

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Pathfinder books snapped up at Tehran Book Fair

— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Clinton pushes deploying NATO troops near Russia

Paris accord is part of U.S. drive to destroy workers state

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"Russia's transition to democracy and open markets is as difficult as it is dramatic," said U.S. president William Clinton as he signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act May 27 in Paris. After six months of negotiations, Clinton launched a tour of Europe to seal the agreement.

In signing the accord, Clinton declared, "NATO will promote greater stability in all of Europe, including Russia." In fact the opposite is true. The NATO agreement reflects a shift in Washington's policy since the early 1990s, when substantial layers of the capitalist class in the United States, Germany, and other imperialist countries hoped the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would open the door to reestablishing capitalist property relations and imperialist domination in that region. As their initial euphoria has worn off, it is becoming clear to growing layers in the imperialist ruling circles that they will have to use military might to accomplish this goal. That's what expanding the NATO alliance eastward toward the Russian workers state is aimed at.

Standing at the lectern in the Élysée Palace during the signing ceremony Russian president Boris Yeltsin declared, "I'll be frank and honest with you... Russia still views negatively the expansion plans of NATO." He said the agreement poses an



U.S. troops land in Bosnia, December 1995. NATO occupation of Yugoslavia was built on blood and bones of thousands of working people there, after three-year war Washington helped fuel. Yugoslavia invasion shows what Clinton has in mind for Russia.

"obligation to nondeploy on a permanent basis NATO's combat forces near Russia."

In fact, while the accord states that NATO has "no intention, no plan, and no reason" to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of prospective members — Poland, Hun-

gary, and the Czech Republic — or build military bases there, it leaves the door open to do so if the imperialists deem necessary.

In a supposed good-will gesture, Yeltsin announced that "all nuclear warheads aimed

Continued on Page 7

## Imperialists scramble for Congo investments

BY MEGAN ARNEY

Since early March capitalists ranging from mining companies to timber, hydro-electric, and agricultural barons have been courting the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL), which assumed power May 17 following the ouster of the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko. As the businessmen meet with the new Congolese government, Washington and other imperialist governments are striving to ensure a stable, pliant administration in Kinshasa.

Mwana Mawampanga, now the new finance minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo, met with 25 investment bankers and fund managers from Canada, the United States, Europe, and South Africa May 10-11. "What we want to do is make sure investors make a profit," he announced.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Mawampanga was well received by the businessmen. But the paper complained that the rebel leaders "talk about free markets and responsible economic management in a land full of mineral riches.... But beyond the broad-brush concept, there has been nothing. No details. No plans."

John Loewen, a mining analyst who was

Continued on Page 8

## Armed clashes spread in Albania

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — Clashes between police forces loyal to Albanian president Sali Berisha and armed workers who have rebelled against his "market reforms" and demand his ousting are becoming widespread in Albania. The pro-capitalist president — encouraged by the deployment of 6,500 troops from Italy, Greece, France, and other countries in Albania — has unleashed heavily armed cop units and paramilitary goon squads in southern Albania, the hotbed of the revolt, to terrorize the population and press for the dissolution of rebel councils. But the pro-Berisha thugs are meeting resistance and their actions raise the specter of a larger explosion.

On May 22, working people in Cerrik protested the decision of the town's mayor to appoint a new chief of police who is loyal to Berisha. The previous day in that small city 50 kilometers south of Tirana, the country's capital, armed rebels prevented Berisha from holding an election rally there.

Unable to stop the protests by using the outnumbered cops, Berisha sent to Cerrik a heavily armed police unit from Tirana on May 23. Working people successfully defended themselves. In the armed clashes that ensued, five cops were killed and many others wounded. The police were forced to flee back to Tirana. Prime Minister Bashkim Fino of the opposition Socialist Party (SP) warned that "criminal acts will be severely dealt with no matter which side commits them." The armed rebels continue to guard the streets and have set up barricades in all of the town's entrances expecting another cop assault.

The attack on Cerrik was part of the efforts of the government of "national reconciliation" — which includes Berisha's Democratic Party, the SP, and other smaller

opposition groups — to quell the armed popular rebellion that erupted in February.

Working people took up arms, forcing the army to dissolve, after "pyramid schemes" collapsed in January financially ruining hundreds of thousands of workers who had been lured by the regime to deposit their life savings in these fraudulent investment funds. Berisha tried to crush the protests by force, sparking the armed rebellion and losing control of half the country within weeks. To save his skin, Berisha then dissolved the cabinet and invited the SP to join a new coalition

government. Fino, the new premier and a Socialist Party leader, subsequently collaborated with the president in opening the door to the imperialist powers to invade and deploy their forces in several cities throughout the country. The imperialist troops, especially those from Italy, are now aiding Berisha to engineer a political comeback.

The Democratic Party and the SP represent competing layers of the bureaucratic caste that has ruled Albania for decades.

The Committees for the Salvation of the People, born in the heat of the rebellion, re-

Continued on Page 10

## Build SWP convention

Over the next ten days, socialist workers who are members of industrial unions and the Young Socialists are focusing their energies on getting fellow unionists, working farmers, and rebel-minded youth to attend the 39th convention of the Socialist Workers Party (see ad below). We urge all interested readers of the *Militant* to join the effort. Anyone who would like to attend can contact party supporters at the locations listed on page 8.

## EDITORIAL

Convention delegates will discuss the politically explosive tendencies in a world marked by economic depression — a world where Washington increasingly uses military power to strengthen its competitive position against its imperialist rivals and attempts to destroy the remaining working-class conquests made possible by the Russian revolution of October 1917.

Delegates will discuss the resistance to this course by working people around the world, including the vanguard example of the socialist revolution in Cuba and the current social rebellion that has erupted in Argentina.

Reports and discussion will take up the increased opportunities today to get communist ideas to a broader audience of fighting workers and youth, and to recruit many of them to the communist movement. Delegates will draw a balance of the experiences of communist workers in strengthening their activity in the unions and in attracting politically active youth toward the revolutionary workers movement.

The big majority of delegates and guests will be workers and youth actively involved

Continued on Page 10

### Building a Party of Socialist Workers and the Young Socialists

Come to the 39th Convention of the Socialist Workers Party

June 11-14, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio

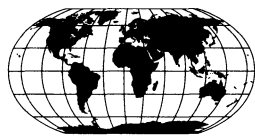
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Social events



If you want to attend, contact party supporters nearest you. See listings on page 8.

Thousands protest against fascist in Australia — page 4



## Thousands rebel against Jakarta crackdown on democratic rights

Protesting the government ban of bourgeois opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri and her supporters in the upcoming Indonesia elections, and a general crackdown on democratic rights, more than 5,000 people took to the streets of Jakarta May 23. Some demonstrators hurled rocks at government buildings, burned piles of tires, damaged cars, and smashed windows.

The government responded by deploying 20,000 cops, who fired live ammunition and launched tear gas at the crowds, killing at least 80 people. Police seized video tapes and film taken by journalists showing gangs of cops beating young Indonesian protesters. The Associated Press said the "riot" began with confrontations between supporters of the Golkar party — now in power — and those supporting the opposition.

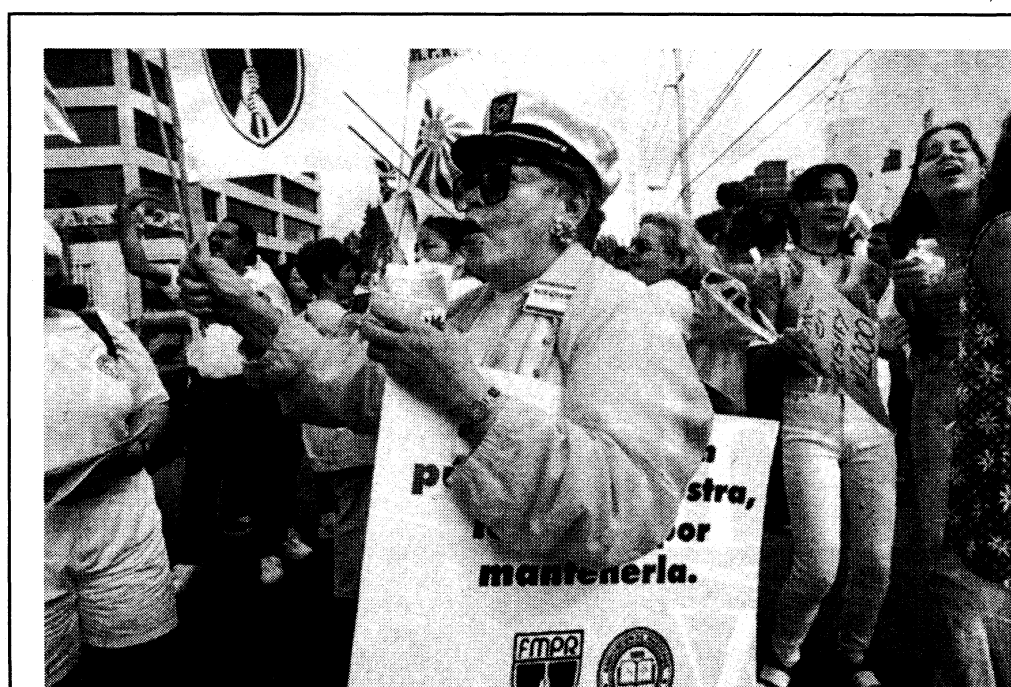
## Tel Aviv proposes housing freeze

After several weeks of sustained protests from Palestinians, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu proposed a temporary freeze on the disputed 6,500-unit Zionist housing project on captured Palestinian land in Jerusalem, Channel 1 television in Jerusalem reported May 23. Netanyahu made the proposal at a meeting with an Egyptian government official in preparation for a May 27 summit with Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. Egyptian foreign minister Amr Moussa said that an unconditional six-month suspension of Israeli settlements was necessary to end the stalemate on the "peace talks" that hit an impasse when the Zionist regime cleared the ground for the apartments in March.

Meanwhile, Palestinian youth hurled stones May 22 at Israeli soldiers who fired tear gas and rubber bullets to break up their funeral protest of a Palestinian beaten to death in a hospital by Israeli cops. Palestinian doctors in Bethlehem found three broken ribs and a broken hand from an autopsy on the man, who the cops claim broke his metal handcuffs and went on a rampage in the hospital.

## Storm devastates Bangladesh

On May 19 a hurricane decimated the



Hundreds of teachers from two main teachers unions, along with students took to the streets in mid-May to reject Puerto Rican Dept. of Education's "Project for Developing a Bilingual Citizen," an attempt to impose the teaching of math, science, and other subjects in English. "I will refuse" attempts to impose English classes, said math teacher Digna Irizarry. "I'm Puerto Rican, I speak Spanish."

homes of those living on the southern coast of Bangladesh. A 125-mile-an-hour cyclone leveled 400,000 mud and thatched roofed houses, leaving close to a million people homeless. Up to 500 people are believed dead, with 1,500 missing.

In 1991, some 138,000 people were killed in Bangladesh's worst cyclone disaster. Just before the recent storm hit, nearly 500,000 people were moved from their to concrete cyclone shelters built after the 1991 catastrophe.

## Turkish troops kill 1,300 Kurds

Some 20,000 Turkish troops in tanks and U.S.-made fighter jets penetrated Iraq's northern border in mid-May, slaughtering 1,300 Kurdish independence fighters in the first week of fighting. Kurdish rebels report taking down 64 Turkish troops, while Ankara admits to only 14 casualties. UN sec-

retary general Kofi Annan called for international pressure on Ankara to withdraw its soldiers. Kurds in northern Iraq and southern Turkey have been fighting for self-determination for decades. Various imperialist powers have tried to influence factions in this struggle to justify intervention in the region.

## Dominican sugar workers strike

Demanding a 60 percent wage increase and access to free medical care, 30,000 sugar cane workers in the Dominican Republic laid down their machetes May 22. The one-day strike halted operation at eight state-run sugar plantations and at four other repair facilities run by the State Sugar Council. Santo Domingo had promised workers health benefits before, but never provided them. The Sugar Council owes \$21.5 million to the Dominican Social Security Institute, which manages most public health clinics there.

According to a recent United Nations report, diseases ranging from AIDS to uterine cancer are extremely high on the sugar plantations, due to poor sanitation and working conditions. Most of the sugar cane workers earn only \$180 a month on the Caribbean isle and can seldom afford medical treatment.

## Ottawa halts U.S. fishing talks

After years of unresolved disputes, the Canadian government suspended negotiations with Washington May 20 on dividing the salmon catch in the Pacific Northwest. Ottawa also says it will enforce restrictions

on U.S. vessels traveling through its waters. The Fisheries Department in Canada warns that vessels violating the restrictions "can be inspected, required to go to a Canadian port, or face arrest." Ottawa charged that U.S. officials did not come to the talks ready to compromise. U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns denied the charge.

## Clinton gov't attacks immigrant rights

The Clinton administration is moving to revoke the citizenship of 4,946 naturalized immigrants. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) audited the 1 million people who became U.S. citizens between September 1995 and September 1996. Assistant Attorney General Stephen Colgate said based on that audit, he will try to revoke citizenship from those who supposedly gave inaccurate or falsified evidence. The laws say some convicted felons can be denied citizenship, but that lying under oath is not grounds for deportation.

Of the nearly 5,000 people affected, only 296 were convicted of felonies. The rest allegedly failed to indicate felony arrests or convictions on misdemeanor charges. The INS has recently streamlined "denaturalization" procedures. Instead of being presented before a judge, an INS official now decides these cases. Only at that point can an immigrant request an appeal before a federal court.

## Texas holds execution record

The state of Texas is on a course toward breaking the record for executions in one year. The current largest number of state-sanctioned murder is 19. Seven people will be executed in May alone. Texas prison officials boast that their high rate of capital punishment was made possible through a ruling of the Court of Criminal Appeals, who enforced a new state law, making appeals quicker. There are 453 men and women prisoners on Texas death row.

## Pollution made into a commodity

The New York state government recently began issuing "pollution credits," which give legal permission to emit a certain volume of pollution. The credits are now bought and sold on the capitalist market. Companies that have good emissions records are given credits. Companies that are not willing to bring their release of byproducts and toxins in line with legal emission standards can simply buy the difference. Credits are generally sold for between \$150,00 and \$450,000 in upstate New York, while they can be priced at ten times that amount in New York City. Now the government is offering companies free pollution credits to set up shop in the state.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

# THE MILITANT

## Class struggle in Argentina

*A wave of social explosions have erupted across Argentina, answering the government's austerity measures and protesting unemployment and police brutality. The 'Militant' follows the class struggle in Argentina as it unfolds. Don't miss a single issue!*



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# Acadians in Canada fight for their rights

BY JOE YOUNG

CARAQUET, New Brunswick — Resistance has broken out against school closures in Acadian communities in New Brunswick, an eastern province in Canada. The response of the provincial government has been violent attacks by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) riot squad.

The Acadians are an oppressed French-speaking nationality numbering about 250,000 out of a total population of 724,000 in New Brunswick. Acadia was conquered by the British empire from France in 1710. In 1755 there was a massive deportation of the Acadians primarily to the American colonies as the rulers grabbed their lands.

Throughout their history the Acadians have had to fight for the right to have schools and other institutions in their language and under their control. While the province was declared officially bilingual in 1981, the struggle continues to this day.

The highest levels of unemployment are in the Acadian areas of the province, at times rising to 25 percent in the Acadian peninsula in north east New Brunswick. The recent moves by the federal government to make it harder for seasonal workers to get unemployment insurance have hit Acadian workers particularly hard. Some 49 percent of the population in non-Acadian areas of the province have attended post-secondary schools, while in Acadian areas the percentage is only 41.2.

A *Militant* reporting team visited parents fighting to keep their primary schools open at Saint Simon and Saint Sauveur, both situated in the Acadian peninsula. The team met with Mireille Manuel, the president of the Saint Simon parents committee; Vice President Denise Mallet; Secretary Isabelle Léger; as well as Thérèse Albert, president of the Saint Sauveur defense committee, and Monique Ferron, the former president.

In New Brunswick, the provincial government is proposing to close 18 schools this fall as a way to save money. In the case of Saint Simon, this means busing children a distance of up to 27 kilometers (1.6 km=1 mile) to a school in Bas-Caraquet. At Saint Sauveur, the province is closing a school for 80 children built only ten years ago. The students will be bused to Allardville, which in some cases will involve a trip of 25 km.

There are important stakes for the survival of the Acadian communities in keeping the schools open. At the end of a leaflet distributed by the parents committee in Saint Simon there are the following words in bold letters: "AWAKE ACADIAN PEOPLE. TO SAVE OUR SCHOOL, OUR COMMUNITY, OUR HERITAGE."

A May 20 press release by the defense committee in Saint Sauveur states, "We are accused of being violent. We don't agree. We are simply demanding our rights as parents concerning what affects the education of our children. The decision to close our school and several others will influence families to move to or near the towns where there is a school. That means a massive deportation that will leave behind it half empty communities, which will finally disappear from the map of New Brunswick."

Since the beginning of the year, the parents have organized demonstrations including blocking roads, school boycotts, and meetings. There have been several meetings with Minister of Education James Lockyer, and other government representatives, with

no results.

The provincial government sought to crush the movement with violent assaults by the RCMP riot squad. On the evening of May 2, after another meeting with Lockyer, the defense committee in Saint Sauveur held a meeting of 350 out of 987 inhabitants at the school to report on the refusal of the minister to back down. The families present decided to demonstrate on highway 160, a road that goes through the village and is only used by local people. After leaving the school, they were assaulted by the riot squad using tear gas, dogs, and clubs.

The protesters were forced back into the school and only allowed to leave with their hands behind their heads. Ferron described the scene, "When I was at the window [of the school] and I watched, it was how I felt when I watched the Gulf War on the television but it was going on in our community — balls of fire, booms, then shouts. That was what was happening."

Two days later in Saint Simon, the cops launched a similar attack resulting in 13 arrests and some people being hospitalized. Léger described one police attack. "There was a young person, 15-years-old," she said, "whom the police pulled out of a car. Then there were two dogs who were biting him while the police clubbed him."

If the authorities thought that this assault would break the spirit of the Acadians fighting for their rights, the impact has been the opposite. "We are living through a dictatorship like Hitler's," Albert asserted. "Shut your mouth because you are afraid to get killed. But, we demand our rights. We are Acadians, we are a minority and we don't want to be crushed."

The committees fighting to keep their schools open have reached out for support.

They have received support from the Acadian Society of New Brunswick (SAANB) and the provincial parents committee. After the attack at Saint Sauveur, representatives of the defense committee went to Bathurst, to speak to a demonstration of 1,500 organized by the Canadian Labor Congress on May 3.

On May 25, the defense committee organized a march called "Hand in Hand" at the same time as activities in many other towns across New Brunswick were organized against cutbacks. Three hundred people demonstrated despite heavy rain and cold to show their determination to keep their school open. Over and over they chanted "We won't give up." At the head of the march was an Acadian flag and seven students from Vieux Montreal College, who had driven 11 hours to show their solidarity.

The march was followed by a rally and community supper. Albert told the crowd, "If the government wants to close the school it will have to deport it, because as long as it remains in Saint Sauveur it will be ours."

To show support for the fight to keep the schools open you can call the following people: Mireille Manuel, president, parents committee, Saint Simon 506-727-9191; and Thérèse Albert, president, survival committee, Saint Sauveur, 506-725-5895.

Messages can be faxed to Saint Sauveur at 506-725-5559.



Militant/Joe Young

Isabelle Léger and Denise Mallet from the Parents' Committee in Saint-Simon with Canadian and New Brunswick flags at half mast and upside down.

Joe Young is a member of Local 1103 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers in Montreal. Stéphanie Morissette, Marie-Claire David, and Guy Tremblay also contributed to this article.

## Rightist sharpens anti-Quebecois stance

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

MONTREAL — Leading up to the June 2 federal elections in Canada, Reform Party leader Preston Manning has stepped up his strident and chauvinist campaign against any concessions to Quebec rights, putting the other federal parties on the defensive.

The Reform Party, a right-wing populist party based in Western Canada, emerged as one of the three major capitalist parties in Parliament in the 1993 elections, and now places second to the ruling Liberal Party in polls outside of Quebec.

On May 22 the Reform Party began airing an overtly chauvinist ad on English-language TV channels. The ad attacks Liberal premier Jean Chrétien, Conservative leader Jean Charest, Gilles Duceppe of the Bloc Québécois, and Lucien Bouchard, Quebec premier and leader of the Bloc's provincial counterpart, the Parti Québécois. It calls for "a voice for all Canadians, not just Quebec politicians." All four candidates pictured in the ad are Quebecois.

Manning denounces the "two main federal parties [Liberal and Conservative].... Both led by Quebecers." Reform's slogan is "Equality, not distinct society," referring to the status of Quebec.

Manning has challenged Chrétien and Charest to debate him on "national unity," but refused to extend the invitation to

Duceppe, leader of the Official Opposition in the outgoing Parliament. Chrétien turned down the proposal.

### 1995 sovereignty vote spurs debate

The debate on Quebec is prompted by the near-defeat of federal forces in the October 1995 Quebec referendum where 49.4 percent voted in favor of sovereignty. Since that time, Chrétien's Liberal government has asked the Supreme Court to rule against Quebec's right to separation, making clear that the federal government has no intention of accepting the results of a "Yes" vote on sovereignty.

"I will never apologize for having gone to the Supreme Court of Canada to make sure that people of Canada know what it is all about. That there will be no government or no individual that will not respect the Canadian constitution," declared Chrétien in Niagara Falls on May 24.

The Liberals and Conservatives, while hardening their stance against Quebecois self-determination, nonetheless seek to win a base of federal support in Quebec. Both Chrétien and Charest favor giving Quebec constitutional recognition as a "distinct society" with a unique language and culture, while promising that this will not confer special powers on the Quebec government. "It is an issue of identity, it is symbolic," explained Charest on a campaign stop in British Columbia.

The Reform Party, on the other hand, is running hardly any candidates in Quebec. While most newspapers of national standing have given favorable coverage to the approach by Chrétien and Charest, several major Western Canada dailies have backed Reform's stand on Quebec.

Manning calls for a Canada-wide referendum to counter a Quebec sovereignty plebiscite, counterposing "equal rights for all citizens" to Quebecois demands. He also favors the right of communities in Quebec who oppose separation to vote on a partition of Quebec in order to remain in Canada. The Reform leader compares Quebec sovereignty to the secession of the slavocracy that sparked the U.S. Civil War.

Both Chrétien and Charest refuse to discuss the issue of partition, saying respectively that it is hypothetical or a Pandora's box best not opened.

On May 21, 1,500 people rallied in the English-speaking, well-heeled west end of Montreal in support of partitioning Quebec

if the province wins its independence. It was the largest political rally of the elections in Quebec so far.

New Democratic Party leader Alexa McDonough declared, "Preston Manning's policies would lead us in this country straight into a civil war." McDonough says that the debate on national unity is a diversion from the real issues. She argues that job creation and halting the social service cutbacks will dull Quebec's will to separate.

Duceppe of the Bloc Québécois said, "What leads to attitudes of near-hatred like those of Reform are the liberal and conservative proposals that have been served up for years. If Preston Manning denies democracy, he is only harvesting what Jean Chrétien and Jean Charest have sown."

### Quebecois not treated equally

The four Communist League candidates in the election are the only ones explaining that Quebec's fight for independence flows from the systematic oppression of the Quebecois in Canada. While Quebec is the country's second most industrialized province, its rate of unemployment stands at 11.2 percent, well above the 9.3 national average.

The rate of illiteracy among Quebecois is higher than among English-speakers and twice as many English-speakers graduate from university than francophones.

"Think of replacing the Quebecois politicians in the Reform ad with Blacks — doesn't the racism jump out at you? It makes me all the more determined to speak out for Quebec independence and affirmative action measures to counter discrimination against women, Blacks, and Native people," said Vicky Mercier, Communist League candidate in the Montreal riding of Rosemont.

The Conservatives, who were reduced to two seats in the last federal elections, are now in a three-way race in Quebec with the Bloc Québécois and Liberals, and gained ground in the eastern Maritime provinces.

The Bloc Québécois, a pro-sovereignist capitalist party on the federal scene that is based exclusively in Quebec, has gone down in the polls.

The Quebec Federation of Labor, which called for a Bloc vote in the 1993 elections, has not done so this time, citing the dissatisfaction of union members with the massive social service cutbacks and job losses created by the Parti Québécois provincial government.

## French elections whop Chirac

BY NAOMI CRAINE

French president Jacques Chirac took a blow in the first round of legislative elections May 25. He had called the vote a year earlier than required in hopes of getting a renewed mandate for the ruling coalition of his Rally for the Republic (RPR) party and the French Democratic Union (UDF) to press for austerity measures. Instead, Chirac's gamble backfired, and the highest vote went to the opposition Socialist Party, which took 23.7 percent. The Gaullist RPR and the UDF took 15.6 percent and 14.3 percent respectively. Together with the Communist Party and other "left" groups, the Socialist-led opposition had an eight-point lead over the ruling parties.

The election was "not only the sharpest of rebuffs for President Chirac," declared a May 27 editorial in London's *Financial Times*, "it is also a warning for the next

French government."

In hopes of salvaging the governing coalition, Prime Minister Alain Juppé announced May 26 that he will resign regardless of who wins the second round of the election, to be held June 1. Several candidates in the coalition distanced themselves from Juppé by declining offers by the prime minister to speak at their campaign rallies.

Juppé has been in the forefront of pushing the government's assaults on working people. His attempts to cut social gains and lay off public workers in the face of high unemployment — currently 12.8 percent — have sparked large strikes and protest actions by workers, youth, and others over the last two years.

The fascist National Front party, headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, received 15 percent of the first round vote, its best showing yet in a national election.

# Thousands protest fascist in Australia

BY BOB AIKEN  
AND DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — Increasing polarization around the views of fascist politician Pauline Hanson has spilled into the streets here in recent weeks.

Since her One Nation Party was launched April 11, thousands have joined protests almost everywhere Hanson has spoken, and at initial public organizing meetings convened by her supporters. The party's national launch was in Ipswich, Queensland, the center of Hanson's Oxley electorate in the Brisbane metropolitan area. Hundreds protested noisily outside the meeting.

One Nation has become a pole of attraction for ultrarightist forces across the country. Party organizers claim 9,000 membership applications were requested in the first two weeks.

In one of the largest actions in recent state history, more than 3,000 people protested Hanson's meeting in Hobart, Tasmania, May 9. In Perth, Western Australia, 2,000 picketed her May 3 rally of 1,000 people. Some 500 protested at a breakfast function she addressed the following morning.

Up to 1,000 demonstrated at an initial One Nation public meeting in Geelong, near Melbourne, Victoria, May 4. Many chanting protesters entered the hall, blocking the meeting of 50 from convening after 15 minutes.

About two weeks later, 200 attended a second One Nation meeting there. About 50 people picketed outside while some 700 participated in a rally on the other side of town, called to oppose Hanson.

Some 150 people, most of them Aborigines, attended an April 24 protest rally in Rockhampton, central Queensland, after Hanson was accompanied at a rally in the town a week earlier by a local Aboriginal man.

In Hervey Bay, Queensland, about 200 people protested a One Nation public launch that drew 300, May 8. Aboriginal protester Russell Currie said, "I was barred [from entering] because I was Black." His niece was also barred. Currie said that an elderly white man going into the meeting swore at him, "Get out of my way, coons." Tony Pitt, the secretary of the One Nation branch, is a former leader of the now-defunct ultrarightist Confederate Action Party.

## Scapegoating and nationalism

A May 17 statement issued by the Communist League explained, "Hansonism's demagoguery is combined with aggressive Australian nationalism. It clearly defines who 'Australians' are — and aren't — in its 'one nation.' It practices the politics of resentment, scapegoating migrants in general and Asians in particular, Aborigines and others, while demagogically speaking of the need for 'all Australians' to be treated 'equally.' It aims at convincing people that these scapegoats are the source of the crisis,

not the capitalist system."

Hanson comes out of the Liberal Party, the main party of the bosses. She successfully stood as an Independent in the March 1996 federal elections after being disendorsed by the Liberals for racist comments.

In her April 11 speech launching One Nation, Hanson raised the specter of "civil war."

"There are so many people in Australia who do not think of themselves as Australians," she said. "They have simply transplanted the problems of their way of life to our country. Where will they stand in any future crisis, beside us, or behind us, or will they themselves be the crisis?"

The One Nation book *Pauline Hanson: The Truth* created a national political storm when it was released in mid-April. It includes speeches and statements by Hanson, as well as an anonymous section outlining Hansonism's program. It was briefly available only at One Nation rallies, with a print run of only 1,000, adding to its mystique. The press has reported on the content of the book.

The Communist League statement noted that the book "contains malignant racism: it scaremongers about 'whites' being swamped by Asians by 2050 and dehumanizes Aborigines as 'cannibals' who allegedly ate their own children and mothers. But it is not simply racist. It includes antigay diatribes, claims to identify with the 'battlers' against 'new class elites,' characterizes all the established political parties as corrupted beyond redemption and attacks key institutions of liberal democratic rule such as the High Court.

"It is a manifesto of an incipient fascist movement, complete with conspiracy theories, pseudoscientific claptrap and mystifications. It is accurate to compare it to [Adolf] Hitler's *Mein Kampf*."

As well as drawing significant crowds and thousands of membership inquiries, One Nation, according to one opinion poll was drawing 10 percent support, while another reported 25 percent were considering voting for the party.

In Hobart hundreds of protestors assembled May 9 outside the venue where Hanson was to speak. They were joined by more than 3,000 who had gathered at Franklin Square three blocks away for an anti-Hanson rally and march. A couple of



Australian youth reject Pauline Hanson, fascist spokeswoman for One Nation Party.

hundred protesters surged into the public meeting.

The chanting, jeering, foot-stomping crowd forced organizers to disband it without Hanson appearing. There was no violence, Rodney Croome, a prominent gay rights activist and march spokesperson, told the *Militant*. The *Saturday Mercury* reported that 350 people had come to attend the meeting.

Hanson told a news conference the next day, "I will not be stopped" by "200 of society's thugs," and claimed that criticisms of her by Liberal Party prime minister John Howard and leaders of the Labor opposition had "incited" the protesters.

## Youth in the lead

Most of the Hobart protesters were "kids wearing orange ribbons and scarves as a symbol of racial harmony," wrote *Daily Telegraph* reporter John Hamilton, while in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, David Marr squawked, "It was just a very rowdy demo of the kind we haven't seen since the Vietnam [war] days."

Students from the University of Tasmania played a big part in the rally. On May 10 Hanson was confronted by protests of 800 outside a meeting of 600 in Launceston, and 100 outside a meeting of 300 in Ulverstone.

Just days before Hanson's tour of Tasmania, the state Parliament passed a law decriminalizing homosexuality, after a nine-year struggle for gay rights. The rightist politician was invited to tour by the Con-

cerned Voters Association, whose leader, Chester Somerville, a former state president of the National Party and former leader of the shopkeepers association, was active in opposing the law.

In Perth the protests came in the context of an April 28 trade union rally of 20,000 protesting new draconian antiunion legislation introduced by the Liberal government in Western Australia.

Up to 1,000 attended an annual multicultural and Aboriginal reconciliation festival in the Sydney suburb of Manly May 18. The festival took on an anti-Hanson flavor, with Hanson's recently established national office a block away, as capitalist politicians from the major parties denounced her views.

Hanson is addressing a One Nation meeting at the Civic Theater in Newcastle, May 30, in the wake of BHP's (Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd.) April 29 announcement that after 82 years it will close its steelmaking operations there in the next two years. Some 2,500 jobs will be lost.

One Nation is campaigning to "restore tariff protection, revitalize Australian manufacturing and initiate financial support for small business and the rural sector" as an answer to unemployment.

A picket and a multicultural festival are planned for Newcastle. Hanson is also scheduled to speak in Adelaide June 11.

Bob Aiken is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in Sydney.

# Socialist candidate is on ballot in D.C.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — After a successful petitioning campaign, Socialist Workers Party candidate Mary Martin has won a place on the ballot for the July 22 D.C. Council Chair election. The only other

candidate to file petitions for the July 22 special election was Democratic Councilwoman Linda Cropp, who has been appointed to fill the position until the election.

In a statement issued to the media the day of filing the nominating petitions, Martin said, "My campaign puts forward a program aimed at uniting working people to fight against the drive of the ruling rich to solve their social and economic crisis off our backs.

"I strongly condemn the legislation proposed by D.C. Delegate to the House of Representatives Eleanor Holmes Norton that would give 30 federal police agencies authority to stop, interrogate, and arrest workers throughout the city. This move will lead to increased harassment, intimidation, and acts of brutality against working people, especially young workers.

"Delegate Norton's legislation fits hand in glove with Mayor Marion Barry's proposal that calls for use of the death penalty for those convicted of killing a cop," Martin noted.

Martin and her supporters attended a town

hall meeting May 15 called by Norton to discuss her tax proposals. The D.C. delegate calls for restructuring the city's tax system to impose a 15 percent flat tax on district residents and eliminate the capital gains tax for those who invest in the city.

The socialist candidate received a warm response in her discussions with participants at the meeting. "I call for taxing the rich, not working people," she said. "This should be done by instituting a steeply progressive income tax with no loopholes or tax shelters for the rich."

The socialist campaign comes in the context of a deepening crisis in Washington. D.C. officials signed a memorandum of understanding with the White House May 16 for a plan to allow the federal government to take over much of the administration of the city. The scheme, which has been dubbed the "Clinton Plan," is the most significant effort to overhaul the city's structure since 1973.

Under the Clinton plan, the federal government would take over collecting income tax, funding transportation projects, and overseeing the pension plan for city employees. The federal government would also take over the court and prison system, require the city to adopt federal sentencing guidelines, and end parole for prisoners.

As part of the Clinton plan, the city administration would make "unspecified management reforms and balance its budget by next year" according to a May 17 *Washington Times* article. The city would also forfeit the \$660 million it receives annually to compensate for all of the nonprofit and government property that cannot be taxed. The plan must still be voted on in Congress.

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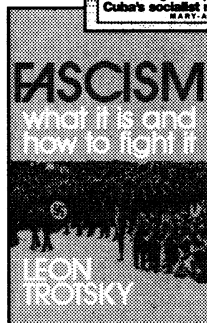
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# SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

*Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets*

## Pathfinder snapped up at Tehran bookfair

BY MARCELLA FITZGERALD

TEHRAN, Iran — More than one million people attended the 10th Tehran International bookfair this year, held April 26-May 5. Most of the books presented were in Farsi, Arabic, and English, including titles from more than 1,300 Iranian publishers and 400 English-language publishers. More Romance-language foreign publishers took part this year as well, including a couple from France. The booth set up by Pathfinder Distribution, London, got a good response.

The bookfair was opened by outgoing Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and was covered in the national press as an important cultural and educational event. As in previous years, busloads of people came to the fair from all over Iran. Schools and colleges organized trips for students, bringing hundreds of thousands to buy books at rates subsidized by the government.

This is the sixth year Pathfinder books

have been presented at the fair. Pathfinder representatives sold a broad range of books to young people, teachers, and soldiers, as well as to national institutions and research centers. Sales included 568 individual books and pamphlets plus two sets each of the *Collected Works* of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the *Collected Works* of V.I. Lenin, and the *Writings of Leon Trotsky*.

One young man had bought Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* and *New International* no. 10 at the 1996 fair. When he came back this year he wanted to buy more of issues in the Marxist magazine *New International* series and a copy of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics — Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, by Jack Barnes. This reader also bought some of the volumes in the series *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*, which records the history of the revolutionary workers movement in the first quarter of the 20th century.

There was a heightened interest in books by Malcolm X and on U.S. politics in general this year. On more than one occasion Malcolm X was the choice of young people who were from peasant backgrounds. Sale prices helped this trend, and the booth sold out of all but one of the Malcolm X titles and all five copies of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. Other sales included books by Socialist Workers Party leaders James P. Cannon and Farrell Dobbs on the workers movement in the United States.

Five copies of *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* and six copies of *U.S. Hands Off the Mideast! Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations* also sold out. The top sellers were *The Communist Manifesto*, by Marx and Engels; *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End*, by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara; *To See the Dawn: Baku 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East* from the series on the Communist International; *By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X; *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*; *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, and the issues of *New International* containing "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" and "Opening Guns of World War III — Washington's assault on

Iraq."

When she saw the Pathfinder booth, one participant commented to her friend, "Who says there are no books on women at the bookfair, here they are!" Several people stopped to ask about the election results in Britain, which brought the Labour Party into office. One or two explained that they were pleased and thought it would make a difference to world politics.

Pathfinder books have come to be known

around the country. In addition to the international book fair, last year Pathfinder books were sold at six different regional bookfairs around the country. This year a wall display at Ferdowsi University in the city of Mashhad featured Engels's *The Origin of Family, Private Property, and the State* and three other Pathfinder titles. A bookstore in front of the Tehran University had the Farsi translation of the "Opening Guns of the World War III" in its window display.

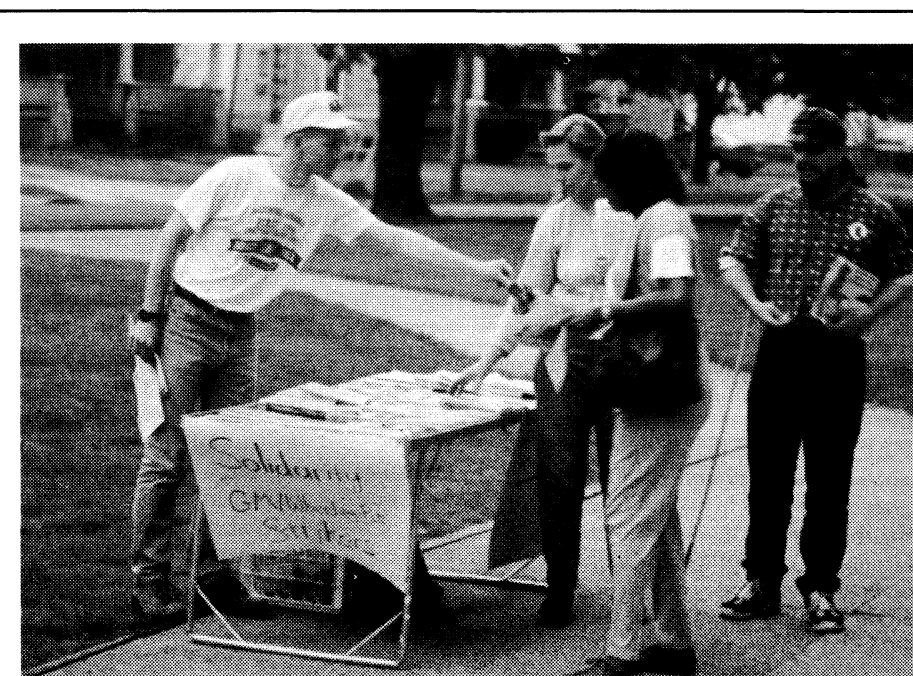
## N.Y. killer cop walks

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — On May 20, a Queens grand jury decided not to file charges against New York City police detective Richard Soto, who shot and killed José Antonio Sánchez, a 56-year-old immigrant from the Dominican Republic, during a raid on the restaurant where he worked as a cook.

Fifty people gathered in front of the restaurant May 22 to protest the decision. Steven Hoffman, a lawyer for the Sánchez family, said three witnesses from the restaurant told the grand jury that Sánchez had no knife, as the cops claim, when he approached the plain clothes officers to break up what he thought was a fight among patrons.

Protests continue here over other cop brutality cases, including the April 6 killing of 16-year-old Kevin Cedeno. Many were outraged when Anthony Pellegrini, the cop who shot Cedeno, was named "officer of the month" by some of his 33rd Precinct cohorts.



Militant supporters set up literature tables in Warren, Ohio, May 18 to get the working-class newspaper into the hands of workers who struck General Motors.

## More than 300 are on board for youth festival

BY MEG NOVAK

CHICAGO — As of May 23, more than 300 applications have been sent in to the U.S. Organizing Committee for the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students taking place in Cuba July 27 — August 5. The festival will be an opportunity for young people from around the globe to discuss issues that are central to world politics today.

Local organizing committees continue their efforts to build delegations from their cities by getting endorsements for the U.S. Organizing Committee from political organizations, and asking them to send representatives to the festival. Local committees are also discussing proposals for representatives to speak on panels for workshops at the festival. Workshops include: peace, security, nuclear weapon-free world; anti-imperialist struggle, solidarity, national liberation, sovereignty and self-determination; democracy and participation; environment and sustainable development; employment; young women; health; and discrimination, racism and neo-fascism.

In Pittsburgh, the local organizing committee has been working with members of the Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice, which has helped lead the fight to demand the prosecution of the cops who killed Jonny Gammage, a young Black man who was fatally assaulted during a routine traffic stop. Jennifer Belden England, an activist in the Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice, is working with other activists to prepare a presentation on the Gammage case for the festival. The Pittsburgh committee has raised \$270 so far to get local activists to the festival, including at a potluck dinner where the movie *Gay Cuba* was shown.

"I think it's important to meet people who are involved in different forms of struggle globally," stated Charlene Crooms, a student and activist with Hmong and Somali youth. She plans to attend the festival as a part of the delegation from Minneapolis. "I'm going to learn new ways and methods of dealing with social and economic injus-

tics, and to network with other organizations," she added. Crooms is a part of an outreach committee in Minneapolis that is building the festival at local political events, including at a Chicana/Latina conference titled the Women of Nations Celebration, as well as at a recent community forum on affirmative action. The outreach committee has also set up tables on local campuses.

May 30 is the deadline for local committees to submit proposals on participants to give presentations on political topics, such as the fight for women's liberation or the fight for Puerto Rican independence, or cultural presentations at the festival. These will be turned over to the International Preparatory Committee, which is meeting in Havana in early June. Another national meeting of the U.S. Organizing Committee will take place June 22 in New York City.

The total cost for the festival is \$625. 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.

## YS fund gets into gear

BY VERÓNICA POSES

CHICAGO — With close to \$4,200 pledged by Young Socialists (YS) chapters towards its national fund drive, the YS kicked off its fund-raising efforts this week

by raising almost \$400 and a few hundred more in pledges.

The newly formed Chicago chapter raised \$110 at an event that celebrated the strengthening of the communist movement in Illinois through the merging of two Socialist Workers Party branches in the state and welcomed the YS National Office to the city. Meg Novak spoke at the gathering on behalf of the YS National Executive Committee. The fund drive "is part of the Young Socialists making steps forward in becoming a self-financed organization," she explained.

Brian Taylor from the New York City chapter reports that the Young Socialists there kicked off the fund drive on Saturday night, May 24. They raised \$180 from a raffle and contributions at a social event following a Militant Labor Forum featuring *Militant* staff writer Argiris Malapanis, who recently returned from a reporting trip to Cuba. In addition, supporters of the Young Socialists pledged \$100 at the event and YS members made initial payments towards their pledges.

Young Socialist members in Los Angeles raised over \$100 by organizing an inter-racial dinner and movie showing, with a discussion period afterwards. This puts the chapter over their \$100 projected goal. "We're meeting tonight and will discuss raising our goal," said Walter López from the L.A. chapter.

The fund drive ends June 30, and \$700 needs to be raised every week in order to stay on target. Contributions should be made payable to Young Socialists and sent to: PO Box 478, Chicago, IL, 60622.

### YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL FUND DRIVE

CITY	GOAL
Atlanta	\$ 200
Birmingham	\$ 75
Chicago	\$ 500
Des Moines	\$ 400
Houston	\$ 600
Los Angeles	\$ 100
Miami	\$ 100
Morgantown	\$ 300
Newark	\$ 600
New York	\$ 400
San Francisco	\$ 100
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,175</b>

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# Events in Cuba mark anniversary of Guevara's death

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL  
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

HAVANA — In Cuba, 1997 is the "Year of the 30th Anniversary of the Death in Combat of Ernesto Che Guevara and his Fellow Combatants in Bolivia." A range of political events, publishing projects, and other activities are taking place in Cuba this year to mark this anniversary.

A central leader of the Cuban revolution, the Argentine-born Guevara was wounded and captured in Bolivia on October 8, 1967. The following day, he was murdered in cold blood by the Bolivian military after consultation with Washington. At a time of accelerating social and economic struggle throughout Latin America, Guevara was trying to establish a revolutionary front in Bolivia that would be the nucleus of a movement of workers and peasants capable of winning the battle for land, breaking the stranglehold of U.S. imperialism, and opening the socialist revolution in South America.

In a May 1 interview here, Noel González, vice director of the department of political education and propaganda of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, explained that the party has established a national commission to oversee this year's activities honoring Che and the other combatants in the Bolivian campaign.

The commission, of which González is a member, is headed by José Ramón Machado Ventura, member of the party's Political Bureau. Its vice presidents are José Ramón Balaguer, also a Political Bureau member, and Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas, who worked and fought side by side with Guevara for a decade and commanded the group of Bolivian and Cuban combatants who fought their way out of the military encirclement after Che's death. The commission's secretary is Rolando Alfonso Borges, head of the department of political education and propaganda of the party's Central Committee.

Through the series of events that will be held throughout the year, González reported, "we are retelling the story of Che's guerrilla in Bolivia — what really happened, who the fighters were, what they did both in Cuba and in Bolivia. Our people must know that history," he said.

"Day by day, on the anniversaries of their

death in combat, we will hold commemorations for the Bolivian fighters, for the Peruvians, and for the Cubans who fought with Che," said González. Special television and radio programs are being broadcast featuring the story of each one of these revolutionary fighters, including a documentary series of more than 20 segments called *Hombres de la guerrilla* (Men of the guerrilla). The Cuban press is also running special features.

April 25, for example, was the day that Eliseo Reyes, also known as San Luis, fell in battle 30 years ago, and numerous events marked the date. Reyes, who used the name Rolando in Bolivia, served in Guevara's column of the Rebel Army during Cuba's revolutionary war of 1956-58 to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. In 1966, having been a captain in the Revolutionary Armed Forces and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Rolando joined the combatants in Bolivia, where he was a member of Guevara's general staff until his death in battle.

"We are also commemorating the anniversary of Che's death in every workplace, school, and institution in the country," González noted. "But we don't just want to celebrate the anniversary this year. The important thing is what we do every day, every year to strive to apply Che's example, by working better, more efficiently."

One of the most ambitious projects for this year's commemoration, González reported, is the publishing of a number of books, particularly a new six-volume collection of Guevara's works. "About a third of the contents of these volumes will be previously unpublished material," he said. The six volumes are scheduled to be published before the end of the year.

The aim of this effort "is the education of the new generation in our country," González said. "There are lots of books being written about Che around the world," many of which falsify his political thought and practical record. "Some of these argue that there was a divergence between Che and Fidel [Castro], that Che was wrong about Bolivia, that the Bolivian struggle was a total fiasco." González stated that while others were entitled to their own point of view, Cuba's revolutionary leadership wanted to set the record



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Veterans of Cuban internationalist missions march in May Day parade in Havana carrying portraits of Ernesto Che Guevara and other combatants in Bolivia.

straight on such questions.

Through the new editions of the revolutionary leader's works, he noted, "we want Che himself to speak for himself."

The first volume, scheduled to be published in July, will include the field diary Guevara kept during the revolutionary struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains of eastern Cuba that led to the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959. Guevara drew extensively on this diary — most of which has never been published — to write his series of articles entitled *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* (available in English from Pathfinder Press).

Also in the first volume will be new editions of *Episodes* and Guevara's *Guerrilla Warfare*. Both will incorporate, for the first time, editing done by Guevara in 1966 — after he led a group of Cuban internationalist fighters who joined the anti-imperialist struggle in the Congo in 1965, and prior to his departure for Bolivia. In doing this editorial work, Che drew on his experiences in central Africa.

Other volumes will include letters, speeches, articles, and interviews by Gue-

vara.

"In addition to the book publishing, there is a project to produce a collection of musical cassettes with more than 100 songs dedicated to Che," as well as a collection of videos produced by others on his life, González added. Plans to produce a video documentary in Cuba are also under way.

Tributes to Guevara and the other combatants in Bolivia are an important feature of various political gatherings in Cuba this year, González explained. One example was the huge May Day celebration that had taken place that morning. Well over a million workers and others had marched through the Plaza of the Revolution to demonstrate their rejection of Washington's crude attempts to bribe or starve the Cuban people into submission through its economic war. Besides the sea of placards and banners with the image of Che, the lead contingents of workers carried big portraits of all the combatants who fell in Bolivia.

Other important political events in Cuba where Che's political example and legacy will be highlighted and discussed are the

Continued on Page 7

## Hundreds rally to support auto workers

BY JEAN LUC DUVAL  
AND JOHN SARGE

PONTIAC, Michigan — Hundreds of striking auto workers and their supporters marched and rallied in front of General Motors (GM) offices at the sprawling truck assembly complex here May 20. For the second week in a row, striking members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 594 showed their determination to win a decent local contract. Union officials said that more solidarity action were planned.

Some 5,900 UAW members walked out April 23 over the company's refusal to hire 600 more assembly workers to fulfill commitments made to end a 1995 local strike. In Pontiac, like other recent strikes against the world's largest automaker, workers are protesting personnel shortages. Workers have been unable to get vacations or even adequate relief time, and there has been a rise in on-the-job injuries.

Strikers report some departments work many hours of overtime to meet GM's production demands. Charles Dinkins explained while walking the picket line, "I'm hoping for the best. But our jobs are overcycled and undermanned. The bottom limit is the dollar and we are an expendable commodity."

Local 594 president Ron Miller told the gathered unionists that the strikers would not go back to work until the company settled over 3,200 grievances that have piled up. He said the union negotiating committee has been meeting with the company, but has little progress to report.

The Pontiac walkout is the latest in a series of strikes over local contracts and working conditions at GM plants. Speaking at a shareholders meeting May 23, GM head Jack Smith said the auto giant would not

allow itself to sign labor agreements "that damage us for the long term." He reported strikes had cost the company \$1.2 billion in 1996 and \$225 million through May 15, 1997.

Meanwhile, the 3,400 members UAW Local 1999 who had struck GM's Oklahoma City assembly plant April 4 voted to end their walkout May 25. The main issues for workers in Oklahoma City were the same as the issues in Pontiac — the refusal of the auto giant to staff its plants with enough workers. UAW members were demanding that GM add 500 workers to the plant.

Yvonne Smith, Local 1999 vice president, told the press GM's plans called for workers to work 58 or 59 minutes out of every hour, compared to prior standards that ranged from 51 to 56 minutes per hour. "That is virtually no recovery time," Smith said.

Union members voted by a 70 percent majority to end their seven-week strike without seeing the final agreement. The local membership will have a ratification meeting the first week in June. Neither the company nor the union would comment officially on the settlement.

In a related development, 8,500 members of the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) in Warren, Ohio, approved a new contract on May 24 by a 79 percent majority. The members of IUE Local 717, who make parts for GM vehicles, walked out May 13 for one day. GM quickly negotiated an agreement with the union, because an extended strike could have crippled much of its North American auto production.

Jean Luc Duval is a member of UAW Local 235. John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900.

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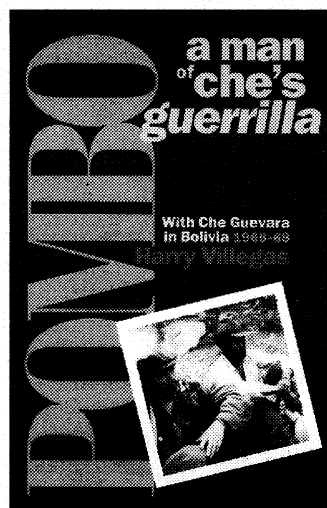
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# Clinton pushes deploying NATO troops

Continued from front page

at NATO countries will be taken off combat duty today."

Sergei Yastrzhembsky, Yeltsin's spokesman, later clarified that the "president meant the warheads will not be targeted at the states which have signed the Founding Act" — not that the warheads would be dismantled. This is in line with a 1994 pact Yeltsin negotiated with Washington, Paris, and London to deprogram Moscow's long-range nuclear missiles aimed at NATO countries. Such missiles can be reprogrammed in minutes.

A week before the summit in Paris, Yeltsin told a meeting of the State Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament, that the NATO pact was a "balanced document. We haven't surrendered on any of the key issues."

Communist Party member and Duma speaker Gennady Seleznyov backed the deal, saying it "appeared to take into account all Russian demands."

Gennady Zyuganov, who ran against Yeltsin for president last year, didn't raise a fuss over the agreement, and in fact praised the administration for the union treaty signed with neighboring Belarus May 23. The Belarus treaty "will be a strong move against NATO's expansion," Zyuganov said.

Other political figures in the Kremlin expressed disagreements. "By making this problem a matter of bargaining, Yeltsin actually gave his go-ahead to NATO eastward enlargement," said Viktor Ilyukhin, chairman of the Duma's security committee. Ilyukhin assailed Yeltsin for trying to deceive the Russian public that Moscow had received advantages from the deal. "NATO will never give us anything!" he declared.

"What can we do? NATO will expand, and we lost the opportunity to stop it five or six years ago," stated Sergei Markov for the Carnegie Moscow Center. "Yeltsin can use this agreement to say NATO gave a promise there will be no military expansion, but in fact it was postponed into the future."

## Broken promises on NATO expansion

The May 25 *New York Times* published an article by Michael Gordon in the Sunday "Week in Review" section, which was headlined, "The anatomy of a misunderstanding: Why Russia feels cheated by NATO. And why it still matters." Citing both Russian and U.S. government sources, the article describes a 1990 "pledge" to Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev by Bush administration Secretary of State James Baker that there would be no expansion of NATO.

"There would be no extension of NATO's current jurisdiction eastward," Mr. Baker said, choosing his words with lawyerly precision," Gordon wrote. In return, the Soviet government acquiesced in the inclusion of a reunified Germany in NATO. "More than seven years later," the article continued, "that meeting casts a shadow over Russia's dealings with NATO as the military alliance prepares to expand to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Evincing a bitter sense of betrayal, former and current Russian officials say the expansion flatly contradicts Mr. Baker's assurances."

Similar "pledges" by Washington are also at the heart of the recent agreement on NATO that Yeltsin and Clinton signed in Paris. Yeltsin, like Gorbachev a few years earlier, is following in the footsteps of former Soviet premier Joseph Stalin in believing he has somehow "wrung" meaningful "pledges" from the imperialists by means of skillful diplomacy. In 1941, for example, toward the end of Stalin's pact with German dictator Adolph Hitler, Stalin flew into a rage against Soviet intelligence agents who



May 26 rally in Moscow protests NATO expansion plans. Signs read: "Paris 'agreements' — a trap!" and "NATO threatens world war."

reported precisely accurate information about the impending German imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union in breach of the Stalin-Hitler nonaggression pact.

Clinton began moving toward the current NATO expansion plan at a 1994 meeting in Brussels, which set up the so-called Partnership for Peace military cooperation program as a sop for the Kremlin to accept the imperialist military enlargement. In June 1994, Moscow joined NATO's "Partnership for Peace," and in September, Yeltsin visited Washington, where Clinton broached the idea of enlarging the alliance. Yeltsin suspended Russia's participation in the military cooperation program six months later at an international conference in Budapest, where he denounced the idea as a risk of changing the "Cold War" into a "cold peace."

The U.S.-led military occupation in Yugoslavia paved the way for the current NATO expansion drive. After years of fueling the war in Bosnia, Clinton authorized the U.S. military to lead NATO bombing raids over Bosnia in the summer of 1995, setting the stage for the U.S.-crafted Dayton "peace" agreement. This laid the basis for the partitioning of Bosnia, sending 20,000 troops there with Washington as the dominant imperialist power.

As part of the latest war preparations, the Clinton administration has set up a new office headed by Jeremy Rosner, a special assistant to the president and secretary of state, to publicly campaign for NATO expansion.

Washington is encountering some resistance among the officer corps in Hungary as it seeks to incorporate its military into the imperialist alliance. The armed forces chief of staff was fired in March for resisting authority. The Hungarian regime has sent troops as part of the imperialist occupation force in Bosnia and thousands of U.S. soldiers have been deployed at the Tazsar airfield in Hungary, as a staging ground for the Bosnia operation.

The imperialist are pressing the Hungarian government to purchase up to \$1.2 billion worth of NATO warplanes, but the country's finance ministry is reportedly

balking at the price. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, surveys conducted by the U.S. Information Agency indicate working people in both Hungary and the Czech Republic overwhelmingly oppose shifting funds from social programs to the military.

Meanwhile, the regime in Slovakia organized a two-day referendum May 23-24 to decide if it would attempt to join NATO. The ballot was a fiasco, since only about 10 percent of eligible voters participated.

Before he left for Paris, Clinton participated in Memorial Day Services at Arlington National Cemetery near the grave of Gen. George Marshall, the highest ranking U.S. Army general in World War II. "We must rise to Marshall's challenge in our day," he declared. As U.S. secretary of state in 1947, Marshall was in charge of setting up the European Recovery Plan, generally referred to as the Marshall Plan.

Linking the NATO enlargement to Marshall, Clinton said, "The world my predecessors dreamed of and worked for 50 years is finally within reach." He joined in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan in The Hague, Netherlands, May 28. On his return to the United States Clinton is scheduled to summarize the NATO proposal during a June 1 commencement speech at the West Point Military Academy.

Under the European Recovery Program, the U.S. rulers provided \$13 billion in loans between 1948 and 1951 to rebuild the infrastructure and renew industrial production in European capitalist countries devastated by World War II. The Marshall Plan generated a thriving market for U.S. capitalist exports, and aimed to stave off further revolutionary struggles by working people in the region.

"We would not ask" the European governments what they want, declared George Kennan, at that time director of the State Department's policy planning staff, in a cable to Marshall. "We would tell them what they would get." Kennan was the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1952 and helped formulate President Harry Truman's

policy of "containment" of the Soviet workers state, which heralded the "Cold War."

The Marshall Plan was followed less than two years later by the founding of NATO in 1949, both of which were designed to exert maximum economic and military pressure on the Soviet Union, codify Washington's military dominance in Europe, and push back the struggles of workers and farmers around the world.

Under military pressures from imperialist forces the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow imposed a new regime on Czechoslovakia in 1948 — eight months after Marshall's speech. Washington denounced this as Soviet "expansionism" and an argument for the policy of "containment." But Kennan later acknowledged that the events in Czechoslovakia "were defensive actions on the Soviet side to the initial success of the Marshall Plan."

## U.S.-Europe trade tensions

Clinton's trip to Europe to press the NATO expansion came in the midst of sharpening world trade conflicts among capitalist rivals, particularly in the airline industry. The U.S.-based Boeing aircraft company accused the European Union competition commissioner Karl Van Miert of provoking a "transatlantic trade war," the May 14 *Financial Times* reported. Van Miert voiced opposition to the \$14 billion merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas, which would create the world's largest aerospace and defense corporation.

He attacked Boeing's two recent contracts to become the exclusive supplier of American Airlines and Delta Air Lines for 20 years. A similar deal with Continental is in the works. "These agreements are totally unacceptable because they eliminate Airbus as a rival for at least the next 20 years," said Van Miert, who insisted that the EU has the right to stop the merger.

European Commission officials say they are considering imposing a 10 percent fine on the revenues of the merged group, expected to reach \$48 billion. "It's obvious he wants a war," proclaimed Harry Stonecipher, the president and chief executive of McDonnell Douglas.

"Let the trade war begin," howled ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, who jumped to the defense of the U.S. companies in his May 24 *New York Post* column. He derided the Clinton administration for allowing the "freeloaders of Europe, the 'easy riders' on American defense" to "kill" rival U.S. companies. At the same time he blasted Boeing for "becoming less American" by "moving plants and jobs outside the U.S. as fast as it can" and doing business with Beijing.

Meanwhile, scandal clouds are following Clinton around the globe. While he was in Paris signing the NATO pact May 27, the Supreme Court ruled 9-0 that Paula Jones, a former Arkansas state employee, can proceed with her sexual harassment lawsuit against the president. Jones filed suit three years ago charging that Clinton made unwanted sexual advances toward her while he was governor of Arkansas in 1991. The Court rejected Clinton's claim of immunity, but left room in the decision for a lower court judge to delay the trial.

# Events celebrate Bolivia combatants

Continued from Page 6

World Festival of Youth and Students, to be held July 27 to August 5, and a conference to be hosted by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers August 6-8, the International Workers Meeting to Confront Neoliberalism and the Global Economy.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, scheduled for October 8-10, will coincide with the anniversary of Guevara's death. "The evening before the opening of the congress, October 7, will be devoted to a major public event. We hope to have leading artists perform, with songs and poetry devoted to Che," González said.

"Immediately following the Communist Party convention, there will be an international conference on Che and socialism," he explained. It will be jointly hosted by the party, the University of Havana, and the party's leadership school. González noted that leadership delegations of political parties from around the world will be invited

to participate in the conference discussion on this subject.

In addition to this gathering, conferences are planned this year at numerous Cuban universities to discuss Guevara's communist views. At the University of Havana, the Ernesto Che Guevara Studies Program is hosting a conference October 1-4 on "Che: Man of the 21st Century." Similar events are projected by the Che Studies programs at the University of Holguín and elsewhere.

Among revolutionary-minded Cuban youth, there is a deep interest in better understanding Guevara's accomplishments and political contributions to the Cuban revolution. At the University of Havana, a group of students, encouraged by the Federation of University Students, have organized a regular discussion group. Every week they meet to read and discuss a selection from Guevara's writings. The students, who are from different university departments and disciplines, call themselves the Grupo Vive.

Some are members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC), some are not.

On April 24, *Militant* reporters joined them for their seventh session, when about 25 youth met well into the evening to discuss a 1964 speech by Che to members of the UJC. In the speech, Guevara frankly takes up the political strengths and weaknesses and challenges facing the UJC.

First the students read aloud the selection for the benefit of the majority who did not have the volume of the collection in which it is published. A lively and critical discussion then ensued for an hour and a half.

Expressing a range of views, the students debated what they thought was needed to strengthen the UJC as a communist youth organization in order to provide political leadership to Cuban young people today who are searching for ways to defend and advance Cuba's socialist revolution. A number of them said this was the best homage they could pay Che Guevara.

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# Imperialists scramble for Congo investments

Continued from front page

part of the delegation in Lubumbashi organized by America Mineral Fields, a Hope, Arkansas, mining company, said, "They [AFDL] are saying all the right things up front... but until we have such concrete things such as delivery of policy, we have got nothing." So far, the new government has not released any concrete economic plans.

America Mineral Fields signed a \$1 billion contract in April with the rebel forces who had taken the mineral rich area of Katanga province, but before the AFDL took power. Other companies moving to get in on the act include Tenke Mining Corp., a Canadian firm that began negotiations with the AFDL March 26. In the beginning of May, Tenke Mining transferred \$50 million to the state owned mines, known as Gécamines. It is a down payment for the right to exploit what may be the world's largest copper and cobalt deposits between the Congo villages of Tenke and Fungurume in Katanga province.

In 1996 mining engineer and capitalist Adolf Lundin received a 55 percent stake in the Tenke Fungurume project under a contract that he would pay Gécamines \$250 million over the next four years.

While the new regime in Congo — called Zaire under Mobutu's rule — is clearly glad to do business, Washington isn't taking any chances. In a May 26 *Newsweek* article, William Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, wrote that he told AFDL leader Laurent Kabila of Washington's desire for "an inclusive transition, leading to a new government based on elections and the rule of law." The Clinton administration would support "giving them greater access to the U.S. market," he said. Richardson approvingly added, "Though he [Kabila] still spoke of large public works projects, I believe that he is pragmatic and that he may learn about the needs of a modern, open, economy."

Many of the mineral concessions in Congo are extensive and quite lucrative. The South African De Beers company, for example, had held an exclusive contract with Société Minière de Bakwanga, the country's largest diamond producer. Recently the AFDL cut off De Beers monopoly. Mawampanga said in early May that "these diamonds make up only 20 percent of the country's production. There will be no more monopoly and De Beers will have to compete with everyone else."

In response, a spokesman for De Beers complained, "Our entire philosophy is that single channel marketing has sustained our industry for more than 60 years."

The main export markets for Congo wealth, as of 1991, were Belgium — the former colonial master — at 44.7 percent, and the United States at 18.3 percent.

Paris has been largely out of the picture lately in relation to Congo. Former defense minister Francois Leotard called the French government's decision to back Mobutu longer than Washington a "tactical, moral, and geopolitical setback" that "highlights the ambiguities and shortcomings of our African policy." The U.S. and French rulers are in competition over influence in central Africa, where Paris has long been the dominant imperialist power.

## Instability in Kinshasa

Hundreds of people demonstrated in the capital city of Kinshasa May 23 – 24, protesting the exclusion of bourgeois opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi from the recently formed cabinet of AFDL leader Kabila. The new government's military fired warning shots into the air to disperse the crowd.

Tshisekedi, who claims to be the legitimate prime minister, said May 23 that he would not recognize the new government. "It's not only that I do not recognize the government, but I ask the people to ignore the government," he added.

Kabila announced an initial cabinet of 13, which could be expanded to as many as 20 members. Appointments include seven from the AFDL, two from Tshisekedi's party, and six representatives from other groups. Kabila retains the sole leadership position and control over the military, having abolished the posts of prime minister and vice president.

The cabinet includes as finance minister Mawampanga, who was a professor of agriculture economy at the University of Ken-

tucky in exile; Bizima Karaha, 29, a physician who was trained and worked in South Africa, as foreign minister; Kongolo Mwenze, who in exile worked as a criminologist for the U.S. Justice Department, as interior minister; and Raphael Ghenda, a lawyer formerly exiled in Belgium and France, as information minister. Justine Kasavubu, a member of Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress, is the new public service minister. Based in Brussels for the last period, she is the daughter of the first post-independence president Joseph Kasavubu.

Tshisekedi was not appointed as part of the cabinet. The three-time former prime minister was formerly part of Mobutu's party, but in 1980 split and established the Union of Democracy and Social Progress. In 1961, while working closely with Mobutu, Tshisekedi signed the arrest papers for independence leader and prime minister Patrice Lumumba, who was then murdered by CIA-backed government officials.

For weeks, Washington, London, Bonn, and others have pushed Kabila to include Tshisekedi in a transitional government and hold rapid elections. The new government says elections will take place 12 months from now.

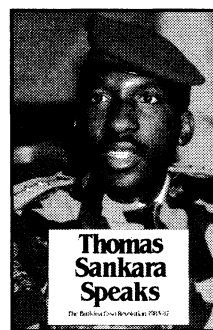
After establishing power, the Kabila regime threw out the transitional constitution established in 1990 as part of Mobutu's so-called political reforms. That document allowed opposition parties to nominate the

country's prime minister — though Mobutu always exercised dictatorial veto power.

As part of pressing for a government that Washington can rely on, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright professed concern over alleged human rights abuses and warned Kabila to include in the government ministers from other parties. Speaking on May 23, Albright also demanded that the regime stop supposed massacres of Rwandan refugees in the eastern part of Congo. Since last year, Washington and

other imperialist powers several times raised the possibility of a United Nations intervention in eastern Congo in the name of aiding the refugees.

On May 21 South African president Nelson Mandela blasted Washington and others for "lecturing" Kabila on human rights. "What is most strange is that some Western countries that have supported the most vicious dictators for decades now... [are] taking it upon themselves to lecture him [Kabila] upon democracy."



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**Prelude** — In 18 months, some 200 lawsuits have been filed in Japan by relatives of people who died from overwork. The Vancouver *Province* says the figures "reflect



Harry Ring

not only that more Japanese are dying from the stress of work than ever before, but that fewer people are prepared to suffer in silence."

**The Ugly American** — Washington has its usual list of b.s. demands for the new government of the Republic of Congo — "free

elections," etc. Also, according to one report, "an end to Marxist claptrap." Will they get these things? No doubt about it, says a State Dept. big-lip. "As the world's only superpower, we have the political clout," he says. "Kabala is well aware of that.... We are going to watch him very carefully."

**Get doggie bags** — Backed by union tops, British Airways won a plan under which cargo workers will take a two-year wage freeze and lose 400 jobs in exchange for an agreement not to give the work to outside contractors. Meanwhile, at London's Heathrow Airport, an unauthorized walkout by catering workers left long-distance flights taking off without a full supply of meals.

Passengers were given vouchers

for a meal at the airport before take-off.

**Some preferences they like** — Stifling debate on the issue, University of California regents killed a motion to end the practice of setting aside admission slots for relatives and friends of heavy donors.

Coincidentally, the meeting also voted to kick off the public phase of a campaign to raise \$1.2 billion. (In 1995 the regents iced student affirmative action programs.)

**Big Royalburger?** — Britain's incoming Labour government says it won't put up the £60 million to replace the Royal Yacht, but is talking with some firms about providing the yacht. The idea of a company owning the boat is not expected to sit well with the Queen, who takes

a dim view of any suggestion of commercial sponsorship of the monarchy.

<http://www.lucifer.com> — Addressing the Prayer Book Society, the Prince of Wales warned that society is in danger of making new technology the arbiter of "virtual reality ethics" and the "eventual murderer of the soul of mankind."

**The prince knows something?** — A survey indicates that 35 percent of U.S. companies practice electronic surveillance of office employees, "at least occasionally," and often secretly. That includes listening to phone calls and voice mail, reading e-mail, and videotaping workers' performances.

Then there's the location badges which track where a worker is at all

times.

**'Whatever'** — Testifying at the trial of Arizona Gov. Fife Symington, his former secretary said she helped him prepare three versions of the same financial statement and he would then choose which one to send to which lender. The gov is on trial for bank fraud, attempted extortion, and perjury.

**'Where there's smoke...'** — We noted the World Health Organization finding that cancer rates in Third World countries will double in the next quarter century. Additionally, each year cigarettes alone claim some 3 million cancer victims world-wide. R.J. Reynolds (Joe Camel) had an export take of \$3.6 billion last year and sales are rising.

# Trotsky on the contradictions of the Soviet state

As the imperialist powers prepared for the second World War, Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian revolution who was forced into exile by Joseph Stalin in 1929, explained that clarity on the class character and contradictions of the Soviet Union was interlinked with the political tasks and orientation of revolutionary workers the world over.

In the excerpt below, Trotsky makes an analogy with trade unions and why working people should defend the Soviet workers state, despite its bureaucratic deformations.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

mations.

The excerpt is taken from the article "Not a Workers' and not a Bourgeois State?" in the *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*. The volume is copyright © 1970 and 1976 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY LEON TROTSKY

The class character of the state is determined by its relation to the forms of property in the means of production. The character of a workers' organization such as a trade union is determined by its relation to the distribution of national income. The fact that Green and Company defend private property in the means of production characterizes them as bourgeois.

Should these gentlemen in addition defend the income of the bourgeoisie from attacks on the part of the workers; should they conduct a struggle against strikes, against the raising of wages, against help to the unemployed; then we would have an organization of scabs, and not a trade union. However, Green<sup>1</sup> and Company, in order not to lose their base, must within certain limits lead the struggle of the workers for an increase — or at least against a diminution — of their share of the national income. This objective symptom is sufficient in all important cases to permit us to draw a line of demarcation between the most reactionary trade union and an organization of scabs. Thus we are duty bound not only to carry on work in the AFL, but to defend it from scabs, the Ku Klux Klan, and the like....

The assertion that the bureaucracy of a workers' state has a bourgeois character must appear not only unintelligible but completely senseless to people stamped with a formal cast of mind. However, chemically pure types of state never existed, and do not exist in general.

The semifeudal Prussian monarchy executed the most important tasks of the bourgeoisie, but executed them in its own manner, i.e., in a feudal, not a Jacobin style. In Japan we observe even today an analogous correlation between the bourgeois character of the state and the semifeudal character of the ruling caste. But all this does not hinder us from clearly differentiating between a feudal and a bourgeois society. True, one can raise the objection that the collaboration of feudal and bourgeois forces is immeasurably more easily realized than the collaboration of bourgeois and proletarian forces, inasmuch as the first instance pre-



First volunteer insurrectionary detachment of Red Army in Petrograd, 1917.

sents a case of two forms of class exploitation. This is completely correct. But a workers' state does not create a new society in one day. Marx wrote that in the first period of a workers' state the *bourgeois* norms of distribution are still preserved. (About this see *The Revolution Betrayed*, the section "Socialism and the State," P. 53.) One has to weigh well and think this thought out to the end. The workers' state itself, as a *state*, is necessary exactly because the bourgeois norms of distribution still remain in force.

This means that even the most revolutionary bureaucracy is to a certain degree a *bourgeois* organ in the workers' state. Of course, the *degree* of this bourgeoisification and the general tendency of development bears decisive significance. If the workers' state loses its bureaucratization and gradually falls away, this means that its development marches along the road of socialism.

On the contrary, if the bureaucracy becomes ever more powerful, authoritative, privileged, and conservative, this means that in the workers' state the bourgeois tendencies grow at the expense of the socialist; in other words, that inner contradiction which to a *certain degree* is lodged in the workers' state from the first days of its rise does not diminish, as the "norm" demands, but increases. However, so long as that contradiction has not passed from the sphere of distribution into the sphere of production, and has not blown up nationalized property and planned economy, the state remains a workers' state.

Lenin had already said fifteen years ago: "Our state is a workers' state, but with bureaucratic deformations." In that period bureaucratic deformation represented a direct inheritance of the bourgeois regime and, in that sense, appeared as a mere survival of the past. Under the pressure of unfavorable historical conditions, however, the bureaucratic "survival" received new sources of nourishment and became a tremendous historical factor. It is exactly because of this that we now speak of the *degeneration* of the workers' state.

This degeneration, as the present orgy of Bonapartist terror shows, has approached a crucial point. That which was a "bureaucratic deformation" is at the present moment pre-

paring to devour the workers' state, without leaving any remains, and on the ruins of nationalized property to spawn a new propertied class. Such a possibility has drawn extremely near. But all this is only a possibility and we do not intend beforehand to bow before it.

The USSR as a workers' state does not

correspond to the "traditional" norm. This does not signify that it is not a workers' state. Neither does this signify that the norm has been found false. The "norm" counted upon the complete victory of the international proletarian revolution. The USSR is only a partial and mutilated expression of a backward and isolated workers' state.

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Idealistic, ultimatic, "purely" normative thinking wishes to construct the world in its own image, and simply turns away from phenomena which are not to its liking. Sectarians, i.e., people who are revolutionary only in their own imagination, guide themselves by empty idealistic norms. They say: "These unions are not to our liking, we will not join them; this workers' state is not to our liking, we will not defend it." Each time they promise to begin history anew. They will construct, don't you see, an ideal workers' state, when God places in their hands an ideal party and ideal unions. But until this happy moment arrives, they will, as much as possible, pout their lips at reality....

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# No imperialist 'advice' needed

Who are Madeleine Albright and William Richardson — to talk about democracy and human rights in the Congo? They're leading spokespersons for the world's biggest imperial bully. That's the point South African president Nelson Mandela was getting at when he said, "What is most strange is that some Western countries that have supported the most vicious dictators for decades are now... taking it upon themselves to lecture him [Kabila] upon democracy."

Washington has a long history of murder and mayhem in the region. In August of 1964, U.S.-backed mercenaries bombed and pillaged Stanleyville and every nearby village in order to crush Congolese freedom fighters. They murdered every man, woman, and child in sight. Washington and Paris then bankrolled the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko for more than 30 years. Mobutu in return kept Congo safe for capitalist exploitation, and used his well-funded army to advance imperialist interests in the region. And the imperialist banks use the country's \$14 billion "debt" as a tool to extract greater surplus from the toilers there.

The same blood suckers who are vying for mineral contracts today have usurped the wealth of the Congo since the turn of the century.

Belgian king Leopold's personal rule of the colony of what was then called the Belgian Congo was marked by

plunder and brutalization. By 1960, U.S. imperialists like David Rockefeller owned plantations and bauxite metal industry in the Congo. Today, American Mineral Fields, from Hope, Arkansas, is among the enterprises making sure they have a piece of the pie.

Working people around the world should celebrate the fall of the Mobutu dictatorship, long a pillar for imperialist control in the region.

The new regime is led by a successful businessman, Laurent Kabila, and others like him who are eager to work with big-time exploiters in the United States, Canada, Belgium, and elsewhere to maintain capitalist rule. But many workers and peasants in the Democratic Republic of Congo now have expectations that there will be more democratic rights, employment, and a rise in the standard of living. This is a factor that has Washington and its allies worried. That's why they are full of advice for Kabila on "democracy," "human rights," and the value of the market system, and why they're keeping 3,000 troops just a stone's throw away in Brazzaville, Congo.

The best way to support workers, peasants, and youth in Congo is to demand that Washington and Co. keep their hands off.

All U.S., French, Canadian, and other imperialist troops out of Africa!

Cancel the Third World debt!

# Vote for Communist League

**This statement was released on May 28 by the Communist League candidates in Canada's federal elections.**

On June 2, workers and farmers in Canada can cast a class vote against the parties of big business. They can vote for Communist League candidates in four ridings — in Montreal: Vicky Mercier in Rosemont and Michel Dugré in Papineau-St. Denis; in Toronto: John Munoru in Davenport; and in Vancouver: Roger Annis in Vancouver-Kingsway. Elsewhere they should vote for the New Democratic Party.

The Communist League campaign is the only voice presenting a clear working-class perspective in the elections. The unfolding of the election campaign in Canada confirms that Quebec independence is the central challenge to capitalist rule in Canada. Workers and farmers across Canada need to unambiguously support Quebec independence and the right of the Quebecois to decide their own future, free of threats. This is key for workers' unity, which is impossible as long as the Quebecois remain oppressed within Canada.

The Communist League proposes an action program for the labor movement to unite working people in the fight against unemployment and to defend and extend social services. We call for a 30-hour workweek with no cut in pay to create jobs, and for affirmative action programs to overcome discrimination against women, Blacks, francophones, and immigrants.

In the so-called salmon war between the rulers of Canada and the United States, we demand that the U.S. fishing boats, which have been seized be released, and that it be left to the producers on both sides of the border to work out a solution that preserves the stocks. The two governments concerned must guarantee a decent revenue to fishermen.

We call for the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Yugoslavia, where they are part the effort to try to overturn the workers state and restore capitalism. We call for the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Haiti, where their role is to maintain imperialist domination. We call for the cancellation of the third world debt.

The CL candidates hold up the example of the Cuban revolution, where workers and farmers kicked out the U.S.-

backed dictatorship and formed their own government in 1959.

At this point it seems that the Liberals will once again form the government. But whoever wins, workers and farmers will be the central target of the capitalist rulers' attacks against our working and living conditions, social services and democratic rights. The capitalist system is in a deepening crisis worldwide and needs to be replaced with socialism, a society based on human needs and solidarity, not profits.

This is the way forward offered by the Communist League candidates. It's one that must be fought out above all in the streets and on the picket lines, not just at a ballot box. We point to the strike by Safeway workers in Alberta against concessions, to the April 16 protest by farmers in Quebec City, the fight of Acadians to keep open their schools in New Brunswick, and the fight of Franco-Ontarians to keep open the Monfort Hospital in Ottawa.

Where the CL is not running, we call for a vote for the NDP. Because the NDP is based on the unions outside of Quebec, a vote for the NDP is a vote against the parties directly controlled by the capitalists.

In Quebec, an NDP vote allows workers and farmers to express the importance of uniting with working people across Canada in the fight for a workers and farmers government and of winning workers in English-speaking Canada to the fight for Quebec independence. Because the Bloc Quebecois is based on a section of the capitalists in Quebec, a vote for the Bloc goes in the opposite direction and is in fact against the interests of working people.

The program advocated by the CL campaign is the program that the NDP as a labor party should put forward, a program that is along the line of march of the working class and its allies toward the formation of a workers and farmers government. Advancing this perspective today is a central element of fighting to transform our unions into weapons of class struggle.

The Communist League candidates know the struggle doesn't stop on election day. On June 3, we'll be back in the streets and in our plants with the Young Socialists joining the fights and looking for those who can be won to the communist movement. We will continue to get out the truth by circulating Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

# Build the SWP convention

**Continued from front page**

in building solidarity for the Wheeling-Pitt steelworkers' strike, battles of farmworkers, and other labor struggles; in the fight for Chicano liberation, Black freedom, and women's rights; in protests against the Klan and other rightist currents; and in actions supporting a democratic secular Palestine, Irish freedom, Quebecois independence, and other battles for national liberation.

A number of conference activities will surround the sessions for the delegates. These will include presentations by *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel, who would have just returned from a reporting trip to Argentina, and by Mary-Alice Waters, a longtime SWP leader, who recently traveled to Cuba. The conference is cosponsored by the Young Socialists and many of those who attend will be YS members from across the United States and other coun-

tries.

Participants will celebrate the publication of several new political weapons for the communist movement that will be available for sale at the conference. These include the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes; and *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'* by Harry Villegas, brigadier general of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (see ad on page 6).

The conference will include classes, workshops, musical performances, dances, sports events, film showings and other social activities.

Making a special effort to bring to the convention as many fighting workers and youth as possible will enrich the political discussion and informal exchange of experiences and maximize recruitment to the communist movement.

# Clashes spread in Albania

**Continued from front page**

main in control of many cities in southern Albania and continue to present a major obstacle to the imperialist forces — whose goal is to restore capitalist property relations in Albania — and to the government in Tirana. The foreign occupation forces have orders to shoot "if they face dangerous situations," which include "clashes between government forces and the rebels." But so far, the imperialist units have refrained from intervening in the escalating clashes between the pro-Berisha police and the rebels.

On May 22 Berisha was able to hold a poorly attended election rally in a closed gymnasium in Elbasan, a city close to Cerrik. Two days earlier he also visited Fier, which is 34 kilometers north of Vlore, the center of the working-class revolt. On his way to Fier, while passing through the town of Lushnje, Berisha and his entourage were greeted with stones and rifle shots by rebels. In Vlore, the local rebel council has been organizing defense guards, strikes, and demonstrations warning the president not to try to step foot in the city.

As part of stepping up his terrorist assaults, Berisha has deployed two battalions of his presidential guard in the area with tanks and other modern weaponry. One of these units is now stationed in Fier. On May 21, a special commando unit from this battalion was beat back by armed rebels in Tepelene and chased back to Fier. Berisha's commandos had been deployed to aid a vigilante gang that abducted Gioleta Malai, leader of the Committee for the Salvation of the People in Tepelene. Armed workers defeated the thugs and forced them to free Malai. In a similar situation, working people in the town of Premete beat back two efforts by police units with tanks to take over the town. The cops were sent there by the Ministry of Public Order in Tirana. These police units are now stationed in the nearby city of Korce.

Under pressure from European Union envoy Franz Vranitzky, the SP and other opposition parties called off their threat to boycott the elections scheduled for June 29. These parties had earlier protested because the current election law favors Berisha's Democratic Party. As part of a deal the SP struck with Berisha on May 21, the president appointed Arben Rakepe from the Socialist Party to head the hated SHIK, the secret police. Fino called on the imperialist troops in Albania to guard election posts and prepare the list of voters. He also asked that these forces be deployed throughout Albania — beyond the cities of Tirana, Durres, Fier, Vlore, Gjirokaster and Elbasan where they are stationed now. Fino warned that the ballot law "will not guarantee that the elections will bring political and social stability in the country."

Speaking in Rome, Vranitzky stated, "We must move toward the elections and the formation of a new government." The new authorities, he said, will then attempt to restore order.

Meanwhile, conflicts among the intervening imperialist powers especially Italy and Greece, are deepening. On May 22 Tirana's daily *Independent* published the transcript of taped telephone discussions between Italian ambassador Paolo Foresti and Democratic Party chairman Tristano Sehoul. In the conversations, Foresti expressed open support for Berisha.

Fino then called on Rome to recall its ambassador back to Italy, a demand also raised by Italy's opposition Communist Refoundation Party in a discussion in the Italian parliament. Foresti claimed that the tapes were fabricated by "extremist groups from Greece and Serbia that want Italy to withdraw its efforts to bring Albania into Europe."

Greek foreign minister Theodoros Pangalos responded that "there are certain people in Greece" who desire the annexation of southern Albania to Greece. But "these are not serious views," he stated. "These views are expressed by a limited circle of people in a moderate and up to a point a justified manner."

The demand by Athens to deploy its forces deeper into southern Albania, especially in regions bordering Greece and the Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, has been met by fierce opposition from Rome. Italian general Luciano Forlani, who heads the intervention force, denied the request from the Greek social democratic government of Premier Konstantinos Simitis to deploy its troops from Elbasan to Pogradec. With such a move, Greek troops would effectively take control of one of the main roads leading to Skopje, the capital of Macedonia.

The revolt in Albania has given impetus to the struggle for national rights of the Albanian minority in Macedonia. Albanians there, comprising 23 percent of the republic's 2.2 million population, have stepped up demands for autonomy in the municipalities in western Macedonia near the Albanian border. Parties that support recognition of national rights for Albanians in Macedonia control city councils in 24 out of the republic's 124 municipalities.

On May 25 thousands of Albanians participated in a demonstration called by the municipal council of Gostivar. According to the organizers, the rally swelled to 20,000. It was called to protest a law passed by the government in Skopje that bars the Albanian flag from being hoisted on public buildings along with the flag of Macedonia. The majority Albanian municipal councils have decided not to comply with the law. U.S. and other imperialist troops, which have been deployed in Macedonia since 1992, are now patrolling the Macedonia-Albania border.



# CSX rail bosses set up \$3,750 training classes

BY KAY SEDAM

HIALEAH, Florida — CSX, one of the nation's largest freight carriers, says it will hire about 500 new conductors yearly until the year 2002. In an attempt to save costs in doing this, the company has recently privatized the training of potential new hires. This breaks with the industry standard of hiring "off the street" and providing full on-the-job training.

CSX has begun this process by contracting universities to offer courses in Freight Railroad Conductor Training. The idea is to provide the railroad with a qualified pool of potential employees ready for entry level jobs. Students are charged \$3,750 for tuition, testing, and application fees, in addition to travel costs and room and board for the eight-week course.

This move comes on the heels of CSX's \$10.2 billion deal with Norfolk Southern (NS) railroad to buy and divide between them the routes of Conrail. These two giants will now dominate freight rail in the eastern half of the United States. The privatization of employee training, along with crew cuts, unsafe working conditions, and skimping on equipment maintenance, is part of the rail bosses' drive to boost their profits by lowering the wages and working conditions in the industry.

Joel Warner, assistant vice president of human resources for CSX, told the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, "People thought of the railroads as a dead or dying industry. The railroads are growing, and we're making a lot of money, and we're happy about that."

Several universities, including University of Florida-Jackson, have received funding from CSX to run the schools, which will not only train workers, but also conduct background checks on those who apply. CSX

official Warner explained that the course is also designed to weed out those people who are unable to endure working conditions on the railroad. "This job is not for everyone," he said.

The *Journal Constitution* went on to explain, "Railroads run 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in all weather conditions. People entering the work force are expected to work strange hours, be away from home over long periods and are likely to be called to work at any time."

Completion of the course does not guarantee a job with CSX. The worker will "be a leg up on other applicants for the \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year job," as Warner put it. All that graduates are guaranteed is an interview. Of the 33 applicants so far, 29 have been offered jobs.

The materials from the Florida Railroad Institute highlight the good pay and benefits received by those who work in rail. But as Jason Holloway, a 20-year-old graduate of CSX's first Railroad Institute class explains, "What they don't tell you is that for this good paying job, in addition to carrying out the duties of trainman, they expect you to be a mechanic and a clerk, as well as be computer literate!"

The skills learned at any of CSX's railroad schools are no different than those learned by any railworker in the traditionally company-sponsored trainmen or conductor schools — switching tracks, locking down a brake, hauling 85-pound couplers, and hanging onto a rolling car. But the bosses hope railworkers' financial stake in staying on the job and recouping their "investment" will help to guarantee they remain loyal employees. In the past, several new hires, after being trained, have left to take advantage of hiring "bonuses" of up to \$40,000

being offered by other rail companies facing labor shortages similar to those at CSX.

Since the first class started, stories of the hardship imposed by CSX's training are becoming widely known in the Hialeah yard. Most students had to take out loans with Sea Board Credit Union — CSX's credit union — in order to afford the \$3,750 tuition. Monthly payments are taken out of your pay check if you are hired.

Given the nature of the training, workers are unable to hold on to their former jobs during the course, resulting in further indebtedness. The program's organizers recommend as a typical housing option that trainees double up in a \$179-per-week hotel room. If for any reason you resign after the end of the second week of class, no refund is given.

While told they will get jobs in particular

cities upon being hired by CSX, trainees were still forced to sign an agreement to relocate wherever CSX demanded. As a result, many were forced to other cities upon being hired by the railroad.

Newly hired trainmen also face the possibility of being reassigned out of the seniority district they originally hired into once they become conductors, if there is a reduction of the work force.

One of the new hires here said that the union is planning to file a grievance against the company's practice of forcing people to pay to get hired. Union officials indicated that they will demand that the trainees' money be fully reimbursed.

Kay Sedam is an engineer for CSX at the Hialeah yard and a member of United Transportation Union Local 1138.

Now available in Spanish!


## The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

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JACK BARNES  
EL ROSTRO CAMBIANTE  
DE LA POLÍTICA  
EN ESTADOS UNIDOS  
La política obrera y los sindicatos



## — LETTERS —

### Airline safety clarification

The recent article "Northwest Airlines Demands Concessions" (See May 12 *Militant*, page 11) was very well received by Machinist union members here in Los Angeles and other cities. Ramp workers, cleaners, flight attendants, mechanics, and other union and non-union workers at other airlines said it spoke the truth. IAM [International Association of Machinists] members have made sure it gets around. Ramp workers in Washington, D.C. also responded to it. They were especially surprised to hear of the layoffs in Los Angeles of IAM cleaners and their replacement by non-union outside contract workers from Atlas Corporation.

Because the original article was edited for space, there was some confusion that should be cleared up. It was Northwest Airlines, at the initiative of the L.A. station manager and the director of subcontracting in Minneapolis, that eliminated union cleaners from performing their jobs on Hawaiian, VASP, and any new carriers Northwest employees work. At this point, loading and mechanical work are still done by IAM organized Northwest employees. The layoffs of hundreds around the country in ramp, cleaning and ticketing was accepted by union officials and we were notified through an internal company newswire.

Another question was the *Militant's* source on cuts in safety training. A Northwest newswire on March 21, 1997, sent from "Ground-Ops Education" to station managers and instructors announced the elimination of large categories of safety training amounting to thousands of hours in several job classifications. Classroom instruction will be reduced to only what is absolutely mandated by the FAA.

The fact that new hires will not be receiving necessary safety training and that veterans' safety training will also be reduced has angered ramp workers in L.A. This endangers the lives of all ground workers, flight crews, and passengers. The result will be a rise in the al-

ready high injury and accident rate in an increasingly unsafe industry.  
*Mark Friedman*  
*Los Angeles, California*

### Wrong to vote Labour

Jonathan Silberman, in answer to Ahmad Haghighat's letter "Why vote for Labour?" gives some dubious reasons for supporting Labour in the past election.

His main premise of wanting to support Labour like a rope supports the hanging man was first used by Lenin in *Left Wing Communism — An Infantile Order* in 1920. He used this analogy to support his argument that voting for Labour would help the progress of the British Communist movement and the working class and by doing so, Lenin gave concrete reasons.

However, the historical conditions are completely different now. Labour is no longer the fledgling party of the working class. Its party membership is presently overwhelmingly middle class (see P. Seyd and P. Whiteley, *Labour's Grass Roots*). The Party has moved much more to the centre and Blair's abstract election campaign centered on being tough on crime (meaning less personal freedoms) and this, combined with his Christian moralism, poses more of a threat to the working class than the Tories ever did.

We do not have to wait four years to see that Labour won't defend our interests. The history is already there to defrock them. One example which is still pertinent today is that Labour was in government when British troops were introduced to Ireland during the present troubles. Blair has recently praised Loyalist Paramilitaries for their 'formal' maintenance of their ceasefire and yet Catholics are still being murdered by Loyalist groups, albeit

"unofficially." Instead of using "infantile" excuses, we should be showing workers why the British Labour party will not work by illustrating their compromising history. It was nothing but an unimaginative 'kop out' for the Communist League to advise the working class to vote for Labour. Giving Labour the 'nod' in the election can only be compared to the Socialist Workers Party backing the Democrats in the U.S.

If you use the premise of giving

argument that capitalizing the word Black is simply consistent with the policy of capitalizing the names of all nationalities. Blacks are not a nationality, he states, because they have no common *country* of origin, only a common continent that no more makes Black a nationality than a common European ancestry makes white a nationality. Better to use a capital 'B,' he affirms, simply as a recognition of the vanguard role of Black people because of

against the Radical Reconstruction governments that came to power with the victory of the Union forces in the Civil War.

This counterrevolution blocked the distribution of "forty acres and a mule" and other measures that could have transformed the freed slaves into a layer of independent small farmers. Instead, Blacks were not only politically disenfranchised, but subjected to a whole range of economic and social discrimination which continues through today.

During the Russian revolution numerous peoples rose up and sometimes even unexpectedly proclaimed their distinct rights as oppressed nationalities in the course of the struggle to overthrow the Tsar. The Bolshevik Party led the fighting workers of the Russian state to champion these struggles for self-determination. That strategy was key not only to victory against the Tsar, but to the unity of the new workers state that emerged from the victorious revolution. The Communist International sought to alert working people around the world to the importance of this lesson.

Blacks are a distinct, oppressed nationality forged out of the very conditions that gave birth to U.S. imperialism. It flows from this crucial understanding that their struggle against national oppression, as noted by the Communist International, is of great strategic importance to the worldwide struggle against the capitalist system.

*Pete Seidman*  
*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

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



enemies of the Communist League enough rope to hang themselves, who next will you be supporting, the British Nationalist Party? Ah, I can see it now: "History will show who is right over the next few years when the masses see the BNP cannot live up to any of their election promises. Lets vote them in and thus end Fascism."

This may be a crass example, but if we do not correctly apply the lessons of Lenin, then this is what they will amount to.  
*Ciarán Farrell*  
*Burke, Virginia*

### Why 'Black' is nationality

Reader Ian Harvey disputes my

their heroic struggles against oppression and exploitation.

But this moralistic approach undermines a scientific understanding of the nature of this historic struggle and the line of march that will bring it to victory.

Harvey is correct in his argument that the *common origin* of Blacks in Africa would not in and of itself mean there is a distinct Black nationality in the United States. But when Russian revolutionary leader V. I. Lenin first introduced this characterization of U.S. Blacks into the Marxist movement, he wasn't looking to any common African origin — but rather to a specific historical development — namely the successful counterrevolution

## Social rebellion erupts in Argentina

BY HILDA CUZCO

Unprecedented levels of unemployment and discontent with the government's economic austerity policies have sparked a wave of social explosions in major cities throughout Argentina. Growing opposition to police brutality has added fuel to the fire. The protests have involved sugar mill workers, teachers, paper workers, students, and others, from the northern provinces to Tierra del Fuego in the far south.

In the town of Libertador General San Martín, in the northern province of Jujuy, thousands of sugar refinery workers, other unionists, and unemployed workers blocked National Highway 34 for three consecutive days May 20-22. They demanded unemployment benefits for the 5,000 laid-off workers in the area and retirement benefits for the hundreds that the owners of Ledesma Sugar mill had laid off without pensions.

The unemployment rate in Jujuy is 33 percent. The unemployment level in Argentina stands at a record high of more than 17 percent.

"I worked 34 years in the mill, they laid me off in 1992 and I have not been able to find work since," explained Juan Giménez, president of the Center for Unemployed and Laid-off Workers, a local organization founded in 1994.

The sugar workers joined in the protests with members of the State Employees Union Front, Congress of Argentine Workers (CTA), the Multi-Sector Union Coalition, and the organization of unemployed workers. For three days the pickets, mostly youth, were violently attacked by the police but they defended themselves by throwing stones and barricading the highway. On the third day, 3,000 protesters were attacked by 1,000 cops with tear gas and rubber bullets and dozens were injured.

The unions in Jujuy called a general strike and protests for May 22 in support of the sugar workers and against the repression.

In response to these events, Argentine president Carlos Menem declared, "I am not going to allow them to block my highways. This is a legitimate and democratic government." He ordered measures to end the unrest. As it became apparent, however, that the protests continued to expand, the nervous government promised it would increase social spending by \$600 million.

At the same time in Tartagal, in the province of Salta, which is also plagued by unemployment, thousands of workers blocked the national highway in mid-May demanding jobs. The protesters were viciously assaulted by the police.

### Pitched battles in La Plata

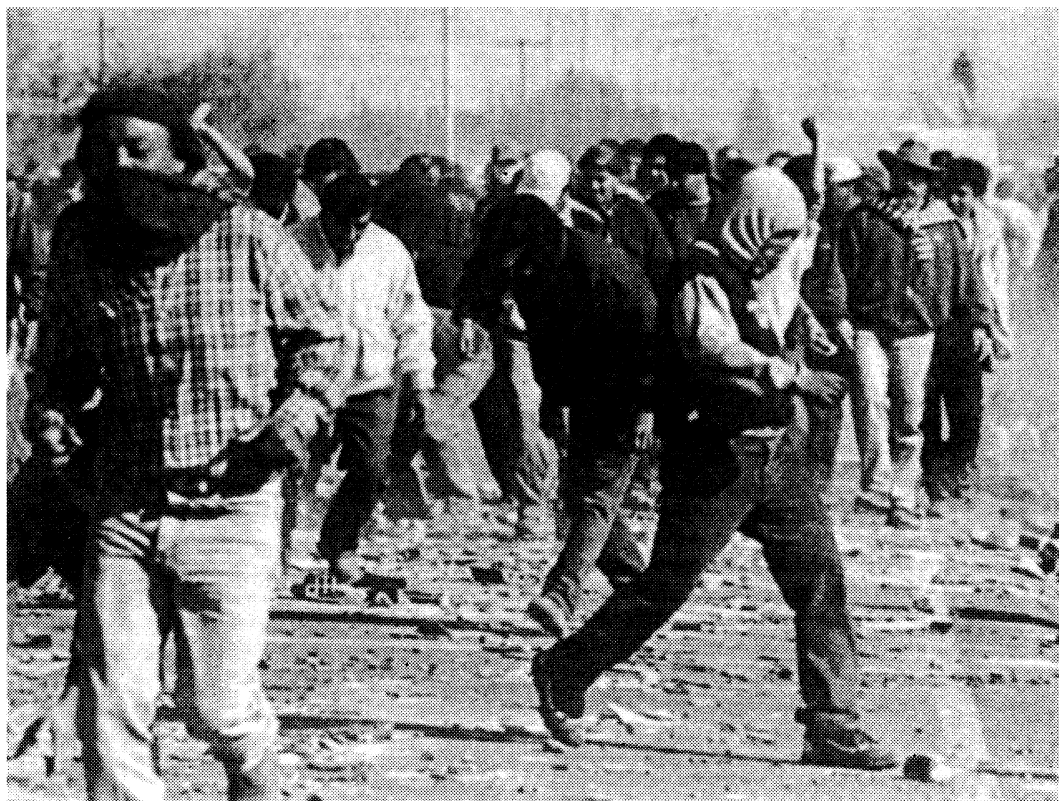
On May 20 in La Plata, in Buenos Aires province, "The city was a battle field," reported the headlines of the daily *Clarín*. The police provoked violent confrontations by attempting to remove dozens of so-called "illegal" vendors from their street booths. The vendors resisted their forced removal and fought back against the cops.

"They club us with their batons and they repress us, and I have three children to feed. We want to work," said one of the vendors.

On the streets of La Plata a pitched battle broke out. The vendors defended themselves throwing stones and other objects. For a while, they beat back the regular units, the mounted police, and the "canine" units of the cops. The police backed by antiriot tanks and even a helicopter, chased the street vendors with tear gas, stones and batons.

After a brief occupation of the America 2 television station, the vendors took refuge in the National University. A sizable group of students came out in their defense and confronted the police who entered the university campus with horses. Police arrested 75 and many protesters were injured. Ten cops were also injured.

The assaults have caused nationwide outrage. In the Argentine capital on May 22, some 3,500 students of the University of Buenos Aires poured into the streets pro-



Youth and workers in Neuquén, Argentina, revolt against cop brutality and in support of striking teachers in April. Fueled by high unemployment and austerity measures, protests by sugar workers, paper workers, students, and others have exploded in major Argentine cities.

testing the repression against the La Plata vendors and students and the Jujuy sugar workers. During rush hour, they blocked major avenues at five key points and organized teach-ins and street rallies. Protesters burned tires and threw firecrackers and flares. As they marched, they were greeted with confetti raining down from balconies and the cheers from the local residents.

One of the students' most popular chants,

***In our next issue, the Militant will feature eyewitness reporting from Argentina, by a team headed by Martín Koppel, editor of Perspectiva Mundial.***

directed at the government, was "*Sabía, Sabía, que a Cabezas lo mató la policía*" (They knew it, they knew it, Cabezas was killed by the cops). This refers to the murder of José Luis Cabezas, a journalist for the weekly newsmagazine *Noticias*, who had investigated cases of official corruption. His charred body was found January 25, handcuffed with a shot through the head, inside his incinerated car.

Cabezas's death, attributed by many to the Buenos Aires provincial police, has become a major scandal for the Argentine government and the focal point of the growing protests against cop violence. In recent months, the Argentine Press Workers Union and student groups have repeatedly demonstrated, demanding an investigation of the murder.

In the past month there has been a wave of protests and rebellions against unemployment and the government's economic policies — in many cases with highway roadblocks — in Córdoba, Entre Ríos, Tierra del Fuego, Tucumán, and other areas. In Mendoza, cops attacked a union protest against the vote by the provincial senate to sell off a state-owned electrical power station. And in Rosario 500 workers marched through the industrial sector of the city demanding jobs and against the layoffs of 41 workers at the Celulosa paper factory.

### Neuquén explodes

The workers' protests have mutually inspired each other. "When we saw what was happening in Cutral-Có and in Tartagal, we understood that we were not fighting alone," explained Eugenio Torre, a member of the Center of the Unemployed in Jujuy.

Torre was referring to the union battles taking place since March in Cutral-Có and Plaza Huicul, two towns in the southern

province of Neuquén, some 800 miles southwest of Buenos Aires. On March 10, teachers of Neuquén, members of the Confederation of Education Workers of the Argentine Republic (CTERA) began a strike against a decree by Governor Felipe Sapag that would slash their wages by 20 percent.

The teachers' strike was also fueled by discontent over the massive layoffs carried out by the YPF oil company since this former state-owned company was sold to capitalists. In this area there are more than 50,000 unemployed workers of the oil and petrochemical industry.

The authorities responded with repression, but when the police attacked a union protest near Cutral-Có on April 12 and fatally shot Teresa Rodríguez, a 24-year-old domestic worker, the protest flared into outright rebellion. The people of Neuquén joined marches of 15,000 and groups of masked students, dubbed the *fogoneros* (fire starters) blocked roads with barricades and burning tires. Thousands of people blocked cop reinforcements from entering the provincial capital at several strategic points.

On April 14 the CTERA, backed by the General Workers Confederation (CGT) and

the Argentine University Federation (FUA) carried out a successful national strike in solidarity with the teachers of Neuquén.

The teachers decided to end their strike after 30 days when the governor of Neuquén signed an agreement canceling the wage cut.

The Menem government initially claimed the protests from Neuquén to Jujuy were infiltrated by "armed ideological groups." The speed with which the revolts spread, however, surprised and frightened the regime, which was forced to change its stance and promise workers a few concessions. The capitalist opposition parties, seeking to profit from the crisis, have called for the resignation of Minister of the Interior Carlos Corach, holding him responsible for the cop brutality.

Meanwhile, Michel Camdessus, president of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), visited Argentina to tighten the screws. Camdessus declared that there is much more belt tightening needed in regard to economic "reforms" and austerity measures to guarantee continued financial aid from the IMF.

The Argentine government has been debating a package of "labor flexibility" bills that, among other things, would gut the trade unions' collective bargaining rights and would make it easier for employers to get rid of workers.

"Only when my visits are as a tourist and friend, will the IMF be able to speak of success in Argentina," he intoned.

Above all, the IMF chief sharply warned Argentine government officials not to "provoke the world's laughter by attempting to limit its foreign debt payments."

For now, no one is laughing in the Casa Rosada (Pink House), the presidential mansion, which faces the most severe social and political crisis in years. On top of the mobilizations by sugar workers in Jujuy and the teachers in Neuquén, political activity is bubbling among high school students.

In late April, more than 2,000 youth, mobilized by the Coordinating Committee of High School Students of the Capital and Greater Buenos Aires, marched through the streets of Buenos Aires behind a large banner reading "From Teresa Rodríguez to Bulacio: prosecute and jail the guilty parties, police out of Neuquén."

Walter Bulacio was a youth whose murder by the police six years ago sparked ongoing protests against police brutality in Argentina.

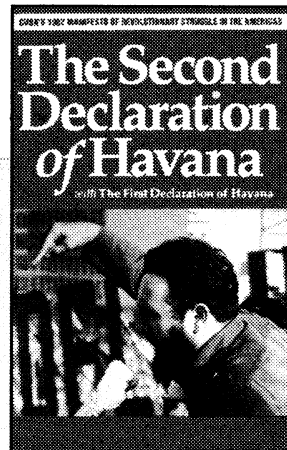
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