison authorities had stated that he would not be subject to reprisals upon his return to Northern Ireland. Smyth says the

same man who testified at his trial witnessed the beatings of the prisoners.

Terry Kirby and Kevin Barry Artt, who also escaped from Maze in 1983, are currently facing deportation charges here in San Francisco.

Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 1781.

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# Youth festival is a 'special opportunity'

BY MEG NOVAK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Young people around the country are stepping up their work and broadening their reach to more groups as the May 15 application deadline for the 14th World Festival of Students and Youth draws closer. The festival will take place in Havana, Cuba, July 27-August 4. Activists in the United States are working to put together delegations that will be discussing world politics with other young people there from around the globe.

In Minneapolis, the University Young Women (UYW) collective at the University of Minnesota has decided to send a delegation of three of its members to the festival. They originally heard about the festival at the Young Feminist Summit in Washington, D.C., and have decided to endorse the U.S. Organizing Committee. The delegation is starting to make fund-raising plans, working with the Progressive Students Organization at the university.

Anh Pham, an member of UYW and an activist in the Asian-American community in Minneapolis, will be part of the festival delegation. Asked why she was going, she stated, "My parents left Vietnam in 1975, and they've always told me they were fleeing from the communists. Since then, I've been reading about Marxism and socialism, and I want to find out first hand what socialism is."

"Young people have traditionally been the starting points of big social movements," she said, looking forward to the prospect of meeting young activists from around the

world. "The more we meet people from around the world and exchange ideas and knowledge, the better prepared we will be to make an impact."

A meeting for people interested in the festival in Minneapolis has been called for April 30 by the Twin Cities Cuba Network, hosted by the La Raza Student Cultural Center at the University of Minnesota.

The Philadelphia Cuba Support Coalition, which has endorsed the U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival, sponsored an initial meeting on April 15, hosted by the American Friends Service Committee, for people interested in building a delegation.

A follow-up meeting on April 24 brought together over a dozen activists from groups in Philadelphia who are interested in the festival. The meeting included students from the University of Pennsylvania and Rowan University in New Jersey, and members of the organization MOVE and the Mumia Abu-Jamal defense committee.

Doug Chavez, a student at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the Chicano student group MEChA, reports that the committee is starting to grow through work that is being done on campuses.

"We just started the Philadelphia Organization for the World Youth Festival," he stated. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity where students and youth can get together and share culture and ideas. Getting together in Cuba is a special opportunity for young people to see Cuba with their own eyes," he added. Chavez is working with



Militant/Sam Manuel

**Mary Martin, Socialist Workers candidate for city council chair in Washington, D.C., discusses campaign with co-worker at Northwest Airlines. Socialists in that city are petitioning to get on the ballot. To help, contact the address listed on page 12.**

other students on his campus to publicize the festival and start fund-raising.

In Chicago, a city-wide meeting was held in mid-April at the University of Chicago. About 30 people interested in the festival began mapping out plans on how to get there. Committees have been set up to work on fund-raising and outreach.

Two young activists from De Paul University in Chicago are also planning on attending the next national planning meeting of the U.S. Organizing Committee, which will be held in New York May 4. Representatives from national and local festival committees are encouraged to attend to review

the outreach and organizing efforts, travel and other logistical details, and plans for the activities of the festival.

The delegation from the United States will be joining several thousand young people for the festival. Organizing committees have been established in over 50 countries and participants are expected from 100 nations. The event, dedicated to revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara, will include workshops and discussions on a range of themes.

The total cost for the festival is \$600 for those who apply by May 15. This 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.

## Militant Fund goes way over the top

BY ELLIE GARCÍA AND DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — We're over the top! Partisans of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have ended the 1997 Militant Fund with 113 percent of the goal — more than \$124,000 total. An extra push made by supporters in the last few weeks to reach out more broadly paid off. One example of this is how supporters in Sydney, Australia, were able to raise \$220 in the last couple of weeks by phoning *Militant* subscribers.

Nat London writes from Paris, "Of particular note was the number of co-workers of longtime *Militant* supporters who con-

tributed. Three workers at Renault and two at Alshom contributed a total of 300 francs [over \$50]. None of these workers can read English or Spanish... [but] they know that the *Militant* regularly publishes articles on the struggles of workers here in France as well as in other countries."

United Transportation Union (UTU) member Ruth Robinette, who works at Amtrak in New York, approached several workers there. Four of her co-workers contributed \$79.

Often, raising the money went hand-in-hand with the *Militant* subscription drive. "The main thing we had going for us was a

couple of important struggles in the Greensboro area where supporters of the *Militant* participated," said Karen Kopperud in a telephone interview. "One is with Black farmers fighting against land loss, centered around the organization Concerned Citizens of Tillery. Another is with the struggle of packinghouse workers at Case Farms in Morganton, North Carolina."

"The subscription drive was pretty easy," she noted. "We sold a lot of subs to people in and around this fight. Almost every team that went out came back with at least one subscription. The Militant Fund flowed from that. One of my co-workers asked me what I was doing these days. When I told him I was helping to organize a rally for the Militant Fund, he asked if I wanted him to contribute, and gave \$20," added Kopperud who is a rail worker and a member of the UTU.

Maggie McCraw from Miami reports, "We sent a mailing early on in the drive and got quite a few contributions. A Cuban who had bought a copy of *Perspectiva Mundial* sent in \$20. We stressed weekly payments on the pledges made, and in the end got contributions from 30 people." Public charts in the Pathfinder Bookstore showing where the fund stood locally and nationally helped create a campaign atmosphere.

"We raised both our *New International* and *Perspectiva Mundial* goals during the subscription drive," McCraw said. "We sold lots, especially *New Internationals* at two immigrant rights demonstrations here, and finally went over on all three goals," McCraw said.

"The most important thing is to ask," said Pete Seidman in a telephone interview. Supporters in Philadelphia raised \$93 among their co-workers at USAir, Boeing, and the Riverview garment shop.

Marla Puziss in Atlanta reports that friends of the *Militant* put a lot of work into building the Young Socialists convention, hosted in that city. This gave a boost to the fund campaign. They raised their goal from \$3,100 to \$3,500, and collected \$4,013.

Meeting and surpassing the fund goal makes it possible to send eyewitness reporting teams to Albania and Cuba as readers can see from the coverage in this issue. But mostly the fund makes it possible for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to simply come out week to week. The enthusiastic response to the Militant Fund reflects the importance that workers, youth, and others place on receiving a socialist analysis on world events.

COME TO THE  
**14th World Festival of Youth and Students CUBA '97**



For more information about the Festival contact  
**U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival**  
2565 Broadway #236  
New York, NY 10025  
Tel: (212) 866-7270

Planning meeting of the U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival:

**Sunday, May 4th**  
New York City  
12 noon to 3 p.m.  
Casa de las Américas  
104 West 14th Street (near 6th Ave.)

## — CALENDAR —

### UTAH

#### SALT LAKE CITY

**The Cuban Revolution Today and the Helms-Burton Act.** Speaker: Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary of the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, D.C.. Thurs., May 8, 12 noon. The Den, Olpin Union Bldg. University of Utah. Co-sponsors: ASUU Diversity-Multicultural Board, Center for Ethnic Students Affairs, ACLU, Young Socialists, Cuba Solidarity Coalition, Hinckley Institute, Economics Dept. For more information, call: (801) 278-8447.

### AUSTRALIA

#### SYDNEY

**Annual Bobby Sands Commemoration Evening.** Sat., May 10, 8 p.m. Gaelic Club, 64 Devonshire St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$10. Sponsored by Australian Aid for Ireland NSW Branch. For more information, call (02) 9636 9021.  
**Answering the Racists. Three-part seminar.** 1 p.m.: Do Migrants Cause Unemployment? 2:45 p.m.: Australia's Racist History. 4:30 p.m.: Fighting Racism Today. Sat., May 10. University of Technology, Tower Bldg., Rm. 2/413. Sponsored by Campaign Against Racism. For more information, call: 9261 4862.

### CONTRIBUTE TO THE MILITANT FUND

Country/City	Goal	Paid	%
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
Wellington	\$140	\$179	128%
Christchurch	\$1,750	\$2,036	116%
Auckland	\$3,500	\$3,623	104%
N.Z. total	\$5,390	\$5,838	108%
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
Cleveland	\$2,500	\$3,168	127%
Greensboro	\$2,250	\$2,740	122%
Boston	\$4,500	\$5,271	117%
Philadelphia	\$4,000	\$4,610	115%
Atlanta	\$3,500	\$4,013	115%
Miami	\$2,000	\$2,292	115%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$7,735	111%
Twin Cities	\$6,000	\$6,545	109%
New York	\$12,000	\$13,057	109%
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$5,420	108%
San Francisco	\$9,000	\$9,715	108%
Chicago*	\$7,500	\$8,015	107%
Houston	\$4,000	\$4,246	106%
Detroit	\$4,750	\$5,009	105%
Los Angeles	\$9,000	\$9,303	103%
Birmingham	\$2,300	\$2,347	102%
Washington, D.C.	\$2,800	\$2,850	102%
Newark	\$7,500	\$7,575	101%
Des Moines	\$2,000	\$2,016	101%
Salt Lake City	\$2,000	\$2,014	101%
Denver	\$40	\$40	100%
Other	\$683	\$683	100%
Morgantown	\$1,500	\$1,312	87%
Peoria*	\$1,800	\$1,323	74%
U.S. Total	\$103,623	\$111,297	107%
<b>FRANCE</b>			
	\$350	\$354	101%
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>			
	\$1,000	\$1,002	100%
<b>CANADA</b>			
Montreal	\$2,000	\$2,000	100%
Toronto	\$1,440	\$1,440	100%
Vancouver	\$1,080	\$1,080	100%
CANADA Total	\$4,520	\$4,520	100%
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>			
London	\$750	\$806	107%
Manchester	\$750	\$375	50%
UK Total	\$1,500	\$1,181	79%
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
	\$200	\$148	74%
Int'l Total	\$116,583	\$124,340	113%
Should be	\$110,000	\$110,000	100%

**\$124,340!**

\$100,000

\$90,000

\$80,000

\$70,000

\$60,000

\$50,000

\$40,000

\$30,000

\$20,000

\$10,000

\* Peoria total is as of April 13. After that date, socialist workers in Illinois decided to consolidate their forces in Chicago. All money raised in the last two weeks of the drive is listed under Chicago.



# SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

## Supporters win over 1,600 new readers to socialist press

BY GREG McCARTAN

Over the past several weeks socialists around the world have made substantial progress in campaigning to sell and distribute revolutionary books, the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International*. In the last three weeks alone, unionists and other workers, Chicano rights fighters, students, protesters against police brutality and the Ku Klux Klan, and participants in dozens of political conferences have purchased nearly 800 subscriptions to the *Militant*; 200 subscriptions to its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 359 copies of *New International*. While figures for the number of books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder will be compiled and published in next week's *Militant*, reports from local areas indicate that socialists in most areas have far exceeded their monthly goals in April.

Teams of volunteers are working this week to fill and send out special orders made by Pathfinder bookstores for a range of titles made available by the publisher at special discount prices. The bookstores are passing on the savings to readers. With orders now arriving in cities across the country, socialists can turn May into a "book blitz" month, while continuing to reach out with irreplaceable news and analysis provided by the *Militant* each week.

This heightened activity will lead into the convention of the Socialist Workers Party, which will be held June 11-14 in Oberlin, Ohio. There, socialists from around the world and those interested in joining the party or the Young Socialists, will discuss central issues in world politics and how best to build the communist movement.

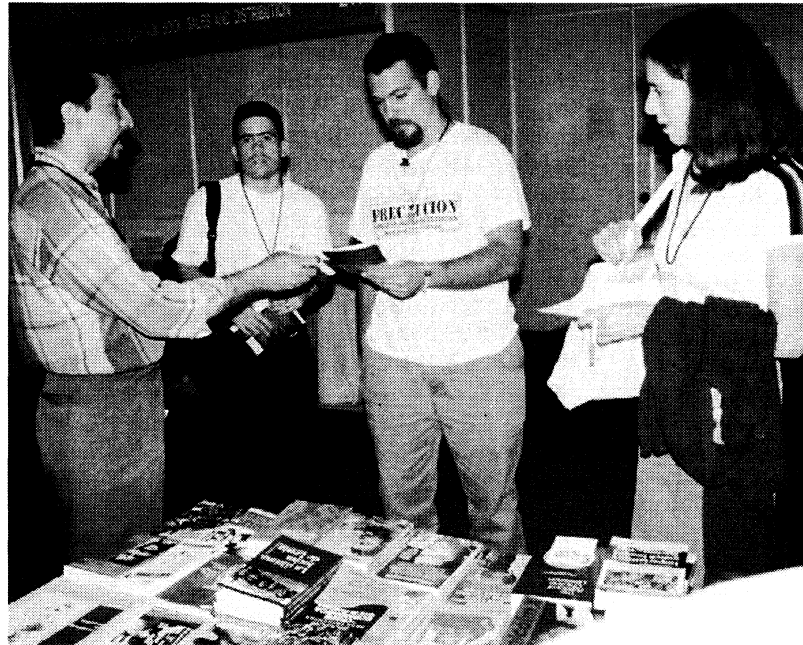
This final chart on the seven-week subscription drive registers a real come-from-behind effort in numerous cities where socialists organized to meet or exceed their goals for both the subscription drive and the *Militant* fund drive. We got off to a slow start on the drive in most cities, and socialists in several major centers fell well short of their goals. Despite these shortcomings, by pressing forward with an international effort *Militant* supporters reached 91 percent of the goal for the paper and 85 percent of the goal for subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Supporters sold more than 900 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* — 595 out of a goal of 600 in local areas, plus 317 at the Young Socialists convention, where *New International* was a top seller.

One lesson of this drive is the need to schedule a target week earlier than was organized this time around, and to utilize the full seven weeks to be on a real weekly campaign.

Initial results indicate socialists in industrial unions took a small step forward over recent drives in sales to their co-workers. Since Washington's drive toward war abroad can only be carried out by inflicting huge defeats on the labor movement at home, there will be growing interest among unionists in the *Militant*'s socialist explanation of world politics and proposals on a road forward for working people. With the continued assault by the employers — and bub-

bling resistance by workers in the auto, steel, rubber, and other industries — the experience gained over the past seven weeks in sales on the job can be a good starting point for continued efforts to broaden the number of unionists reading revolutionary books and papers.

For example, Leonel Cabrera, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees who works at Wilen Manufacturing the Atlanta, reports this week that *Militant* supporters there sold two subscriptions to the socialist



Sales were high at the Latin American Studies Association conference in Guadalajara, Mexico, April 17-19. Participants bought nearly \$1,000 worth of books, including 28 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

newsweekly and three to *Perspectiva Mundial* in the last two days of the campaign. "Sales of Pathfinder books during the month of April helped to increase our confidence that co-workers would respond to an explanation of what is in the paper and why workers need to read it every week. We reached out to many people we had not talked with yet. Ten Pathfinder books, including many 'super-saver' sales books were sold this month."

At an April 20 demonstration of farm workers and their supporters in Yakima, Washington, socialists sold 12 subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, plus a number of Pathfinder titles, reports Robbie Scheer, a member of the IAM who works at Boeing. "Two Chicano student activists from Yakima and a shipyard worker from Seattle purchased *The Politics of Chicano Liberation*; a farm worker bought *La Revolucion Traicionada* [The Revolution Betrayed], by Russian communist leader Leon Trotsky. An immigrant rights conference in the Yakima Valley April 26 and a march for justice for farm workers in Mount Vernon, Washington, May 4 will provide good opportunities for more sales," Scheer writes.

"We had a big turnaround in sales of *New International* in the last week of the drive," writes Ray Parsons from Des Moines, "with a United Auto Workers member purchasing a copy of *NI* no. 4 that includes 'The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States,' by Jack Barnes; a new subscriber bought *NI* no. 10 featuring an article by Barnes on 'Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War'; and a new Young Socialists member purchased *NI* nos. 1 and 6 to add to those he purchased at the YS convention at the end of March." Parsons adds that United Food and Commercial Workers members sold five subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* to their co-workers the final week of the drive.

The *Militant* will continue to feature articles each week on sales efforts by socialists around the world. Small articles, notes, and other information sent to the paper helps generalize our experiences and give some real life to the work to expand distribution of Pathfinder books and the revolutionary press.

\* Peoria total for subscription drive is as of April 13. After that date, socialist workers in Illinois decided to consolidate their forces in Chicago. Sales from the last two weeks are included in Chicago's total.

FINAL

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

	Militant			PM		NI	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
<b>SWEDEN</b>	15	17	113%	7	2	10	10
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>							
Wellington	3	4	133%			1	1
Auckland	35	39	111%	2	2	14	9
Christchurch	25	21	84%	1	1	10	10
<b>N.Z. total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CANADA</b>							
Toronto	30	36	120%	7	7	10	13
Vancouver	40	42	105%	5	7	15	16
Montreal	35	22	63%	10	10	35	38
<b>CANADA total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>							
London	45	43	96%	8	8	25	26
Manchester	21	20	95%	2	0	10	6
<b>U.K. total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>UNITED STATES</b>							
Cincinnati	5	7	140%	1	0	0	0
Tucson	4	5	125%	2	2	0	4
Boston	30	35	117%	10	9	30	30
Miami	30	34	113%	15	18	20	24
Greensboro, NC	30	33	110%	15	16	10	12
Twin Cities, MN	70	77	110%	10	13	15	16
Pittsburgh	42	45	107%	4	1	15	17
Los Angeles	100	106	106%	50	55	50	65
Atlanta	27	28	104%	14	14	16	17
San Francisco	70	72	103%	30	31	35	35
Des Moines	40	41	103%	25	13	20	25
Seattle	60	61	102%	25	20	25	12
Birmingham, AL	32	32	100%	5	3	15	13
Houston	50	50	100%	20	13	20	23
Washington, DC	42	42	100%	15	15	15	15
Peoria*	25	24	96%	3	2	10	12
Salt Lake City	24	23	96%	10	11	8	11
Cleveland	35	33	94%	7	5	10	3
Philadelphia	35	33	94%	10	8	10	14
Detroit	40	34	85%	7	6	15	10
Chicago*	70	51	73%	25	18	30	28
New York	150	83	55%	75	39	65	45
Denver	4	2	50%	4	2	3	0
Newark, NJ	130	53	41%	45	31	60	12
Morgantown, WV	27	8	30%	2	0	10	10
Spokane, WA	10	0	0%	2	0	6	0
YS convention							317
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>770</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>GREECE</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PUERTO RICO</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>International totals</b>	<b>1,465</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>913</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>UNIONS</b>							
<b>CANADA</b>							
IAM	8	9	113%	0	0	7	2
USWA	11	10	91%	2	4	7	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>							
UFBGWU	3	2	67%	0	0	0	0
EU	7	3	43%	0	1	0	0
MWU	6	2	33%	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>UNITED STATES</b>							
UTU	55	41	75%	4	4	28	11
UAW	45	25	56%	10	3	20	10
IAM	75	41	55%	15	8	35	11
OCAW	28	15	54%	5	0	18	1
UMWA	2	1	50%			2	1
USWA	42	21	50%	8	5	31	6
UNITE	21	8	38%	15	16	15	4
UFCW	14	1	7%	10	9	6	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>							
AMWU	4	0	0%	0	0	3	2

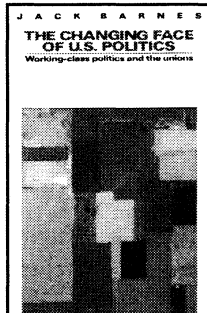
AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Metal Workers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, 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.

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# YS holds 'Socialism and Feminism' class in D.C.

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

BY SARAH KATZ

WASHINGTON, D.C. — At the Young Feminist Summit, held in Washington D.C. April 11-13, Young Socialists sponsored a workshop entitled "Feminism and Socialism," which explained how the struggle for women's rights and the struggle for the liberation of the working class are closely linked. With over 80 participants, this was one of the best-attended workshops at the conference.

To open the discussion, YS leader Meg Novak posed the question, "Can you get rid of patriarchy without getting rid of capitalism?" She went on to explain, "Women's liberation is a part of, and cannot be separated from, the class struggle," pointing to the examples of the Cuban and Russian revolutions.

Quite a lively discussion ensued. A woman from the Pro-choice Coalition at Kansas University asked why we need to "construct ourselves in opposition to something else?" This was in response to Novak's statement that "[capitalist politician] Jean Kirkpatrick is not my sister." The question of who are our allies in the fight for women's rights was sharply posed, and there was quite a bit of debate from participants about who defenders of women's rights need to link up with.

Nadine Loza, a student from Panama, California, responded, "I'm an activist for Chicana rights, but I don't necessarily think

that wealthy Chicanas face the same kind of situation as the rest of us."

Sara Van Norman, a member of the University Young Women at the University of Minnesota, asked about the role of women after revolutionary movements come to power, like the Bolshevik party in Russia, and the role that women have in constructing a new society. Novak noted that after the working class — led by the Bolsheviks — took power in Russia in 1917, abortion was made legal and women won the right to vote.

Novak also explained the current threat to a woman's right to abortion, with the passage of a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives that would ban the late-term abortion procedure called dilation and extraction. "If this bill is signed, it will be the first time since the *Roe vs. Wade* court ruling that an actual abortion procedure is made illegal," she explained. "This is nothing less than an attempt to slowly chip away at the rights that we have won, the right to control our own bodies, by taking to the streets during the women's liberation movement of the '60s and early '70s. Now is the time for every defender of women's rights to take an uncompromising stand in defense of a woman's right to make the decisions that she feels are right for her own well-being."

Participants discussed whether or not women's equality can be achieved by reforming the capitalist system. The most hotly debated topic was the best way to make the kind of revolution that is necessary to decisively change women's role in society. Several people pointed to the example of Ghandi and pacifism, while Novak and others pointed to the lessons of past labor struggles, and Malcolm X's speeches on self-defense.

Because of the response to the class, the



Militant/Naomi Craine

The Young Feminist Summit ended with a demonstration, top, in front of the White House. Over 100 conference participants came to two sessions of the Young Socialist class, right, entitled, 'Socialism and Feminism.' The class helped members of the Young Socialists meet youth interested in joining the revolutionary youth organization.



YS held a second session, which about 30 people attended.

Holding these meetings as a part of the Young Feminist Summit helped the Young Socialists to meet others who were attracted

to the idea of a revolutionary youth organization. The class also helped point people to the Young Socialists table of Pathfinder literature, where participants bought more than 50 books and 20 *Militant* subscriptions.

## Young feminists discuss fight for women's rights

BY DIANA NEWBERRY AND NAOMI CRAINE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 1,000 young women and men from 40 states gathered here for a Young Feminist Summit April 11-13, called by the National Organization for Women. In workshops, plenary sessions, and in the hallways until late at night, participants discussed how to organize and work together to actively engage in defending women's rights.

Many people at the conference were involved in campus women's organizations. Justina Grubor and Kristin Hilton, members of the Feminist Collective at Mt. Holyoke college in Massachusetts, said they had just restarted the group and were able to get 25 students to come down from there.

Jen Richards, from a community college in Salt Lake City, Utah, said she came to "network with others and let them know there's progressive people in Utah." Three people came from her campus women's group.

Elizabeth Nelson, a law student from Boston, said she and a friend saw the notice about the conference posted on the internet. She said she thought, "there have got to be other people out there" and decided to come meet them.

Among the issues taken up in conference workshops were abortion rights, women's health, domestic violence, rape, and affirmative action. A few weeks before the Young Feminist Summit, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would ban a particular late-term abortion procedure known as "intact dilation and extraction." In one session Alice Cohan, of the Feminist Majority, stated that the radical right is using late-term abortion to "hit a wild drum beat" in order to eliminate all abortion rights. She pointed out that 80 percent of counties in the United States do not have abortion clinics, limiting access for many women.

Reflecting the political pressures on supporters of women's rights, one participant asked, "Is there another way we can represent the defense of abortion rights? The viability of the argument based on constitutional rights and reproduction freedom is being put into question." She argued that with the advancement of technology, doctors can now follow the development of a fetus much closer and the question of when a fetus becomes a life is being posed more

sharply.

Several workshops also took up the attacks on affirmative action. The discussion was enriched by conference participants from California who had been involved in opposing Proposition 209, an anti-affirmative action ballot referendum that passed last year. Jennifer Meister said she was in her senior year at the University of California when the campaign for Proposition 209 started. "There were 15 of us in my campus coalition to fight 209, and others organizing in the community," she said. "Our slogan was 'Women and Minorities are Important in Education.' We held debates on our campus, and speeches, rallies, marches, and leafleting. There was a three-week hunger strike by 25 students."

Nadine Loza, a 20-year-old Chicana student from Pamona, California, was also involved in that fight. "We had marches on our campus, posted up all over, and went to San Diego to protest at the Republican convention." Loza had earlier been involved in the fight against the state anti-immigrant law Proposition 187. During the workshop "Women and Affirmative Action," one speaker stressed "Affirmative action means opportunity, not preferences or quotas. We're

talking about qualified people." This view was echoed by many others, but there was debate on the point.

Speaking in one workshop discussion, Patti Iiyama argued, "We didn't get affirmative action because of the courts — we fought for it. And you need quotas to enforce it. That's how I'm able to work in an oil refinery," where women were excluded for years.

The pressures on women to meet specific standards of beauty was a big discussion among summit participants. The "Media Images of Women and Eating Disorders" workshop took up how the media affects the self-esteem of women. During the workshop Ayla Gustafson, a high school student from Blacksburg, Virginia, described how her health teacher invited a friend who sells cosmetics to come to the class to hand out samples and tell female students how they could fix their "oily skin," "hooded eyes," and other supposed defects. "The boys were allowed to go play basketball instead," she added. Gustafson is a member of a women's studies group at the high school along with Lindsay Doyle and Erin Mckelvy, who were also at the conference.

The young feminists were eager to join

in some actions. On the second day of the summit, many took a few hours off to join in a local "Take Back the Night" march protesting violence against women. The entire conference marched on the White House the final morning of the summit.

Nine regional meetings took place in which participants discussed upcoming activities and plans in their areas. Great Lakes region participants decided to mobilize support for a May 15 pro-choice rally in Milwaukee. Southeast participants made initials plans for a regional day of coordinated action on abortion rights in October. Several areas, including Minneapolis and Massachusetts, planned regional young feminist conferences for the fall.

Pittsburgh and Morgantown, West Virginia, participants planned to work together on clinic defense in Pittsburgh and giving a report-back from the conference to the women's committee of the strike at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel. And they discussed organizing a protest against a Promise Keepers rally July 25-26. The Promise Keepers is a right-wing, all male organization that promotes pushing back the gains of women and placing them in their "proper" place in society.

## Military Staff Sgt. convicted of rape

BY MEGAN ARNEY

A military jury found Staff Sgt. Delmar Simpson guilty on April 29 of 18 rape charges involving six female trainees. Simpson was also found guilty of 47 counts of assault, including 10 incidents of indecent assault. Simpson had been charged with 19 counts of rape and 39 other sexual offenses.

Widespread charges of sexual abuse at the U.S. Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland surfaced last November, setting off a major scandal in the armed forces. Twelve soldiers were charged with crimes ranging from rape to assault and adultery. So far, at least 50 women have made official complaints of sexual abuse at Aberdeen, including 27 rape complaints. Currently, the Army is investigating 313 cases there and at other institutions. Simpson's case is the first conviction on rape charges at Aberdeen.

The NAACP has called for an indepen-

dent investigation into the allegations, charging the Army with unfairly targeting Blacks for prosecution. Of the 12 male soldiers accused of sexually assaulting female soldiers under their command, all are Black. In March, five female soldiers, all of them white, told the press that Army investigators at Aberdeen had pressured them into falsely accusing their superiors of rape.

The prosecution introduced no physical evidence in making its case against Simpson. Under military law, sexual relations between soldiers of different ranks brings a court martial — with a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and benefits, and prison time. Simpson already faces 32 years for admitting to consensual sex with 11 trainees.

According to military law, because of the unequal relationship in the armed forces, what is known as "constructive force" is

sufficient to prove rape. This "constructive force" is when "a reasonable belief in the victim's mind that death or physical injury would be inflicted on her and resistance is futile."

Simpson was convicted by a military jury of one female and five males superiors, including two colonels, a lieutenant colonel, and a captain. Unlike in a civilian court, this jury did not have to reach a unanimous verdict to find Simpson guilty; a two-thirds majority was sufficient. In sentencing, which Simpson faces on May 5, three-fourths of the jury must approve any sentence of more than 10 years. A conviction and sentence in a crime of rape can carry a life sentence.

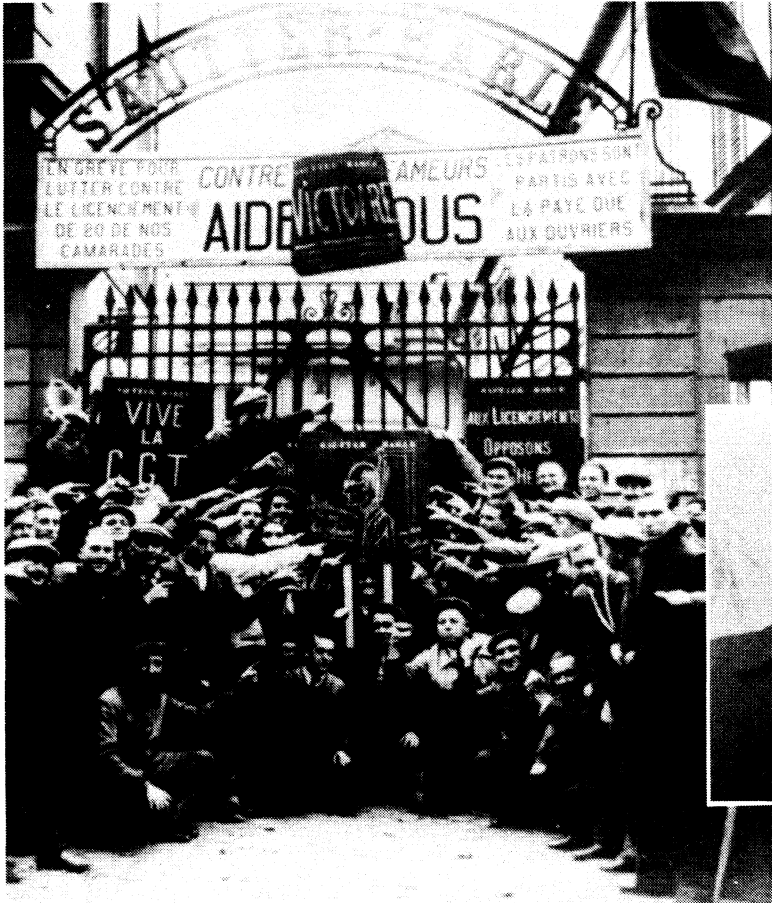
Opponents of women in the military, including those in Congress, have used the case to argue for restoring sex-segregation. Some 14 percent of the U.S. armed forces are women.



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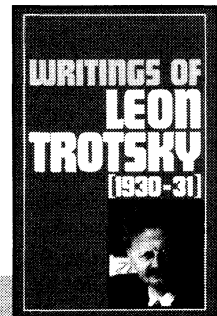


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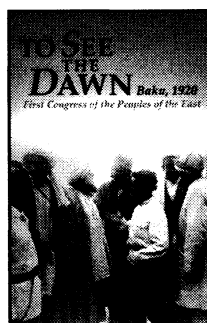
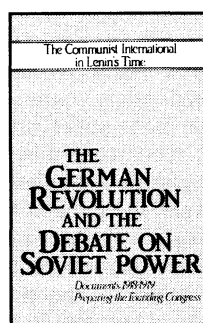
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# Occupation stirs discussion among workers in Albania

Continued from front page

entrance to the main port and have set up camps at the old port, the disused military airport, and the city's naval academy. Gen. Girolamo Giglio, the Italian commander in charge of operations, told reporters at a press conference that in Vlore there are now 570 Italian and 130 Greek soldiers along with 320 military vehicles, including tanks.

On the same day, two Greek warships landed in the port of Durres further north, with 400 soldiers and 90 military vehicles. Two Spanish and two Turkish ships had also arrived earlier. This brings the Italian-led intervention force to 5,500 of an expected 6,000 troops. Armed forces from France, Romania, Austria, and Denmark are also part of the operation.

The popular armed rebellion erupted in Albania in the beginning of February after the collapse of fraudulent investment schemes that the Berisha government had backed. This collapse, in which a third of Albania's population lost most of their life savings, came in the midst of a devastating economic crisis. With the revolt, the country's armed forces have been virtually dissolved and the police rendered ineffective, with many stations shut down or burned. Albania's jails were thrown open and courts function only in certain parts of the country. Almost every household in Albania now has weapons.

In the course of the rebellion, defense councils were born in city after city. They formed the National Front for the Salvation of the People, which now includes 28 such citizens committees. In the southern part of the country, particularly in Vlore, the front has functioned as a alternative government, both locally and in opposition to Berisha's government in Tirana.

The Socialist Party (SP) — which is the former ruling Communist Party — has joined Berisha's Democratic Party and seven others in a government of "National Reconciliation" under SP prime minister Bashkim Fino, in an attempt to forestall the overthrow of the Berisha government by revolutionary means.

In March preparations for imperialist intervention began. This was at the same time as a stalemate developed between the heterogeneous rebel committees, which hold virtually the entire south of the country, and the government in Tirana — with time ticking to the advantage of the counterrevolution.

Despite the rallying cry of most Albanians for his resignation, Berisha remains the president. He has organized vigilante gangs that terrorize the population. These gangs are made up of remnants of the dissolved army loyal to Berisha, agents of the secret police SHIK, and police officers that fled the rebel-held areas. Criminal elements have also instilled terror, uncertainty, loss of confidence, and frustration among working people and youth. These terrorist forces carry out indiscriminate assaults, killing many, and looting and burning banks, small shops, and houses.

"I lost all my money in the 'pyramids,'" said Goci. "I had a car, and that was stolen by the gangs. Now I have nothing." The night before a relative, who is a truck driver, was robbed at gunpoint. "By myself I can't do anything," the young worker said, "but if all the people in Vlore got together, we could do something to stop them."

The daily terrorist assaults have been used by the state-controlled media here and by the international big-business press to paint a picture of "chaos and anarchy" in Albania to justify the imperialist occupation.

## Relationship of forces shifts

The defense committees have so far been unable to adequately mobilize armed working people to defend themselves effectively in the cities against these constant attacks, as well as distribute food and medicine and carry out other tasks. The government in Tirana, with the weight of the imperialist military presence behind it, has taken further steps toward organizing its police forces with the collaboration of the rebels' citizens councils, and toward reestablishing its authority.

The entrance of the city of Sarande is now

guarded by policemen, as well as civilians with automatic rifles. "There are now 83 policemen in the city," says Minella Bala, a leader of the local committee. He explained that the committee chose a new police chief, who went to Tirana to get properly appointed by the ministry of the interior. Many members of the recently reconstituted police have been cops before. Apparently one of the "bad apples" from the old police was rehired, says Bala, and when people saw him in uniform they "beat him up in the central square and took his pistol." No other police have been harmed. "People have Kalashnikovs, while the police don't even all have pistols," he said.

The committee of Sarande has been ceding its authority to the previously elected organs of local government. "The prefect of our area had been on the committee here from the beginning," Bala noted, "so our committee was never entirely 'illegal.' It's undemocratic to appoint a new administration as in Vlore."

Bala maintained that "all of Europe and the whole world" recognizes the government and the local authorities, so "who are we to hold out." He explained that he himself is also considering resigning from the committee, as others have done, to make way for restoring the previous city officials. "Europe has its own reasons for intervening — they are afraid of a wider Balkan war. But we cannot keep order now and someone has to. The armies here will help us go to elections."

"We accomplished a great deal so far," Bala evaluated. "We have kicked out the SHIK [secret police] and the Sigurimi [security forces]. Only one person was killed [in the movement], and that was from a stray bullet."

"We brought Berisha to his knees and then served him up on the table. We handed him over to the opposition parties to finish the job. But they didn't! We have taken this as far as we can. The elections must now take place where surely Berisha will lose. Then he will stand trial and we will have a chance to find out what happened to our money and get some of it back."

The experience was somewhat different in Vlore. There Albert Shyti, a central leader of the Committee for the Salvation of Vlore and a former immigrant worker in Greece, explained that the local authorities loyal to Berisha had been replaced by the committee. Posts were allotted by the committee to the various opposition parties. "We tried to do on a local level what was done nationally," he explained, adding that the committee works closely with this newly constituted local government. A top priority is putting together the police force again, with salaries paid by the central government. These moves are part of reinforcing the Fino government — something that committee leaders see as necessary in order to move to elections and in that way get rid of Berisha.

"We had enough of killings and the attacks by the criminals," said Elidon, a young worker. "We want peace and order to return to Albania; we don't want the foreign forces to help Berisha but to bring peace and order," he said, reflecting the sentiment of many workers and youth. *Militant* reporters talked to as they gathered for the rally at Vlore's main square organized daily by the committee.

## Welcome and warning for troops

Three days into the arrival of imperialist troops on their soil, the belief was widespread, although not universal, among rank-and-file fighters, as well as leaders of the committees we spoke to, that foreign military forces would be a help in establishing order and ensuring fair elections this summer.

Albert Shyti described the events leading up to the arrival of the multinational force and the stance of the committee. Before the bulk of the troops arrived in Vlore, Gen. Giglio asked to meet with "up to 10 leaders of the committee" along with the mayor to discuss the deployment. When the first troops arrived in Vlore on April 21, he and others from the committee led between 4,000 and 5,000 people from the morning rally to the port to "welcome the foreign

soldiers in Greek and Italian," said Shyti. "We don't think this is an intervention. Five thousand or 10,000 foreign troops can't fight the whole armed population of Albania. We have warned Fino's government and the foreigners not to make the mistake of supporting Berisha," he continued.

It was the committee, Shyti said, that showed the military command where to set up camp. Giglio promised the committee leaders that the occupation



Militant/Argiris Malapanis  
Above, daily rally in Vlore calls for overthrow of Berisha government March 28. While rebel forces and government are at a stalemate and imperialist occupation force is now taking up positions in Albania, workers in many areas remain armed. At left, oil worker does volunteer defense duty at refinery 50 miles south of the capital on March 21.

forces will keep "a neutral position between the rebels and Berisha." According to Shyti, the imperialist forces "will help bring peace and order" by guarding the main thoroughfares, the port and the airport. This will "guarantee that elections will take place on June 29 as scheduled. Berisha will go, through democratic means," Shyti said. The newly elected government will compensate working people for the money lost in the pyramid schemes. Working people "will never give up their arms until Berisha goes," Shyti told us.

Shyti and others in the committee have called on the people of Vlore to be on the alert and retain armed defense units against any possible attacks by Berisha's forces. In fact, though many more uniformed police are visible in the streets and roads, they are generally accompanied by armed civilians. Sporadic gunfire continues to be heard during the night, the same as before the arrival of the troops three days ago.

"We have guaranteed that we will not harm the soldiers," stated Luftari Petositi, head of the committee in Vlore. "It is very possible that Berisha will attempt a provocation against the soldiers. Then foreign troops will be caught in the middle. He may attack the troops to create an excuse to attack us."

## Humanitarian aid is a pretext

On this visit to Albania, *Militant* reporters saw dozens of trucks carrying goods creating a traffic jam at the border crossing from Greece. This commercial traffic is a very different picture from the deserted road we crossed three weeks ago. Commercial activity is on a comeback, with many shops and street markets functioning, carrying basic food stuffs and clothes — although the prices have gone up and money is scarce. Red Cross sources have reported no violence against them in providing food and medicine to several hospitals and institutions around the country. Yet, one of the main pretexts the imperialists use for sending their occupation force into Albania is "to secure distribution of humanitarian aid."

Basic goods for sale in the markets of towns such as Sarande and Gjirokastra come from Greece. In Sarande, Bala explained, "we don't have a lack of food. Medicine, yes, we need." So far he says that the city has received 26 tons of food and 8 tons of fuel. In his opinion "help will not be able to come without the troops — only half of it would ever make it."

"It's not that we are a hungry people," responded Elidon to the question of the need for humanitarian aid in Vlore. The view of many people at the morning rally was that

the most important thing was for the port to reopen and normal commerce to resume with Italy, the most vital trade link for Vlore. They expected the foreign troops to prioritize this.

The aid is to be distributed through commercial routes, explained Bala. "The baker will get the flour at a cheap price, like 200 leke, and sell it at a small profit, say 250 leke for example, enough to get paid for his labor." Meanwhile, commercial exploitation of what aid has already been given is reported. A woman from one of the villages bordering Greece, who did not give her name, said that the baker there had gotten the sacks of flour which came in as aid for free and sold bread for 700 leke.

## Workers determined to oust Berisha

On April 24 around 10,000 people gathered here for the day's rally at 10:30 a.m. sharp. People had begun to gather earlier. There was no sign of the occupation troops, who have not yet set up patrols beyond the guarding of the port entrance.

There was no mention of their presence in the brief speech by the representative of the Vlore committee either. Edmond Tahirai called on the parties in the government to get tougher with Berisha and kick "the people's enemies" out of the government. "Even if one citizen of Vlore remains alive, he too will fight against Berisha," Tahirai declared. The chants of "Down with Berisha" did not seem to stop.

A speaker then announced that in "a historic moment for Vlore" Leka Zog, the son of the former king of Albania, would address the city. Wanting to make its position clear, the committee representatives left, taking the sound system with them. Zog's feeble attempts to make a speech using a bullhorn were resoundingly rejected with shouts of "Down with Leka" and "Hang Berisha." The Albanian president supports a referendum on the return of the monarchy.

"Leka's father left with all of Albania's gold," said Robert, a young worker, referring to the monarch's flight in 1939, before the invasion of Albania by Italian forces. "Berisha took all our money, and now Leka's son is back to take what is left!" Greece's Mega TV channel showed a rally of about 5,000 the next day in Shkoder, however, which was supportive of the former king's son.

The spirited rally in Vlore showed working people's determination to continue to fight until Berisha resigns and they are compensated for the money they lost. No one doubts that people will keep their arms at least until that time comes. Many trust the

Continued on Page 14



# More facts come out on brutal massacre in Peru

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Since the April 22 slaughter of 14 members of the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) in Lima, Peru — organized by Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori — more facts have come to light on the atrocities carried out by the regime. In the name of fighting terrorism, 150 military commandos stormed the Japanese ambassador's residence and executed all the rebels on sight, including those who surrendered. The soldiers mutilated rebel bodies and the Fujimori government refused to return the remains to their relatives.

The capitalist media around the world praised Fujimori for the murderous assault. Paul Bremer, former State Department ambassador at large for the United States in the late 1980s, said the raid was "absolutely magnificent — a model." A *Wall Street Journal* editorial called the massacre "exemplary."

Two relatives of jailed MRTA rebels were arrested after visiting the grave of MRTA leader Néstor Cerpa Cartolini. No charges were issued. The government banned funerals and viewings of the bodies of MRTA

members, saying it might draw attention to the rebels' cause. The Fujimori regime buried most of the rebels in unmarked graves marked "NN" in scattered areas throughout the region.

Lima has given political police expanded powers to arrest anyone suspected of "subversion," and to use secret military court proceedings. Thirty-eight more civilians were added to the list of workers and peasants falsely arrested, tortured, and jailed, according to human rights groups. Enrique Vernaes, a former Peruvian senator, proposed having MRTA family members followed. Rodolfo Muñante Sanguinetti, a Peruvian government official and former MRTA captive declined to give the name of one of the rebel that could have shot him but didn't, admitting fear of the consequences that might befall the living relatives.

The excessive force used by Peruvian government troops and then the harassment of the relatives was unpopular among many working people around the world. In Mexico, university students held a demonstration condemning Fujimori, calling him "Hitler-mori." Other protests took place in



Students in Mexico condemn Peruvian president during protest against massacre

Sweden, and in Montreal where activists chanted "Fujimori assassin, Ottawa accomplice!" Nancy Domínguez, the sister of one of the hostages, told the *New York Times*, "I don't know if the attack was necessary. All I know is it was a horrible shame."

Fujimori expressed remorse for the "three human lives" lost. Two of those "humans" were members of the Peruvian special forces units from the police, army, navy, and air force. In the Spanish-language periodical, *El País*, Fernando Rospigliosi — touted as an expert on the subject — describes the commandos. "They are trained to be

bonafide killing machines," he said. "Part of their training consists of raising new-born puppies to later kill them and eat their intestines. It's a way to dehumanize them." The soldiers ripped off the heads and ligaments of the already dead rebels.

Peruvian intelligence chief Ivan Vladimiro Montesinos, who works closely with the CIA, organized the military attack from the beginning of the rebel's takeover of the embassy. The CIA, while admitting to having trained these special forces units, has consistently denied direct collaboration on the assault.

## Washington steps up Europe war preparations

Continued from front page  
U.S. arsenal.

Overthrowing the workers state in Europe and defeating the struggles of workers and peasants around the world was Washington's objective when it founded NATO in 1949. It codified Washington's immense economic and military superiority in Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops, a string of military bases across western Europe, and the U.S. Sixth Fleet stationed in the Mediterranean form the core of Washington's domination in Europe today. "When NATO was created in 1949," crowed Albright, its "area of concern has always been wider than its area of membership and it always will be."

Despite Albright's reassurance of goodwill and building a "peaceful, democratic and transatlantic community," Moscow remains unconvinced. "So far, NATO has not changed enough so that we could not feel a threat if the alliance's military structures are near our borders," Russian deputy foreign minister Georgi Mamedov stated before the April 15 negotiations with NATO officials in Moscow.

During the talks with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov demanded commitments from the imperialist military alliance not to station combat troops or nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states, nor move any of NATO's military infrastructure closer to Russia's border. Later, Russian president Boris Yeltsin met with German chancellor Helmut Kohl in Baden Baden, Germany, April 17 to discuss an agreement on the enlargement. While stating he was ready to sign a NATO cooperation charter on May 27 in Paris, Yeltsin reiterated the demands from the Kremlin.

### 'We do not need Russia to agree'

Albright flew to Moscow April 30 to impress on the Russian regime that regardless of whether an agreement is reached, "NATO enlargement will go forward with no delay." She explained to the Senate committee, "We do not need Russia to agree to enlargement." The secretary of state said a "joint NATO-Russia Council will give Russia a voice but not a veto."

Addressing the concerns of Russian officials about the deployment of conventional and nuclear forces, she asserted, Washington had no plans to pursue this course of action for now. "But we will not compromise on this issue," Albright added, leaving the door open for future military intervention.

NATO officials will announce the new members at the July 7-9 conference in

Madrid. Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic are presumed to be the new candidates for the imperialist military alliance, which will lay out plans at the summit to accept them by 1999 — the organization's 50th anniversary.

"NATO's first new members will not be the last," Albright remarked. She mentioned a "particular effort" to strengthen NATO's military "cooperation with Ukraine," promote a new Polish-Ukrainian "peacekeeping battalion," and "bolster military reform" there. Moscow and the Ukrainian regime are engaged in a simmering dispute over the division of the jointly shared Black Sea Fleet in the Crimean Sea and the fleet's headquarters at Sevastopol, Ukraine.

U.S.-Ukrainian war games are scheduled for August 26-31, just weeks after the Madrid conference. News of this naval exercise — "Operation Sea Breeze" — in which the main enemy was Moscow provoked an uproar in Russia. The proposed scenario for the military operation involves a crisis in which civil unrest by unidentified "armed factions" is sparked by an earthquake. Under that pretext, the Ukrainian government is supposed to call for a multinational "peacekeeping force and humanitarian aid." Washington then leads a naval convoy on a rescue mission to provide medicine, blankets, and evacuation for the wounded.

A previous U.S.-Ukrainian exercise was conducted in 1995 off the Crimean coast that went off without controversy, as Washington had not yet presented its military expansion plans. In early April, U.S. Gen. George Joulwan, the top NATO commander, visited Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, to discuss bringing that regime closer to the imperialist military alliance.

Joulwan, who will retire this summer, will be replaced by Army Gen. Wesley Clark. Currently, Clark heads the U.S. Southern Command, which controls Washington's military operations in Central and South America. He was also the senior U.S. military official who helped force through the Dayton agreement on the warring factions in Yugoslavia, paving way for the imperialist troops now occupying Bosnia.

While Washington is pressing full steam ahead with the NATO enlargement, other imperialist regimes would prefer a little caution. Paris is demanding a legally binding agreement between Moscow and NATO as a condition for French military officials rejoining the inner command structure of NATO. Bonn is also seeking such an accord. The French government is pushing for more "Europeanization" of NATO, demanding that a European be named to one of the top

two posts in NATO's Southern Command, which oversees imperialist military operations in the Mediterranean.

The prime minister of Spain, Jose Marie Anzar, expressed support for the "Europeanization" of NATO, but backed off from Paris's demand. Also voicing prudence, Anzar said NATO enlargement is possible only if Moscow and the U.S.-dominated alliance reach a prior deal on a cooperation agreement.

### Debate in Senate committee

Last July, the U.S. Senate approved the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act, endorsing the expansion and granting \$60 million to the governments of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to prepare their militaries. At the April 23 Armed Services Committee meeting, Sen. John Warner mentioned his doubts concerning NATO expansion, suggesting U.S. GIs could get bogged down in a military quagmire. "If it's not broken, why try and fix it?" he asked.

"The United States has important security interests in Central and Eastern Europe," Albright replied in her presentation. If there were a "major threat" to imperialist interests in this region, "there is already a high likelihood that we would decide to act, whether NATO enlarges or not."

The secretary of state asserted, "If an institution such as NATO did not exist today, we would want to create one. We would want to build the strongest possible partnership with those European nations that share our values and interests.... We would not make the old Iron Curtain its eastern frontier."

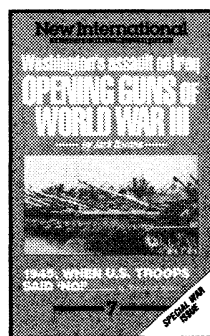
Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan

has been one of the more prominent opponents of NATO expansion. In his March 20 syndicated column, he wrote, "It is China, not Russia, that looms as our Great Power antagonist." Buchanan demands the imperialist war machine aim its tanks at "a rising China with eight times Russia's population," not at an "amputated Russia."

A few days earlier, he sounded a nationalist tone in an article the *Conservative Chronicle* headlined "The time is past to bring U.S. troops home." In it Buchanan declared, "What we have in NATO today are less American allies than American dependencies.... The nations of Europe are pathetic shadows of their former selves. If ever our new NATO guarantees are called — to go to war to defend Poland and Hungary or, in the dreams of the more hubristic NATO expansionists, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovina, Finland, Bulgaria and Ukraine — U.S. troops can expect as much European help as they got in Vietnam."

Recognizing the dangers in Washington's war preparations, Beijing and Moscow issued a joint statement April 23, that declared, "No country should seek hegemony, practice power politics or monopolize international affairs." Yeltsin and Chinese head of state Jiang Zemin produced the document during their five-day meeting in Moscow. A five-nation border agreement was signed the next day by the presidents of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan aimed at increased military cooperation.

Meanwhile, according to the *New York Times*, trade increased between China and Russia by 25 percent last year, including trade in weapons.



New International no. 7

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# Workers prepare for May Day in Cuba

Continued from front page

decked in banners; the workers from the canned foods factory with their own colorful float; and restaurant workers, transportation workers, teachers, artists, and elementary and high school students. A large group of workers from the local garment factory, almost all women, was particularly vocal.

Marchers young and old carried placards and banners with a multitude of hand-lettered slogans such as: "Helms-Burton, Nooooo!" "No transition, no surrender!" "Cuba yes, interventionist law no!" and "We are the *mambises* of the 20th century and this is our Protest of Baraguá."

The common theme of these signs was condemnation of Washington's economic war against Cuba, especially the embargo-tightening legislation generally known as the Helms-Burton law. What has drawn particular scorn in Cuba, however, is a January 28 report by U.S. president Clinton, which offered \$4 - 8 billion in "aid" if the Cuban people removed Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro from the revolutionary government and accepted a "transition" to capitalism, as demanded in the Helms-Burton act.

In recent weeks, hundreds of thousands of Cuban workers, peasants, military officers, students, and others have signed their names to a manifesto rejecting this bribe. The Declaration of the 20th Century Mambises, as it is called, affirms their resolve to defend their national sovereignty and socialist revolution.

The *mambises* were the fighters in the plebeian armies of the late 19th century that fought for Cuba's independence from Spanish colonial rule. At the end of the first of two wars of independence, Antonio Maceo was among the handful of military leaders of the liberation forces who refused to sign an accord ending the hostilities in 1878. He made public his rejection in the Protest of Baraguá, and later commanded the second liberation war.

## Clinton draws special scorn

At the demonstration, the U.S. president was the subject of special ridicule and contempt for his underestimation of the Cuban people. One sugar worker in his 50s marched with a sign that stated, "Clinton, *cabrón*, remember Girón!" using a derogatory term for Clinton and referring to the decisive defeat of Washington's mercenary invasion of the island in April 1961 by Cuban workers and farmers at Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs).

Unionists at the march gathered around visiting reporters, eager to voice their opinions. Ramón Castellón, a grade school teacher, was carrying a giant pencil labeled "We will be like Che," referring to Ernesto Che Guevara, a central leader of the Cuban revolution. "The United States shouldn't even try to impose a 'transition' government in Cuba because they would fail," he said, flanked by some of his co-workers. "First they would have to fight us and burn the island to the ground."

Washington's effort to pit working people against their revolutionary leadership has likewise failed, as interviews with numerous workers in Villa Clara and Cienfuegos provinces, as well as Havana, indicated. Eladio Martínez, a worker at La Esperanza

farm cooperative near Cienfuegos, expressed a commonly heard sentiment: "They [Washington] want Fidel's head. But we're not going to let them do that. Today they would have to cut off too many heads."

At the San Diego rally, Amarillis Jiménez, from the municipal leadership of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), gave the keynote speech. This year's event, she noted, was dedicated to Che Guevara on the 30th anniversary of his death. Guevara fell in combat in October 1967 while leading a guerrilla unit in Bolivia that set out to build a mass revolutionary movement of working people that could take power in that country and extend the socialist revolution in South America.

The U.S. government wants to reimpose capitalism in Cuba, Jiménez explained. "We reject going back to exploitation of man by man," she declared. "We reject the discrimination against women. We reject a society where selfishness prevails."

The CTC leader described how working people and youth had expressed their repudiation of Washington's attacks on the Cuban revolution by massively signing both the Declaration of the Mambises of the 20th Century and the Law for the Reaffirmation of Dignity and National Sovereignty.

This Cuban law was passed last December by the country's National Assembly in response to the Helms-Burton act, which among other things sanctions non-U.S. companies "trafficking" in formerly capitalist property expropriated by Cuba's workers and farmers. Under the Law of Dignity, which declares the Helms-Burton law null and void, all those in the United States who seek to implement the U.S. law will be excluded from any future negotiations on compensation for nationalized property. Another provision guarantees Cuban citizens the right to sue for compensation if they are victims of any U.S.-backed aggressions against Cuba since 1959.

## Resisting impact of Helms-Burton act

In her speech, Jiménez highlighted the current effort to bring in this year's sugar harvest, scheduled to end in early May. "This harvest demonstrates our determination and resistance," she stated.

Most workers at sugarcane cooperatives and sugar mills interviewed by *Militant* reporters said they expect this harvest will reach or slightly exceed last year's production of just under 4.5 million tons. In 1996, production of sugar was 30 percent higher than the 1995 level of 3.3 million tons, — the lowest in half a century. Before the abrupt end of aid and trade on favorable terms with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries in the early 1990s — which opened what Cubans refer to as the "special period" — sugar production reached or exceeded 8 million tons annually. The subsequent drop has cut into Cuba's capacity to import needed goods, since sugar remains the country's main export crop and a primary source of hard currency.

Since the enactment of the Helms-Burton act in March of last year, credits that the Cuban government secured for the 1995-96 harvest to import fertilizer, herbicides, combine engines, and spare parts have begun to dry up. As a result, crucial supplies



Militant/Jon Hillson

## Members of Territorial Troop Militia march at Havana May Day parade in 1989

were late or did not arrive at all for this year's harvest. In addition, hurricane Lili and several months of drought have lowered sugarcane yields. This is especially the case in Villa Clara — until last year the number one province in sugarcane production — and Cienfuegos, hardest hit by the storm. Crippling shortages of everything from fuel and pesticides to work boots persist today.

Working people in the countryside have been waging a tough battle, often laboring 16-hour days seven days a week, to surpass last year's production. Many described this effort as being at the heart of their resistance to Washington's brutal economic assault.

## A special May Day

"May Day is special this year," said Dalia Mino, 29, a nurse at the main clinic in San Diego, interviewed after the rally here. "We are celebrating 30 years since the murder of Che, by defying imperialism and fighting against all odds to increase production." She had just returned from 10 days of voluntary labor weeding cane fields.

The combine preceding the contingent of sugar mill workers and members of a Basic Unit of Cooperative Production (UBPC) carried a big sign reading, "We met the goal," referring to their quota for the sugar harvest. UBPCs are cooperatives that have replaced most state farms throughout the island since 1993.

Dozens of UBPC members interviewed in Villa Clara and Cienfuegos described in detail their struggle to keep tractors and combines running by fabricating spare parts when possible, organizing maintenance brigades, and cutting cane by hand, often with torn boots or even barefoot.

"Some thought that with the fall of the socialist camp, Cuba would fall too," said José Medina, a truck driver at the Matún UBPC in Cienfuegos during an interview there on April 25. "But that didn't happen. I think the special period made us stronger. We proved we are capable of doing more with less."

The identification with the Cuban revolution is prevalent even among many of those who express open discontent with the current economic hardships. María, a retired teacher, riding with *Militant* reporters on the road from Cienfuegos to Havana April 26, complained about high prices for food in the agricultural markets, irregular bus schedules, shortages of dairy products and affordable clothing, and inadequate housing. "Things are getting worse," she said. She added, however, that she was not willing to give up the social gains of the Cuban revolution for the brutality and individualism that prevail in countries like the United States, Mexico, or Peru.

"At least here no one has been thrown onto the streets in the middle of this crisis. You don't see thousands of people sleeping in cardboard shacks under the bridges." The Helms-Burton law, she said, "is an anti-Cuban law. Too many people spilled their blood to win sovereignty in this country for us to go back to slavery."

## 'We want them to know we are ready'

The resistance by Cuban working people to Washington's economic war has been intertwined with improving the military preparedness of the population to resist imperialist military aggression. This too was a prominent feature of the mobilizations leading up to May Day.

At the CTC-organized rally in San Diego, several unions were given awards for

their achievements over the past year. The teachers union won first place based on outstanding performance in several categories, including participation in voluntary labor campaigns, military training, and building "people's tunnels." Working people and students have built these ubiquitous underground tunnels as part of their preparation for any imperialist military attack. They are now to be found near workplaces, at campuses, and in fields and residential areas throughout the island.

Coordinated rallies, demonstrations, and military training exercises were held April 20 in many cities as part of a national Day of Defense. At the Copacabana hotel on the shorefront of western Havana, for instance, about 100 hotel workers took part in grenade-throwing practice early that morning.

Defense coordinator Amaury Quintana, a veteran of the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army, explained that the exercise was organized by the Production and Defense Brigade at that workplace. "In case of enemy attack, workers here would be assigned a variety of related tasks: defending the facilities from sea attack, evacuation of tourists, and maintaining the functioning of the hotel during the attack." Such brigades are organized at workplaces everywhere, with special priority given to major industrial and other economic sites. Practical and theoretical training takes place monthly.

The Production and Defense Brigades in the workplaces, together with the Territorial Troop Militias and Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), are part of the massive military training and arming of the country's population in defense of the revolution against imperialist assault, a strategy known as the War of the Entire People that has been developed by the revolutionary leadership since Washington's belligerent moves against Cuba in the early 1980s.

Pointing to the workers drilling on the hotel's tennis courts, Quintana smiled and explained, "See, these defense activities are all public. You can go anywhere and people will tell you what they're carrying out in their neighborhood. We want *them* — 90 miles away — to know."

About 400,000 people took part in military exercises that day in the capital and the province of Havana, and similar actions were held elsewhere. The exercises included target practice, antiaircraft and antitank drills, distribution of food and fuel, and organization of centers to care for large numbers of wounded civilians.

Mass mobilizations took place in several cities on the Day of Defense. Twenty thousand people rallied in Ciego de Ávila and 50,000 in Holguín, with other actions taking place in Camagüey, Santiago de Cuba, Matanzas, and other cities. The rallies celebrated both Cuba's victory at Playa Girón and the 40th anniversary of the FAR, founded in December 1956 as the Rebel Army. At these events, thousands of military officials were given promotions and medals for distinguished performance.

The mobilizations in late April will climax with large marches and rallies in Havana and other major cities. In Havana, 40,000 vanguard workers are to head the May Day march. They will include workers from 34 work sites that have been recognized as Vanguard Workplaces, as well as from 14 voluntary labor contingents of construction workers.

Mike Taber and Mary-Alice Waters contributed to this article.

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# Strikers resist takebacks at Goodyear

BY GERARDO SÁNCHEZ  
AND JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Nebraska — "This strike is to keep the company from steam rolling over what the union has fought for and won over the years," said Jim Eichelberger, a hose trimmer on strike against Goodyear. He is one of 1,800 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 286 who walked out April 19 at the Northeast Lincoln plant location and at the Goodyear Global Distribution Center (GDC) in the Lincoln Air Park. About 12,500 workers are on strike against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. at nine locations across the country. Another 2,300 USWA members are on strike at Kelly Springfield, a Goodyear subsidiary, in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Workers at the union hall and on the picket line report that the strike vote here was more than 1,300 in favor of the strike and 26 against. No union member has crossed the picket line.

"Goodyear makes huge profits and we want a share of their prosperity," Eichelberger explained. He said that Goodyear's first quarter profits were up by 12 percent and that the company's chief executive officer, Samir Gibara, just got a 70 percent raise in salary and stock options.

The company claims it needs concessions to stay competitive. An article in the Lincoln *Journal Star* quoted John Kornitzer, whose company owns about 396,000 Goodyear shares, as saying, "If Goodyear gives in to the union, the stock prices will fall. Investors know the importance of keeping costs competitive. If they bury the union, Wall Street will applaud."

"They want us to compete with other rubber workers including international workers," said Carl Fedon, another hose trimmer walking the picket line.

Ted Kastle and Rick Shaw, local stewards on the executive board who work in the plant as an interplant trucker and a hose janitor, were at the union hall. They explained that Goodyear wants to cut wages, insurance benefits, pensions, and cost of liv-



Militant Joe Swanson

Members of USWA Local 286 picket Goodyear plant in Lincoln, Nebraska.

ing allowances. New hires now come in at top pay after their training period, which can take from 4 to 12 weeks to qualify. Goodyear wants to cut new hire wages so that the first year would be 70 percent and it would take 36 months to get the top pay.

Kastle and Shaw also noted the media has inaccurately reported that workers at the plant make an average of \$18 per hour. While some tire builders make that wage, the average is between \$12-\$13, they said. They added that the union is negotiating for job security and is opposed to the company demands on outsourcing. Goodyear wants to use nonunion workers to do daily maintenance, plant improvements, and some assembly line work.

Strike support and solidarity has been strong from the beginning, Kastle said. Support has come from the Nebraska AFL-CIO, members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the International Association of Machinists. Truckers who are members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have refused to cross the line.

About half of the workforce at the plant and distribution center have been there less than 10 years, explained Shaw.

Dee Birdwell, a 27-year-old hose finisher at the plant, has worked for Goodyear for three years. Other strikers, both young workers and veterans of past contract fights,

grinned and nodded in agreement as she commented, "We are standing tall and proud together and we've got the support of our brothers and sisters in the union against Goodyear."

*Gerardo Sánchez is a member of United Transportation Union Local 867 in Des Moines, Iowa. Joe Swanson is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa.*

BY M.J. RAHN

FAYETTEVILLE, North Carolina — "I put 24 years of my life here, the best years of my life. I get five weeks vacation now, but I feel I've earned it. Now they're trying to take away and take away. We're saying 'no way.' They can close the place down as far as I'm concerned, before we should take these cuts." This was how Ralph Schmid, who services machines at the Kelly-Springfield tire plant, summed up his feelings on the picket line of the strike of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 959.

Dozens of strikers were picketing in a steady downpour on Sunday, April 27. Their strike began at noon five days earlier, as day shift walked out in a big procession, met by cheering second- and third-shift workers.

Kelly-Springfield was formerly an independent company but is now a subsidiary

of Goodyear. The plant employs about 2,500 production workers, 2,100 of whom are union members. Many nonunion workers also walked out when the strike began. Perry Rayburn, a first-shift worker, reported, "All kinds of people started signing union cards at the last minute before we walked out."

Strikers described intensive speedup at the plant. Although the weight workers handle is less than it used to be, strikers pointed out that the pace of work has increased alongside advances in machinery and technology. Schmid said, "We produce 61,000 tires a day on a bad day. We've produced as much as 67,000. They're stretching you out now, through modifying machinery and speeding-up production. They've increased the quotas to the point where you're working full out and still can't keep up." The tire builders work on piece rate. Everyone else is on hourly pay.

Perry Thomas, a tire builder with 21 years seniority, said, "We've got some new machinery now, but mostly they retooled old machines. Some of the 40-year-old machines are producing twice as fast as they were made to. They wanted us to reduce scrap to 0.99 percent. We did that within a month. Then they said, 'We want it down to 0.89.' We did that. And now, they want to take away." The workers are primarily on strike over the company's proposal to establish a seven-day schedule, which would eliminate overtime pay on the weekends; a two-tier wage schedule for new hires; cuts in vacation time; and increased co-payments for medical insurance.

The Fayetteville *Observer-Times* reported April 24 that a U.S. district court ruled to deny a temporary restraining order by the company to halt the strike.

Numerous workers described the early years of the plant when there was a height and weight requirement, 5'8" and 150 lbs., to do the backbreaking work of building tires. That policy was later scrapped as discriminatory.

Many workers said they were prepared to stay out a long time, but also seemed confident in their ability to keep production to a minimum. Schmid expressed the opinion, "Before long, if they want some tires getting out, they're going to have to start talking to somebody."

*M.J. Rahn is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Greensboro, North Carolina.*

## UAW strikes

Continued from front page

assembly complex in nearby Pontiac, Michigan, has entered its second week. The union is demanding that GM hire 600 more assembly workers to fulfill commitments made by the company as part of a 1995 strike settlement.

As in other recent strikes against GM this year, understaffing and workers being denied vacations and rest breaks are the key issues. Workers in auto parts plants that supply GM, such as American Axle & Manufacturing, are getting overtime cut and have been warned that layoffs will start if the Pontiac strike goes for another two weeks.

Morale is high on the 17 picket lines surrounding the truck plant. "Tell [GM Chairman] Jack Smith that if he wants a contract that makes business sense," said Robert Combs, a production line worker at the Pontiac plant, "he should start by cutting his own wages 90 percent. Five GM execs got \$18 million between them. GM's got lots of profits and no sharing. They should try a day on the assembly line and see if they can handle it."

A GM spokesman argued that the company is "seeking a local agreement that addresses the needs of our employees while giving GM the flexibility we need to improve our competitiveness in the global marketplace."

Auto workers also remain on the picket lines in Oklahoma City. Some 3,500 members of UAW Local 1999 have now been out against GM for almost a month. The union is demanding that GM hire 500 additional workers to staff the car plant. Workers there have experienced a big increase in the number of injuries. The strike has cost GM more than \$150 million. So far little progress has been made toward a settlement. The Oklahoma City strike has halted the production of GM's Chevrolet Malibu and Oldsmobile Cutlass, just as the spring selling season gets under way. There continues to be talk of more UAW strikes if progress is not made in the current disputes.

*Toni Gorton is a member of UAW Local 235 in Detroit.*

## Northwest Airlines demands concessions

BY MARK FRIEDMAN  
AND TONY LANE

LOS ANGELES — Twenty-six thousand members of the International Association of Machinists, working without a contract for six months at Northwest Airlines, face serious union-busting demands from management.

Four years ago, Northwest ground crews, mechanics, ticket agents, cleaners, pilots, and flight attendants took a wage cut of 18 percent or more to "help the company come back from the brink of bankruptcy," as both management and union officials put it. Workers received company stock in exchange, totaling \$897 million. Other concessions in recent contracts included the introduction of part-time ramp workers, who receive no benefits, as 15 percent of the workforce; a two-tier wage scale that takes five years or more to reach top pay; job speedup while reducing crew sizes; and some forced overtime.

Similar contracts have been forced on workers at United, U.S. Airways, and Trans World Airlines. There is intense competition among the airlines and they are all trying to push down labor costs and increase their profits. Given the huge amount of capital invested in aircraft, however, the rate of profit in the industry continues to fall, even though the total dollar amount is the highest ever. Northwest's profits last year were over \$536 million, the largest annual income in the company's history. The company recently announced orders of \$4.2 billion worth of new Airbus aircraft.

Extensive speedup and the use of old and broken equipment has resulted in an increase in on-the-job injuries. One accident in an untested and faulty de-icing truck in 1995 resulted in a worker's death. There is less attention to safety on the ground and

pressure by management to shortcut or eliminate safety checks and repairs. The size of ground crews has been severely reduced.

In the new contract, Northwest management is demanding an expansion of part-time ramp employees hours from 20 to 39.5 a week, dumping of some meal periods, split shifts, elimination of holiday pay and airline travel benefits, weakening of seniority rights, reduction of sick and occupational injury leave time, reduced rights of older and injured workers to stay employed, physical and psychological fitness tests, cross-utilization of workers in different departments, the right to subcontract-out work, forced overtime, and more.

The central issue is that of outsourcing work to low-paid nonunion workers. The company wants to establish this precedent now. The first proposal is to make air freight facilities nonunion. This would eliminate more than 1,000 union jobs immediately.

Los Angeles union member Erick Kendle said, "We made a mistake when we voted yes on this last contract and the stock-for-concessions program, which did not benefit us. It opened the door to what we're seeing now. We as union members have to demand our right to job security and decent pay."

Northwest has started replacing union members who clean aircraft with nonunion subcontractors in Los Angeles. At the end of February, nearly 25 percent of the cleaners were laid off and replaced with workers from outside contractor Atlas Corporation.

In Minneapolis, Servicemaster, an outside contractor, had been learning how to do cleaners jobs for possible future replacement. Management was forced to retreat on this due to union members opposition.

Northwest is trying to cut aircraft maintenance overtime labor costs by 15 percent,

reports mechanic Sean MacGra. "Because of past inadequate staffing, overtime was a necessary ingredient in the operation. At JFK [airport in New York], management began to intimidate, harass, and discipline mechanics.... Mechanics responded by affirming that the job would be done right and they will not speed up in such a safety-sensitive area. Unfortunately, union officials and the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] have accepted the company's position that this is a mechanics slowdown to protest overtime cuts. This is not a slowdown by the mechanics but a speedup by management."

On March 21, Northwest management sent a notice to all stations instructing managers to cut thousands of hours of ground service and ticket agent training. Instead of the previous classroom instruction on loading aircraft, where workers were able to ask questions and discuss procedures, employees will now receive a handout, which will be the extent of the instruction.

In response to deteriorating conditions in Memphis, when management tried to lay off eight mechanics this spring, the mechanics joined together to work-to-rule and be especially safety conscious of the aircraft. A number of flights were grounded, delayed, or canceled. The company rapidly canceled the layoffs. Memphis IAM activist Jim Lyle said, "We have to stop looking at divisions that separate us, we have to start uniting all sectors of the workforce, not looking at station versus station or group against group. We can't let management put a dividing wedge between us."

*Mark Friedman and Tony Lane are members of the IAM and are ramp workers for Northwest Airlines in Los Angeles and Minneapolis respectively.*

## ALABAMA

### Birmingham

**Palestinians Resist Israeli Offensive in West Bank.** Speaker: Betsy Farley, member of Socialist Workers Party National Committee, and member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 111 21 St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

## CALIFORNIA

### San Francisco

**Northern Ireland Today.** Speakers: Mairead Hurl, Sinn Fein activist from County Derry; John Horgan, Regional Vice President for Human Rights, The Irish American Unity Conference, and others. Wed., May 7, 7:00 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

## MINNESOTA

### St. Paul

**Palestinians Resist Israeli Expansion.** Panel discussion. Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m.  
**Solidarity with California Farmworkers.** Panel of participants in April 13 march in Watsonville, California. Barb Kucera, editor of *The Union Advocate*; Somah Yarney, student, Macalester University. Fri., May 16, 7:30 p.m. Both events held at 2490 University Ave. St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Palestinians Resist Israeli Offensive in the West Bank.** Speakers: Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 87-A Halsey St. (corner with Linden). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK

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**Speak Out Against Fujimori's Massacre in Peru.** Speaker: Hilda Cuzco, staff writer for the *Militant*, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Ave. (corner of Bergen). Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**The Irish Freedom Struggle: Its Place in World Politics.** Panel discussion with: Gerald O'Hare, Irish Northern Aid; Linda McComus, Irish-American activist, just returned from trip to Ireland; Mary Nell Bockman, Socialist Workers Party, member of International Association of Machinists. Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 1906 S. St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**The 'D.C. Budget Crisis' and Capitalism's Worldwide Disorder.** Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers candidate for D.C. City Council Chair. Sat., May 10, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. 1930 18th St. NW (at 18th & Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**How the Cops Use the Drug Laws to Attack Democratic Rights.** Panel discussion. Fri., May 9, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

### Christchurch

**UK Elections: Issues Facing Working People.** Fri., May 9, 7:30 p.m. 199 High St. (Corner High and Tuam Sts.) Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

# Quebec is central issue in Canadian elections

## Continued from front page

clearly: "We have to remind Canadians that only one of the various problems which afflict us — the problem of Quebec — can destroy our country."

There are several points of conflict between the Parti Quebecois government in Quebec and the federal government in Ottawa at this time. The Parti Quebecois (PQ) is a bourgeois nationalist party that promotes Quebec sovereignty. The federal government has asked the Supreme Court to rule on whether Quebec has the right to declare independence unilaterally. On March 1, a headline in the Montreal daily *La Presse* summarized the federal government's position: "Only a war can lead to secession, claims Ottawa."

The Quebec government is also seeking a constitutional amendment to replace a school system divided on religious and linguistic lines with one divided on language lines only. At the present time public schools are divided both between Catholic and Protestant schools and English and French schools. The division of schools in Montreal and Quebec City on religious lines is enshrined in the Canadian constitution. The existence of separate schools systems divided along religious and language lines leads to inferior services for students who speak French and is a big factor of division among working people.

While a step forward in ending the religious division of schools, the Quebec government's proposal would not alter the existing divisions between French and English schools. The federal government is using the request as an occasion to assert its ultimate authority to decide.

## Liberals attack the social wage

While there is an economic upswing in Canada — the Gross Domestic Product grew by 0.6 percent in January, the biggest monthly gain since June 1994 — unemployment remains very high, with the official rate at 9.3 percent. In Quebec the unemployment rate stands at 11.2 percent. The fragility of the upturn has been highlighted by the dramatic fall in the value of the stocks of Bre-X, a gold mining company with interests in Indonesia. Reports that the value of finds in Borneo had been greatly exaggerated led to a drop of \$3 billion in the value of its shares within minutes on March 27. This in turn had a devastating effect on the value of stocks of a whole series of other mining companies. Mining is a key sector of the Canadian economy.

In its three and a half years in office, the Liberal government has carried out the most far-reaching attacks on social services since World War II. In fact, the government has applied a large part of the program of the right-wing populist Reform Party, which won more than 50 seats in Parliament in the last elections.

These attacks have largely taken the form of cuts in funds transferred to the provincial governments for health care and welfare. This means that the cuts have been carried out province-by-province. While there has been resistance, in particular in Ontario last year, there has been no unified national actions except on the part of students. Recently union officials have retreated from organizing actions against the attacks.

Cuts in transfer payments have had a devastating impact leading to widespread hospital closings and massive cuts in welfare payments and in welfare rolls. From 1994-95 to 1997-98, the amount transferred to the provinces will go from \$18.8 billion to \$12.5 billion. According to the National Council

on Social Welfare, poverty has never been so widespread in Canada, with one-sixth of all Canadians living in poverty. This affects Quebec the most. While 17.4 percent live in poverty nationally, the proportion is 20.6 percent in Quebec, despite the fact that it is the second most industrialized province.

There have been major reductions in unemployment benefits. In 1993, more than 80 percent of those unemployed received benefits. With new rules applied in January 1997, only about half receive benefits now.

Since the election of the Liberal government in 1993 there have been no major disagreements in Parliament over foreign policy. While not a major actor on the world stage, the Canadian ruling class has used its military forces and "aid" to shore up imperialist domination in oppressed countries and to contribute to efforts to take back for capitalism countries such as Yugoslavia, where bourgeois rule has been overthrown.

Ottawa gives support to many dictatorial regimes internationally from Indonesia to Peru in hopes of seeking profits through investment and trade. Ottawa presently has military forces in Bosnia, Haiti, Cyprus, and elsewhere. On March 26, Canadian troops leading the occupation in Haiti were met with shouts of "Go home" by demonstrators.

The Liberal government has also pressed forward the attack on democratic rights. One move has been the adoption of an "anti-gang" law. Using the pretext of violence by motorcycle gangs and drug dealers, the law attacks the right to freedom of association

by putting into law that participating in the activities of a "gang" is a criminal act. The law allows a judge who believes that someone is about to commit an act of gangsterism to demand that the individual sign an "engagement to keep to peace" for up to 12 months. It also increases prison terms and facilitates electronic surveillance.

## Shake-up of Canada's electoral system

The last federal elections, which took place Oct. 25, 1993, registered the biggest shake-up in Canada's electoral system since the depression of the 1930s. There was a virtual collapse of the Progressive Conservative (PC) party, one of the two traditional parties of capitalist rule since the foundation of Canada in 1867.

The PC went from forming the government and holding 155 seats in the previous Parliament to 2 seats. The New Democratic Party (NDP), which is based on the unions outside of Quebec, fell from 44 seats to 9, losing its status as an official party. For official status, a political party must hold 12 seats in Parliament.

On the other hand two parties that had never won seats before made major breakthroughs. The Bloc Quebecois, which promotes Quebec sovereignty and is allied with the PQ, won 54 seats in Quebec and, much to the chagrin of Canada's capitalists, became the official opposition. The right-wing Reform Party, based largely on support in the west, won 52 seats. The big majority of the votes of these parties came from the Conservatives, reflecting polarization along

national lines in Canadian politics.

It is not clear at this point how the PC will fare in the upcoming vote.

In Quebec, neither the BQ or the PQ put forward a perspective of mass struggle for independence. The PQ, which forms the provincial government in Quebec, has carried out major attacks on social services. Nevertheless many workers and youth will vote BQ as a way of voting against Ottawa's domination of Quebec.

At its convention in Regina in April the NDP adopted a program pledging to cut unemployment in half over the next four years, to increase social services, and to balance the budget by the year 2000. Its stand on social services is not very credible, however, since NDP governments in Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia have carried out major attacks on social services.

While at the NDP convention, Roy Romanow who is premier of Saskatchewan, spoke in favor of recognizing the distinct character of Quebec, at the same time the Saskatchewan NDP government joined the federal government's lawsuit before the Supreme Court challenging Quebec's right to declare independence.

The Reform Party has been unable to define itself clearly on the right and will likely lose ground. A large part of its program on social services has been applied by the Liberal government and because of its virulently anti-Quebecois positions it has no perspective of winning support in Quebec and thus becoming a credible tool for Canada's ruling class.

Continued on Page 14

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**Murder machine** — It would be difficult to explain away as an aberration those videotapes of Brazilian cops beating, torturing and killing slum dwellers. In the first



**Harry Ring**

months of this year, Human Rights Watch listed 30 cases of police killings, numerous beatings and hundreds of "disappearances."

**Young subversive?** — The Prez had a two-way computer video sys-

tem chat with students at a Los Angeles elementary school. Not totally two-way. Classroom participation was limited to the principal and an official of the AFL-CIO, which installed the setup as part of a national program. Leslie Andrews, 11, had hoped to ask Clinton a question: "I wanted to ask him why there are so many jails and not enough schools."

**It figures** — Responding to federal moves to end Medicaid for thousands of immigrants, New York nursing homes are denying admission even to those immigrants who will retain their coverage.

**Safety first** — The Colorado River provides drinking water to Southern Utah, Nevada, Arizona and Southern California. On a Utah

bank of the river sits 10 million tons of uranium waste leaking toxics into the water. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission plans to "cap" the 130-acre dump with clay and rocks. The owner, Denver Atlas Corp. said the cap won't entirely stop nuclear waste from seeping into the river and agreed it would be safer to move it. But that would cost \$150 million and it can be covered for \$16 million.

**P.S.** — Not to worry anyone, but that nuclear dump sits on a flood plain over an earthquake fault zone.

**Stench bomb** — Javier Echevarria, a Spanish Catholic Bishop, heads Opus Dei, an influential right-wing group within the church. In Sicily, he told members that accord-

ing to "scientific research," 90 percent of the disabled are children of people "who had not entered into marriage in a pure state." Opus Dei said a) he thought it was a closed meeting; b) he doesn't speak Italian well; c) he was only speaking of children of HIV-infected parents.

**Damn, you did it again!** — At the West Virginia headwaters of the Potomac River, poultry producers are turning out 100 million birds a year, and 300 million pounds of dung. An unmeasured amount gets into the river, fouling the water. A *Los Angeles Times* story on this was headlined: "Potomac River is paying price for nation's chicken appetite."

**Sleepy?** — A National Sleep

Foundation survey found that large numbers of U.S. workers don't get enough sleep. Almost half the work force, some 55 million people, experienced sleeplessness during the previous three months. Two-thirds of these said the resulting fatigue made it difficult to do their job.

**Philosophical issue** — In Los Angeles, as many as 100,000 families are living in garages. In the past four months, fires killed eight people. Muses city housing director Gary Souier: "Is it better for kids to live in a garage that is a fire hazard than to be homeless? These are the imponderable questions." Apparently he hasn't pondered the crazy idea of providing safe, affordable public housing.

# Capitalism is in decay, but won't fall on its own

Drawing on the experiences of the October 1917 revolution in Russia and the consolidation of the first workers state, the Communist International was founded in 1919. During its first five years, the new International, guided by V.I. Lenin and other central leaders of the Bolshevik Party, sought to build a world movement of parties capable of leading the toilers to overthrow capitalist exploitation and colonial oppression.

Documents of the process that led to the founding of the Comintern, and from its early years, are collected in the six-volume series *The Communist International*

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

in *Lenin's Time* (see special sale offer on page 7). In addition a two-volume set, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, contains related speeches and writings of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky. The excerpt below is from the article "The main lesson of the Third Congress." The entire article appears in volume one of *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, which is copyright © 1945, 1972 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY LEON TROTSKY

Classes are rooted in production. Classes remain viable so long as they can fulfill a necessary role in the process of social organization of labor. Classes begin losing the ground under their feet when the conditions necessary for their further existence come into contradiction with the growth of productive forces, i.e., with the further development of economy. Such is the situation in which the bourgeoisie finds itself at the present time.

But this does not at all mean that a class, which has lost its living roots and has become parasitic, is by this very reason doomed to instantaneous death. While economy constitutes the foundation of class rule, the respective classes maintain themselves in power by means of the state-political apparatuses and organs, namely: army, police, party, courts, press, etc., etc. With the aid of these organs, which in relation to the economic foundation represent a "superstructure," the ruling class may perpetuate itself in power for years and decades after it has become a direct brake upon the social development. If such a situation endures too

long, an outlived ruling class can drag down with it those countries and peoples over whom it rules.

Hence arises the necessity of revolution. The new class with living roots in economic development — the proletariat — must overthrow the bourgeoisie, must tear power out of its hands and convert the state apparatus into an instrument of economic reorganization of society.

The bourgeoisie had become a parasitic and anti-social class even prior to the World War. The incompatibility of bourgeois rule with the further development of economy, and even with the further preservation of economy, has been disclosed on a grandiose scale during the war. Furthermore, the war has not only laid bare this incompatibility but has also reinforced it in the extreme, bringing it to the highest pitch of intensity. The war has shattered the economic foundation of bourgeois society.

At the same time the war has extraordinarily disorganized, weakened, discredited and paralyzed the political organs of bourgeois rule: the state, the army, the police, the parliament, the press, and so on. In the initial postwar period the bourgeoisie was in a state of extreme disorientation; it was fearful of the day of reckoning, had lost confidence in the old methods and usages of its rule, kept apprehensively probing the soil, kept wavering, and readily agreed to concessions.

In the most critical year for the bourgeoisie, the year 1919, the proletariat of Europe could have undoubtedly conquered state power with minimum sacrifices, had there been at its head a genuine revolutionary organization, setting forth clear aims and capably pursuing them, i.e., a strong Communist Party. But there was none. On the contrary, in seeking after the war to conquer new living conditions for itself and in assuming an offensive against bourgeois society, the working class had to drag on its back the parties and trade unions of the Second International, all of whose efforts, both conscious and instinctive, were essentially directed toward the preservation of capitalist society.

By employing this Social-Democratic shield, the bourgeoisie was able to take the best possible advantage of the breathing spell. It recovered from its panic, stabilized its state organs, supplemented them with counter-revolutionary armed gangs and started hand-picking politicians who are specialists in applying combined methods in the struggle against the open revolutionary movement and who operate through intimidation, bribery, provocation, segregation, division, etc., etc. The basic task of these specialists is to engage isolated detachments of the proletarian vanguard in a series of battles, bleed them white and thus undermine the faith of the working class in the possibility of success.

In the field of economic restoration, the bourgeoisie has achieved nothing essential during the three years that have elapsed since the war. On the contrary, it is only today that the economic consequences of the war are unfolding in their full scope in the form of a crisis unprecedented in capitalist history. We thus have here a very graphic illustration showing that the political conditions of rule, although they are in the last analysis dependent on the economic conditions, do not at all run parallel to these economic conditions nor flow from them automatically.



Revolutionary sailors and soldiers in Berlin, December 1918.

Whereas in the field of production and exchange the world capitalist apparatus has today fallen into such a state of complete disorganization that the situation in 1919 appears as the height of well-being in comparison with the present one, in the field of politics the bourgeoisie has in this interval succeeded to a very large degree in strengthening the organs and vehicles of its rule. The leaders of the bourgeoisie see all too clearly the economic abyss which yawns before them. But they are prepared and they will fight to the end.

They approach the existing situation in terms of political strategy. Coolly and calculatingly they watch every move of the proletariat, seeking to emasculate it, especially in Germany, through a series of isolated bloody defeats. During the last three years the workers have fought a great deal and have suffered many sacrifices. But they

have not won power. As a result the working masses have become more cautious than they were in 1919-20. Throughout a series of spontaneous and semi-spontaneous offensives the workers have each time run up against resistance better and better organized and they were flung back. They have understood and sensed that the prerequisite of success is a firm leadership, that one must know how to calculate and plan, that revolutionary strategy is indispensable. If the working masses no longer respond today to revolutionary slogans so directly as they did in 1918-19, it is not because they have become less revolutionary but because they are less naive and more exacting. They want organizational guarantees of victory.

Only that party will be able to lead them to decisive battles which reveals in practice, under all conditions and circumstances, not merely its readiness to fight, i.e., its courage, but also its ability to lead the masses in struggle, its capacity to maneuver in attack or in retreat, its skill in leading them out of the line of fire when a situation is unfavorable, its ability to combine all forces and means for a blow, and, in this way, systematically to enhance its influence and its authority over the masses. It is unquestionable that the parties of the Communist International have not by far given sufficient consideration to this task. Herein is the main source of tactical errors and internal crises among the various Communist parties.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

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

May 12, 1972

One of the key focuses of the African Liberation Day actions scheduled for Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Toronto, London, and the West Indies on May 27 is U.S. and NATO (North American Treaty Organization) complicity with Portugal's colonial wars in Africa. Portugal's colonial empire — the largest in Africa — includes Mozambique, Angola, and Portuguese Guinea-Bissau — Cape Verde Islands. The independence struggle taking place in Guinea-Bissau is one of the most advanced struggles within Black Africa.

Guinea-Bissau has a population of 600,000. Portugal claimed the area in 1886, but it took nearly 50 years of "pacification" campaigns against the Guinean people to effect full Portuguese control. This has left a rich heritage of resistance among the Guinean people.

Thousands of Portuguese youth have illegally left Portugal to escape the draft and the reactionary regime. Massive strikes against conscription shook Portugal's medical schools and universities in early 1971, even though such actions are illegal. Portugal's defense minister was forced to admit in the Jan. 18 *New York Times* that this dissent had affected the officer corps in Africa and had led to desertions (which have also been reported by the Cuban magazine *Tricontinental*.)

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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

May 10, 1947

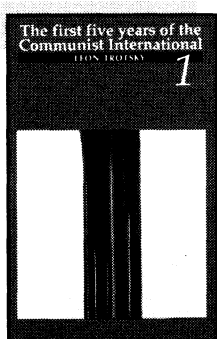
PARIS, France, Apr. 29 — More than 30,000 workers of the nationalized Renault auto plants struck today for a wage boost of 10 francs an hour (equivalent to about 4 cents on the black market). The strike movement began April 25. It was bitterly opposed by the Stalinist leadership of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). But as it spread despite their strikebreaking efforts, the Stalinist officials decided to issue a "cease work" order.

Around the plant gates, the strikers hold continuous discussions that are virtually mass meetings. Main targets of the speakers are the Stalinist CGT leadership and the policy of the Communist and Socialist parties in the coalition government, particularly the wage freeze and the phony price controls that have operated to the disadvantage of the workers. The Stalinists launched a campaign of violent abuse against the young militants who started the strike movement.

The strike leaders, however, have remained firm. On their proposal, the workers by secret ballot elected strike committees in all departments. In the noon mass meetings at the plant gates all shades of opinion were invited to take the microphone. Only the CGT leadership rejected this invitation issuing instead leaflets calling for a "back to work" movement.

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# U.S., UN hands off Zaire!

Headlines scream of "atrocities," "massacres," and "rapes," allegedly committed by the Congolese (Zairians). New York *Herald Tribune* reporter Patrick O'Donovan writes, "A Rhodesian official asked a refugee whether he had been forced to flee. He said yes. Asked why, he said he heard shooting. Asked where, he said on the other side of town. Asked what his occupation was, he said chief of police." Date: July 25, 1960.

"Refugee Massacres," "Machetes, Axes and Rebel Guns: Hutu Tell of Zairian Attacks," "The horror of the attacks is filtering from the jungle in the numbed minds and maimed bodies of the victims," "Maimed Victims Carry Tales of Slaughter," screech the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Date: April 30, 1997.

Same imperialists, same propaganda.

After the Congo (now Zaire) won its independence from Belgium in June 1960, Washington and its allies moved quickly to destabilize the new government headed by Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, who had been the leader of the independence struggle. In July 1960, Moise Tshombe began a war against the new regime by declaring the secession of the southern province of Katanga (today Shaba), with himself as president. Lumumba's government appealed to the United Nations for help, and UN troops were sent as "peacekeeping forces." The UN troops did not disarm the secessionists or keep the peace. Instead, they disarmed the legitimate government of Lumumba, backed the secessionists and Tshombe, and engineered the prime minister's execution.

In August 1960, the *Militant* reported that UN officials proclaimed their mission to be one of restoring "order" in the Congo. Under-Secretary Ralph Bunche instructed his staff "to pacify and then administer the Congo."

Today, O'Donovan and Bunche's successors in the ruling-class news rags, in Washington, and in the United Nations have stepped up their propaganda for intervention in Zaire. Special White House envoy William Richardson, the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, ventured to Zaire April 28. He is reportedly carrying a "message" from the U.S. president "offering" to help negotiate a "settlement leading to an inclusive transitional government." In other words, he is trying to make sure the new

government in Zaire includes figures whom Washington — along with the mine owners and other capitalists with big stakes in the region — prefers. Richardson himself has continued the propagation of "reports of massacres," declaring that "this must end."

Same imperialists, same propaganda.

The Alliance for Democratic Forces for the Liberation Congo/Zaire has denied allegations that they are responsible for killings in eastern Zaire, and the imperialists have no credible proof to offer. Washington is using the presence of hundred of thousands of Rwandan refugees in the area as a pretext for intervention — with troops poised on the borders and UN "rescue teams" gearing up for action. "The rebel alliance must bear responsibility for what happens to innocent people in the regions they occupy," warned State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

When Washington and the United Nations intervened in central Africa in 1960, it was not about "humanitarian aid" but about smashing the independence movement. It is clear today that they intend to do the same thing. Working people and youth should oppose any troops in Zaire — either under the auspices of Washington or the "peace-keeping" banner of the United Nations. The workers and peasants of Zaire need more political space — without the boot of imperialist troops — to be able to fight for a way forward out of the economic devastation and turmoil capitalism breeds. Workers the world over should celebrate the fact that the rebellion in Zaire is close to accomplishing its aim of kicking out the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko, whose brutal dictatorship Washington backed from 1964 until this year.

Cuban revolutionary leader, Ernesto Che Guevara explained that " 'Western civilization' disguises behind its showy facade a picture of hyenas and jackals. That is the only name that can be applied to those who have gone to fulfill such 'humanitarian' tasks in the Congo. A carnivorous animal that feeds on unarmed peoples. That is what imperialism does to men.... All free men of the world must be prepared to avenge the crime of the Congo."

The nature of the beast hasn't changed a bit in the three decades since. Hands off Zaire! No U.S. or UN troops in Zaire!

# Occupation force in Albania

Continued from Page 8

Fino government and its call for foreign imperialist intervention. "Every night there are one to three people killed," said Mrs. Diamante, who runs a cafe in the front part of her house. She spent several years as a domestic worker in Greece. "Berisha still wants to fight us, to drink the blood of the people. But we have confidence in Fino and the foreign troops." She is hoping for an SP victory in the elections.

A few people who had worked in Italy as immigrants and been deported went so far as to support annexation of the Vlore area into Italy. "We haven't accomplished anything by ourselves," said Robert. "Why not be part of a powerful, rich country like Italy, and be Italian?"

Most, though, expressed reserve and cautious optimism. Fotis Coulari, who worked in Greece as a furniture worker, said that the intervening powers were spending 6 million ECU to bring their armies here, while "the aid they promise us is 3 million ECU. If they come so that elections can take place they are accepted because Berisha will lose. If they support Berisha they will receive our bullets."

"Greece and Italy came here not to aid us but to steal,"

said Trifon, who had been a waiter on the Greek island of Mytelene. "If they give us food aid it's OK. If they support Berisha then it will be war."

Dimitri Streto, who spent three months in jail for campaigning for the Human Rights Union in the local elections last year that were rigged by Berisha, said that Greek, Italian, and other imperialist troops have come to Albania to "defend their own interests and not to guarantee that fair elections take place." He is a member of the Greek minority from the village of Arta outside of Vlore. His views were not popular with other rally participants.

Meanwhile on April 24, the European Parliament passed a resolution that leaves the door open for the postponement of the June 29 elections. One of the reasons given for the possible postponement is if the local governments that were seated after Berisha's fraudulent elections in 1996 are not restored.

The rebel's 28 committees, meeting in Vlore, continue to take initiatives to put pressure for the resignation of Berisha. Shyti reported that they were meeting April 25 to plan rallies and marches across Albania May 1 to demand the ousting of Berisha.

# Elections in Canada

Continued from Page 12

ing class.

On April 24, the Communist League decided to field four candidates across Canada: Michel Dugré and Victoria Mercier in Montreal, John Monuru in Toronto, and Roger Annis in Vancouver. All four are members of industrial unions and Mercier is a leader of the Young Socialists. The Young Socialists have voted to support the national election campaign of the Communist League.

The theme of the Communist League campaign is "No to the capitalists' war against workers at home and abroad." At the heart of the CL's campaign is support for Quebec independence, defense of social services, and the demand for the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Haiti and Yugoslavia. The CL candidates call for a single secular school system in Quebec, with French as the common language. They point to the example of revolutionary Cuba, which shows what a difference a government of workers and farmers makes. They and their supporters are actively involved in building a delegation from Canada to the World Festival of Youth and Students, which will take place in Cuba this summer.

The communist campaign champions the fight of small

farmers to defend the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board over the marketing of wheat and barley. This system allows farmers to get better prices for their products than if they were left at the mercy of the market. The CL puts forward the demand of a reduction of the workweek to 30 hours with no loss in pay as a way of fighting unemployment.

CL candidates with their supporters will join the mobilizations to keep Montfort Hospital in Ottawa, the only French-language hospital in Ontario, open and they are walking the picket lines with 10,000 union members on strike against the Safeway grocery chain in Alberta. They have taken a stand against the racist murders by the police in Toronto, who have recently killed Hugh Dawson and Edmond Yu. They will expose the antidemocratic real aim of the "anti-gang" law. And they will join those who are fighting the closure of nine hospitals in Toronto. In all of these fights, Communist League campaigners will offer fighters a class-struggle perspective by circulating the *Militant* and selling Pathfinder books.

Joe Young is a member of Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union Local 1103 in Montreal.

# Why vote Labour?

LONDON — Labour Party leader Anthony Blair has made clear that his government will continue to aggressively defend the interests of British imperialism. And yet where the Communist League is not standing candidates, the League has advised a vote for Labour. Isn't this contradictory, asks Ahmad Haight in a letter on page 15.

When millions of workers vote Labour, they do so in the hope that a future Labour government can be used as an instrument to advance their interests. One of the striking things about this election is how, despite Blair's insistence that workers should have no expectations from Labour in government, so many workers do.

In discussions with fellow workers, communists say: "You believe that a Labour government can be used to defend our interests. We don't. Let's test it out. Let's first agree on the program we need and that we must rely on our own struggles. Let's campaign together for the Communist League, the only candidates expressing that view. Then vote Labour where the League's not standing. History will show who's right about what a Labour government will do." So we "support" Labour like a rope supports a hanging man. The bigger the Labour majority the

# DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

better. With a small majority, the leadership and their left apologists will say, "We wanted to do more but the parliamentary balance of forces wouldn't allow it." We want the Labour leadership to have all the rope it needs.

Workers' expectations from and electoral support for Labour have deep historical roots. Over the course of decades in the last century, workers struggled through their unions to break with open capitalist parties and establish an independent mass political party to defend their interests: a party of labor. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels participated in this struggle.

This struggle gained impetus with the rise of "new unionism," when unskilled workers joined the ranks of organized labor. It resulted in the formation by the Trades Union Congress of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900. The LRC won the affiliation of about one-quarter of organized labor, but many founding delegates were Liberals and it won limited electoral support.

The transformation of the LRC into the Labour Party rested on the shoulders of the international class struggle — the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, which gave momentum to the struggle for class independence around the world. In 1906, Labour won 42 seats and formed its own parliamentary party. In 1918 the Labour Party adopted a constitution permitting individual membership and promising "common ownership of the means of production."

But Labour never expressed the interests of the working class. Although formed by the unions, its capitalist program and electoralist structure were determined by the union *bureaucracy*, a petty bourgeois layer bought off by the vast wealth of the British imperialism. The bureaucracy maintained its roots in the working class by resting on a relatively better off layer within the working class — Lenin called it the "labor aristocracy" — which, also the product of imperialist wealth, falsely identifies with the interests of its masters.

Built into the Labour Party from birth has thus been a struggle between the ranks of workers through their unions and the pro-capitalist leadership. Left-wing social democrats feed off this struggle, presenting themselves as an alternative to the conservative leaders. In 1925, Leon Trotsky wrote, "The working class will very probably be obliged to replace its leadership a number of times before a party would be born which truly corresponds to the historical situation and the tasks of the British proletariat."

How to be part of this struggle for a new leadership — neither abstaining from it nor adapting to the left reformists — has been an important challenge for communists in Britain. Tactics vary depending on the situation. For instance, under the urging of Lenin, the fledgling Communist Party campaigned for affiliation to the Labour Party. Its application was turned down but the fight educated many workers and won adherents to communism.

Political conditions are different today. One change is the fact that the Labour Party has formed the government five times, always showing itself to be a faithful servant of British capitalism. Another is the 100-year decline of British imperialism, limiting the room for the capitalist class to make concessions to the labor aristocracy.

Nonetheless, experience shows that a rise of working-class struggle invariably finds its reflection in a struggle inside the Labour Party. During the 1984-85 miners strike, for example, fighting workers sought to use the Labour Party to generalize their struggle and, both through their unions and as individual members, engaged in a sharp fight against the leadership. Communists in Britain were part of that struggle. Labour's union links are weaker today. Blair states that the "Labour Party is not the political arm of anybody today other than the British people."

But the links have not been broken. Some 4.1 million trade unionists pay a political levy as part of their union dues and are counted as Labour Party members. They have the right to vote in elections for party leader. Union officials carry 50 percent of votes at the Labour Party conference and control 12 out of 26 National Executive Committee seats. The unions account for 54 percent of Labour Party funding.

— JONATHAN SILBERMAN



# Leaks endanger safety at Tosco refineries

JIM GOTESKY

SAN FRANCISCO — Two chemical releases and a fire disrupted production at Tosco, Inc. in Los Angeles and Rodeo, California, in the first two weeks of April. Both refineries were purchased from Unocal April 1 as part of Tosco's takeover of Unocal's four California oil refining plants.

Flames erupted from a leaking pump seal April 4 at the Wilmington refinery near Los Angeles Harbor. The fire burned for more than two hours, shutting down the hydrocracking unit. The leak began more than three weeks earlier. Repairs were postponed by plant managers to build up gasoline inventories. Damage to the hydrocracker will idle the plant for several weeks.

Meanwhile, toxic smoke billowed from the Rodeo plant north of San Francisco twice on April 16. Early in the day shift, black smoke laden with hydrocarbon products spewed from the MP-30 unit for more than 10 minutes. Maintenance workers were evacuated from the unit.

Later that evening, beginning at 8:30 p.m., fire and smoke poured from two furnace stacks at the sulfur plant. For nearly four hours highly toxic hydrogen sulfide gas and sulfur dioxide drifted through the neighborhoods of Crockett, Hercules, and Richmond. Contra Costa County health officials asserted that the release did not pose a health risk, although exposure to the chemicals released could exacerbate existing respiratory problems. Many residents complained of headaches, runny noses and stomach aches.

All three incidents came on the heels of an April 1 concession labor agreement imposed on refinery operators and maintenance workers employed at the former Unocal facilities. The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) members narrowly ratified a five-year statewide contract under a company threat to close the Rodeo plant and contract out maintenance work at the other three plants. The new agreement allowed Tosco to reduce plant staffing in all four plants by 15 percent and eliminate the fire and safety departments.

Plant workers are concerned about the impact on safety of the job cuts. Many wonder whether the refinery can be run safely with fewer operators. Operations and maintenance workers at the Rodeo facility have been working 12 hour days for the last two months covering lost jobs and staffing round the clock shutdown maintenance.

A refinery maintenance worker who lives near the Rodeo facility, and asked that his name not be used, said, "This is just the tip of the iceberg. We don't get a say for 5 years. Tosco says they will listen to us in 1998 on local issues, but what leverage do we have with a no strike clause? This is serious. If they can get away a 15 percent cut in the workforce, then they will take 10 percent more until something happens!"

Community residents are upset as well. Initial media reports indicated that 6,000 residents were urged to take shelter during the hydrogen-sulfide and sulfur-dioxide release. However, later reports revealed that it took Tosco more than 20 minutes to de-

cide to notify Contra Costa County health officials about the release. The emergency alert network had only reached 1,336 residents by 9:57 p.m., 90 minutes after the incident began.

Kasha Kessler, a Crockett resident, explained, "That siren was a wake-up call for community residents. We all smell odors coming from the refinery, but no one ever calls to say what we've been exposed to. So, most of us just go about our business. The siren connected these experiences with the real threat they pose."

She added, "I'm not pleased with the 45 minutes it took to notify me about the release.... With Tosco, we've gone from the

frying pan into the fire. To stop this you have to have criminal indictments!" According to Kessler, community residents plan to meet and discuss further action against Tosco.

Pressure on public officials to demand corrective action from Tosco is growing. Contra Costa Board of Supervisors member Jim Rogers told the San Francisco *Chronicle* that he plans to ask the Board to subpoena Tosco employees to testify in public sessions about the January fire that killed one worker at Tosco's plant in Martinez, California, as well as the recent leak.

*Jim Gotesky is a member of OCAW Local 1-326 at Unocal in Rodeo, California.*

## Racist jury system exposed in Philadelphia

BY NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA — Media disclosure in early April of a 10-year-old training tape for city prosecutors has lifted a corner on the racist and anti-working-class nature of this country's judicial system. Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham — running for reelection and under fire for racist comments and practices — released a videotape that her Republican opponent Jack McMahon made while a homicide prosecutor a decade ago.

In the tape McMahon advises rookie prosecutors how to proceed during jury selection. The law states the purpose is to get a competent, fair and impartial jury, he notes. "Well, that's ridiculous," he declares on tape. "You're not trying to get that.... The only way you're going to do your best is to get jurors that are unfair, and more likely to convict than anybody else in that room."

In pursuit of that end, McMahon's counsel includes the following:

- "The Blacks from the low-income areas are less likely to convict," he says. ".... And as a result, you don't want those people on your jury." He later recommends avoiding all-white juries, but suggests opting for a few older Black men, preferably from the South.
- "[Y]oung Black women are very bad," he pronounces. "There's an antagonism. I guess maybe because they're downtrodden in two respects. They are women, and they're Black."
- Avoid smart people, he says. "Because

smart people will analyze the hell out of your case.... They take those words 'reasonable doubt' and they actually try to think about them. You don't want those people. You don't want people who are going to think it out."

• He also cautions against social workers ("intelligence, sensitivity, all this stuff") and teachers ("bad, especially young teachers").

McMahon even suggests to look at the books jurors bring to court. "If they're reading Karl Marx, you know you don't want this person."

McMahon won jury convictions in 36 murder cases while he was assistant district attorney. In his own defense after the tape was revealed, McMahon declared, "Every lawyer in the world uses these techniques." And in fact, three Common Pleas Court judges told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, on the condition of anonymity, that the techniques described in the videotape are routinely employed by the District Attorney's office, as well as by defense attorneys.

According to John Ackerman, a former dean of the National College of Criminal Defense, "If you looked at the training tapes of virtually every prosecutor's office in America, you'd find roughly the same type of thing."

Reaction to the tape's disclosure was swift from politicians here — not to condemn McMahon for his trampling of the U.S. Constitution and its guarantee to a public trial by an impartial jury, but to take Abraham to task for her crude campaigning.

Part of McMahon's counterattack charged Abraham with "victimizing African American defendants" in her handling of the 39th Police District scandal. In that public revelation that began two years ago, eight police officers pleaded guilty to corruption charges, including framing, robbing, and beating drug suspects and perjuring themselves in court. So far, 293 criminal cases have been thrown out by judges because those charged were arrested by one or more of the eight cops.

A couple of years ago the *New York Times Magazine* ran a major article on Abraham called, "The Deadliest D.A.," subtitled, "the Capital of Capital Punishment." It noted that unlike other cities in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia prosecutors file a notice to seek the death penalty in virtually every homicide case where there are "aggravating circumstances." What this means in practice is that prosecutors get a "death qualified" jury — every juror must say they are willing to impose the death penalty. Attorneys in capital cases also get 20 peremptory challenges — striking potential jurors for no stated reason — instead of the usual seven.

The article quoted former homicide prosecutor Michael McGovern saying, "Minorities tend to say much more often than they are opposed to the death penalty. Prosecutors are aware of that. A lot of Latinos and Blacks will be lost on these questions."

*Nancy Cole is a member of the International Association of Machinists.*

## LETTERS

### Why vote for UK Labour?

"UK gov't announces May 1 election" is an excellent article by Jonathan Silberman that appeared in the issue number 14 of *Militant*. He explains how "broader sections of the ruling class have looked to the Labour Party under Anthony Blair to provide temporary respite from the Tory crisis." He continues to explain that "over the last few years, Blair has taken advantage of the retreat of the labor movement to shift the Labour Party significantly to the right" with some facts that the Labour "government will stick to the limits on public spending decided by the Conservative Party...."

It is very encouraging that the Communist League in Britain is going "to launch an election campaign that would provide an independent working-class voice" with two candidates who are industrial workers. The article concludes "the League urged people in British constituencies where no Communist League candidate is standing to nonetheless involve themselves in the League's campaigning; on election day it advised them to vote Labour."

The conclusion seems to contradict the general line of the article. I am confident that the Communist League has a good reason why working people should vote Labour. However, it is very important that the Communist League in Britain explain this.

Without an explanation it appears the league is contradicting itself, which could bring confusion among working people and militant fight-

ers around the world.  
*Ahmad Haghighat*  
*Toronto, Ontario*

### Iowa farmers rally

On March 20, National Agriculture Day, a rally was held in Clive, Iowa, a suburb of Des Moines, by supporters of family farms. The rally included a performance by country music star Willie Nelson, and grilled meat produced by small independent farmers. The event was sponsored by a consortium of farm groups opposed to "factory farms," the large scale agribusiness methods of hog and egg production.

Nelson responded to a letter from Alice Ginter, a Rhodes, Iowa, farmer in her 80s, which explained the purpose of the protest and asked Nelson to speak and sing at the rally. Ginter's son, Larry, is a leader of the movement to defend family farmers and oppose the environmental devastation created by factory farms.

A protest was held at the National Pork Producers' headquarters, where a list of demands was presented. A sign was mockingly planted in front of the "National Pork Producers' sign, reading "National Factory Farms Council." The sign more accurately highlights their real agenda, according to rally organizers.

The spirited crowd demanded first that the National Pork Produc-

ers stop spying on family farm groups. In a scandal that received national attention in the agriculture world recently, the Pork Producers Council reportedly hired an independent firm to spy on the activities of pro-family farm groups such as Missouri Rural Crisis Center and others.

The rally demanded the Pork Producers stop supporting policies favorable to large agribusiness operators, such as the notorious De Coster Farms (recently fined by Iowa authorities for environmental abuses), over small to medium sized family farms. Another demand included ending the mandatory Pork Producers "checkoff," making it voluntary instead. Now, each time

a small pork producer sells a hog, a portion of the money goes to the Pork Producers Council, whose policies, rally organizers claim, are helping put small farmers out of business.

*Bob Peters*  
*Des Moines, Iowa*

### City officials attack rights

In the aftermath of the successful anti-Klan action held here on April 5, the city administration has continued its attacks on democratic rights.

City Councilwoman Valerie McDonald, who is Black, proposed that the Ku Klux Klan be billed for the tens of thousands of dollars it

cost the city to close parts of downtown, erect fences, and pay for the hundreds of heavily armed police it used to "protect" the Klan. When Mayor Thomas Murphy agreed to pursue this idea, the head of the Klan responded that his group didn't request the fencing and police, and if anyone should pay it should be the anti-Klan demonstrators.

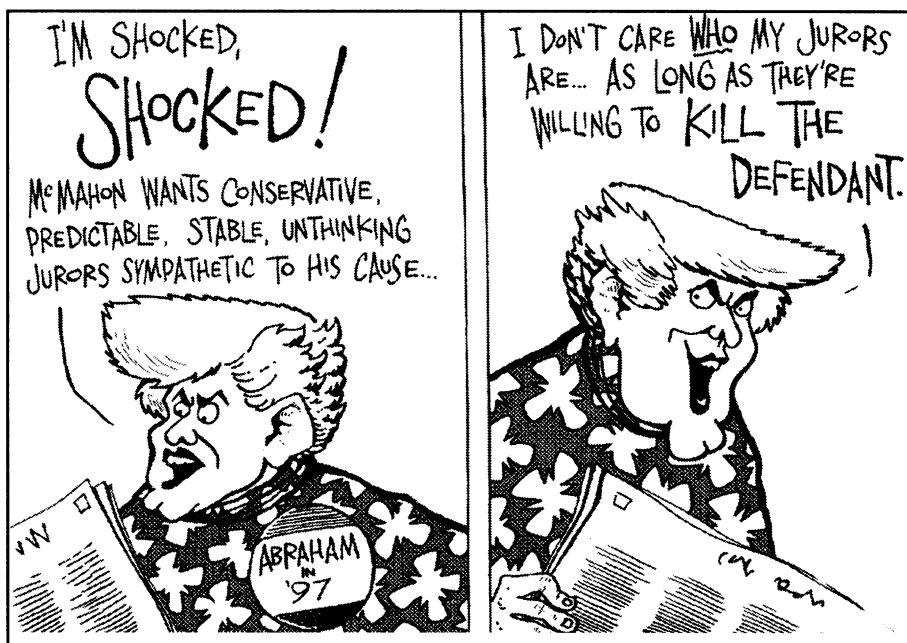
In a related development, the American Civil Liberties Union is challenging the city's policy of charging groups for police patrols at special events.

The Three Rivers Pride Committee was charged \$1,900 for police services for annual gay pride events in 1995 and 1996 and want to do a similar event this June without being charged.

On April 18, as a result of police being assigned to a "Take Back the Night" demonstration in downtown Pittsburgh, the city charged the sponsoring organization, "Pittsburgh Action Against Rape," \$25 per hour per police officer.

*Edwin Fruit*  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

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



## Sinn Fein campaigns for free Ireland

BY TIM RIGBY  
AND PETE CLIFFORD

MONAGHAN, Republic of Ireland — "Change there will be. Negotiations there will be. And Sinn Fein will be there," Martin McGuinness told the more than 700 delegates and observers at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (conference) held here on April 21. Sinn Fein is the nationalist party that is in the forefront of the struggle to end British rule in the north of Ireland.

Three days prior to the Ard Fheis, two bomb explosions and a series of warnings disrupted road and rail transport in much of northern England. In the days after the Ard Fheis, similar warnings hit London. British prime minister John Major condemned the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which claimed responsibility for the disruption. Labour Party leader Anthony Blair proclaimed the main parties would "not be diverted from their election campaigns," which have all tried to avoid the question of Ireland.

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams refused to join this chorus, instead blaming Major for breaking the opportunity of the last few years to "bring this all to an end." Adams was referring to London's refusal to call all-party talks on the future of Ireland involving Sinn Fein.

The Ard Fheis was timed to take advantage of the electoral opportunities that Sinn Fein faces. The UK general election is to be held on May 1. Local council elections are scheduled for May 23 in northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland general election, yet to be called, is expected in June or July. Caoimhghin O'Caolain, a Sinn Fein local councilor in Monaghan, just south of the border with the British-occupied six counties of northern Ireland, is one of two Sinn Fein candidates for the Irish Dail (parliament), with a chance of electoral success.

### Sinn Fein candidates stand in elections

In the six counties of northern Ireland, three of Sinn Fein's candidates — Gerry Adams in West Belfast, Martin McGuinness in Mid-Ulster, and Pat Doherty in West Tyrone — have a chance of topping the poll. These elections, Sinn Fein leader McGuinness said, "present us with an opportunity to take our message and analysis of the political situation to the electorate." He stated that "a strong mandate for Sinn Fein will reverberate throughout the corridors of power in Dublin, London, and Washington, as well as in European capitals."

McGuinness announced that if elected, Sinn Fein members of the next UK parliament would "travel regularly to London to increase the pressure on the new British government to engage in genuinely inclusive and substantive negotiations." Sinn Fein is not going to break with its policy of abstaining from taking seats in the Westminster parliament, which it argues has no authority to govern the north of Ireland. The party does plan to open an office in London, itself a new departure. Many Sinn Fein leaders have in the past been banned from the British capital.

These reporters were able to accompany a Sinn Fein campaigning team in the New Lodge area of North Belfast for the afternoon of Saturday, April 19. Accompanying Gerard Kelly, the Sinn Fein candidate for the North Belfast constituency, between 20 and 30 campaigners swept down the streets — leafleting, knocking on doors, arranging callbacks for undecided voters, and joining Kelly on doorstep discussions. Campaign organizer Martina McIlkenny said that day several other teams of a similar size were out around the area. She said they expect to have campaign teams up to 100 people nearing election day.

A key component of the Sinn Fein electoral campaign is the political fight with the reformist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) to become the dominant voice of the nationalist community. In the elections to the Northern Ireland Forum last May, Sinn Fein gained its highest electoral results, winning 16 percent of the total vote

and 40 percent of the pro-nationalist vote. Many backed Sinn Fein for the first time, frustrated that despite 18 months of an IRA cease-fire London had continued to exclude Sinn Fein from talks.

While Sinn Fein activists are determined to see a rise in the Sinn Fein vote for Kelly, they predicted the refusal of the SDLP to make an electoral pact with Sinn Fein, allowing the single Unionist (pro-British) candidate to win the seat.

The sharpest divisions, though, are amongst the Unionists. The London-based *Economist* magazine reports they are "bitterly at odds about whether to negotiate with nationalists of any party." McGuinness explained to the Ard Fheis that the Unionists fear negotiation "because they know to agree to negotiate is to admit the need for change, and to admit the need for change is to end the status quo."



Sinn Fein candidate Gerard Kelly campaigning in Belfast April 19. Inset, Catholic houses deserted after arson attacks by loyalist rightists in summer of 1996.

The Unionist crisis is fueled by turbulence inside the Orange Order over this year's marches. The Orange Order is a rightist group that stages provocative marches through Catholic neighborhoods aimed at terrorizing the nationalist population. Last year, after a July 12 assault by these rightists at Drumcree — followed by a police and army attack on nationalist residents — organizations opposed to the marches mushroomed across the six counties and gained the moral high ground in their fight to reroute the parades.

This year, Orange Order leaders have retreated from several marches planned through Catholic areas prior to the election and held talks with residents groups. Although David Trimble, head of the Ulster

Unionist Party, and Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist Party have proclaimed that the Drumcree march will take place this year, both accuse each other of betraying Unionism and have been unable to maintain their electoral bloc for the May 30 local elections. Despite this crisis of Unionism, Sinn Fein president Adams stressed, "Bypassing the Unionists is not an option



for us. Our option is dialogue."

The election in the six counties of northern Ireland is being fought out against a background of arson attacks on Catholic schools and churches, retaliatory burning of Orange Order meeting halls, and violence against the homes of Catholic families. Some 48 churches, 71 schools, and 44 meeting halls have been torched in the past 16 months, along with many houses.

### Series of attacks on Catholics

The overwhelming majority of these attacks have been directed against Catholics. A system of relative privileges for Protestants and second-class status for Catholics has been a pillar of maintaining British rule in northern Ireland.

*Militant* reporters visited Limestone Road in North Belfast where on the weekend of April 12-13 — with 17 police and army personnel carriers full of riot squads looking on — a loyalist gang of 200 drove eight Catholic families out of their homes. This attack followed days of feuding on the streets between members of two rightist organizations, the Ulster Defence Association, and the Ulster Volunteer Force, in a fight for local supremacy.

At the Ard Fheis, Martin McGuinness stressed how retaliatory attacks are "the antithesis of republicanism." The next day the *Irish Times* reported a claim by David Ervine, leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, that the attacks on Protestant churches and businesses were the work of dissidents from his party trying to stir up an anti-Catholic backlash.

Apprehension about the marching season and Drumcree this year runs deep. In the Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast, residents leader Gerard Rice explained that in the nearby Sandy Row, a loyalist area, huge bonfires which are traditionally lit on July 12 to burn effigies of the Pope are already being prepared. The *Belfast Telegraph* reports that ferry bookings out of northern Ireland are already 40 percent up for the July 12 week, as many plan to take a holiday to avoid the marches.

But the apprehension is more than matched by nationalist determination. Rice reported that nationalist residents groups would soon embark on their first speaking tour of North America.

The loyalist attacks have been mirrored by an increase in British Army assaults on Catholics. Phyllis Doherty, from the predominantly Catholic Ardoyne neighborhood, explained how her area had seen several army raids in the days following the loyalist attacks on Limestone Road. The April 19 *Observer* newspaper reported the recent shooting in Mid-Ulster of two young men by "army agents dressed in plainclothes and baseball caps."

In south Armagh, five young men were arrested April 10 by heavily armed plainclothes British soldiers. Three of the detainees were severely beaten. The lawyer for Martin McGinn, one of those arrested, listed the injuries inflicted by the soldiers. "His eyes, his nose, his right ear, which required stitches, his head, which needed staples, his right shoulder, right arm, lower back, and knees were affected." At the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis, a special announcement was made appealing to participants to join with the families of those assaulted to protest this attack.

*Tim Rigby is the Communist League candidate for Manchester Central. Pete Clifford is a member of the Rail and Maritime Trade union.*

## French president calls early elections

BY IAN GRANT

LONDON — In a move aimed at strengthening the hand of the rulers to launch another round of assaults on working people, President Jacques Chirac announced that elections to the French legislative assembly will take place May 25 and June 1, nearly one year early.

The ruling coalition of the Union for French Democracy (UDF) and Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) parties currently holds a large majority in the French parliament. Nevertheless, attempts by the French rulers to inflict harsh austerity measures have met with determined resistance.

In November and December of 1995, a huge social movement organized strike actions which derailed the "Juppé plan." Named after French Prime minister Alain Juppé, this raft of government policies aimed to claw back social welfare and other gains won by workers in struggle. A year later, truck drivers won retirement at 55 and other concessions through militant actions.

Their victory has prompted other fights.

Meanwhile, there has been a shift to the right in capitalist politics, including those of the Communist Party (CP) and the Socialist Party (SP). This has opened ground to the fascist National Front, headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, which is being tipped to poll 14 percent of the vote.

Despite the unpopularity of his government, by calling elections now Chirac hopes to consolidate a reliable legislative body, albeit with a reduced majority for his coalition. Its five year term of office would remove the obligation of holding another national election until 2002, when his presidential term also expires.

The *Financial Times* of London described Chirac's move as a "huge political gamble," but commented, "It would also free the government from worries that it might need to implement an unpopular new package of austerity measures to ensure France's qualification [for European Monetary Union (EMU)] just ahead of elections originally

due in March 1998."

"Another victory for the centre-right could speed up the sorely needed overhaul of France's economy," commented the April 26 *Economist*. What the *Economist* cited as Paris's "grander vision of France in Europe" is also viewed as a plus by the bosses, who are looking to better utilize French military muscle and its position as a nuclear power in competition with rivals in London, Bonn, and Washington.

The response of the opposition French SP has been to reject the economic criteria demanded by Bonn for Monetary Union as "dogma," and demand that the EMU "counterbalance American domination and favor growth and jobs." The SP will aim to forge an alliance with the French CP around the elections on this basis. SP leader Lionel Jospin claims Socialist policies will offer "less brutal, more protective" change.

*Ian Grant is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in London.*