

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Frame-up of Geronimo Pratt
is overturned in California

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Protests by youth, workers sweep Argentina

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND JAVIER ACEVEDO

LA PLATA, Argentina — Before a packed audience of students at the University of La Plata, five young *fogoneros* from Neuquén province gave a graphic account of the working-class rebellion that has exploded there. The youth, dubbed the “bonfire starters,” received a loud ovation at the June 3 meeting when one of them, Juan, declared, “The rulers call us lawbreakers because we barricaded the highways, but they are the criminals because their economic austerity plan has brought this country nothing but unemployment and poverty.”

The Neuquén revolt, centered in the towns of Cutral-Có and Plaza Huincul, was set off in April by a month-long strike by teachers fighting a 20 percent wage cut proposed by the provincial government. Social unrest has been fueled by massive layoffs in this oil-producing area since the sale of the state-run oil company, YPF, to U.S. and Canadian capitalists five years ago.

In face of this social explosion, government officials canceled the cut in teachers’ wages and promised aid for the economically devastated towns. “Although the strike in Neuquén is over and we’ve lifted the roadblocks, the fight has spread all over the country,” said Juan, 28, an oil worker for six years before he was permanently laid off.

In May the example of the *cutralcazo*, as the rebellion in Cutral-Có became known, Continued on Page 9

Socialists step up book sales, from factories to Argentina

BY SARA LOBMAN

The first copies of *El rostro cambiante de la política de Estados Unidos*, the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, were sold to students involved in the protests sweeping Argentina. *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel reports that one copy was sold to a young person who was part of a group of high school students who were interviewing teachers holding a fast to press their demands.

Students at the University of La Plata also bought a copy for the student center library, along with the issue of *Nueva Internacional* featuring the article “Imperialism’s March toward Fascism and War.” They had participated in battling the cops who charged onto their campus May 20 in an assault on protesting street vendors and their student supporters.

Big increase in sales on the job

Sales to workers in the industrial unions soared in May, as socialists organized to take advantage of a “super sale” by Pathfinder of many of its titles. Socialists in the United Continued on Page 5

Workers reject austerity in French elections

Socialist, Communist parties form new gov’t

BY JEAN LOUIS SALFATI
AND RAFIK BENAÏE

PARIS — Working people across France sharply rejected the government’s austerity policies in parliamentary elections held here May 25 and June 1. The ruling conservative coalition parties were trounced, with the parties linked to the trade unions — the Socialist Party (PC), Communist Party of France (PCF), and their electoral allies — taking a majority of legislative seats. The fascist National Front also gained, netting its biggest vote yet in a national election and winning a seat in parliament.

French president Jacques Chirac had called the election nearly a year early. At the time his Rally for the Republic (RPR) party — the party of former president Gen. Charles de Gaulle — and the Union for French Democracy (UDF) held a large parliamentary majority. Chirac hoped to win a new mandate in this election to have a five-year run at implementing an austerity program to slash the social gains working people have won over the last half century by waging giant class battles.

Instead, the PS went from 57 to 241 seats in the 577-member parliament. The CPF won 38 seats, up from 24 in the last legislature. The Radical Socialist Party, allied with the PS, took 12 seats and the Green party won 8. A coalition of these and other “left” parties will form the next government.

The RPR and UDF ended up with 249 seats between them. Chirac, whose term does not expire until May 2002, remains the



Above, Militant/Nat London Workers’ resistance to government austerity led to election defeat for Chirac regime. Insets: Lionel Jospin (far right), Alain Juppé and Jacques Chirac (right). Above, workers demonstrate in Lyon, June 1996.



president.

In the May 25 first round of the general election, which better reflects the electoral balance between the different parties, the PS won 25.5 percent, an increase of more than 8 points from the last general election in 1993. The Communist Party won 9.9 per-

cent, an increase of one point. The RPR and UDF won about 36 percent between them. The National Front, headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, received 15 percent of the vote.

Only candidates with at least 12.5 percent in the first round were eligible to stand in the final vote. While other parties made Continued on Page 7

Wheeling-Pitt strikers keep up fight, despite pressure from company

BY DAVID SANDOR

After eight months on the picket lines, steelworkers striking against Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Co. remain adamant in their demand for a pension. At the same time, Wheeling-Pitt investors and Ronald LaBow, chairman of Wheeling-Pitt’s parent company WHX, are using threats and pressures to try to weaken the strikers’ resolve.

Some 4,500 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) began their strike against Wheeling-Pitt on Oct. 1, 1996. The strikers are demanding that Wheeling-Pitt establish a pension plan that will meet the standard of pensions paid under USWA contracts with other unionized basic steel mills in the United States. The current substandard pension was set up after a bankruptcy and subsequent 89-day strike in 1985.

Wheeling-Pitt is the ninth largest integrated steel company in the United States. The strikers have kept eight mills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia shut tight from the beginning of the strike.

The strikers have been getting stepped up financial support from other steelworkers through regularized solidarity efforts, such as monthly plantgate collections. The USWA authorized locals in the basic steel industry to do the collections and other fundraising in late January. Many locals have acted on this, in many cases with the par-

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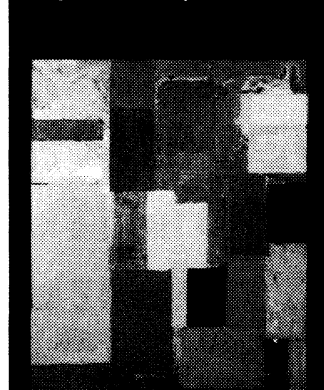
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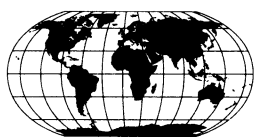
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Polish court nixes abortion law

On May 28 the Polish government's Constitutional Tribunal struck down a law that gave women the right to abortion through the eleventh week of pregnancy. Opposing a woman's right to choose, tribunal chairman Andrzej Zoll ruled, "The highest value in democracy is human life, which must be protected from its beginning to its end." The Polish parliament now will have six months to either change the law or override the court ruling with a two-thirds majority vote. Abortion was available on demand for four decades in Poland. The current law permitting first-trimester abortions reversed a 1993 ban on the procedure.

Spain abortion trial suspended

A court in Malaga, Spain, suspended a May 28 trial of 34 people charged with having or facilitating illegal abortions in 1986. Eight women were clinic staff members, while the other 26 were clients. The prosecution asked for a 21-year jail sentence for each staffer, for alleged involvement in 44 abortions, and six months for the other women. The postponement of the trial came when 15 of the defendants did not show up. No new trial date was set, but one of the presiding judges said arrest warrants would be issued to make all the accused be present.

For more than a decade, abortion has been illegal in Spain except for cases of rape, incest, fetal deformities, or fatal consequences for the woman. The Spanish daily *El Pais* printed a letter in their May 28 edition, signed by dozens of unions, political organizations, and health groups, demanding that women have abortion rights on demand.

Iraqis say 'Turkish troops out!'

Hundreds of people assembled May 29 in Baghdad to denounce the invasion of northern Iraq by 50,000 Turkish imperialist troops. Turkish military and government officials have stated they will remain in the region until the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is wiped out of that area. The Syrian, Iranian and Iraqi governments have all sharply criticized Ankara's moves, but beyond that there has been no attempt to stop the invasion of Iraqi soil. Turkish military officials boast of having killed 1,800 rebels

and destroyed PKK camps in the Zab, Sinat, Haqurk, Zeli, Hafthanin and Kesan regions of Iraq, but there has been no independent confirmation of this claim.

Battle for control of Afghanistan

During heavy fighting in northern Afghanistan the last week of May, the rightist Taliban forces, who control most of the country, briefly seized Mazar-I-Sharif. They were routed and forced to withdraw from the city May 28 after a 15-hour battle with Shiite Muslim residents and the forces of Uzbeki general Abdul Malik, a former Taliban ally. The Clinton administration has backed the Taliban, whose northern offensive could potentially open a corridor between Pakistan and the Turkish republics that were part of the Soviet Union, bypassing Iran.

'Don't hide WWII sex slavery'

Dozens of the 200,000 Asian women who were subjugated to sex bondage in Japanese military-organized brothels during World War II picketed the Japanese embassy in Philippines May 29. They were protesting efforts to strike reference to this piece of history from school books in Japan. Demanding compensation and an official apology from Tokyo, 70-year-old protester Cristeta Alcover, said, "They should face the truth about what happened to us and admit what happened was wrong."

Indian, Bangladeshi women unknowingly sterilized

Thousands of women in Bangladesh and India have been subjected to experimental sterilization tests of the toxic drug quinacrine, without their knowledge or consent.



Cops in south Korea dodge a firebomb at May 10 protest by students demanding the president resign over a campaign finance scandal. The police also attacked a march of 10,000 students May 31.

mala to remove president Jacobo Arbenz from office. Arbenz became a target of U.S. imperialism for threatening to carry out modest land reforms against the interests of produce giant, United Fruit Company. In 1952, U.S. president Harry Truman gave the secret police approval to begin shipping guns and money to opposition forces and training mercenaries.

The released documents show that CIA cops trained assassins to kill 58 people put on a "disposal list." They include a 22-page how-to manual on murder. Secret intelligence officials claim none of the missions were carried out. The list of CIA targets were also subjected to "nerve war," which included death threats, phone calls "preferably between 2 and 5 A.M.," frame-ups, and other forms of intimidation. Less than 1 percent of the CIA files on the Guatemala coup were included in the declassification, with many details blacked out.

Court rules against gay rights

On May 31, the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit ruled against a woman being denied a job because she was a lesbian and planned to marry another woman. The court ruled 8-to-4 that Georgia's Attorney General Michael Bowers did not break the law when he withdrew a job offer to Robin Shahrar.

Last year, a court panel ruled that Shahrar had a fundamental right of intimate association with her partner and could not be fired for that reason. In March, however, the full court of appeals decided all 12 judges should hear the case and it was retried. Bowers defended the state's anti-sodomy law before the United States Supreme Court in 1986.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

Workers reject austerity in France

The recent elections in France and Britain reflect broad opposition among working people to the capitalist rulers' attempts to lower their standard of living. The 'Militant' brings you coverage of this resistance, which portends rising class battles in Europe. Don't miss a single issue!



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Quinacrine, which was used as an antimalarial drug during World War II, has been labeled a chemical poison and can cause irreversible reproductive damage and possibly cancer. The tests were conducted to see if the drug could be used as a contraceptive. The result: a 14 percent failure rate in the prevention of pregnancy and a heightened chance that delivery would be fatal due to the permanent sealing of the area between the uterus and the fallopian tubes.

Military coup in Sierra Leone

The elected president of Sierra Leone, Tejan Kabbah, was ousted May 25 in a coup led by Maj. Gen. Paul Koromah. The military officers suspended the constitution, banned demonstrations, and abolished political parties. The government of Nigeria sent 900 troops to the West African country, to join 700 that were already stationed there. Unconfirmed reports say the governments of Ghana and Guinea may also send troops in an attempt to reinstate Kabbah.

Under the pretext of a rescue, on May 30 Washington deployed 200 marines with helicopters and attack vehicles to evacuate 900 people including U.S. citizens from the capital, Freetown, to an amphibious assault ship 12 miles off the shore.

CIA involved in Guatemala coup

At the end of May, the Central Intelligence Agency declassified 1,400 pages of reports on the 1954 coup it engineered in Guatemala.

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Editor: NAOMI CRAINE

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

Editorial Staff: Megan Arney, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Argriris Malapanis, Brian Taylor, and Maurice Williams.

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Iran elections show desire for rights

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

NEW YORK — Twenty-nine million people went to the polls and elected Seyyed Mohammad Khatami as the next president of Iran May 23. The turnout, 91 percent of those age 15 and over, was the largest in any presidential or Majlis (parliament) elections since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the monarchy and established the Islamic Republic.

Public opinion polls did not predict his victory, but Khatami won 69 percent of the votes nationally. In the capital city Tehran and its working-class southern belt he won 76 percent.

The new president is an Islamic cleric, widely known to be in favor of easing restrictions on democratic rights. He heads up Iran's national library and is a professor specializing in Islamic reform movements. Khatami had been the Minister of Culture for 10 years, before he was forced out of his post in 1992 for reducing censorship on books and periodicals. The turnout and the vote was a massive demonstration by workers, farmers, women, youth, and significant sections of the middle class of their desire for basic liberties and freedom of expression that was a central slogan of the 1979 revolution. For working people, this was also a chance to cast a protest vote against Khatami's rival, the well-known cleric and capitalist politician Hojatolislam Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri.

Nateq-Nouri, speaker of the Majlis, enjoyed the backing of key figures in the state and clerical hierarchy, and his victory in the first or second round of elections was taken for granted by most bourgeois commentators before elections. The head of Islamic state, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had issued statements indirectly favoring Nateq-Nouri, but he received just 25 percent of the votes. In Kermanshah, where most people are of the oppressed Kurdish nationality, he received 13 percent as opposed to Khatami's 80 percent.

Question of democratic rights

Many people viewed a Nateq-Nouri victory as a prelude to further restrictions of democratic rights. As if to prove the point, the Council of Guardians, which has the final say on who is eligible to run, ruled 234 candidates off the ballot and approved the candidacy of only four, all of them men. Most members of the Council of Guardians are conservative clerics who supported Nateq-Nouri.

Azam Taleqani, a member of the Majlis who earlier had announced her candidacy as a test case for eligibility of a woman to

be president, was among those ruled off the ballot. The spokesman for the Council of the Guardians who reported on the ruling did not address the woman question and gave no specific reasons for deletions. Referring to those who were ruled off the ballot he said, "Some of them had Marxist views or political problems such as having belonged to antirevolutionary groups or backing groups fighting the government."

The Council of Guardians ruling forced the electoral contest to be confined to ruling class factions and figures. Nateq-Nouri belongs to a faction that is sometimes called the "traditionalist right" and is based on the large merchants, known as Bazar. While Khatami declared that he was unaffiliated, he was backed by a faction identified with the outgoing president Hashemi Rafsanjani that aims to build a modern capitalist state using the government as a leverage.

Supporters of the "traditionalist right" have a majority in the present Majlis. That majority was obtained in the last elections by a series of decisions by the Council of Guardians that selectively ruled many candidates off the ballot, or refused to ratify the victory of some who won. In particular, this affected many women who had come forward to be candidates for the Majlis.

In this year's elections extralegal groups, known as Ansare Hezbollah (Supporters of the Party of God), generally considered to be supporters of Nateq-Nouri, heckled and at times disrupted the meetings of the opposition candidates. These kinds of groups, who are supported by the Bazar, have been active since early days of the revolution and have acted with impunity to stifle democratic discussion. They have never been popular with working people, but an effective defense has never been organized to stop their disruptions.

This year a group of Ansare Hezbollah disrupted an April 19 meeting where Khatami was speaking in the city of Mashhad. They accused the candidate of working secretly for imperialist governments. For the first time, sensing mass revulsion with those actions, some prominent leaders of Islamic Republic took their distance and condemned the disruptions. In the face of mass opposition, the disruption campaign fizzled out.

Anti-imperialist protests, labor actions

The presidential elections came in the wake of massive demonstrations that engulfed the country after the April 10 ruling by a German court that framed up leaders of Iranian government in assassination of Kurdish opposition leaders in Germany.

Thousands of teachers strike in Mexico



More than 20,000 teachers and their supporters rally in Mexico City

During the month of May, teachers struck across Mexico demanding higher wages. The teachers, members of the National Coordinating Committee of Education Workers (CNTE), began organizing demonstrations throughout the country after May Day celebrations. On May 21, the CNTE mobilized tens of thousands of teachers from Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Michoacán to demand a 100 percent pay increase. The unionists agreed May 24 to suspend their street protests and negotiate.

Their demands also included defense of social security and public education, free text books for secondary school students, school breakfasts for children through all levels for elementary school,

and an end to military repression. The CNTE members, who broke from the official National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), said their real wages have dropped 60 percent since the devaluation of the peso in December 1994.

The government maintained its offer of a 6 percent wage increase and a 16 percent hike in social benefits.

Meanwhile, the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is facing elections for governor in five states, mayor in Mexico City, and lower house of the national legislature on July 6. Polls indicate the PRI could lose its majority in the lower house of Congress for the first time in nearly seven decades.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Following that ruling, all the governments in the European Union except Greece, as well as some other imperialist countries, withdrew their ambassadors from Iran.

Iranians saw this as a new imperialist assault on their sovereignty. More than 100,000 demonstrated in front of German embassy in Tehran April 13. There was also a sit-in in front of the embassy by victims of chemical gas supplied by German companies to the Iraqi government during the Iran-Iraq war. At the same time Sepahe Pasdaran, the military organization that was built during the Iran-Iraq war to defend the revolution, conducted 200,000-strong air, land, and sea maneuvers in the Arab-Persian Gulf, where a major U.S. naval force is stationed.

Along with their participation in anti-imperialist actions workers have been increasingly involved in labor struggles. The elec-

tions registered a shift that has taken place in relations between the government and the masses. The capitalist rulers are no longer able to convince the working people that they should postpone fighting for their democratic rights and better living conditions because that would play into the hands of imperialist counterrevolution.

Early this year, oil refinery workers in the industrial city of Isfahan staged a one-day strike to publicize their demands for wage increases and other benefits. Refinery workers from some other cities expressed solidarity and collectively presented their demands to authorities, giving them a month to respond. Having received no satisfactory answer, they decided to travel to Tehran and demand a face-to-face meeting with the highest officials of the Ministry. On February 16, hundreds refinery workers from various cities converged at the headquarters of the Ministry of Oil for the meeting. Authorities brought in the riot police, attacked the workers, and arrested them. But this did not intimidate the workers, some of whom had volunteered and fought in the Iran-Iraq war. Government officials finally met with them and agreed to substantial pay raises, some amounting to 50 percent. This struggle became widely known around the country as a major victory for working people.

There was no working-class alternative in this election. The Workers House, which is a semiofficial workers organization, supported the candidacy of Khatami. He received higher vote than the national average in Tehran, indicating that heavily working-class vote of the suburbs of the city, constantly growing by new arrivals from the country side. A *Washington Post* correspondent reporting from the working-class Tehran suburb of Akbarabad, where in a bus fare hike sparked a major rioting in April 1995, observed that Khatami "seemed to have many supporters."

Even in the city of Gum, the center of the Islamic clerical establishment, where leading theologians issued a statement saying they approved of Nateq-Nouri's Muslim credentials, vote counts were 59 percent to 33 percent in favor of Khatami, again indicating a heavy working-class vote for him. For working people, voting for Khatami was a protest vote against the ills of capitalism, especially against the merchant profiteers associated with Nateq-Nouri faction. A worker told the *Financial Times* correspondent Scheherzade Daneshkhu in Tehran that he had voted for Khatami because the Nateq-Nouri "lot have made our lives a misery with their high prices and inflation."

Bonn, unable to push through austerity, debates gold maneuver to lower deficit

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — After considerable debate between Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, Bonn put off until 1998 a scheme to lower its budget deficit by revaluing its gold reserves. The German government had announced plans May 28 to pass legislation to allow the transfer of some \$11 billion in revalued gold profits from the country's central bank to cover a budget deficit. Bonn claims the so-called shortfall is largely caused by nearly 5 million jobless workers drawing benefits.

Kohl also unveiled a program on May 22 to create 100,000 jobs a year in east Germany. Unemployment in east Germany was 17.5 percent in April — 7.7 percent higher than in the west. The eastern region has received government payments of \$90 billion annually since reunification in 1990.

The federal labor office announced May 6 that the country's unemployment rate had soared to the highest levels since World War II. Manfred Stolpe, president of the eastern state of Brandenburg, said unemployment had become "a very real danger to social peace in our country."

Last October, protests swept Germany as 400,000 metalworkers walked out of factories and steel mills, protesting cuts in sick pay and other social entitlements.

According to London's *Financial Times*, an "experts' report" was published May 15 in Germany that forecast a Deutsche mark (DM)118 billion (\$68 billion) deficit in budgeted revenues between now and 2001. The report was released as German finance minister Theo Waigel, presented the government plans to revalue the nation's gold reserves to the country's central bank.

The gold reserves are currently valued at DM13.69 billion, more than DM40 billion below their market value. Waigel said a transfer of Bundesbank's profits from the revaluation of the gold reserves to the "redemption fund for historic burdens" would go toward reducing Germany's public deficit and debt. This fund is among others used to cover costs for German reunification.

Waigel asserted the move would ensure that the country's overall deficit stayed below the limit of 3 percent of gross domestic product, the criteria for membership in the European Monetary Union. He also announced further sell-offs of Deutsche Telekom shares and other government properties and tightening controls of public spending to plug the gaps in the budget.

These reserves, although among the world's largest, have not been of crucial importance to the German rulers as they have benefited from the strong German mark that came out from the country's economic re-

covery in the post World War II boom. The gold revaluation plan, however, is a sign of economic weakness and reflects the regime's trepidation in launching a deep assault on workers' wages and benefits. Bonn is caught in a "financial squeeze brought on by the high cost of reuniting with eastern Germany and lackluster economic growth," the *New York Times* reported May 29.

Government officials from other countries in Europe seeking to enter the monetary union railed against Bonn's "creative accounting." Italy's foreign minister Lamberto Dini said, "Recourse to accounting gimmicks" makes "precarious the respect and sustainability of the stability pact." Similar onetime financial maneuvers by Paris and Rome had been denounced by the German regime.

The German daily *Die Welt* described the government's apparent desperation as "Helplessness." Bundesbank officials stated disapproval of the plan May 29. On June 1, Oskar Lafontaine, leader of the opposition Social Democratic party called for new elections, declaring "the Kohl government should not damage further the credibility of Germany monetary and finance policy."

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

Marshall Plan was about domination, not world peace

In his recent travels, U.S. president William Clinton has been touting the 50-year-old European Recovery plan, better known as the Marshall Plan, as a model for peace and economic development. Under this scheme, the U.S. rulers provided \$13 billion in loans between 1948 and 1951 to restart industry and rebuild the infrastructure of the war-torn capitalist countries in Europe. Far from advancing peace, the Marshall Plan was designed to codify Washington's hegemony over its imperialist rivals, stave off further revolutionary developments in Europe, and maximize economic pressure against the workers state in the Soviet Union.

Below we reprint major excerpts from an article that appeared in the July-August 1947 issue of *Fourth International*, a precursor to the Marxist magazine *New International*. In it the magazine's editors explain the real aims of the recently announced Marshall Plan. The entire article will be available in the upcoming *Collected New International*, to be published by Pathfinder Press in CD-ROM format. Copyright © 408 Printing and Publishing. Reprinted with permission. Subheadings and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

The Marshall Plan represents the most finished and thought-out scheme of American imperialism to bend ruined and prostrate Europe to its needs, to exert further economic and political pressure to hem in Russia, and to realize hegemony of the continent. The Marshall Plan bases itself on the new relationship of forces and the new facts that have now come into sharp relief two years after the war: Not only America's military and industrial superiority *vis-à-vis* Russia, but the incurable disintegration of the British Empire and its inability to maintain the pretensions of a first-rate power; the helplessness of the European capitalist classes; the out-and-out bankruptcy of Europe; and the utopian character of the Potsdam¹ agreement.

Just as the Potsdam agreement represented the high point of collaboration between Washington and Moscow, so the Marshall Plan represents a high point of the break between these two world powers, and the scrapping of all the former pacts, in the first instance, the Potsdam agreement.

The Potsdam agreement along with the previous agreements at Teheran and Yalta, was an attempt to divide up in a business-like manner the spoils of war between the three major powers, the United States, England and Russia, and to parcel out the European continent along the same lines. The United States and England would run Western Europe through traditional economic penetration and imperialist methods of control. Eastern Europe would fall into the Kremlin's "sphere of influence." And Germany would be run as a joint military enterprise of the three powers, with a minor cut provided for the country cousin, France....

Everything went wrong with this strategy from the economic standpoint.

The attempt to rehabilitate the economies of England and France has failed. The huge \$4 billion loan to England will be used up by the end of the year. Loans totaling almost \$2 billion to France have likewise melted away. And instead of their economies showing improvement, they are both in acute crisis. They cannot revamp their internal economies, their colonial empires are in open revolt. Far from being able to take the lead in reorganizing and stabilizing capitalism in Europe, they have become the prime sources of its disorganization and disintegration.

Economic disaster in Europe

Hopelessly bankrupt France greedily sucks every possible ounce of blood out of the Saar and its "colony on the Rhine," and bickers with England over its share of the plunder of Ruhr coal.² England, in control of the Ruhr, has kept this greatest industrial concentration of Europe in a state of economic anarchy. Ruhr coal production averages no more than half the pre-war level. Now England finds itself in such a bankrupt state that it cannot pay out any longer the necessary sums to maintain its military establishment in Germany.

The Kremlin's political methods are different, but its aims are identical with those of France and England — to plunder Germany. First, it proceeded to dismantle the plants in its zone and ship them bodily to Russia. This vampire policy was abandoned, not out of humanitarian considerations, but because it proved unprofitable. The machinery arrived damaged, or with essential parts missing, or Russia found it lacked the necessary skilled labor or personnel. Now it keeps the plants in its zone running full blast, but confiscates 50 to 70 per cent of all production and ships it to Russia — as reparations. Thus Germany, its living flesh torn from all sides by four ravenous wolves, is literally bleeding to death; and its death threatens to drag the rest of Europe down into the abyss, and endanger the existence of capitalism, on a world scale....

Two years after the signing of the Potsdam agreement, the United States finds itself further from its objective than it was after the war — of stabilizing European capitalism, converting it into a profitable preserve of American imperialism, and incorporating it into its assigned place in the projected American Empire. In addition, half of Europe, including half of Germany, is in the grip of the Kremlin. The Stalinist oligarchs have closed this vast region to Western capital, have aligned by main force all of the economies therein with their own and have first call on all its resources and raw materials.

The United States has already sunk over \$21 billion into Europe through governmental loans, property credits, World Bank and International Monetary loans, plus relief. As mentioned before, England and France have all but used up their huge loans with no noticeable improvement in their positions. They again stand on the verge of a catastrophic crisis. Italy's position is even more



Workers and farmers in Greece armed with shovels and hatchets defending themselves from the invasion of imperialist forces at the end of WWII. The Marshall Plan sought to end this type of resistance by workers and peasants.

desperate. As for Germany, it is worse off today than at the war's end. So phenomenally successful have the Allies been in their policies of "de-industrialization" and destruction, that they are now even forced to import food into Germany at their own expense, to prevent the whole structure from collapsing underneath. Under American tutelage, Western Europe is in such a state of disorganization, demoralization and decay, and such a source of losses rather than profits, that cynical Congressmen have dubbed the whole affair as "Operation Rathole."

Threats against Russia are insufficient

Under the whip of stern necessity, the gang of arrogant generals and cocky industrialists who have undertaken to teach the Europeans "our way of life," have been forced to take stock and seriously ask themselves the question: Where do we go from here? Two years sufficed to teach even them, that saber-rattling, threats, denunciation of Russia was insufficient to guarantee their hegemony. Despite the big loans, Europe was in danger of collapsing, with all the incalculable political consequences that that would involve.

Face to face with this mounting threat to its rule — not only in Europe but also in Asia! — the American masters sat down to appraise the situation and attempt to think, for a change. The result is — the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan recognizes in effect the new reality; that Europe is partitioned in two with the eastern half withdrawn from the capitalist world market. There is no way, right now, for the United States to breach this iron curtain, short of war. Secondly, the plan to restore Europe through the instrumentality of Britain and France, and on the basis of a crushed Germany, has failed. Therefore the whole old policy is to be scrapped and all the old estimates must be revamped. The Potsdam scheme is to be junked, in toto. Wall Street now proposes to rebuild Germany. The financial magazines talk of rebuilding it to 75 per cent of its pre-war level. They plan to send their engineers, financial experts, and production planners into Western Germany, provide it with capital loans, machinery, raw materials, food and credit; raise coal production to its pre-war level, rebuild partially its steel industry, and get the productive machinery moving again. A revived Western Germany can then proceed to pump life blood into the sclerotic veins of the rest of Europe. By means of this sharp reorientation, American imperialism hopes to eventually see daylight ahead and convert Europe into a profitable undertaking for the Wall Street banks. This is the whole sum and substance of the Marshall Plan, from its economic side. Everything else said about it falls into the domain of technique, diplomatic bunk and window-dressing.

Can Wall Street put the plan across? After all, this very same question of Germany has divided the powers for three decades. For the past two years, France and England have been unable to reach an agreement on the far more modest plan to restore the Ruhr coal mines. But the very weakness of these two powers and their pathetic dependence upon the colossus across the sea — the only

solvent imperialist power in the world — means that finally Wall Street will have its way and will push through the plan. France will have to give up its dream of being first claimant in robbing Germany's coal and uniting it with the iron ore of Lorraine to build up French steel as the center of the new European economy. England will be forced to cede its exclusive control over the Ruhr to the Wall Street banks, and content itself with a more modest role in the projected new Germany. John Bull's hope at the war's end to rebuild the Ruhr under its own hegemony, with France in the position of a junior partner, has gone up in smoke. Both "allies" are being unceremoniously elbowed aside by the American overlords. All England and France can now hope to do is blackmail Wall Street to give them additional loans and other concessions and emoluments, in return for faithfully carrying through the terms of the Marshall Plan....

A logical plan

It is apparent that the Marshall Plan is the most logical and sensible plan of action yet devised by American imperialism to realize its imperial aims. Not only that; but the plan was launched with a diabolical disingenuousness. Big hearted Uncle Sam, full of good will and humanitarian sentiments towards his less fortunate kin folk, came forward and said simply: "Stop fighting, boys. Get together. Figure out how you can pool your resources and what you can do to help yourselves. I will undertake to make up the difference and help you out with some loans. Let's all put our shoulders to the wheel, go to work and give the people some security." What could be more altruistic and sensible than that?

West-European capitalism is so insolvent and helpless that no sooner was Marshall's speech delivered, then Bevin,³ like a gang foreman, lined up in single file all of the European statesmen with their food bowls extended. The London *Economist* observed wryly that "Western Europe now has what is virtually a standing economic committee for answering and briefing Mr. Marshall." The organ of the British banks speaks of the 16 countries participating in the Paris Conference as the "Marshall countries." Grasping, greedy, perfidious Uncle Shylock was thus permitted to step out on the European stage donned in the trappings of a kindly, down-to-earth gentleman attempting to

Continued on Page 11

NOTES

1. The heads of state and foreign ministers of Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union met in July 1945 in Potsdam, outside Berlin, following the German regime's surrender in World War II. The discussions there took up the continued war against Tokyo and the division of Europe among the victors. This included initial agreements on extracting reparations from Germany and the other defeated countries.

2. Saarland and the Ruhr valley are coal-rich industrial areas in western Germany, bordering France.

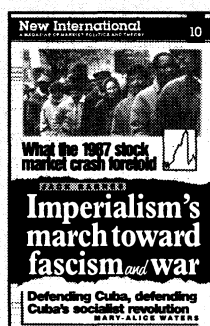
3. Ernest Bevin was foreign minister of Labour government in Britain, 1945-51. He helped lay groundwork for NATO military alliance.

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SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Socialists sell more books on the job and at political events

Continued from front page

States sold 451 books to their co-workers, exceeding their monthly goal for the first time.

In Boston, 22 books were sold on the job, Mary Nell Bockman reports, including *What Is to be Done?* by V.I. Lenin, *The Struggle against Fascism in Germany* by Leon Trotsky, *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, and *On the Irish Freedom Struggle* by Bernadette Devlin McAliskey. "Workers at a rally of 2,000 unionists from the GE plant in Lynn, Massachusetts, bought five copies of *The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists* and a copy of *Labor's Giant Step: The First Twenty Years of the CIO: 1936-55*. Workers there are preparing for a contract fight. Boston socialists also sold 19 titles at political events, including a Gay Youth Pride march, a commemoration of the Irish hunger strike, and a debate on Puerto Rican independence." Another 19 books were sold at the Harvard Square Book Festival.

Rachel Fruit in Miami reports that members of the International Association of Machinists, the United Steelworkers of America, and the United Transportation Union came by the Pathfinder bookstore in May to take advantage of the special offers.

In Pittsburgh, 17 books and pamphlets were sold to members of the IAM. Doug Jenness reports from Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, that socialist workers there sold 34 books and pamphlets on the job in May, "the highest on record."

Dick McBride, a meatpacker and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers in Perry, Iowa, went around the plant after work, showing his co-workers the supersaver order form. One worker, who engaged him in an extended discussion, ordered 15 titles. Several other workers, from Vietnam and Latin America, joined in the conversation. Another worker, from the Sudan, purchased *Capital* and *On Colonialism* by Karl Marx.

13,800 books en route to workers, youth

The successful sales of the revolutionary literature to unionists on the job is one of the most important results of the Pathfinder sale. In the course of the special effort some 35,300 books were packaged and shipped to Pathfinder bookstores around the world, their first stop on their way into the hands of workers and youth. This includes 115 sets of the 14-volume *Writings of Leon Trotsky*, 231 sets of the *Communist International in Lenin's Time*, 121 sets of the *Collected Works of Lenin*, and dozens of sets of the *Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*. The total sales, including sales of the *Collected Works* during a special offer in the early months of the year, came to \$152,000!

On May 24 and 25, several dozen volunteers converged on New York from across the United States and Canada to help pack up the final orders and ship them out from a warehouse the publisher had temporarily rented in Brooklyn to cities around the world. As the final orders were packed up, other teams immediately began a careful inventory of the remaining stock.

As part of the effort to set up the efficient production and distribution of revolutionary literature, several thousand books, mainly volumes of the *Collected Works* of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, were shipped to a half dozen



Militant/George Chalmers
Selling Pathfinder titles at picket for Irish political prisoner Róisín McAliskey May 31, New York City.

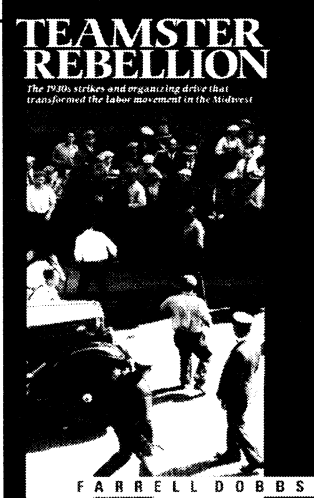
cities where supporters had volunteered to keep these hard-to-replace books until they are needed. Volunteers also destroyed thousands of overstock titles; both steps were necessary to ensure open shelves, space to fill orders in a timely way, and an organized reprint program that regularly produces the socialist books and pamphlets.

Following a final inventory review, volunteers will pull several thousand additional titles from the shelves. Many of these will be available at supersale prices to participants at the June 10-14 socialist conference in Oberlin, Ohio.

Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla

These steps come not a moment too soon. In addition to the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, several other new books are rolling off the presses. *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*, is a never-before-published story of the 1966-68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara told by Harry Villegas, a member of Guevara's general staff. Villegas, known by his nom de guerre, Pombo, is today a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces.

At the same time, Pathfinder is publishing—in English and Spanish—recent interviews with Villegas, where he talks about the struggles he has taken part in over the past four decades and the importance of Guevara's political legacy for a new generation of fighters the world over.



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

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

Countries/Cities	May			Previous months		
	Goal	Sales	% Sold	Apr	Mar	Feb
FRANCE	25	77	308%	44%	164%	96%
SWEDEN	55	123	224%	214%	84%	109%
UNITED STATES						
Pittsburgh	54	214	396%	228%	96%	49%
Washington, D.C.	64	247	386%	245%	134%	67%
Des Moines	45	150	333%	196%	16%	71%
Los Angeles	120	347	289%	413%	94%	95%
San Francisco	110	308	280%	229%	113%	168%
Atlanta	48	133	277%	179%	156%	88%
Boston	65	169	260%	234%	137%	55%
Miami	41	103	251%	198%	107%	144%
Detroit	54	128	237%	252%	89%	233%
Chicago	77	169	219%	209%	97%	84%
Greensboro	42	63	150%	356%	90%	20%
Morgantown	40	60	150%	156%	19%	69%
Seattle	80	119	149%	99%	84%	79%
Birmingham	36	51	142%	106%	44%	78%
Twin Cities	104	144	138%	166%	29%	43%
New York	245	328	134%	116%	60%	43%
Newark	171	226	132%	89%	76%	57%
Philadelphia	41	51	124%	329%	102%	54%
Houston	65	79	122%	125%	97%	128%
Cleveland	50	39	78%	106%	70%	94%
U.S. Total	1552	3128	174%	168%	74%	71%
Goal/Should be	1800	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CANADA						
Vancouver	41	117	285%	90%	66%	34%
Montreal	80	146	183%	91%	40%	46%
Toronto	80	68	85%	85%	54%	40%
Canada Total	201	331	165%	89%	160%	38%
GREECE	13	19	146%	100%	331%	23%
AUSTRALIA	36	46	128%	100%	105%	44%
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	139	93%	97%	97%	78%
Manchester	56		0%	113%	0%	0%
U.K. Total	206	139	67%	101%	64%	36%
NEW ZEALAND						
Christchurch	35	27	77%	169%	51%	100%
Auckland	45	22	49%	147%	62%	41%
N.Z. Total	80	49	61%	156%	80%	61%

IN THE UNIONS

Unions	Goal	Sold	%	Apr	Mar	Feb
UNITED STATES						
UFCW	6	35	583%	83%	183%	67%
UAW	50	93	186%	62%	70%	82%
UNITE	26	46	177%	138%	31%	23%
IAM	60	104	173%	83%	21%	58%
USWA	46	49	107%	102%	33%	48%
UTU	94	97	103%	54%	27%	0%
OCAW	44	22	50%	43%	27%	27%
UMWA	3	1	33%	33%	133%	100%
U.S. Total	329	447	136%	71%	38%	37%
CANADA						
USWA	18	15	83%	38%	42%	60%
IAM	8	4	50%	38%	25%	88%
Canada Total	26	19	73%	38%	39%	81%
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	2	50%	50%	50%	100%
UNITED KINGDOM						
AEEU	5	4	80%	0%	10%	40%
TGWU	7	1	14%	114%	29%	100%
RMT	10	1	10%	10%	13%	0%
U.K. Total	22	6	27%	33%	16%	44%

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

Talking politics in W. Virginia

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY DIANA NEWBERRY

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Over Memorial Day weekend the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) here cosponsored an educational weekend attended by 27 people. Six Pathfinder titles were bought during that time, including the book *Fighting Racism in World War II* and *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation*, part of the Education for Socialists series."

The weekend began with a class on the fight against women's oppression. The speaker was Mary Zins, a member of the SWP, the United Steelworkers of America, and a longtime activist in the Coal Employment Project (CEP), an organization formed a couple of decades ago to help women get and keep jobs in the mines. Zins spoke about the origins of women's oppression and pointed to some of the attacks on women's rights today.

One of the central questions discussed

was the government's moves to ban a procedure used in late term abortions. One participant, who found out about the conference at a SWP/YS street table, raised that she is a defender of abortion rights but said, "Let's face it, late term abortion is really awful." Feminists should concentrate on working for better birth control and sex education, she said.

Her friend jumped into the discussion saying, "It should be every women's right to decide whether or not to have an abortion. All the attacks coming down on abortion rights, including late term abortion, are tied to the recent clinic bombings. If they can, they will take away all of abortion rights."

That evening Estelle DeBates, a garment worker, spoke at the Militant Labor Forum titled "Capitalism's World Disorder and the Place of Working-Class Resistance." She took up the U.S. imperialist war moves against the workers states through the expansion of NATO as part of the growing attacks throughout the world on all gains won in struggle by working people.

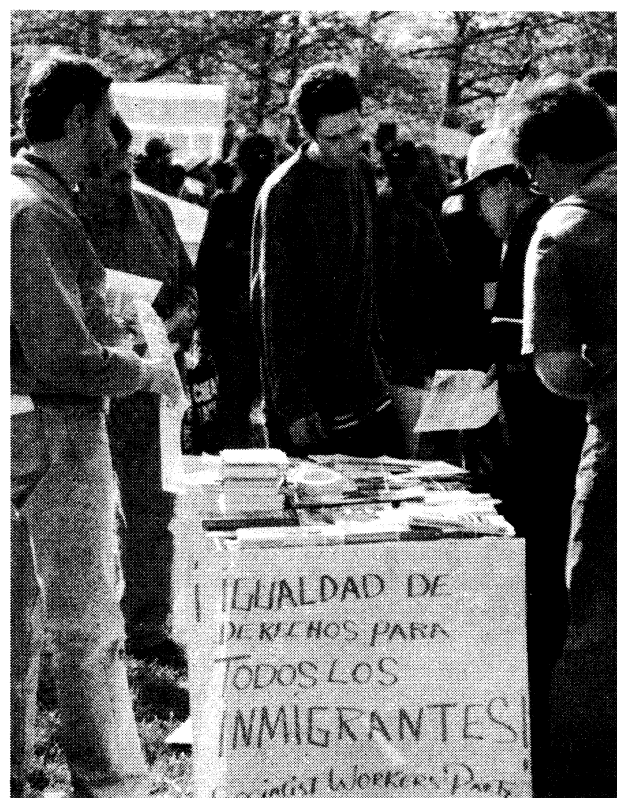
DeBates' presentation also highlighted the place of the Cuban revolution in today's crisis-ridden world. She pointed to the *Secrets of the Generals*, a book that was recently published in Cuba. The book contains "the record of Cuba's international proletarian army as it fought on the side of workers from Syria to Angola to Bolivia,"

DeBates said. "What other country on the face of the earth would publish their military record for the workers of the world to see? None."

Following the forum the Young Socialists held a party that raised \$31 toward the YS national fund drive.

Sunday's activities began with a class by Joshua Carroll, a leader of the Young Socialists from Washington, D.C. This class focused on the challenge of unifying the working class worldwide. He put forward the demands — Cancel the Third World debt, Shorten the workweek with no reduction in pay, and Enforce affirmative action — explained in the Pathfinder pamphlet *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.

Participants also visited the Scotts Run Museum in Osage, West Virginia. Opening just a couple weeks ago, this museum features the role of the United Mine Workers union in this area. Rich Fuller, a laid off union miner, welcomed participants and fielded questions. This inspired YS members from Washing-



Militant/Wendy Lyons
YSer Ryan Kelly (center) selling Pathfinder books at May 29 immigrant rights demonstration in New York.

ton, to look towards returning to West Virginia to participate in a portal sale aimed at getting the *Militant* and Pathfinder books into the hands of UMW members.

Atlanta meeting blasts cop beating of Black youth

BY JAMES HARRIS

ATLANTA — More than 150 people attended a public hearing on police brutality called by the Atlanta branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on May 19 at Mt. Ephraim Church. The meeting was organized to address police brutality in general, but most of those present saw it as a chance to publicly protest the vicious videotaped beating by Atlanta police officers of 27-year-old Timmie Sinclair during the Freaknik street festival on April 20. (Freaknik is an annual spring break festival in Atlanta attended by thousands of Black youth from around the country.) The beating of Sinclair was caught on video by a Freaknik participant.

The video, which was shown on a local TV station a week later, is startlingly similar to the 1991 beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles. It shows five Atlanta cops

pummeling Sinclair with nightsticks and spraying him with pepper gas while he is laying helplessly on the ground. Sinclair was accused by the cops of evading two police barricades. The police are always fully mobilized for the festival. One of their tactics is to block off streets and highway entrances to control the flow of traffic. This is done arbitrarily and without notice and can make a 10 minute drive well over an hour long. Many drivers try to evade the barricades.

Sinclair said he was out on that particular night with his wife and two children trying to buy medicine for his one-year-old daughter. He was beaten so badly he required immediate medical treatment. Sinclair suffers from muscle spasms over his whole body and he has difficulty grasping things. At the May 19 meeting he was still limping very badly.

After Sinclair left the hospital, he was jailed on charges of aggravated assault and

two counts of obstructing an officer, while the cops who beat him went free. When Sinclair was released, he was immediately re-jailed on traffic violations dating back to 1994. He was freed only after paying a fine of \$1,100 and pleading no contest to the charges. He still faces charges of aggravated assault and two counts of obstructing a police officer for the April 20 incident.

Despite the severity of Sinclair's beating and the video evidence, police chief Beverly Harvard has concluded that there were only two specific actions by two officers that were inappropriate and that only one amounts to the use of unauthorized force."

The meeting at Mt. Ephraim was opened by Dr. R. L. White Jr., the president of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP. He began his remarks explaining that the purpose of the meeting was not to bash the police or the police department and that there are good and bad cops. He was then followed by a parade of speakers that included Rev. Fred Taylor from the Southern Christian Leadership Council, Theresa Nelson from the American Civil Liberties Union, Billy McKinney, Georgia representative, C.T. Martin from the Atlanta city administration, and John Boone, a former corrections commissioner. All of these speakers echoed the sentiments of White. There was little mention of Sinclair's case and no member of the panel called for the prosecution of all the cops involved in the beating.

After the panel had spoken, the meeting was open to some members of the audience who had been victims of police brutality. At this point Sinclair and his lawyers spoke.

Sinclair explained what had happened to him and read a prepared statement.

Sinclair said, "the officers who violated my civil rights didn't care who I was or that I lived in the area. The officers violated my civil and human rights. The city should take immediate action against these officers. An injustice to one is and injustice to all." He received a warm response from the gathering. As did others who told of their victimizations by the police.

The meeting was not organized to accommodate all those who wished to speak. This provoked a heated debate as people who wanted to speak tried to do so. A sizable section of audience shouted for the need for action and the prosecution of all the cops who participated in the beating. At this point, the organizers ended the meeting.

Doug Nelson, the socialist candidate for mayor of Atlanta was among those who was unable to speak at the meeting, but a lively discussion continued at his campaign literature table. In a statement he had prepared for the meeting Nelson said, "This act of police brutality is one example of the growing incidents of police brutality against working people, especially oppressed nationalities such as Blacks, Latinos, and immigrants. Inseparably linked to the increased violence and repression at home, is the increased use of military force and the drive towards war abroad.

"My campaign joins with all fighters against police brutality and murders by cops and demands justice for Timmie Sinclair. Jail all five guilty cops! Drop the charges against Timmie Sinclair!"

Keep sending \$ to YS fund drive

BY VERÓNICA POSES

CHICAGO — With four weeks to go on the national fund drive, Young Socialists chapters around the country are mapping out plans to raise the remainder of a national

goal of \$4,200.

Diana Newberry from Morgantown, West Virginia, reports that the YS there held a party to raise funds for the drive. "Thirty-one dollars was raised towards the \$300 local goal, with plenty of supplies left over for the next YS fund-raising event on June 7," she explained. They are also holding a raffle that will go until the end of the drive.

In Newark, New Jersey, YS members are organizing a "benefit slam" for the weekend of June 8 at the Pathfinder bookstore in that city. This event will include a speaker from the Young Socialists, poetry, and music. A mailing has gone out to over 50 people. David Berg, organizer of the Newark chapter, reports YS members in that city have started paying their pledges.

In Washington, D.C., \$65 was raised at a fund-raising dinner on May 10 before a Militant Labor Forum where Sam Manuel spoke on behalf of the Socialist Workers election campaign. The chapter plans to hold another fund-raising dinner and a party in the next two weeks.

As of June 1, chapters have sent in \$357 towards the goal. In order to stay on target \$960 need to be sent every week to the National Office.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL FUND DRIVE May 15 - June 30			
CITY	GOAL	SENT IN	%
New York	\$ 400	\$ 182	46%
Chicago	\$ 500	\$ 109	22%
Des Moines	\$ 400	\$ 46	12%
Atlanta	\$ 200	\$ -	0%
Birmingham	\$ 75	\$ -	0%
Houston	\$ 600	\$ -	0%
Los Angeles	\$ 100	\$ -	0%
Miami	\$ 100	\$ -	0%
Morgantown	\$ 300	\$ -	0%
Newark	\$ 600	\$ -	0%
San Francisco	\$ 100	\$ -	0%
Twin Cities	\$ 400	\$ -	0%
Washington D.C.	\$ 400	\$ -	0%
Other		\$ 20	
TOTAL	\$4,175	\$ 357	9%

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For those attending the international festival from the United States, applications are due June 30. The total cost for the trip is \$625. This covers all expenses except airfare from the United States to Nassau, Bahamas, or Cancún, Mexico — the meeting points for U.S. participants.

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Workers in France say no to austerity

Continued from front page

alliances to stand single candidates for the second round, the National Front made no electoral pacts, maintaining all 133 of its candidates who qualified for the June 1 ballot.

Reaction to Juppé plan

The elections took place while France is in the depths of the sharpest economic crisis since World War II. At least 3.5 million people are out of work, wages are stagnant, and growth rates continue to decline. At the same time, French capitalism faces severe competition with its imperialist rivals over markets and shaping the European Union in its interests.

The high PCF and PS vote is another expression of the resistance by workers against austerity plans and assaults against the social wage launched by Prime Minister Alain Juppé during the last two years. In November and December of 1995, millions of workers took to the streets and went on strike to oppose the Juppé plan, which was an attempt to go after the social security and to raise the number of years government employees would have to work before being entitled to retire. After several weeks of strikes and protest, Juppé finally gave up on the main aspects of the plan.

In December 1996 thousands of truck drivers blockaded the country for 12 days demanding a wage raise, retirement at 55, and shortening of the workweek. They won most of their demands. Encouraged by this victory, thousands of bus drivers throughout the country fought for the same demands. In several towns substantial gains were won by the truckers.

In the wake of these fights, the PS and PCF issued a joint electoral platform that outlined the goal of creating 700,000 jobs for young people and the progressive reduction of the working week to 35 hours with no cut in pay.

During the last days of the campaign, however, as returning to the prime minister's office appeared more than a vague possibility, PS head Lionel Jospin's promises became less concrete. "On the 35 hours, it is not 35 hours right now," he said. "We have to be very clear. We have a three-year lead time, first we need a legal framework, and then the opening of negotiations between social partners."

Commenting on what the French rulers still need to take away from the working class in order to reverse their falling profit rates, an article in the May 26 *Economist* complained, "The whole of France's bloated public service and vastly generous... welfare system needs overhaul.... Labour markets are inflexible, employment costs are far too high. Public pensions will be soon unaffordable. Far too many big firms remain in state hands."

That's not what workers have in mind. "I hope Jospin does something to stop the Vilvoorde closure now that he is prime minister," said Sayad, an immigrant worker from Morocco at Renault, referring to the auto company's plan to close its facility in Vilvoorde, Belgium. "Otherwise it will be like the Union of the Left all over again." The Union of the Left was the PS-PCF coa-

lition government in 1981 under PS president François Mitterrand.

Jospin attended a demonstration in Brussels in support of the Renault workers' fight against the plant closing a few months ago. "The Union of the Left was in power and Renault was owned by the government, but the PS and PCF did nothing to stop the closing of the plant and layoffs of thousands of workers," said Sayad, who had worked at Renault's Boulogne-Billancourt factory before it was shut down 10 years ago.

After the first round of voting, Manuel Alvarez, a 28-year-old worker at GEC-Alsthom in Paris, commented, "The results of the left give hope, but we'll have to take the streets so that things don't start again like in 1981." He was referring to the fact that despite Mitterrand's electoral promises, the government in fact began to attack workers' conditions under Prime Minister Jacques Delors. The same Delors is now slated to become a special adviser to Lionel Jospin.

Crisis in Gaullist coalition

Trying to save the neck of the RPR-UDF coalition in power, Chirac dismissed Juppé — associated by most workers with his austerity plan — and after the first round hinted he would appoint Philippe Seguin prime minister if the UDF-RPR won a majority in parliament. Seguin is portrayed as more "socially concerned" than Juppé. "It is a bizarre truth that there is no political party in France that is committed to true economic liberalism," lamented the *Economist*.

The French stock markets suffered their steepest drop in four years the week following the first round of the election, but stabilized and rose a bit after the final vote.

As a result of the electoral defeat of the parties of big business, many politicians called for a total reshaping of the current organizations. Philippe Vasseur, ex-UDF minister said, "I think that in the following weeks, you will witness deep changes in the right." Nicolas Sarkozy of the RPR said in the same spirit, "We must imagine renewed forms of organization and method."

After the results gave a majority of seats for the PS and PCF, Le Pen immediately called for Chirac to resign. National Front leader Bruno Mégret, in order to hasten the decomposition of these parties, said, "The right must understand that she is definitely lost if she does not consider the Front National as a possible partner."

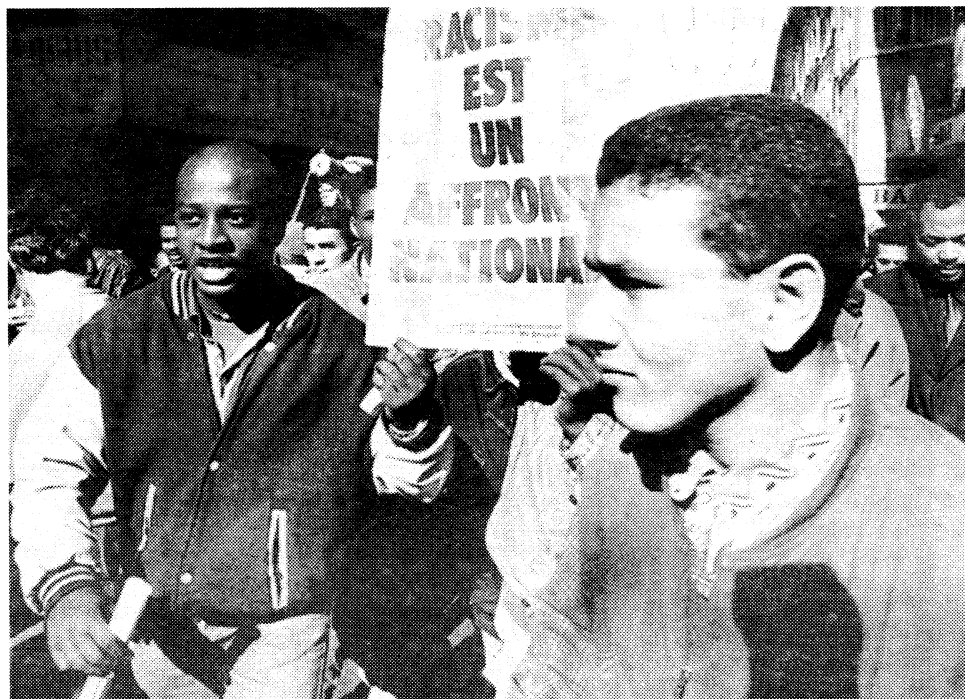
U.S. ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan cheered the election results as "part of the baptismal ritual of a more coherent French party of the right for the 21st century." In a June 4 column he castigated Chirac's coalition as "so politically correct and so intimidated by the media and intelligentsia that they will not co-opt the best of the National Front's agenda: its populism, its patriotism, its nationalism and its insistence on a halt to the immigration from North Africa."

Debate on Europe

For several years the French ruling class has hidden behind the criteria for the European Monetary Union (EMU) as a pretext to push for austerity measures. According to the Maastricht treaty, governments entering the EMU on the first round must have budget deficits of no more than 3 percent, which Paris is not set to meet. This became a point of debate in the election campaign.

Most wings of the capitalist class in France broadly agree that moving toward a single currency and establishing military alliances in Europe is the best way to defend their interests in the world. Jospin said in an interview just before the second round, "We are in favor of a single currency from the beginning... but we pose a certain number of conditions." These conditions are to negotiate more flexibility on the budget deficit criteria, include the weaker currencies Italy and Spain in the first wave of monetary union, and set up a "European economic government" to counter-balance the German dominated central bank. Even Seguin, a prominent RPR "euro-sceptic leader," recently became "pro-Europe."

The real discussion in ruling circles had more to do with how far and fast it is possible to carry out massive attacks against the working class. A few months ago, after the



Over 15,000 demonstrators condemned the slaying of a young immigrant by National Front supporters in Marseilles, February 1995. Protests against Le Pen have been growing across the country over the last two years.

truck drivers strike, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, a former conservative president and at that time, strong partisan of the *franc fort* (strong franc) and the single currency, had argued for a devaluation of the franc to make French industry more competitive and trim down the pressure on unemployment. That is also what Jospin's pretenses about social Europe are about.

The PCF, for its part, led a chauvinist campaign. PCF national secretary Robert Hue said, "We refuse to sacrifice the nation and its sovereignty to the building of Europe." In some places, PCF and Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) held common candidates like in Aix-en-Provence. Both parties called for an immediate referendum on EMU.

In addition to a campaign against immigration and in favor of "national preference" or French First, Le Pen stood against France's participation in the EMU. "Through the Euro [the single currency], Chirac wanted to submit France to the Europe of Maastricht. France does not know, but we are in war against America. Let's recall the failure of the European to get the NATO command in Naples," he said. "Let's recall France's failure in Central Africa in face of American diplomacy, in Rwanda and in Zaire. More and more for Europe, is less and less for France."

Increasing polarization

In some areas harshly hit by the social crisis, the National Front received a high percentage of the vote, and in some cases came in first in the May 25 ballot.

In a working-class neighborhood of Marseilles, Jean-Jacques Susini of the FN, got 30.8 percent, just ahead of the PCF candidate. North Marseilles has a large immigrant population, mainly from North Africa, and a high rate of unemployment. In France, immigrants who are not citizens do not have the right to vote. Susini was one of the top leaders of the Secret Army Organization, a paramilitary group that carried out a terror campaign in Algeria during the independence war, assassinating thousands of Algerian independence fighters and civilians. While in exile in Italy after the Algerian revolution, he was twice sentenced to death by French courts, the second time for attempting to assassinate General de Gaulle. He was later amnestied by Mitterrand. Asked to comment about his past he said, "My past is my honor."

His presence in the election in Marseilles was seen by many youth and workers as a provocation. The racist campaign of National Front provoked protests, mainly among youth. On April 19 in Ales, a small southern town, more than 5,000 mobilized against a public meeting held by the National Front leader Mégret.

In the northern town Lille, 5,000 demonstrators, many of whom were young, protested a public meeting by Le Pen. The demonstration was led by the *Sans-Papiers* (Without Papers) coalition. In Tourcoing, an industrial suburb of Lille, the National Front got 25 percent, one of its highest scores. The *Sans-Papiers* are undocumented immigrant workers fighting to have the right to work and stay with their families in France. Such groups spread throughout the country since 300 undocumented workers sought refuge in Saint-Bernard church in Paris last year. Some 20,000 people demonstrated in solidarity with their fight in Paris on Sept. 28,

1996. In several towns, *Sans-Papiers* still occupy public buildings or churches.

In Nantes, Oullins, Vannes, Montpellier, Toulouse, and many other towns, similar counter-mobilizations to the FN took place.

In Mantes La Jolie, a working-class town near Paris, Marie-Caroline Le Pen, daughter of the National Front leader, was the Front's candidate. She got 28 percent of the vote. When Jean-Marie Le Pen came there to support his daughter, he assaulted the Socialist Party candidate, who was sent to hospital with numerous injuries.

The Jeunes Socialistes /Young Socialists issued a statement during the campaign and distributed it during anti-Le Pen demonstration and at street tables. "The use of immigrants and women as scapegoats for unemployment, as well as the rise of fascists movements show the true nature of capitalism," the statement said. "Its only hope of surviving lies now in using more and more criminal alternatives." The YS is calling for the right to vote for all immigrants, French troops out of Africa and Albania, the shortening of the workweek with no loss in pay, and the end of the embargo against Cuba.

As the election results became known, a group of *Sans-Papiers* went to the PS headquarters in Paris and shouted "We want papers." A *Sans-Papiers* march from Angoulême in the south to Paris started on June 2 and is due to arrive on June 10.

Florence Duval contributed to this article. Duval and Rafik Benale are members of Young Socialists in Paris.

Liberals squeak by in Canada vote

The Liberal Party in Canada barely clung to its ruling majority in the June 2 election, keeping 155 of the 174 seats it had held in the Canadian legislature. For a majority, 151 seats are needed.

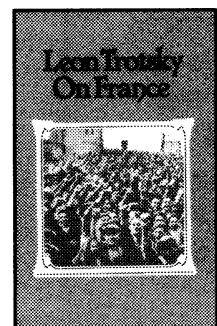
Showing an increase in political polarization, the right-wing Reform party became the official opposition party, capturing the second-largest number of seats, while the union-based New Democratic Party nearly doubled the percentage of votes it received. The Reform Party, whose leader Preston Manning carried out a virulent anti-Quebecois campaign, won 60 seats, up from 50 in the 1993 election. The number of NDP seats rose from 9 to 21.

The Bloc Quebecois, a capitalist party that advocates sovereignty for Quebec, won 44 of its 50 from the previous government. The Bloc Quebecois was displaced by the Reform Party as the official opposition.

The election results reflect a response to the austerity campaigns and programs of the Liberal party. Headed by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, the Liberal government tightened eligibility rules and spending for social programs such as health care, unemployment, and pensions. The Liberal government also hammered through \$10 billion in cuts in welfare and higher education. The unemployment rate hovers around 9 percent.

—MEGAN ARNEY

From Pathfinder



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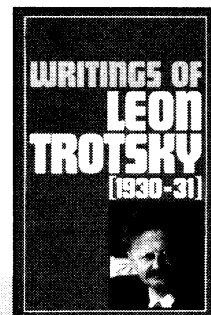
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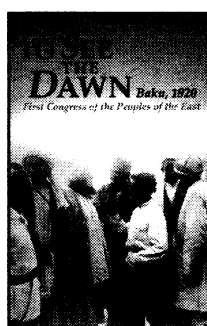
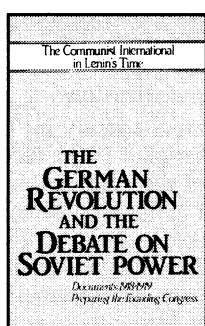
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Protests flare up throughout Argentina

Students and workers reject gov't austerity measures and police brutality

Continued from front page

spread to other provinces, particularly Salta and Jujuy in the north, also devastated by unemployment — officially at 33 percent in that area. Working-class protests have also flared in provinces throughout the country — Mendoza, Tucumán, Santa Fe, San Juan, Entre Ríos, and Tierra del Fuego, among others. Nationally, the jobless rate stands at 17 percent.

The five fighters from Cutral-Có were invited to speak in La Plata by supporters of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, an organization founded in 1977 by women whose sons and daughters had been "disappeared" by the military regime. Other sponsors of the meeting were a local university student group and the Coordinating Committee of High School Students.

The five identified themselves only by their first names and, as many of the Cutral-Có fogoneros have done, wore bandannas to cover their faces to avoid government victimization. Carlos, 28, read a statement from the protesters. "When this repressive government privatized YPF and gave away our main source of jobs to the Yankees and Canadians," he said, "more than 10,000 of us ended up unemployed out of 50,000 inhabitants" in the two towns.

Carlos explained they were fighting for justice for Teresa Rodríguez, a domestic worker killed by a police bullet on April 12, when cops attacked demonstrators in Cutral-Có. A number of other residents have been arrested and await trial.

In reaching an agreement to lift the roadblocks, government officials offered residents some temporary jobs and emergency subsidies of 150 pesos a month (1peso=1US\$). These low-paying jobs, the protesters said, include "painting curbs, pulling weeds, unclogging sewers, sweeping streets, and in some cases cleaning the homes of government officials. We don't want that!" Real jobs, they said, is what they are demanding.

The fogoneros' statement ended with "Mariciweu, mariciweu, mariciweu!" — a Mapuche Indian warrior chant meaning "We shall win a thousandfold." After the meeting, Juan, 19, a high school student protester,

explained that the social upsurge has awakened a new identification among local residents, some of whom are *mestizos*, of their Indian heritage and history of resistance.

Accumulated discontent

Laura, 24, another fogonera, explained that discontent had been building up over time. When leaders of the provincial teachers union, ATEN, "appealed for support from the population, the response from the unemployed and the people of Cutral-Có was uncontrollable," she remarked. For a few weeks, "there were marches of up to 30,000 twice a week. We organized general assemblies where the people discussed and decided everything."

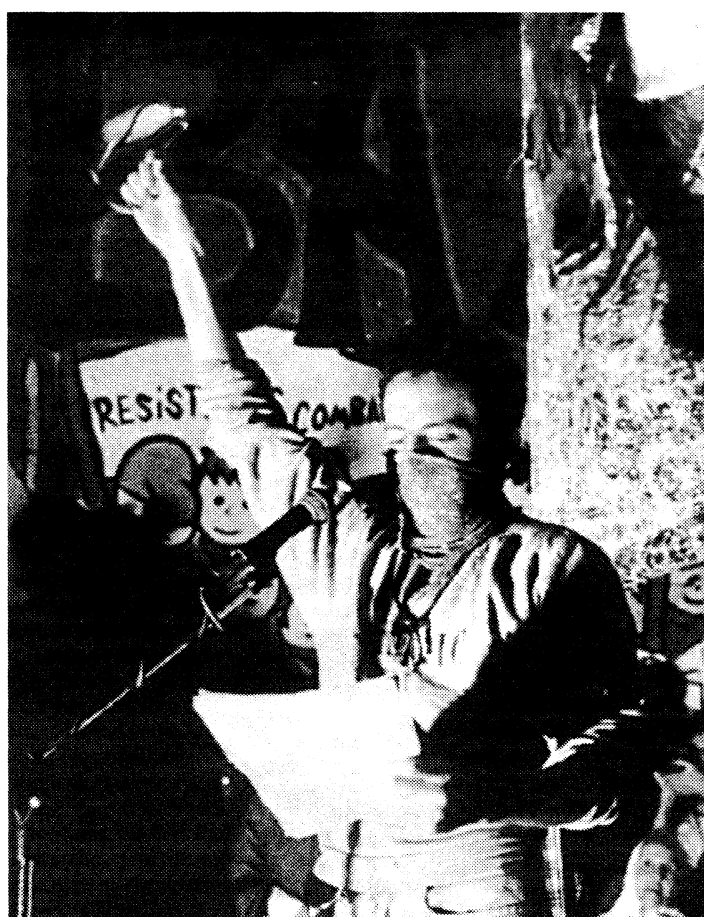
Several of the protesters commented that many people in their town express a deep distrust of all politicians, from the major capitalist parties to the smaller left-wing parties, which play a visible role in the trade union movement. This distrust extends to union officials, they added, because of their reluctance to wage a fight or address the needs of the unemployed.

José, one of the fogoneros, said, "We don't believe in politicians or union leaders; they don't represent us." Some of the others voiced similar views.

Changing attitudes among youth

A wide-ranging discussion period opened up, as students and others in the audience of 200 debated the meaning of the social explosions around the country and which way forward for those who wanted to fight. Some were eager to tell the visitors from Neuquén about the recent struggles they had been involved in, particularly the protests in La Plata against the May 20 cop assault on "illegal" street vendors and on the students who came to their defense.

Students described how the mounted police had charged onto the campus in violation of the university's autonomy. Startled students found cops running right up to the third floor, throwing tear gas grenades and shooting rubber bullets. This outraged many youth, who organized protest marches over the following days. They were joined by La Plata shipyard and hospital workers, who



Madres de la Plaza de Mayo

Carlos, one of the *fogoneros* of Cutral-Có and Plaza Huincul, Neuquén, speaks about their struggle in that southern region of Argentina during the 20th Anniversary celebration of the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo April 30.

themselves are engaged in union fights.

Talking to *Militant* reporters, Alejandra Finocchi, 24, said, "There used to be a lot of individualism among young people. Now that's changing. A lot of students identify with the fogoneros in Neuquén and the *piqueteros* in Jujuy," referring to unemployed sugar mill workers who set up pickets and roadblocks in that northern province."

Meanwhile, the Jujuy workers won a political victory when the government, which had previously unleashed the cops against

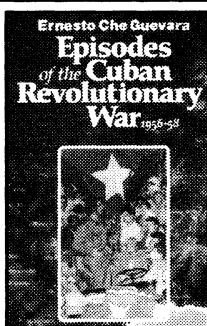
them, backed down and promised them more than 12,000 jobs, subsidies, and other economic aid in exchange for taking down the roadblocks on Highway 34.

Working people in the depressed sugar mill town of Ingeniero Ledesma celebrated their moral victory. But, added one *piquetero*, "If the government does not meet its promises, we are going to block the whole province." Hundreds of sugar workers and their spouses and children remain camped by the roadside, threatening to put up the barricades again if the promises are not met within two weeks.

The unfolding events have alarmed international bankers, who insist Argentina's president, Carlos Menem, continue to ensure payments on the country's foreign debt. The Argentine ruling class is equally

worried about the political impact of the wave of working-class struggles and some of the government's concessions.

One big-business commentator, Miguel Angel Broda, warned in the June 2 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *El Cronista*, "The Menem administration must avoid giving the signal that roadblocks (and any other act that infringes on the rule of law) pay." One TV program raised the specter, horrifying to the ruling rich, that workers may get a bad idea: "if you block highways, we will offer you jobs."

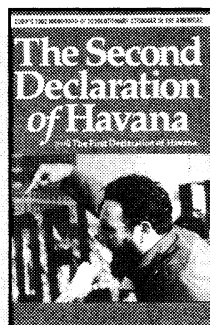


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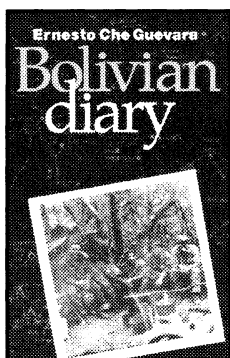
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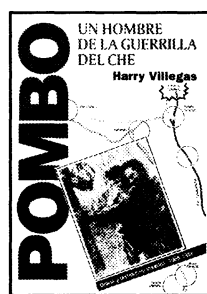
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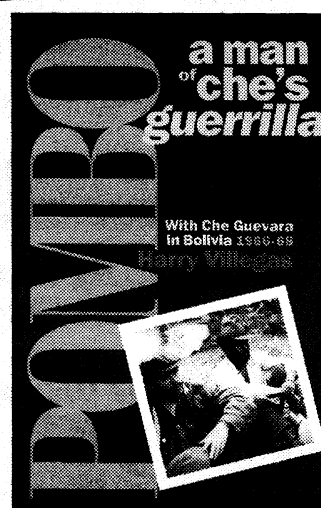
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Bre-X gold swindle sinks pension funds

BY MIKE BARKER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — What was touted as one of the biggest gold finds in history became one of history's greatest swindles when on May 4 Strathcona Mineral Services confirmed that the Bre-X mine site in Busang, Indonesia, contained insignificant amounts of gold. Strathcona also determined that the test samples Bre-X used to prove there was gold at the site had been tampered with.

Bre-X, a mining company based in Calgary, Canada, acquired the Busang site in early 1993. Prior to that its shares sold on the Calgary stock market for as low as two cents.

Over the next three years, Bre-X's estimate of the amount of gold on the site grew to 71 million ounces — worth US\$25 billion at prevailing gold prices. In May of 1996 the value of Bre-X shares reached Can\$201.75 (US\$145.26), after which they were split at ten for one. A few months later, the split shares peaked at over \$28.00.

As the estimates grew and share prices expanded, major players in Canadian mining and leading Canadian financial institutions were drawn into the frenzy. Bre-X was endorsed by mining analysts from the ten largest brokerage firms in Canada including Nesbitt Burns, owned by Canada's third largest bank — the Bank of Montreal. Brokerage firms receive a commission for acting as an intermediary in the purchase and sale of shares and profits from financing the purchase of shares. Trading in the Bre-X shares resulted in an estimated \$116 million windfall for Canadian brokerage firms.

In April of last year, Canada's premier stock exchange in Toronto allowed Bre-X onto the exchange. Eight months later, the TSE waived its one-year listing requirement and added Bre-X to its TSE 300 index of top companies. Immediately, millions of dollars began to pour into Bre-X shares from Canadian pension funds, as most of them automatically invest in the companies on the TSE 300 index. Many mutual funds also tie their investments to the TSE 300 and began to buy Bre-X.

The Indonesian rulers decided to get in

on the act. Early this year, they forced a deal that reduced the Bre-X share of the Busang mine to 45 percent, gave Indonesian investors a 40 percent share, and provided 15 percent for the U.S. resource giant Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc.

Until Freeport became involved, the billions of dollars in trading on Bre-X shares was based solely on the word of Bre-X regarding the amount of gold in the Busang deposit. Then on March 26 the bubble burst. Freeport announced that its own tests indicated almost no gold at the Busang site.

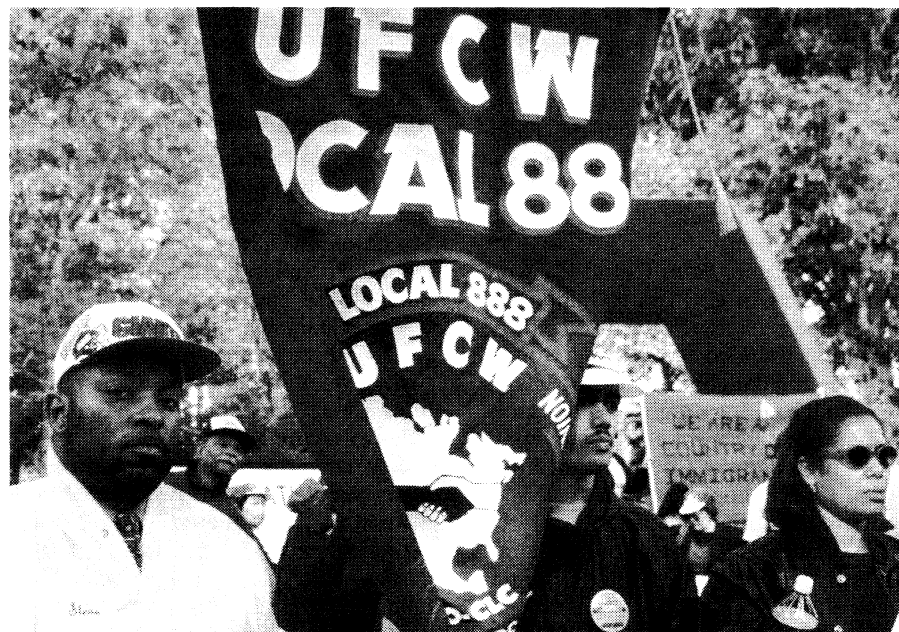
The next day Bre-X shares dropped from \$15.50 to \$2.69 a share. Bre-X's paper value dropped \$2.8 billion. This helped to propel the TSE 300 index to a massive 191 point drop — the largest one-day fall since the 1987 stock market crash.

The final nail in the Bre-X coffin was driven in May 4 when Strathcona confirmed that virtually no gold existed at the Busang site. The following morning Bre-X shares fell from \$3.23 to \$0.085. Many wealthy investors lost millions and some were ruined in the Bre-X collapse, including one Vancouver area investor who killed himself after losing a reported \$3 million.

The fallout also hit at the savings and pension plans of tens of thousands of working people. The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan suffered a loss of \$100 million, while the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement Board lost \$45 million. The Caisse de depot, which manages the pension funds of public sector workers in Quebec, lost \$70 million. The Globe and Mail reported that "a full tally undoubtedly would include almost every public pension plan in the country and many large private ones."

For that sector of the Canadian ruling class involved in mining, the Bre-X scandal has been a disaster. Mining is one of the most important means by which Canadian imperialism profits from the labor of toilers in the semi-colonial world. Canadian imperialism has invested \$6.4 billion in Indonesia, most of it in oil, gas, and mining. The Bre-X fiasco has spooked investors and dried up the ability of the approximately 100 Canadian junior mining companies operat-

Hundreds rally to defend immigrant rights in N.Y.



Militant/Wendy Lyons

NEW YORK—Over 500 people attended a rally called to defend immigrant rights in Battery Park, Manhattan, May 29. The action was sponsored by the New York Immigration Council and the New York City Central Labor Council. Contingents were present from a number of unions, including union-organized busload from the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) Local 23-25. Other unions present included the Transit Workers Union, AFSCME DC 37, Local 1199 of the hospital workers union, and a group from the United Farm Workers. Beatrice Conway and Rosa Pintos, members of UNITE Local 23-25 and sewing machine operators at J. Abushar in Brooklyn, were at the protest. "All of us are immigrants here. We need to fight for our rights," Pintos said. They said they have been working 24-hours a week for six months. Conway explained that she has worked at the same place for 8 years and makes just \$6.65 per hour.

—DEBORAH LIATOS

ing in Indonesia to raise new capital for further exploration.

On the day following the Bre-X collapse, major U.S. dailies, including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, used the scandal to warn of the risks of investing in Canada. The *New York Times* listed a number of Canadian mining ventures that have failed under suspicious circumstances, causing the loss of millions of dollars for U.S. investors.

Major figures within the Canadian ruling class have responded by downplaying the Bre-X fiasco. Peter Munk, the chair of Barrick Gold, called Bre-X a "single deviant member" among Canadian mining companies. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien dismissed the event, saying, "There's always unfortunately bad apples in any sector."

Mike Barker is a member of the Hospital Employees Union.

USAirways presses workers for deep concessions

BY EDWIN FRUIT

PITTSBURGH — On May 8, USAirways (formerly USAir) announced that it was closing a flight crew base in Los Angeles, ending jet service to nine cities, grounding 22 planes, and laying off 103 pilots. The company also said it would shut maintenance bases in Roanoke, Virginia, and in Greensboro and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This would affect approximately 1,400 mechanics who are represented by the International Association of Machinists (IAM). The IAM, with 14,000 members at the airline, is currently in contract negotiations with USAirways.

William Scheri, transportation secretary

vice president of the IAM, charged that USAirways CEO Stephen Wolf "has become the Frank Lorenzo of the '90s." Lorenzo spearheaded a union-busting concession drive at Eastern Airlines; he was pushed out of the industry and Eastern was forced to shut down in 1991 as a result of a successful Machinists strike.

In the previous weeks, USAirways, the nation's sixth largest airline, with some 42,000 employees, has undertaken an all-out campaign to force the unions to negotiate concessions. Wolf and company president Rakesh Gangwal conducted a series of meetings around the country with USAirways employees. Speaking in front

of a large screen filled with graphs, charts, and statistics, the two bosses painted a bleak picture of the future of the airline if the unions refused to accept take-back contracts. "You have a choice," they repeated over and over again. "Either we achieve cost competitiveness and become a 'global airline of choice' or we downsize and become a regional carrier."

USAirways claims that in just the past year, Southwest, Delta Express, and Valujet have added 390 daily departures and 318,000 seats that compete with USAirways' structure, including flights into the northeast. The airline's labor costs represented 43 percent of its total costs in the 12-month period ending in September, compared with the average 37 percent for major carriers in the United States.

USAirways wants to put on line a regional airline, dubbed US2, that would pay pilots about a third less than on the main line. The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) is proposing the low-cost part of the airline represent no more than 20 percent of the flying time, while the company wants as much as 40 percent. The company also wants the pilots to take a 12.5 percent pay cut. The pilots association says it will make concessions, but not that much. At the annual shareholders meeting held in Philadelphia on May 21, some 50 USAirways pilots picketed outside, handing out informational flyers.

While unionized employees took wage and work rule concessions in the early 1990s, more drastic cuts were imposed on non-union workers. The baggage handlers and caterers in USAirway's fleet service voted for the IAM to be their union representatives in August 1994 after being several years without any union at all. After almost three years, they still do not have a contract.

Pete Dutkovich, a ramp worker in Pitts-

burgh, explained a sentiment which many of his co-workers share. "I've worked here for nine-and-a-half years and I'm still part time. When we were without a union the company made us second class citizens. Some of us have to pay \$3,000 a year to get health insurance for our families. We don't get paid time-and-a-half for holidays, can't bank sick days, and have an inferior pension plan to the mechanics. We want parity with the mechanics on the property. After that we can talk about concessions."

USAirways has also tried to renegotiate its contract with 7,800 flight attendants represented by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA). According to an AFA brief to union members, the company is demanding numerous concessions, including separate pay scales for those flying US2 with reductions ranging from 7 percent to 40 percent, benefit cuts, and less vacation time and sick leave. The AFA says the company also wants to save cuts by having flight attendants clean planes, take tickets in airports, and sell tickets on airplanes.

Wolf said that USAirways loses money on the majority of its 5,000 daily flights. Nevertheless, the company said it earned a record \$152.7 million the first three months of the year, historically its worst quarter. Revenue also hit a record \$2.1 billion compared to \$1.9 billion in 1996.

On May 20, USAirways Groups Inc. said it plans to repurchase about a quarter of the USAir stock held by its former alliance partner, British Airways, for \$126.2 million, according to the *Baltimore Sun*. The article date described this action as "a signal that the airline has the financial muscle to use cash for financial management rather than operations."

Edwin Fruit is a member of Local Lodge #1976 of the IAM and works for USAirways at Pittsburgh International Airport.

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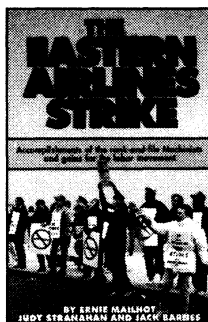
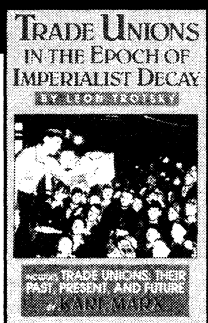
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25-year frame-up of Pratt is overturned

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Frame-up victim Geronimo Pratt scored a major victory when a state judge ruled he had been denied a fair trial and set aside his conviction. Meanwhile, authorities acted with vengeful slowness in carrying out the judge's order that Pratt be released from Mule Creek state prison in northern California and transferred to Los Angeles County jail so he can be readily available for hearings that could lead to his freedom.

Pratt, a 1960s leader of the Black Panther Party, has served 25 years of a life sentence for a murder he did not commit. After years of stubborn effort, Pratt finally won an evidentiary hearing on his case before Superior Court Judge Everett Dickey in Orange County.

Dickey ruled May 29 that Pratt had not received a fair trial because important information had been withheld from the defense and jury, information which could have brought a different verdict.

As of June 4, his order to release Pratt from the state penitentiary to a county jail had not been complied with. Judge Dickey will have jurisdiction in the case until July 31. He ordered that Pratt be given a hearing to request bail June 10.

Los Angeles County District Attorney Gilbert Garcetti has until July 30 to decide whether he will drop the case, appeal the reversal of Pratt's conviction, or seek a retrial. An attempt to retry Pratt would be rough going. Julius Butler, the only available witness against him, stands exposed as

a stool pigeon and alleged perjurer.

Judge Dickey's decision was based on a bedrock issue. The prosecution had denied Pratt a fair trial by permitting Butler to give "false testimony" about whether he was a cop informer, Dickey said, and withheld key information from the defense and the jury.

A one-time sheriff's deputy, Butler had infiltrated the Panthers and was as informer and provocateur for the FBI, the Los Angeles police, and, most recently revealed, for the district attorney's office. At the trial he testified under oath that he was not and never had been an informer.

The frame-up of Pratt was a product of the drive by the federal government to destroy the Panthers. In a secret directive to his agents, then-FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, ordered that steps be taken to "neutralize" the Panthers. Local cops and prosecutors joined in the ruthless drive to crush the organization.

In 1972, Pratt was convicted of killing Caroline Olsen and wounding her husband Kenneth in a 1968 holdup. At the time of the killing, Pratt was attending a Panther meeting in Oakland, 400 miles away.

The Black rights activist was indicted two years after the killing, when Butler told police Pratt had "confessed" to him that he was the killer.

The other principal witness against Pratt was Kenneth Olsen, since deceased. At the

Irish political prisoner wins bail



Militant/George Chalmers

After months of worldwide protests demanding her release, a British judge finally granted Roisin McAliskey bail June 3. Framed-up on allegations of involvement in an Irish Republic Army bombing of a British base in Germany, McAliskey had been held in prison throughout her pregnancy. Despite health problems, she was only allowed to go to a hospital May 23, three days before giving birth. Above, 100 people picket British consulate in New York on May 31.

trial, he identified Pratt as the man who wounded him and killed his wife. The jury was not told that a year earlier, Olsen had identified another suspect as the killer.

During the 25 years since his conviction, Pratt has been denied parole 16 times. Four previous requests for a new trial were denied.

June labor actions called in Detroit

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — "We're traveling around urging everyone to come to Detroit on June 20 and 21 and join thousands of trade unionists from around the country to protest union busting and corporate greed," is how Carol O'Neal, a member of Graphic Communication International Union (GCIU) Local 13, described what she and dozens of other locked-out Detroit newspaper workers have been doing around the country, from union conventions to strike picket lines.

The AFL-CIO Executive Board, after months of urging by strikers and at the formal request of the six newspaper union locals, have called "Action Motown," a protest set for Detroit on the weekend of June 20-21. The call came days after the striking local unions offered to return to work. Members of the Detroit newspaper unions, working or locked-out, are urging unionists and others to take part in the actions in support of their fight to return to work, rebuild their unions, and win a contract.

On July 13, 1995, some 2,500 editorial, production and distribution workers struck

the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* and their joint business agent, the Detroit Newspaper Agency (DNA). Some 2,000 workers remained on strike for 20 months. They hit the picket lines to protect jobs, wages, working conditions, and their unions' right to negotiate jointly.

The strike was preceded by five years of attacks by the newspaper bosses, including massive job cuts, a wage freeze, and work rule changes. The six largest unions — the mailers and drivers, members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters; printers, members of the Communication Workers of America (CWA); pressmen in the GCIU; and the Newspaper Guild, made up of editorial workers — walked out, representing the vast majority of workers.

Earlier this year, the international presidents of the Teamsters, CWA, and GCIU decided to offer an unconditional return to work. Local officers of the striking unions made the offer public February 14. The companies quickly announced that the unions' statement meant the strike was over and that they would bring strikers back to work as

needed. Almost four months later less than 200 have returned to work. No members of the mailers Teamster local have been recalled. The unions declared the strike converted into a lockout, and have gone to court to try to win an injunction ordering the companies to take back all unionists not fired for strike related activities.

The upcoming protests in Detroit will include a teach-in organized by the AFL-CIO, a strikers benefit, and a religious service June 20. The next morning actions are planned around the region, with participants converging in downtown Detroit for a march and rally.

Organizers report that unionists are planning to come from cities ranging from San Francisco to New York. For more information the striking unions can be contacted toll free at (888) 97MOTOWN or www.action97.w1.com.

John Sarge is a member of the United Auto Workers and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council in Detroit.

...from Pathfinder

COINTELPRO

Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

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Marshall Plan was not about world peace

Continued from Page 4

bring a semblance of order and sanity into Europe's shattered, crazy-quilt economy; to unify its efforts, and supplement the lacks with goods and loans. It is not too difficult to imagine that this project must have aroused considerable hope amongst the European peoples. "Possibly this offers a way out of the blind alley," must have reasoned the weary, hungry Europeans.

The Kremlin bureaucracy is so bereft of any program for Europe that the mere announcement of the Marshall Plan was sufficient to drive it into a corner. What a commentary on the black reactionary character of the Stalinist regime, and its lack of all perspective, that it flatfootedly put itself in opposition to any attempt to unify the European economy. As against Wall Street's plan to organize Europe under its hegemony and for its benefits, the Kremlin proposed—what? Nothing! No plan, no perspective, no hope for the peoples of Europe. Nothing...

What are the prospects for the Marshall Plan? Once the Wall Street tycoons overcome the opposition of the European capitalists, blackjack Congress to vote the necessary funds, and the plan actually gets into operation, its initial success is entirely possible within certain strictly defined limits. By pouring several billion dollars into Western Germany, and abrogating the Potsdam

rules, the Ruhr can be partially revived; with coal, steel, machinery, railroad equipment, etc. again provided Western Europe. If nothing more, at least a semblance of international exchange can be restored, and the living standards of the masses raised to levels, which while remaining very low as compared even with pre-war days, would nevertheless be an improvement over the present.

In contrast, there is little prospect for significant growth of East-Europe's industries or impressive revival, of its agriculture, and the betterment of its standard of living. Despite the wholesale looting and exaction of reparations from Eastern Europe, Russia's Five Year Plan is progressing poorly. Industrial areas that were occupied by the Nazi armies are producing less than 50 per cent of pre-war levels, and the targets in the main sectors are not being attained.

For many, many years, Russia will be unable to supply the countries under its domination with their main needs: machinery, manufactured goods, farming equipment, fertilizer, credits and loans. Even Eastern Germany, whose industries — in contrast to the enforced idleness of Western Germany — are going full blast, faces a dismal future.

Not only because Russia steals the greater part of the production, but because the stock-

piles of existing raw materials are disappearing and Russia lacks a surplus of raw materials which it can ship in sufficient quantities into Germany.

It is clear that even a mildly revived Western Europe will exert a murderous economic pressure upon Stalin's European domain. The East-European peoples will blame Stalin and his bloody regime for depriving them of preferred Western loans, the possibility of integrating their primarily agricultural economies with the industries of the West and thus bettering their living standards....

Can the Marshall Plan afford Europe a new period of stabilization, and therefore a mitigation of the class conflicts which are again on the rise in France and Italy? The very opposite results are far more likely. Even before the Marshall Plan is a going proposition, the Wall Street bourbons have forced the Communist parties out of the Italian and French cabinets. One can imagine how ruthlessly they will wield the dollars in an attempt to blackmail the masses and force them behind authoritarian governments. But the European masses, who have demonstrated so unmistakably that they wish to rid themselves of the scourge of capitalism, will resist, we may be sure, both the mailed fist and the blandishments of dollar diplomacy.

Women miners to meet in Canada

The 19th National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters is June 27-29 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The conference is sponsored by the Coal Employment Project (CEP), an organization founded in the late 1970s to help women get and keep jobs in the coal mines. The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) has endorsed the conference.

This is the first year the conference has been outside the U.S. Joan Nelson, a member of UMWA Local 1565 in Alberta and one of the organizers of this year's conference said, "We welcome everyone to attend the conference. We are working to ensure there will be something of interest to everyone fighting for workers rights."

Two international guests from Germany are expected to attend the conference. Linda Chavez-Thompson, secretary of the AFL-CIO is scheduled as a speaker at the conference. Workshop topics include sexual harassment, the importance of unions, safety in the workplace, and organizing. For more information contact CEP, P.O. Box 682, Tazewell, Virginia 24651 or call (540) 988-5877.

—MARY ZINS

Wheeling-Pitt strikers refuse to back down

Continued from front page
ticipation of strikers.

The union has organized buses to bring steelworkers and other unionists from Chicago; Gary, Indiana; Detroit; Cleveland; and from throughout the Ohio River Valley, to name just a few of the tours that have visited the picket lines and strike headquarters.

This solidarity has been welcomed by strikers. Ralph Rowland, a by-products worker with 26 years in the coke mill, said, "We have to stick together. There needs to be more of this because we're all in trouble. The companies are getting more control, so if you don't stick together you're just not going to win." Expressing the resolve of many strikers you meet on the picket line,

Rowland added, "I don't want to go back there and work for nothing — I wouldn't go back to that."

An "AFL-CIO Solidarity Conference" around the Wheeling-Pitt strike was held April 26 at the Westin William Penn Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh. The conference was chaired by AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and attended by local union officials from the three-state region. A delegation of strikers from several Wheeling-Pitt locals also in attendance. As part of the event, participants watched a video on the strike that is now available.

On May 19, the strikers joined members of the Service Employees International Union in a rally, march, and town meeting

against Beverly Enterprises, the largest nursing home chain in the United States. The National Labor Relations Board has filed charges of labor law violations against the owners for firing 500 workers who struck the company's facilities in 1996.

On May 29, some 80 strikers and supporters picketed in Boston at the office of Dewey Square Investors, which owns 10 percent of WHX. The pickets were demanding that WHX return to the bargaining table.

LaBow commented, "I really feel they should be picketing me. I feel left out." He added, "I'll tell you what Dewey Square told me: 'Don't give in, if you give in you'll bust the company.'" Protests are also planned in June against WHX investors in New York

and Pittsburgh.

The determination of the strikers has put pressure on the government. In early May the NLRB issued a complaint against Wheeling-Pitt, charging the company "failed to bargain in good faith" with the USWA. The complaint also says the strike was "caused and prolonged by Wheeling-Pittsburgh's unfair labor practices." An NLRB spokesman said the agency is considering further charges against Wheeling Pitt, while the company's complaints against the union will be dismissed as lacking in merit.

Negotiations brokered by U.S. Sen. Jay Rockefeller and the Federal Mediation Services held in Washington, D.C., in mid-May have broken down. Rockefeller was forced to say, "It has become clear to me that substantial hurdles have been erected to the resolution of this dispute...his [LaBow's] refusal to honor that commitment [to negotiate] this week is deeply disturbing."

The May 19 issue of *Business Week* magazine reports major stockholders "agree that Wheeling-Pitt needs low pension costs and job cuts to compete against low-cost, non-union mini-mills. So even as the stock falls, large institutional investors have been buying." On May 14, WHX announced a loss of \$40.7 million for the first quarter of 1997.

Tony Dutrow, a member of USWA Local 1557 in Pittsburgh, contributed to this article.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Stop the Attack on Abortion Rights! Speakers: Heather Martin, Women's rights activist and writer, member of National Organization for Women (NOW); Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Auto Workers. Fri., June 20, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Superannuation Referendum: An Attack on Social Security Entitlements. Speaker: Terry Cogan, Communist League. Fri., June 13, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Clinton launches NATO campaign

Continued from Page 16

question about the troop withdrawal, stating he wanted to "stop talking about what date we're leaving on" and instead focus on how to implement the Dayton "peace" accords.

Clinton's campaign to expand NATO developed from Washington's emergence as the dominant imperialist power occupying parts of the Yugoslav workers state. After years of watching the slaughter in Bosnia, and quietly fueling the conflict, the U.S. government pushed aside its rivals in Bonn and Paris and led NATO bombing missions over Bosnia.

Albright's itinerary in Europe also included a May 29 conference of NATO foreign ministers in Sintra, Portugal, where some government officials indicated they wanted to invite Romania and Slovenia into membership. Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia released a statement published in the May 28 *Christian Science Monitor* expressing a "wish to participate in this historic process and to be included in the first round of NATO enlargement."

Eleven countries are candidates to join the imperialist military alliance, but Albright insisted Washington wanted to admit only the regimes of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

"NATO is not a scholarship program," she declared. "The alliance should admit only those new democracies that have both cleared the highest hurdles of reform and demonstrated they can meet the full obligations of membership."

Economic turmoil in Czech Republic

At least one of the regimes slated for NATO membership, the Czech Republic, is plagued by a deepening economic and political crisis. The national currency plunged almost 9 percent after Josef Tosovsky, governor of the Czech National Bank announced May 26 a devaluation of the Czech koruna.

Highly touted for years as Eastern Europe's "economic success story" and a "model" for capitalist "reforms," the country experienced a net loss of 550,000 jobs between 1990 and 1993 — and unemployment is still rising. A restructuring plan for the state-owned Czech Railways sparked a national strike in February of this year.

Prime Minister Václav Klaus, who is increasingly described in the press as "unpopular," announced the second austerity package in two months on May 28. Klaus called for a wage freeze and cuts in spending for social programs. Trade union officials stated unwillingness to accept more wage curbs on top of those introduced in April.

"The relative lack of industrial unrest up to now has been a blessing for the government," warned a May 14 article in the *Financial Times*. "When the cuts start to bite, it is inevitable that resistance will increase."

CALENDAR

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Celebration of the Life of Ernesto Che Guevara, leader of the Cuban Revolution. Live music with Los Planeros del Batey. Fri., June 20, 7:30 p.m. until midnight. Sponsored by Cuba Support Coalition and Philadelphia Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival. *Painted Bride Art Center, 230 Vine Street. Admission: \$12. For more information, call (215) 291-2988 or 462-4288.*

Fending off calls for his resignation, Klaus dismissed two chief architects of the nation's "transition to capitalism" — Industry and Trade Minister Vladimir Dlouhy and Finance Minister Ivan Kocarnik. Dlouhy was blamed for not controlling the growing trade deficit and Kocarnik failed to check some 10 banking officials who have been charged with embezzlement.

Capitalist investors have been pulling out of the Prague stock market. "Foreign capital is losing faith in us and we have to convince it quickly," Klaus stated.

"This is the greatest turmoil since 1989," asserted Jiri Pehe, a political analyst at Radio Free Europe in Prague, referring to the collapse of the Stalinist regime that had ruled the country since 1948.

Elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Russian president Boris Yeltsin signed an agreement May 31 with Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma that ended a territorial dispute over the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea. The pact allows Moscow to lease part of the Sevastopol naval base for 20 years and the Russian government agreed to write off Kiev's huge debt, mostly money owed for oil.

With NATO preparing to expand, the Kremlin stepped up its efforts to strengthen its relations with former Soviet republics like Ukraine. "We honor and respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine," said Yeltsin, while asserting that maintaining ties with Kiev "is a priority of priorities for us."

A little more than two weeks earlier, on May 12, Yeltsin signed a peace treaty with the government of Chechnya. Moscow had

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

SWEDEN

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Must be a genetic defect — A survey found that most teenagers are financial illiterates. Only a handful knew that bank certificates of deposit are insured by the feds.



Harry Ring

Most didn't even know that playing the stock market is the best way to build your nest egg.

A thought — Distressed by the finding of teen financial illiteracy,

concerned groups have formed Jump Start, an educational coalition. Do you think they might teach kids how they can ensure a decent living and anticipate a secure future? Or, maybe, would youth do better checking out the Young Socialists?

Lying gets harder — Asserting that the stop-communism message of the 1947 Marshall plan was simple, clear-cut, and understandable, the *Los Angeles Times* says "Clinton has none of these advantages. Today's dangers to European security are as real as those in 1947, but they are hard to identify and even harder to explain or understand."

Clear enough? — "Why doesn't an AIDS vaccine exist today? One simple reason is economics. Vaccines, unlike drugs, typically don't cost much to make, they don't sell for a high price and they don't make their manufacturers large profits." — *Los Angeles Times*

Lord of the Privy — A record take was expected from the recent auction of British barony and lordship titles. Time was when such titles meant you could claim local shipwrecks, organize a private army, and/or build a gallows in your village. Now it's mainly for stuffed-wallet folks to dress up their letterhead.

Who needs wages — We were

touched when John Barnsdale, top dog at Netscape, said that he would only take a \$1 salary this year because the computer search software company hasn't been doing well profit-wise. But, happily, Barnsdale will get by. He unloaded a third of his company stock holdings for \$100 million.

Big Bother with the Big Eye — Police have installed a closed circuit camera system at checkpoints in England's Wall Street, the City of London. The cameras can scan a license plate in four seconds and authorities say they have stopped or tracked more than a thousand vehicles for "suspected" links to terrorism or other offenses.

Not as dumb as they look? — Hull, England, cops say they captured 22 people wanted for criminal offenses by sending them invitations to a phony offering of free use of home entertainment systems. We're still puzzling how they knew where to send the invitations.

Beat the (postal) system — If you're coming to the Socialist Workers convention in Oberlin, bring along those clippings you've been intending to mail for this column. We gladly accept hand delivery. For those who won't be there: Send clippings to Great Society, Pathfinder Bookstore, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. 90006 or fax to (213) 380-1268.

1969: workers' struggles explode in Argentina

During the 1960s and 1970s mass protests of students and workers erupted throughout Latin America. In Argentina the upsurge was especially based in the working class. The following excerpt, from *The Leninist Strategy of Party Building: The Debate on Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America* by Joseph Hansen, gives a picture of the mobilizations by industrial workers and students there in 1969. The book is copyright © 1979 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JOSEPH HANSEN

Since May 1969 the situation in Argentina has been prerevolutionary.

In that month the country was shaken by mass struggles touched off by student protests. A general strike paralyzed Rosario, Argentina's second largest city. Major flare-ups followed in various cities, the biggest



September 1973 demonstration in Tucumán, Argentina, against the military coup in Chile. Hansen describes prerevolutionary situation a few years earlier.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

and most violent being in Córdoba, hence the name *Cordobazo* for this historic struggle. The two big trade union federations called a nationwide solidarity strike. This widespread upsurge in May amounted to a semi-insurrection.

The use of the term *semi-insurrection* rather than *spontaneous rebellion* or *uprising* is deliberate. It accurately indicates the nature of the struggle — in the streets, with masses confronting the army and police; and the target the masses had in mind — the national government. What gave it the character of a semi-insurrection was the clear political aim of the mobilizations and confrontations — to bring down the government.

That is the profound difference from the uprisings in the Black ghettos in the United States, which were spontaneous rebellions, with no specific political demands either ex-

PLICIT or implicit.

But even the Argentine explosions were not insurrections. For that, a revolutionary leadership applying a clear program for the conquest of power was required. None of the mobilizations of the working class in Argentina has had this feature....

In Córdoba a series of struggles flared up on the eve of the May events. On February 24 the metalworkers voted to call a strike. Four days later, the workers of Luz y Fuerza (light and power) held assemblies. The struggles in this period were occasionally accompanied by marches. In the following month all the metalworkers went on strike, and in April the teachers began to mobilize, voting for a plan of struggle.

The Rosariazo and the Cordobazo

Turmoil broke out on the University of Corrientes campus on May 11. The issue was an arbitrary boost in prices at the student cafeteria. On May 15 the police killed a student. The campus uproar spread to Rosario on May 16. Two days later the police killed another youth.

The workers responded to the appeals of the students and staged a solidarity strike. The CGT [General Confederation of Labor] bureaucrats, sensing the rising tide, gave their endorsement to the strike. On May 21 the police killed a young metalworker. This led to street demonstrations and confrontations with the police. Barricades went up, and the masses, in a completely spontaneous manner, took over an area of twenty blocks.

Under the impact of what had happened in Rosario, Córdoba exploded.

Mass discontent had been building toward such an outcome in this powerful proletarian center, the seat of Argentina's auto and aviation industries. On May 5, the transport and metalworkers went out on strike. As a show of solidarity the CGT of Córdoba voted a twenty-four-hour general sympathy strike. This resulted in a confrontation with the police on May 14 in which a worker was wounded.

The students now stepped forward. Aroused by the events in Corrientes and enthused by the action of the workers, they organized a march. This was repressed. The medical students answered the police by organizing resistance in their own district. A week of struggle was then voted by the students. In face of the mounting tension, the police arrested Tosco, the leader of the light

and power union. High school students began showing up at demonstrations organized by the university students. The Catholic university students joined in the struggle, and student demonstrations spread beyond Rosario and Córdoba to Tucumán and other cities.

General strike in Córdoba

Disregarding the wishes of the CGT bureaucrats, factory committees began to call for a general strike. The students declared

full support for the action.

On May 30 and May 31, a thirty-six-hour general strike paralyzed Córdoba. It went through three stages:

1. With the rate of absenteeism in the main plants running at 98 percent, the workers marched to the center of the city. The police threw all their forces into the streets in a showdown fight. The battle swept over a large area and involved thousands of workers and students.

Besides throwing rocks and other missiles against the police, the workers and students began using Molotov cocktails. A small number of sharpshooters harassed the police from the tops of buildings.

The outcome was a defeat for the police. This marked the high point of the semi-insurrection.

2. The army entered the city at 5 p.m. The troops occupied key points and then spread out. Proceeding on foot, and firing at roofs, the troops drove back the demonstrating workers and students, regaining buildings they had occupied.

The workers and students retreated to their *barrios* (neighborhoods where they lived).

3. During the night several police stations were attacked and set on fire. Such actions continued the next day on a wide scale. Worker-student committees began to appear. They discussed how to resist the army and how to organize and coordinate the movement from the barrios. Propaganda began to be directed to the troops. A significant slogan was "Soldiers, you are our brothers. Don't shoot."

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



June 16, 1972

NEW YORK, June 7 — The Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC) held a national coordinating committee meeting here June 4, which projected a series of activities to carry on the fight for women's right to abortion. Nearly 80 women's right to abortion. Nearly 80 women from local coalitions around the country attended.

Motions to call a national abortion conference on July 15-16 in New York, to hold an international tribunal in the fall, and to intensify WONAAC's support to the Abortion Rights Act now in Congress were passed after a lengthy and heated debate.

This debate reflected sharp disagreements within WONAAC over perspectives for continuing the struggle to repeal anti-abortion laws in the face of the growing mobilization of anti-abortion forces.

In just the past few months the women's movement has been confronted with the near adoption of a law overturning the liberalized abortion statute in New York. Also, a new, more restrictive abortion law was passed in Connecticut. This came after women had won a significant victory in the courts against Connecticut's old law.



June 14, 1947

June 9 — More than 11,000 Pennsylvan-

nia soft coal miners have downed tools in protest against the Taft-Hartley bill. The stoppage began three days ago when 400 men in the Fayette-Greene County area decided it was time to take action against the Taft-Hartley anti-labor bill now on Truman's desk.

Their strike was not official. Andrew S. Rayner, president of the Gates Mine local of the United Mine Workers, declared: "The men refused to work for some reason but the local did not call any strike."

The strike rapidly mushroomed throughout the Pittsburgh area. "The men think President Truman will veto the anti-strike bill if all the men come out on the strike," said John Ozanich, president of the Robena local. "The men went to work Saturday morning, but the word was spread around that there was no work on account of that bill."

As the spontaneous protest action swept from mine to mine, United Mine Worker officials tried to get the men back to work, but up to now appeared to have no success. At Uniontown, Pa., William J. Hynes, president of UMW District 4, who reported the official efforts to halt the protest action, said the walkout was due to "unrest" over the Taft-Hartley bill.

With 20 mines already shut down, Capt. N.H. Collisson, Coal Mines Administrator, ordered an "investigation." Under government operation of the mines, the United Mine Workers are subject to savage court penalties for official strike action. The Krug-Lewis agreement bans demonstrations such as this one. The coal operators can demand the imposition of fines of \$1 or \$2 a day.

From Pathfinder

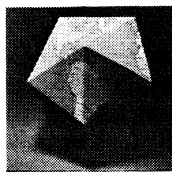
The Leninist Strategy of Party Building

THE DEBATE ON GUERRILLA WARFARE IN LATIN AMERICA

Joseph Hansen

In the 1960s and '70s, revolutionists in the Americas and throughout the world debated how to apply the lessons of the Cuban revolution to struggles elsewhere. This book is a living analysis by a participant in that debate. It contains substantial writing on the class struggle in Argentina. \$26.95

The Leninist Strategy of Party Building
The Debate on Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America
Joseph Hansen



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Celebrate workers' blow to French rulers' plans

The results of the parliamentary elections in France give working people around the world cause to celebrate. The vote was a sharp reminder that the capitalist rulers have failed to convince working people to accept the idea that they "need to sacrifice" more for the sake of capital. This isn't just true in France — recent elections in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Iran also registered widespread resistance to capitalist austerity.

In order to reverse the long-term decline in their rate of profits, the bosses in France — like in every other capitalist nation — need to drive down workers' wages, social benefits, and working conditions. That's what President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé attempted to do over the last two years. But they ran into a problem — stiff resistance by the working class.

Workers in France are stronger today because of their own actions. In response to the "Juppé plan" of austerity at a time of record unemployment, they took to the streets in several waves of strikes and protest actions in 1995-96. These battles ended in a standoff. Chirac and Juppé failed in their attempt to either finesse or force workers to accept the slashing of their social wage, supposedly needed for Paris to meet the criteria for entering the European Monetary Union (EMU).

With support for Chirac's Gaullist coalition slipping, a layer in the French ruling class decided to take a gamble on early elections, hoping to at least hang onto a majority in parliament for the next five years and use its as a carte blanche for further assaults on labor. But working people said, "We've had enough."

Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin and his coalition partners in the Stalinist Communist Party of France have a thoroughly bourgeois program — like François Mitterrand and other social democratic regimes before him did. But Jospin will head a government that was elected on promises of creating hundreds of thousands of jobs. The workers who just voted out the Juppé government will be watching closely, and are more confident to keep pressing their demands, including with more strikes and street actions.

This ends the prospect of maintaining a strong franc. Paris has tried to keep the French currency strong to maintain its slot in the imperialist pecking order, even at the cost of high unemployment. The working class has replied, "We don't care about your currency — we need jobs." Working people are now likely to push Jospin in the direction of allowing a weaker franc in an attempt to boost exports and employment. Such policies, under the current conditions of a world depression and stiff interimperialist competition, will push inflation upwards.

Without a strong franc, the ability of the French rulers to put forward their "Gaullist model" as the capitalist alternative to Washington's domination in Europe will diminish. This is what Chirac had been trying to do both through pushing for the franc to become the currency the EMU could revolve around and for Paris to take over NATO's southern command or build an alternative imperialist military alliance in Europe.

Every week, though, the idea of monetary union built around the German mark or the French franc, with a strong common currency able to compete with the dollar, is more exposed for the pipe dream that it is. In addition to Chirac's woes, Bonn has been wracked by the German regime's scheme to revalue its gold stock to solve its budget deficit problem with a stroke of the pen! In Germany, too, the rulers have been scared off from pushing social cuts by the resistance of the working class and their inability to reimpose capitalist social relations in the eastern part of the country. This makes the entire imperialist edifice more shaky.

Working people should celebrate the weakened position of these imperialist masters. Their disputes over "monetary union" and military alliances are about how to best take on workers at home; drive toward overturning the workers states in Russia, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere; and beat out their capitalist rivals. The toilers have no common interests with "their" bourgeoisie on these questions — in France or anywhere else.

The French vote also showed a growing polarization, with Jean-Marie Le Pen's fascist National Front receiving its largest vote ever. This is not unique to France either. Under the impact of a world economic crisis ultrarightist and reactionary forces get a bigger hearing, including the Reform Party in Canada, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party in Australia, and Patrick Buchanan in the United States. At the same time, growing numbers of workers and young people turn out to protest when these rightists speak.

The elections in France make clear there's a real desire and resolve among working people to resist the capitalist rulers' austerity drive. This provides more openings for revolutionaries to join small skirmishes and bigger social protest actions, fight shoulder to shoulder with fellow workers for immediate demands, and in the course of these battles explain to others that what workers want — jobs, social equality, an end to racism and sexism — are not possible under the capitalist system.

There's more space today to present and win a hearing for a working-class, a socialist course. There's more space to explain that the labor movement needs a program that advances the unity of workers and their allies, such as working farmers, in order to push back the rulers' offensive and give an effective answer to the ultraright.

This includes fighting for jobs for all — for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay and public works programs to build needed housing and infrastructure and create more jobs. It includes demanding affirmative action and equal rights for all immigrants, an end to the deportations and victimizations supported by all of the capitalist parties. It includes opposition to entry by any country into the European Union, NATO or any other imperialist institution. And it includes international solidarity — demanding all French and other imperialist troops get out of Africa, Albania, and Yugoslavia.

Class-struggle minded workers in every country should recognize and celebrate the greater possibilities to advance such a program today.

Why communists back a class vote for Labour

"We do not have to wait four years to see that Labour [in Britain] won't defend our interests," wrote *Militant* reader Ciarán Farrell in a letter printed last week. I agree. But Farrell is wrong to conclude from this that in the UK general election the Communist League (CL) should not have called for a Labour vote in the constituencies where the League wasn't standing. Millions of workers who wanted to express their resistance to the grinding capitalist offensive, spearheaded over the last 18 years by the Conservative (Tory) government, saw no option but to vote for the Labour Party. Voting Labour was a way of saying "no!" to the government's continued demands that workers should accept what the rulers deem to be "economically necessary;" of saying "no more!" to the Tories, the main party of big business.

Farrell links the way workers should vote to the policies of the Labour government. But Labour won the election *in spite of* its program. What was striking about the election campaign — and this remains the case today — is how few workers accept Anthony Blair's appeals that they should have no

expectations from his Labour government. This exposes the lie in Blair's claim that the party won because of its "New Labour" program.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

Workers in their millions cast a class vote because they believe that Labour — a party that rests on the affiliated membership of 4.1 million trade unionists — can, whatever the leadership says, be used to defend their interests *as workers*. That's why the day after the general election there were celebrations of the Tory drubbing in factories, mines, and rail depots across Britain. Many workers in plants where CL members work expressed the view, "We've won!"

If communists had not urged a Labour vote we would be reduced to replying, "No, we haven't." Much better to say, as we did in the election campaign, "Let's fight together to commit the unions and the Labour Party to a program that defends our interests." Then, as the Labour government implements its pro-capitalist program, we can — not as prophets of doom, but concretely in the heat of the battle — explain its real character and the need for a class-struggle approach.

In the months and years to come, workers will go through the experience of Blair, the testing of other leaders, the fight for partial demands. Trade unions will engage in struggles and they'll demand that Labour supports them. Workers and youth in Scotland will take advantage of Labour's devolution referendum to push forward the fight for Scottish independence. Trade unionists will take a stand on policy conflicts and elections within the Labour Party. They'll resist Blair's continuing drive to weaken Labour's links with the unions. If we abstained from the struggle around such questions, communists could never be effective revolutionary politicians in the unions, for it will be in union struggles at work, and on the streets and picket lines, that these issues will be fought out.

And when union members next have the opportunity to vote on the continued affiliation of their unions to the Labour Party, communists will argue for a vote in favor, as the only way open, under today's conditions, to express the need for a mass party of labor, without which the struggle for power is impossible.

None of this implies declaring a political amnesty for the pro-capitalist Labour leaders — or "giving the nod" to Labour, as Farrell puts it. On the contrary, Labour is no better politically than the Tories. It's equally committed to defending the capitalist order. The example of Ireland cited by Farrell is a good one. Labour was officially silent over the partition of Ireland in 1922 and has defended the union ever since. Labour governments sent in the troops in 1969, enacted the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1974, and have presided over some of the most draconian policing of the Six Counties.

What's at issue is not "giving the nod" to Labour but how to influence the great majority of workers who are Labour supporters — for example, in the fight to get British troops out of Ireland. Only by recognizing that Labour is different — not because of its program but because it remains based on the unions — can we give the right answer. Unions are organizations of the working class. We should *never* give them up to the bourgeoisie.

To become more than a revolutionary group self-satisfied in its hatred of capitalism, and to embark upon the road of forging a genuine *party*, revolutionaries can't abstain from the struggles within the mass organizations of the working class. We must embrace every manifestation of working-class resistance and make revolutionary propaganda in the context of *the actual experience of the mass of workers*. It's not, as Farrell suggests, a "cop out" to have a united front approach to Labour.

The united front approach, summed up in the election by advising a class vote for Labour, allows communists to go through common experience with the rest of our class, help other workers break from the reformist misleaders, win new adherents to our program, and pave the way for a mass communist party. As Farrell says, it was Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin who first expressed this in the memorable formula of "supporting Labour as a rope supports a hanging man."

Farrell suggests that the policy adopted by Lenin toward the Labour Party is inappropriate today because conditions have changed. He cites Blair's "Christian moralism" and the preponderance of middle-class members in Labour Party branches, and concludes that now Labour is a party like the Democratic Party in the United States. But Labour has never been distinguished from the Democrats in its ideas.

Ideologically, Labour has always been a bourgeois liberal party, totally servile to the interests of the ruling class. Where Labour differs is on its relations to the labor movement and the capitalist class — it's based on the unions and for that reason, despite middle-class members, is still not the preferred party of the capitalist rulers over the long term. (It's worth noting that influence of "middle-class liberals" was also an argument used against Lenin at the time by those like Sylvia Pankhurst and Willie Gallagher who opposed Lenin's stance toward Labour.)

Farrell concludes by asking "who next will you be supporting, the [fascist] British National Party?" It was a rhetorical question, but it shows the danger, from the point of view of revolutionary tactics, of putting all bourgeois parties into the same basket. The Stalinist party in Germany in the 1930s did just that. They said that the social democrats were the same as the fascists. They called them "social fascists" and refused a united front approach to them against Hitler. The result was the greatest defeat in the history of the modern working-class movement.

— JONATHAN SILBERMAN

Iceland: Fish workers strike for wage increase

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

center in a local pizzeria, they were on the look out for a trawler recently in the harbor and trying to organize a meeting with local union leaders and dockworkers.

Company officials announced a decision to close the distribution center as a "business move" and claimed they had planned to do so long before workers became unionized.

Workers at the distribution center, which supplies baked goods to some eighty Starbucks outlets in BC, struck May 16 after six months of contract negotiations ground to a halt. The union official-dom has yet to call for a strike at the eight unionized cafes, however, but has initiated what they call an "un-strike." Cafe workers sport big, blue buttons reading "CAW: Unstrike," and come to work out of uniform.

"If one of our members is sent home for not being in uniform, everybody walks, because it will be an illegal lockout," CAW national representative Roger Crowther told the *Vancouver Sun*, BC's largest circulation daily. The union's key demands, outlined in a leaflet distributed in the cafes, include an immediate wage increase to \$10 an hour, sick leave for "baristas" (cafe workers), seniority rights, and keeping the distribution center open.

Rajendra Reddy, a 35-year-old truck driver for the center, explained to the *Militant* that before workers joined the CAW, company representatives floated plans to expand operations at the center to 24 hours. "We joined the union, and then they found out we were in the union, so all of a sudden they want to close on us," he said.

Workers at one of the company's busiest locations in North America, Starbucks cafe on Commercial Dr., felt similarly. "They're making it sound as though it's wrong to have a union when it's our legal right," said Allison Mersereau, referring to Starbucks' statements in the media and posted in stores.

The company lowered wages from

1,600 office workers strike in New Jersey



Striking Blue Cross-Blue Shield workers picket outside the company's Raymond Blvd. headquarters in Newark, New Jersey. About 1,600 workers struck over retirees' health insurance payments, and against company attempt to merge vacation and sick days.

\$7.50 to \$7 per hour, the minimum wage in BC, in October 1995. "In 1995, I would have been making 50 cents more than I am today. For the amount of money that I make for them, I think I deserve a little more," said Melinda Symak, 19, who works at the Commercial Dr. cafe.

New York garment workers face negotiations

NEW YORK — Contracts for more than 40,000 members of the Union of Needletrades Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) are expiring. The contracts for workers in the women's outerwear industry expire May 31, 1997.

Negotiations for a new contract are also taking place for 2,500 members of UNITE Local 62-32 in New York working in the Embroidery, Belt and Pleaters Division. Their contract expires June 30.

UNITE Local 23-25, the largest UNITE local in New York, opened its 1997 contract negotiations on March 26 with the New York Skirt and Sportswear Association and the National Association of Blouse Manufacturers.

The opening session with the contractor associations—the Greater Blouse, Skirt and Undergarment Association, the Sportswear

Apparel Association, and the Metropolitan Area Apparel Association—took place on April 3. The contract for Local 23-25 union members expire May 31.

Demands for the new three-year contract include a 16 percent wage increase for all week and piece workers, an increase in minimums commensurate with the wage increase for all week and piece workers, an increase in holiday pay, and an increase in employers' contributions to the health and welfare fund.

The employers rejected the demands outright. Some associations are pushing to lower overtime pay, allow Sunday work, and slash benefits. Negotiating sessions between union representatives and the employers' associations are continuing. UNITE Local 23-25 is distributing information and buttons to members that say "UNITE for a fair contract" in English, Spanish and Chinese.

Sigurlaug Gunnlaugsdóttir from Iceland; Jake Garvey, member of the Young Socialists and Ned Dmytryshyn, member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 764 from Vancouver; and Deborah Liatos member of UNITE Local 25 in New York contributed to this column.

ON THE PICKET LINE

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Members of trade unions in the regional federation Alþýðusamband Vestfjarða (ASV), of the northwestern peninsula in Iceland, have been on strike for five weeks. Two large unions of unskilled workers in the area of Reykjavik, Dagsbrún (Dawn) and Hlíf have declared solidarity for the labor action. Their members are not loading or unloading ships, which ASV union members normally work on.

The strike is a part of general negotiations in the labor market in process since the fall of 1996 that ended with signing of contracts between the Organization of Employers (VSÍ) and majority of federations and unions in the country. The talks began, following a one-day strike of unskilled workers in Reykjavik, at the end of March. The contract included a pay raise of about 13 percent over three years.

The unions in the ASV are demanding a wage increase and are debating the bonus system in the fishing industry. The bonus is a variable part of workers' salaries, often around one-third of the fixed wage. Most workers in ASV are employed in the fishing industry and some are dockworkers.

Teams of strikers jumped in cars on May 17 to picket at harbors around on the northwestern and western coast. Their first stop was the northern town of Hvammstangi where they encountered members of the local union unloading *Framnes*, a ship registered in Vestfirðir. After some discussions with them, they reached an agreement and the strikers continued towards the area around the capital city of Reykjavik.

Supporters of the *Militant* met the strikers just as they had arrived in Hafnarfjörður, an adjacent town to Reykjavik. From their immediate

"We wanted to incorporate the bonus into the fixed wage and estimated it at 230 kronur (US\$3.20) an hour, said striker Adalheidur Steinsdóttir. "Since they did not even want to discuss it, we canceled the idea. We are demanding a minimum of 218 kronur bonus an hour, a guarantee for 85,000 kronur (US\$1200) a month at the signing of the contract, and 105,000 kronur at the end of the term."

"Today, the hourly bonus where I work is around 240 kronur an hour, added Sirri Bragadóttir. But there are small places where productivity is very low, for example for bacalau and dried fish, the bonus goes down to 130 kronur an hour. This is meant to help them out."

There was no unloading of the ship in Hafnarfjörður. The employers built a wall of containers at the site to evade blockade, but the dockworkers refused to work on the ship under these conditions. It left and was unloaded a couple of days later in a southern harbor of Vestmanna-Islands. A similar process followed in Reykjavik.

The Organization of Employers, VSÍ, have claimed that sympathy action of Dawn and Hlíf are illegal since both unions have recently signed a contract and are thereby obliged to keep peace on their part. VSÍ have also said they will sue the unions involved in hindering the unloading take place and seek to recover damages.

Meanwhile, teachers have not signed an agreement with their employer, the state and municipalities. According to Elna Katrin Jónsdóttir, chairperson of the teachers union, KSI, the union must prepare for a fight after the summer.

Starbucks workers fight for contract in Canada

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — A strike is looming at Starbucks, British Columbia's (BC) largest coffee retailer, where workers at eight retail outlets and a distribution center were recently organized by the Canadian Auto Workers.

LETTERS

New Zealand health care

Carrying placards saying "We're left without a leg to stand on" and "Shame on North Health", about 100 amputees and their supporters marched through central Auckland May 15, to protest what they described as the deplorable treatment of amputees.

Late last year North Health, the government health agency, decided to dispense with the services of the Artificial Limb Board (ALB) and contract out the supplying of prosthetic limbs to a private outfit, Rehabilitation Management Limited (RML). Since then, hundreds of complaints have flooding in from amputees about delays, unhelpful staff and shoddy workmanship.

The Amputee's Association, which organized the protest, explained in a leaflet handed out by the marchers, "The ALB has a purpose built Limb Centre in Auckland with excellent facilities. RML has not. Auckland Limb Centre has 10 trained prosthetic staff RML's staffing remains a mystery to us.... Many

repairs and adjustments carried out by RML have rendered the artificial limb unwearable!"

The marchers were addressed by Labour Member of Parliament Chris Carter and Jim Anderton, leader of the opposition Alliance, who blasted the contracting out of health services. *Mervyl Morrison Auckland, New Zealand*

Correction on Okinawa case

Thank you for being the only newspaper to take a clear position opposing the recent Congressional attacks against a woman's right to choose abortion (June 2).

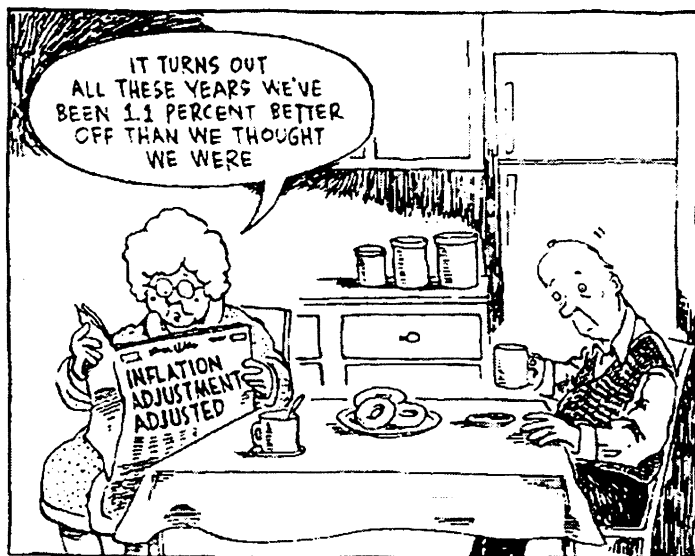
I also appreciate your excellent coverage of the demonstrations which have taken place in

Okinawa protesting the rape of an Okinawan native by U.S. soldiers.

Their is, however, one small disagreement I have with your coverage of the latter. Your caption on the second page of the above issue referred to the rape victim as "... a 12-year-old woman."

abuse as well.

There is, consequently, two-fold reason to protest the behavior of these soldiers. The first demand should be that they be punished for both offenses; the second, that all bases on Okinawa be closed, and U.S. soldiers leave immediately.



There is no such thing. I teach 12-year-olds for a living. 12-year-olds are children. They are not ready to make mature decisions (such as whether to be sexually active). Therefore, the caption should have read "... a 12-year-old girl," or "... a 12-year-old child." Not only did the soldiers commit rape, they committed child

Sue Kawakubo by e-mail

Thanks for the knowledge

Thank you for providing the only source for decolonized truth in the U.S. Your contributions to the struggle for justice will not be forgotten. Thanks for the knowledge. *M.D. Atlanta, Georgia*

Cuba's internationalism

I would like to hear more about Cuba's international missions. Keep up the great work. *S.G. New Richmond, Minnesota*

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.

Clinton launches U.S. campaign to win backing for NATO war moves

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"Fifty-five years ago, in the early days of World War II," said President William Clinton to some 900 graduating cadets of the United States Military Academy, "Gen. George Marshall spoke here about the need to organize our nation for the ordeal of war." During his pep talk at the May 31 commencement at West Point, New York, Clinton warned the military students, "You could be asked to put your lives on the line for a new NATO member, just as today you could be called upon to defend the freedom of our allies in Western Europe."

The president's speech was the launching of what the administration projects as a year-long national campaign to win support for the enlargement of NATO and use of Washington's military might abroad. "When our values and interests are at stake, our mission is crystal clear," Clinton told the cadets. As part of its war preparations, the White House established a new office headed by Jeremy Rosner, a special assistant to the president and the secretary of state, to publicly campaign for the expansion of the imperialist military alliance.

Clinton's speech was a tribute to U.S. Gen. George Marshall and the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, named after the general. On June 5, 1947, Marshall, who was U.S. secretary of state at the time, delivered a commencement speech at Harvard University announcing the European Economic Recovery Program, later known as the Marshall plan.

Under this program, Washington provided \$13 billion in loans between 1948 and 1951 to rebuild the infrastructure and renew industrial production in the capitalist countries of Europe, which had been devastated by World War II. The Marshall Plan was followed less than two years later by the founding of NATO in 1949. Both of these enterprises were aimed at exerting maximum economic and military pressure on the Soviet Union, codifying Washington's political and military supremacy in Europe, and

crushing the struggles of workers and farmers around the world.

Half a century later, Clinton's West Point address capped his recent tour of Europe to promote NATO military expansion into Central and Eastern Europe. By moving NATO troops toward the Russian border, the U.S. imperialists are preparing for the day when they will try to use military force to restore capitalism in Russia and elsewhere in the region. At the same time, Washington is using the NATO expansion drive to push its political domination in Europe.

"We have the best tools to do these jobs," Clinton boasted to the West Point cadets. "Those are the most powerful and best-trained military in the world and a fully funded diplomacy."

Albright's Balkan mission

Clinton's trip was followed by an arm-twisting mission by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the Balkans, where she scolded chauvinist leaders Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia for not complying with U.S.-crafted Dayton "peace" agreement.

According to the *New York Times*, "unusually sharp exchanges" occurred between Albright and Tudjman during a



U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright traveled to Yugoslavia to push U.S.-imposed Dayton accords, while Clinton spoke at West Point military academy.

joint news conference in Zagreb May 31. The current regime in Croatia, with its "autocratic and violent past" does not meet the standards of the "democratic community we are building in Europe," the top U.S. diplomat sneered.

Earlier that day, Albright had choreographed a visit to a family of refugees who were harassed as they tried to return to homes they fled during the 1992-95 war. Afterwards, she chided Croatian reconstruction minister Jure Ganic, saying, "you should be ashamed of yourself," and called him a liar.

The next day, Albright traveled to Banja Luka, where she met with chauvinist Serb leader Biljana Plavsic, president of the Bosnian mini-state Republika Srpska. Albright aimed to push imperialist demands for the surrender of alleged "war criminals." State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said the Clinton administration plans to set up a representative office in Banja Luka staffed by officials from the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo.

During Albright's meeting with Plavsic, protesters rallied outside and denounced the U.S. government for "waging war against the Serbs." Residents interviewed in the streets strongly opposed giving any concessions to the Clinton administration, the *Washington Post* reported.

Albright's trip to the Balkans reflects the frustration of the U.S. rulers in accomplishing very little after 18 months of military occupation in Bosnia. Washington has already begun to back away from the agreement to remove the 30,000 NATO soldiers from Bosnia in June 1998. At a May 29 press conference in London, Clinton ignored a

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Albright probes NATO role in Albania

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright called for a NATO mission to be sent to Albania to come up with a proposal on how the Atlantic imperialist alliance can help "in reestablishing a functioning and democratically controlled army in that country." Albright made this statement while touring Yugoslavia to push for compliance with the Washington-crafted Dayton accords the U.S. government forced the rival regimes in the Yugoslav republics to sign in 1995.

"Albania is an example of a pattern of crisis situations we face, and will have to face in the future in Europe," Albright said, according to the May 31 *Eleftherotypia*, one of the main Greek dailies. "It reflects the need for NATO and the Euro-Atlantic Council of Cooperation to focus their efforts, working with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), on preventing conflicts."

Meanwhile, the Italian government announced it will send more troops to Albania before the June 29 elections take place to augment its 2,500-strong detachment already there in that Balkan country.

There are more than 6,500 imperialist troops in Albania, led by the Italian government along with eight other regimes in Europe. The occupying forces in Albania aim to quell the working-class rebellion which began in early January against the devastating consequences of capitalist "market reforms" imposed by the pro-imperialist regime of President Sali Berisha.

The revolt has thrown into utter crisis the rule of the bureaucratic caste that has for decades controlled political power in this Balkan workers state. The NATO military force, Albright said "will aid in reestablishing a functioning army." During the popular revolt, Albania's armed forces have been virtually dissolved, with many units and

thousands of individual soldiers and officers joining the rebels.

One of the main pretexts the imperialists use to justify their deepening intervention is the "guarantee of free and fair elections." The imperialist troops will be patrolling the streets in cities throughout Albania and guarding poll stations. The OSCE is sending about 400 "observers." Franz Vranitsky, the OSCE coordinator in Albania, spoke in Rome's parliament on May 26, urging the Italian government to prolong the mandate of the imperialist occupation for another three months.

On June 2 the Italian government recalled Paolo Foresti, its ambassador to Tirana, back to Rome. Foresti had voiced open support for Berisha in taped discussions with Democratic Party (DP) leader Tritan Sehou, which were published by an Albanian daily. Rome quickly responded, fearing Foresti's statements could spark resistance to its occupying troops by Albania's armed workers and farmers.

The demand for Foresti's recall to Italy was supported, among others, by Albanian Prime Minister Bashkim Fino. Fino's Socialist Party (SP) and Berisha's DP are the main groups in the national coalition government in Tirana representing competing layers within the bureaucratic caste.

Under pressure from the occupying forces, the SP and the DP agreed to hold the elections hoping to put an end to the workers' struggle.

Both parties accuse each other for being responsible for the crisis facing the rule of the privileged social layers they represent. On May 27 the SP organized a protest rally against the "state of emergency" that has continued to be enforced since the beginning of the revolt. The SP also demanded that Berisha hand over control of the SHIK, Albania's secret police, as he had promised under the agreement to hold the elections.

About 10,000 people participated in the protest rally held at Tirana's soccer stadium, chanting "Sali you dog, we will hang you" and "give us our money back." The ousting of Berisha and reimbursement for the money they lost in the "pyramid" schemes are the main demands of the popular revolt. The "pyramids" were investment scams endorsed by Berisha's government in which hundreds of thousands lost their life savings after their collapse.

While holding some poorly attended election rallies in northern Albania, Berisha has continued his terror campaign against working people. Eight people were wounded after a bomb exploded on a bus in central Tirana. The bomb went off 10 minutes before the nine o'clock curfew that is imposed under the state of emergency measures. The day before, another bomb exploded in a cafeteria at Tirana's Skenderbey Square wounding more than 20 people. The cafeteria's owner is Vice Minister of Public Order Lous Perpale, who is a leader of the SP.

While blaming Berisha for the attack, Perpale said that the action aim "to repeat the elections with the violence and fraud of March 1996." The DP holds the majority of seats in parliament after those rigged elections.

Pieter Arbnore, president of Berisha's parliament in Tirana, reiterated the DP's position that "a precondition for the lifting of the state of emergency is the dissolution of the rebel's committees." In agreeing to hold the vote, Fino has also called for their dissolution.

But the rebel councils have refused to disband. The armed workers and farmers and the Committees for National Salvation, born in the heat of the revolt, remain the main obstacle in the ability of the imperialist occupying forces and Tirana's national coalition government to subdue the working class in Albania.

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