

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Meeting celebrates life,  
example of Helen Scheer

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Workers' resistance accelerates

From Iowa to Australia, more workers say 'No!' to the bosses

Labor resistance and other political struggles in the working class are palpably accelerating. This resistance to the employer and government attacks on working people is not an isolated development — it is occurring throughout the United States, and parallels the labor struggles that are breaking out in other industrialized countries to-

### EDITORIAL

day, from Canada to Australia to Denmark. The latest series of union fights and skirmishes is further confirmation that the years-long retreat of the working class has ended. In 1989-91 the Machinists at Eastern Airlines, joined by the United Mine Workers at Pittston Coal, waged sustained strikes that defeated union-busting assaults by these two employers — the first successful battles of

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## Tire workers strike in Iowa

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES — At midnight April 30, 650 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164 went on strike against Titan Tire after failing to reach a new contract agreement.

The night shift marched out with clenched fists in the air and were greeted by more than 400 cheering members of the local and supporters from other unions.

Titan Tire is a manufacturer of agricultural, industrial, and military tires and is a subsidiary of Titan International, a leading producer of off-highway wheels. Titan has contracts with major equipment manufacturers including John Deere, AGCO, and New Holland.

Around 11:00 p.m., steelworkers assembled outside the Local 164 union hall. Their excitement and confidence grew as the afternoon shift drove up from the nearby



Militant photos: top, Ray Parsons; far right, Ron Richards

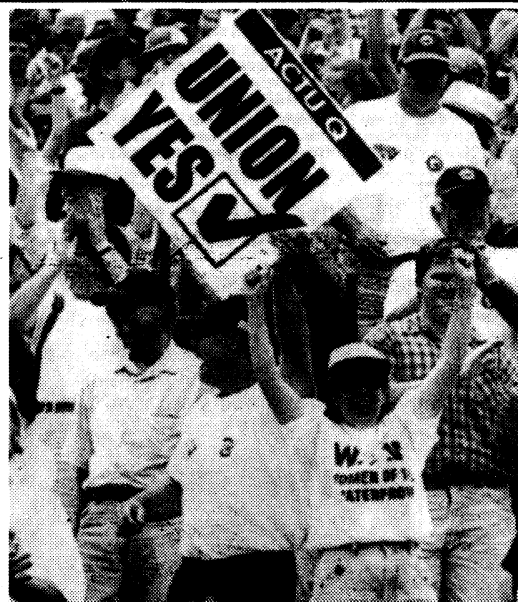
Above, Titan Tire workers on picket line first night of their strike. "Grizz" refers to boss Maurice Taylor's chosen emblem of grizzly bear. Right, unionists rally May 4 in Brisbane, Australia. 100,000 people marched two days later in Melbourne to protest antilabor laws and announced call for general strike. Far right, Puerto Rican unionists turn out May 1 to protest sell-off of phone company.

plant.

Workers shot off fireworks, brought out picket signs, and a banjo player led a chorus of "Solidarity Forever" from atop a pickup truck.

Twenty members of USWA Local 310 from Bridgestone/Firestone joined the rally with picket signs reading "USWA 310 Supports Local 164." Another said "310 plus 164 equals solidarity." In the days before

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## May Day in San Juan: 'Puerto Rico is not for sale'

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Several thousand workers celebrated International Workers Day by marching from Luis Muñoz Rivera to the Capitol here. The march was called by the same trade union groups that organized a demonstration last October of 100,000 people against the proposed sale of the government-owned telephone company. The lead banner read "Puerto Rico no se vende" — Puerto Rico is not for sale.

The pro-statehood government of Pedro Rosselló is still trying to sell the telephone company and is expected to announce the buyer in the coming weeks. Besides the Puerto Rico Telephone Company, the government has or is in the process of selling hospitals, sugar mills, pineapple fields, and a shipping company. At the government-owned water authority, a lucrative contract has been given to a private company.

The Rosselló government has proposed cutting the budget of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) to supposedly use this money to provide scholarships from the kindergarten to university level. These scholarships could be used to pay for private education. In response to this attack the University Front Against Privatization, which includes student groups and unions of uni-

versity workers and professors, shut down the UPR system with a strike on April 30 and joined in the May 1 march.

Ron Richards is a member of the American Federation of Government Employees.

## U.S. Senate votes to push NATO boundary eastward

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. Senate voted April 30 to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, pushing the military alliance 400 miles eastward toward Russia. The move bolsters NATO forces by 200,000 troops and marks a qualitative step by the U.S. rulers toward a military encirclement of Russia. The vote was 80 to 19 and formal admissions are scheduled for 1999, the 50th anniversary of the imperialist military alliance.

"Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have met every possible requirement of membership," declared U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright in a *New York Times* opinion piece published the day before the Senate vote. "Their soldiers have risked their lives in the Persian Gulf war and Bosnia. All three have offered to contribute forces if a military strike is necessary in Iraq," she added.

The NATO expansion is part of the U.S. rulers' strategic aim of overthrowing the workers states in Russia and elsewhere in the region and reestablishing capitalist social relations there — which they must eventually attempt to do by military force. The door is open to bring some of the former Soviet republics into NATO membership as well, including the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This prospect has already increased political tensions in the area. Recently, Moscow demanded immediate repayment of debts from the government of Latvia and threatened to cut off some oil shipments there.

"The process of enlargement is ongoing," said Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. "No one's going to be excluded on the basis of geography or history."

The debate among big-business poli-

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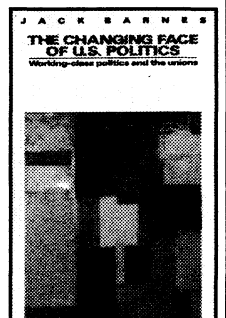
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Australia dock workers push back union busting — page 3

## U.S. gov't renews threats on Iraq

The United Nations Security Council voted April 27 to extend its strangling sanctions against Iraq. The next day the top UN "weapons inspector" Richard Butler claimed that "experts" found artillery shells in Iraq that contained mustard gas. "Sanctions will stay on as long as Iraq continues to flout UN resolutions," declared James Rubin, the U.S. State Department spokesman, four days before the UN decision. Rubin reiterated that the U.S. imperialist military arsenal remained in the Arab Persian Gulf and Washington was still prepared to use it. The U.S. war machine includes 36,000 troops, six navy vessels, two aircraft carriers, 30 warships, and 400 fighter planes.

The Pentagon also projects sending the first batch of reserve fighter units since the 1991 assault on Iraq to enforce no-fly zones imposed on Baghdad. The beef up will include pilots, aircraft maintainers, and other personnel who are scheduled to be deployed in mid-May. According to the April 28 *New York Times*, "there was never a chance that Iraq would be freed from sanctions in this review." Shen Guofeng, China's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, called for ending the sanctions. He charged the chief UN snoop Butler with running the UN Special Commission operation in Iraq like "an army of occupation."

The Clinton administration and their imperialist colleagues in London insist on administering maximum punishment on the Iraqi people. Iraqi government officials assert that U.S. and British representatives on the Sanctions Committee deliberately delay humanitarian supplies, including ambulances and pencils for schools, which they claim could be used for military purposes.

## Protests swell across Indonesia

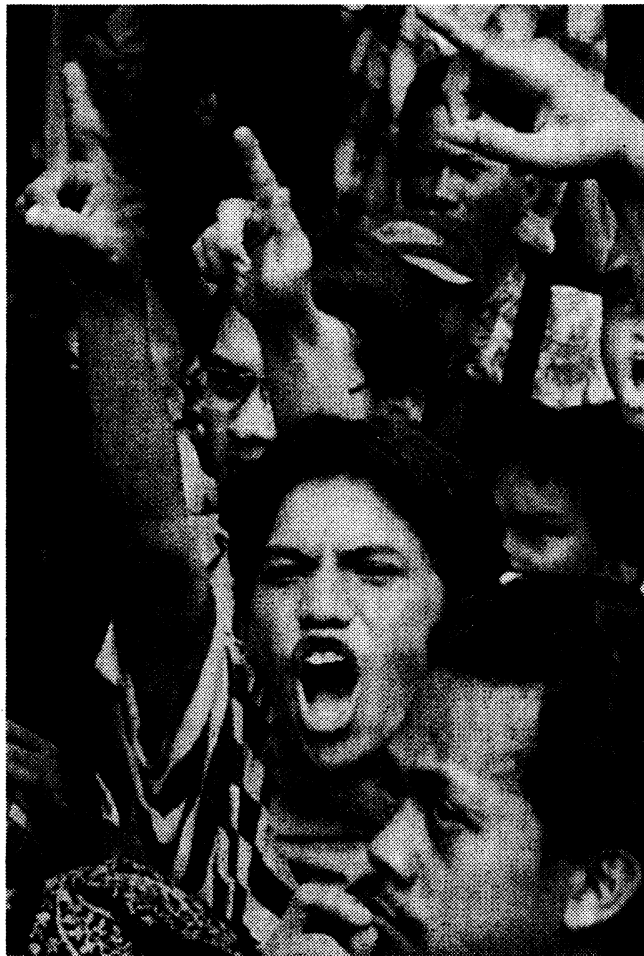
Students and others rallied in major cities across Indonesia May 2 in response to a proclamation made by the Suharto regime that no measures would be taken to relieve the harsh economic crisis facing workers and students there. As tens of thousands of students rallied at four campuses that day in the capital city of Jakarta, they were attacked by riot cops armed with tear gas and rattan sticks. Students have won the support of la-

bor unions, women's organizations, faculty members, and others. As protesters gain more confidence and numbers build, activists have begun to "disappear." The Indonesian Army has denied any role in the disappearances, though, according to news article in the *New York Times*, some of the missing activists turn up "in police custody or have been released many weeks later in their hometowns hundreds of miles away."

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is discussing whether or not to pay the latest \$1 billion installment on the \$43 billion loan being issued to the Indonesian government. Jakarta has vowed to carry out whatever "reforms" are demanded in order to receive the IMF loan payment. Millions of working people in Indonesia will face higher prices for fuel, electricity, and other basic goods, which threaten deeper unrest. Washington and other imperialist powers are pushing for deeper austerity measures in Indonesia and using the crackdowns that the Suharto regime carries out to threaten withholding further loan payments.

## S. Korea: no layoffs!

Blocking traffic and taking over roads in Seoul, south Korea, May 1, more than 22,000 industrial workers and others demanded "No to layoffs!" Some 13,000 police assembled at the gathering point of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions—organized march. Workers and students dispersed when cops fired tear gas, but they quickly regrouped and retaliated with metal pipes and heavy debris. The south Korean rulers are pushing for labor "reforms" — that is, to force workers to accept layoffs and unemployment in the name of meeting the stiff terms set by the International Monetary Fund. The IMF issued Seoul a \$58 billion loan package in December. These so-called reforms are sparking resistance among working people there. Two weeks earlier 13,000 workers at Kia Motors struck after threats of a company selloff to capitalist investors.



Indonesian students demand an end to government's austerity measures at May 1 protest in the capital city Jakarta.

## Ukraine miners strike 34 pits

Coal miners in Ukraine struck 34 mines May 4. They were protesting the government's action a month earlier to cut up to a third of the coal industry subsidies. The Ukrainian government made the budget reduction in the name of meeting conditions set by the International Monetary Fund for a three-year \$2.5 million loan. Going into the strike, the government already owed workers an average of 10 months in back wages — about \$1 billion.

## French truckers warn gov't

The International Transport Workers' Federation, to which many truck drivers in France belong, issued a warning to Paris that if wage demands were not met, truckers would strike during the World Cup soccer tournament taking place there in June. Truckers are demanding a raise for qualified drivers from about \$7.25 to \$9.40 an hour. The drivers are "perfectly aware of the enormous inconvenience we can cause," a letter from the union stated. Striking truck drivers have paralyzed roads throughout France at least twice in the last two years.

## Waste spill devastates Spain

A ruptured dike in a reservoir at Boliden, a mining company in Spain owned by Canadian capitalists, sent nearly 176 million cubic feet of toxic waste streaming down the

several rivers in southern Spain April 25. The spill killed everything in its path, according to Greenpeace activists in Spain. Initial estimates put crop losses at \$13 million. "I've lost my whole crop, my whole livelihood," one tomato farmer said. Boliden president Anders Bulow said the toxic release was probably caused by a "seismic shift" below the dam, which he claims passed a company inspection two weeks prior to the rupture.

## Cops raid Chiapas town

A squadron of 500 cops raided a village in the Mexican state of Chiapas at dawn May 1, arresting 47 people. A Chiapas state official defended the action, claiming the village was full of supporters of the Zapatista National Liberation Army. A Reuters news report added that it was "run by Indians." The peasant-run area "was dismantled" a state government spokesperson said, but she cited no grounds for the arrests.

## Argentina floods kill 18

Weeks of incessant rains have caused what is reportedly the worst flooding in Argentina in decades. Sixteen people in the northeastern region had drowned or been electrocuted as of April 27, while two others died in the southern province of Chubut. More than 100,000 people there were evacuated from their homes and put in makeshift shelters. The Argentine government estimates \$2.5 billion worth of damages in the northeastern region alone were incurred.

## 'Equality for Black farmers'

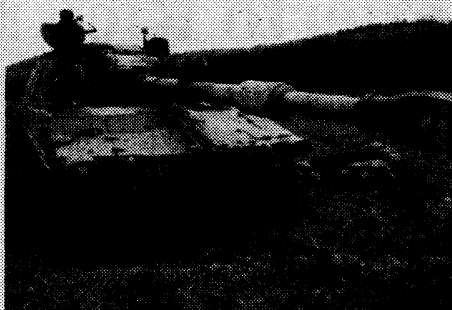
"When is there going to be justice?" "Equality for Black farmers," read some of the signs carried by more than 100 Black farmers and supporters gathered outside the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) April 23. They were protesting the government's April 8 ruling that restricts compensation for racist USDA practices to cases where a complaint was filed within two years. Alexander Pyres, the Black farmers' lawyer, said the ruling could eliminate 75 percent of the farmers who have joined a lawsuit against the USDA. The farmers are demanding the statute be waived, pointing to the fact that the USDA admittedly ignored discrimination complaints from 1983 to 1997. The farmers, who later marched into the building, heard USDA secretary Daniel Glickman lament that it's hard to institute changes to help the farmers. "Let me have your job, I'll make the changes," said Malachi Bowden, a former Virginia farmer. — BRIAN TAYLOR

Ken Morgan from Baltimore, Maryland, and staff writer Maurice Williams contributed to this column.

# THE MILITANT

## No to expansion of NATO

*The expansion of NATO is part of imperialism's moves to encircle the Russian workers state and reimpose capitalist relations there. The 'Militant' explains why workers and youth should oppose Washington, Paris, London, and Bonn in their march toward war. Don't miss a single issue!*



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# 'Our fight has strengthened the union'

## Workers in Australia prepare to return to docks in victory against union busting

BY MARNIE KENNEDY  
AND DOUG COOPER

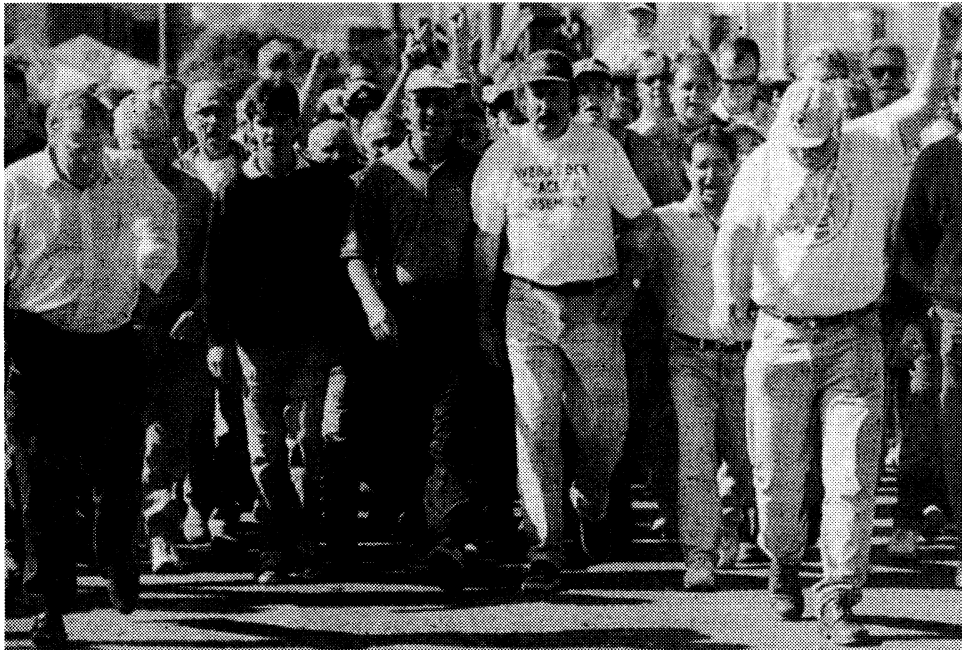
SYDNEY, Australia — Nearly a month of rock-solid picket lines paid off May 5 when unionized dock workers around the country were told to return to work the next day by the administrators of Patrick Stevedores. Patrick sacked its entire work force, members of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), in a middle-of-the-night, military-style eviction April 7. This union-busting move was carried out with the open backing of Prime Minister John Howard.

Peter Meegan, an MUA member from P&O's CTAL docks at Port Botany, told the *Militant* on the picket line May 4, "This fight has really strengthened the union, especially the young blokes. Now we are united, solid."

The union is maintaining its picket lines, however, in the face of a May 5 announcement by Patrick boss Christopher Corrigan that security guards hired to carry out the initial assault will remain on site.

Around 100,000 people took to Melbourne's streets May 6 to back the MUA, in a statewide action planned in the first days of the dispute.

The administrators' announcement came a day after a 6-1 decision by the High Court largely dismissed Patrick's appeal of an April 21 Federal Court order to reinstate the



Workers dismissed by Patrick Stevedores march to Swanson dock April 24.

sacked wharfies.

Reacting to provocative statements by Corrigan and Workplace Relations Minister Peter Reith, MUA National Secretary John Coombs said there would be "no return to work unless every single one of our

people is back ... in every port." He added, "Once we are back at work we are prepared to sit down and discuss what it will take to make [Patrick] productive."

Tens of thousands of unionists rallying May 4, Queensland's Labour Day, were told

of the High Court decision as it was being handed down and responded with jubilation. Ten thousand marched in Brisbane, led by 700 MUA members and their families. Organizers said the turnout was three times larger than the previous year. Record turnouts were also reported in Rockhampton, Townsville, and the mining town of Blackwater. May Day marches a few days earlier drew 6,000 people in Melbourne and 4,000 in drenching rain in Sydney. The turnout was marked this year by the upbeat mood already set by weeks of successful picket line mobilizations that have involved thousands of unionists and others.

The High Court reaffirmed that there was an "arguable case" that Patrick and the federal government had engaged in an unlawful conspiracy to injure the MUA and its members. The Federal Court is expected to hear the full case in a few months' time.

Seizing on minor amendments by the High Court to the April 21 decision, Corrigan, government spokespeople and headlines in the big-business press claimed a victory against the MUA. But scab outfit P&C Stevedores was forced to remove all nonunion labor from Patrick wharves within hours of the High Court decision.

The bosses' disarray was the subject of opinion pieces in every big-business daily. Brian Toohey commented in the May 5 *Australian Financial Review*, "By now the waterfront was only supposed to be lingering in the public consciousness as the source of a magnificent victory for the Workplace Relations Minister, Peter Reith.... Instead, the government remains mired in an extremely messy court action as well as damaging public anxiety about the tactics used to sack the wharfies."

Small advance crews of MUA members entered some Patrick terminals May 6 to carry out safety inspections, damage assessments, and maintain refrigerated containers.

MUA members at Port Botany told the *Militant* they expect to work unpaid for around two weeks. They were unconcerned, however, since they anticipate receiving these wages along with other back pay still owed. The wharfies remain firm, emphasizing their determination to resume work with no concessions on working conditions and in the strongest position to fight.

*Marnie Kennedy is a member of the Australian Workers Union. Doug Cooper is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union. Bob Aiken and Linda Harris contributed to this article.*

## Social Democrats in Sweden try to defuse workers' resistance in election

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Parliamentary elections will take place September 20 this year in Sweden. The Social Democratic government launched the election campaign April 14 by publicizing its 1999 budget. A year ago the conservative party, led by Carl Bildt, was at the top in opinion polls. But the latest ones give the Social Democrats about 37 percent, compared to 27.5 percent for the conservatives. Through campaign promises to increase social spending, the Social Democrats are seeking to deflect workers' resistance to high unemployment and attacks by the bosses.

Improvements in economic figures such as low inflation, modest interest rates, growth in Gross Domestic Product, and the prospect of a budget surplus have boosted support for the government in the polls. Based on this economic conjuncture, the budget projections include more resources to local authorities for health and education, as well as measures they say will create more public sector jobs. At the same time, both the social democratic and conservative parties have agreed to steps aimed at eroding state pensions, an important part of the social wage the working class in Sweden has won over decades.

The government has recently increased unemployment benefits from 75 to 80 percent of regular wages, and will raise the cost of living indexes for pensions this year.

The conservative parties and the employers are responding by pointing to the historically high unemployment of about 8 percent. They argue that cuts in taxes on businesses, slashing social benefits, and increased "labor flexibility" are needed to obtain sustainable economic growth.

The Left party, a remnant of the Stalinist Communist Party, is polled around 10 percent, which is higher than ever. It calls for a legal 35-hour workweek with no cut in pay and an end to the privatization of schools and other state facilities. Although there have not been many strikes in Sweden lately, contract negotiations have come close to breaking down more often than before.

The executives of some of the biggest companies in Sweden have joined in the conservative parties' hue and cry over taxes. The telecommunications giant Ericsson and the pharmaceutical company Astra have threatened to move their headquarters and plants to other countries, claiming that high income taxes make it difficult to hire qualified employees in Sweden.

To gain the parliamentary support of the Center party, which is based in the small agrarian bourgeoisie and middle-class "environmentalists," the Social Democrats have

decided to decommission two nuclear plants. This has been opposed by the employers and by some union officials as hurting jobs.

Bonapartist figure Ian Wachtmeister has announced he will stand in the elections with a new political formation, the New party. Wachtmeister was voted into parliament in 1991 after a campaign in which he scapegoated immigrants for the economic crisis and played on fears and resentments of the middle class and a better-off layer of workers. Later, Wachtmeister resigned and his party split, but he remains active in politics.

### Agreement on cuts in pensions

Behind the scenes, the Social Democratic party and other bourgeois parties have come to an agreement on a new pension system. The current one was established after a 1957 referendum during the postwar capitalist boom, over the employers' opposition, and was a big gain for working people in Sweden. The current pension system is guaranteed by the state and financed by employers' payments into government-administered funds. Pensions have been tied to a cost-of-living index, so that they provide enough for workers live when they retire.

The new system would be tied to economic growth and wages, not the cost of living. Some 2.5 percent of the funds are to be allotted to individual accounts for placement on the stock market or in other paper values. The bourgeois parties of every stripe try to promote this as a better pension system. The new scheme is supposed to be voted on by parliament early this summer.

Although Sweden meets most of the criteria to qualify for the European common currency, the government has decided not to take part in the project at the start. The conservative opposition led by Bildt is trying to take advantage of that to portray the government as isolationist concerning Europe and foreign policy. Bildt is advocating committing the krona to the European exchange rate mechanism as a precursor to joining the euro "at the earliest opportunity."

Carl Hamilton of the Liberal party argues that Stockholm will lose international influence by remaining outside the euro — especially if the British government signals its intention to join. Bildt is also pushing that Sweden should consider taking part in the NATO enlargement. The Social Democrats, for the time being, advocate a non-aligned foreign policy, but keep the door open for NATO membership in the future.

### Communist League campaign

The Communist League is fielding Anita Östling and Ernesto Oleinik as its candidates for parliament. They are using their cam-

paign to speak out against the maneuvers by the rulers in Sweden within the European Union to take part in the encirclement of the Russian workers state, especially by trying to gain a foothold in the Baltic states. They are campaigning against restrictions on democratic rights like the right to asylum and against the scapegoating of immigrants for the economic crisis. The Communist League calls for open borders for all refugees. The candidates are putting forward an action program against the coming economic crisis, including legislation of a 30-hour workweek with no cut in pay, affirmative action, and the cancellation of the third world debt. Their campaign also speaks in defense of the Cuban revolution.

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

## Birth of 'euro' is marked by clash between Paris, Bonn

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The European Union (EU) formally approved 11 members of the European monetary union (EMU) and projected single currency, the euro, at a meeting in Brussels on May 3. The meeting was marked by what German chancellor Helmut Kohl described as a "dogfight" between French and German officials over who would head the new European Central Bank. The incident was a further indication that the euro, which is intended by the participating bourgeoisies as an economic bloc against their U.S. and Japanese rivals, will be a weak currency, not a strong one, and will intensify the conflicts among the European imperialist powers.

The rulers of most EU member states have signed on to the plan. The governments of Denmark, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are voluntarily staying out of the monetary union at this point. The EU ruled that the Greek government, which wants to participate, has not met the criteria for the euro. These criteria — which include target debt limits and inflation rates — are being used by the various EU governments as justification for intensified job cuts and attacks on social entitlements at a time when unemployment is in double digits across much of the continent.

Bonn and 13 other EU members backed the candidacy of Wim Duisenberg from the Netherlands. But six months ago Paris nominated Jean-Claude Trichet, the head of the Bank of France, for the post. At the Brussels meeting, Chirac demanded that the

eight-year term be split between the two, with a written commitment that Duisenberg would step down in favor of Trichet in 2002. The compromise was a public, verbal declaration by Duisenberg that he intends to "voluntarily" resign at an unspecified time that year. "I feel satisfied," declared Chirac. "It doesn't bother me that France gained an advantage."

European Parliament president José María Gil-Robles of Spain commented May 3, "This is not good at all for the European Central Bank to begin like that. Let us hope that a baby born in such bad form can recover and become stronger."

This was echoed a few days later by Hans Tietmeyer, the head of the German central bank. "Not everything that happened last weekend in Brussels contributed to the necessary expectation that the euro will be a really supranational and depoliticized currency," he stated.

In a May 6 column headlined, "Europe: The Artificial Nation," U.S. ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, who uses his column to campaign for "America First" protectionism, trashed the EMU, describing it as "tied together by bureaucracy and greed" and "a common resentment of America's hegemony." Shedding crocodile tears that "across Europe, workers are being sacrificed," Buchanan ended with a jab, "As this new Europe is a marriage of convenience...not a marriage of love, it will end in a rancorous and perhaps violent divorce — to which we should all look forward."

# 'New generation of youth comes into anti-imperialist activity'

BY ELIZABETH STONE

HAVANA, Cuba — During the International Women's Conference held in Cuba this April 13-16, several *Militant* reporters spent an evening at the headquarters of the Continental Latin American and Caribbean Student Organization (OCLAE).

This group has existed as an organizing center for students in Latin America and the Caribbean for more than three decades. Kenia Serrano, a Cuban who is currently the president of OCLAE, talked with us and gave us a tour of the well-kept offices where a team of young people from different countries carry out the organization's work.

The first thing she showed us was a large painting of a Puerto Rican youth — José Rafael Varona — which dominates the room where the leadership of OCLAE has meetings. "This is one of our heroes," Serrano said. Varona, better known by his nickname "Fefel," was a leader of student protests in the 1960s against the drafting of Puerto Ricans into the U.S. army to fight in Vietnam. He was a fighter for Puerto Rican independence and a leader of the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students (FUPI). He spent time in Havana participating in the leadership of OCLAE as a representative of FUPI.

In the spring of 1967 Varona visited Vietnam at the invitation of the National Union of Students of Vietnam. He was wounded by a bomb dropped from a U.S. plane while traveling with a group of young people in the countryside. On March 24, 1968, he died from the wounds. Serrano told how after Fefel's mother received word of his death, a messenger appeared at her door with an order that he report to be drafted into the U.S. army.

On May 29, as part of a solidarity week with Puerto Rico, students in Cuba will be taking a bust of Varona to the Cuban city of Matanzas. They will place it in a square which will be renamed "Latin American Student Square — José Rafael Varona." FUPI plans to send a delegation to Cuba to participate in the dedication of the bust.

"There is a new generation of youth com-

ing into political activity," Serrano explained, pointing to the activists in FUPI as an example. Up until recently FUPI had been dwindling in size, but it is now seeing a revitalization and growth in membership.

Serrano said OCLAE experienced a crisis in the early 1990s, which was reflected at its 1992 conference. "At the time people began to question whether we could continue as an anti-imperialist organization."

By the time of the 1995 OCLAE conference in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, the situation had shifted. "We saw the beginning of new struggles, of Chiapas, and the determination in Cuba that the revolution would survive," Serrano noted. This strengthened those who supported continuing the work of OCLAE.

"I was a delegate at that conference," Serrano said, "and we established that we wanted to be a more open, plural organization, yet with clear principles. We felt more confident that we could take up the questions facing youth — unemployment, illiteracy, drugs and other issues."

Serrano pointed to Malcolm X as an example of an anti-imperialist fighter whose

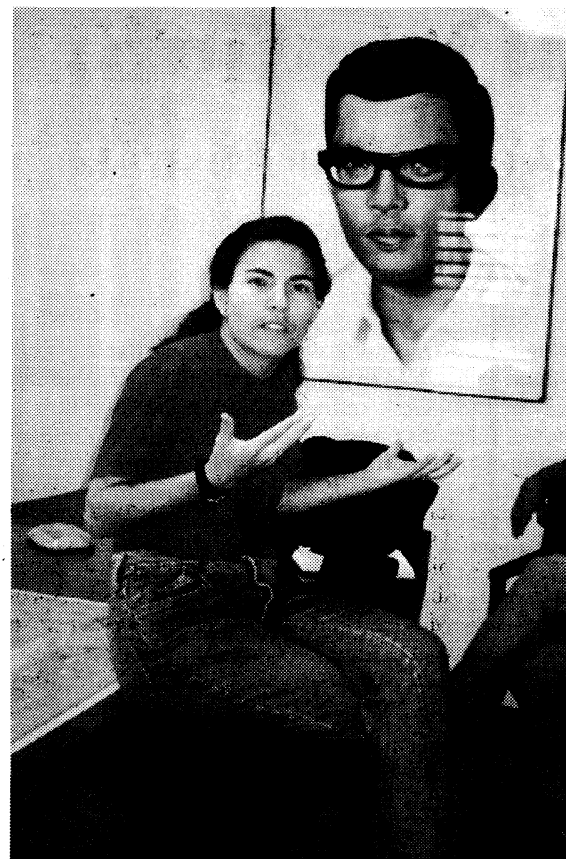
ideas are important for young people today.

In her travels in Latin America Serrano is finding more young people repelled by the attacks on working people in every country and wanting to do something about it. She said students in many countries are fighting cuts in education and attempts to privatize universities. "We feel there are going to be more protests," she said.

Students who try to organize also experience repression. At San Marcos University in Peru, one of the oldest universities in Latin America, for example, the army occupies the campus.

Serrano pointed out that intervention by U.S. imperialism in Latin America is growing, not decreasing, and the need for young people to fight back is greater than ever.

Elizabeth Stone is a member of the International Association of Machinists in Chicago.



Militant/Elizabeth Stone

Kenia Serrano, president of Continental Latin American and Caribbean Student Organization, in Havana office. Portrait is of Puerto Rican independence fighter José Rafael Varona.

## Sinn Fein negotiator speaks in New York

BY MEGAN ARNEY

NEW YORK — "The union with Britain has been considerably weakened. There is no doubt about that.... Britain has no right to be in Ireland and it never has," Bairbre de Brún, a Sinn Fein negotiator and director of international affairs, told a meeting of about 150 here April 25. Sinn Fein is the party leading the fight for a united Ireland.

De Brún was on a week-long U.S. tour, which included Milwaukee, Chicago, New York, and Baltimore, meeting with supporters of the Irish freedom struggle to discuss the April 10 agreement on Northern Ireland.

The agreement includes the establishment of a 108-person Northern Ireland assembly, to be elected by proportional representation; the establishment of a North/South ministerial council, to be made up of representatives from the government in the South and the proposed assembly in the North; and a two-year time frame for the release of political prisoners. It does not include the im-

mediate withdrawal of British troops.

Sinn Fein delegates from across Ireland opened a discussion on the agreement at an Ard Fheis (national conference) in Dublin April 18-19. They decided to return for a second meeting May 10 to vote on what position to take after more discussion in the party's branches. Referenda on the agreement will be held in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic May 22.

The so-called Good Friday agreement "is not where we intend to end up. It's a rolling position, not a settlement," de Brún said. "But I do believe we are in a stronger position now than we have been in a long time."

"Has this produced a level playing field? No, it has produced a visual playing field. It's a battlefield. Now we have to bring it forward.... We need to be in the vanguard to make sure these changes happen," de Brún said. She added that one of the biggest challenges facing Sinn Fein was the proposal to change Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish

Constitution, which claim sovereignty over the entire island. "We do not accept the partition of Ireland. We're opposed to the overturning of articles 2 and 3.... The key debate is at home. What are the challenges? The opportunities?" de Brún told the audience. "There must be immediate and tangible change in people's day-to-day lives."

De Brún took nearly an hour and a half to answer questions and copies of the agreement were available to the crowd. Among those attending were some workers from Ireland, including a layer of youth, as well as longtime activists in the United States. The Sinn Fein negotiator reiterated the party's position on the withdrawal of British troops and the disbandment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). "The RUC has to go full stop.... Without a date for the release of political prisoners, you won't have an agreement. All of the political prisoners must be released." There are more than 750 Irish freedom fighters imprisoned in Northern Ireland, Britain, and the Irish Republic.

In a response to a question on whether or not fighters for Irish self-determination could trust the British government to concede to the agreement, de Brún responded, "What you can trust is that the British government is going to look at their interests first.... I wouldn't like to wait for self-determination." The Labour Party, the ruling party in Britain today, "has to be held accountable for fair employment. We are fighting for absolute change in employment and differentials."

De Brún concluded with an appeal for activists here to keep up international pressure in fighting for Irish self-determination. "This is a phase in the struggle. We're going into another phase.... Republicanism has come of age. We recognize our power, our unity, can bring fundamental change."

## Final push for Militant Fund

BY JON ERWAY

NEWARK — As the \$110,000 international Militant Fund enters its final, eighth week, partisans of the socialist press are making the final push to raise all the remaining money needed to complete their goals by May 10. We collected almost \$17,000 last week, closing the gap, but are still behind at 77 percent of the total goal.

In many cities, *Militant* supporters report they are organizing a special phone-calling effort to contact people who have made pledges but have not yet paid them. Some contributors have raised their pledges.

"It's going to be a little tight, but we're going to make our goal of \$3,200," reported Mike Italie, *Militant* fund director in Atlanta. "Over two dozen people have made pledges," he noted, "and we're going the extra mile to call others who have already pledged and asking them if they will raise their pledges."

There is a noticeable increase in workers who are contributing to the fund. In Los Angeles, for example, a rail worker who appreciates the *Militant's* truthful coverage donated \$10, and a United Airlines worker involved in the defense of the Cuban revolution gave \$20.

*Militant* promoters in Los Angeles, who had previously organized a fund-raiser at a regional socialist conference in early April, organized a wrap-up event May 1. It featured Virginia Garza, who reported on the international women's conference she had just attended in Havana, Cuba. The meeting attracted a number of people to their first such political event, including a young woman who is an activist for Puerto Rican independence.

Dave Ferguson from Houston reports that at an April 29 Militant Fund meeting there,

a panel of speakers on labor resistance today included two locked-out Crown workers. Tim Mardis, a Teamster who was recently on strike against Laidlaw, a hazardous waste disposal company, spoke from the floor about their fight. He came with another Laidlaw worker who is a *Militant* reader, Shawn Matlock. Some \$2,600 was collected at that meeting.

Special steps such as all these, plus continuing to get generous donations from co-workers and other working people who have become new readers during the current *Militant* subscription drive, are key to reaching the goal posts by May 10.

### Militant Fund Drive March 14 - May 10

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL	PAID	%
<b>New Zealand</b>			
Auckland	930	829	89%
Christchurch	700	508	73%
Wellington	115	67	58%
<b>N.Z. Total</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Iceland</b>	150	110	73%
<b>United States</b>			
Los Angeles	9,000	8,795	98%
Houston	6,000	5,853	98%
Des Moines	2,500	2,270	91%
Miami	2,850	2,554	90%
Washington, D.C.	3,800	3,383	89%
Detroit	4,200	3,680	88%
Philadelphia	4,000	3,350	84%
Newark	8,500	6,773	80%
Chicago	11,000	8,630	78%
Seattle	7,000	5,191	74%
Pittsburgh	5,000	3,500	70%
Atlanta	3,200	2,190	68%
Birmingham	2,500	1,609	64%
New York	14,000	8,750	63%
San Francisco	10,000	6,075	61%
Boston	6,000	3,147	52%
Twin Cities, MN	7,000	2,515	36%
Cleveland	3,000	992	33%
Other	0	863	
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>109,550</b>	<b>80,120</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>France</b>	220	150	68%
<b>Canada</b>			
Vancouver	1,000	680	68%
Montreal	1,517	665	44%
Toronto	2,414	845	35%
<b>Canada Total</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>			
London	600	415	69%
Manchester	400	0	0%
<b>UK Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>42%</b>
Australia	650	240	37%
Sweden	700	145	21%
<b>INT'L TOTAL:</b>	<b>118,750</b>	<b>84,664</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>SHOULD BE:</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>93,500</b>	<b>88%</b>

### The Communist Manifesto

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MANIFESTO**





# Best week yet in 'Militant' sales to fighting workers

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Last week saw the best sales yet in the campaign to win new readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial* (PM), and the Marxist magazine *New International*. As we enter the final week of the sales drive, supporters of the socialist press need to sell 438 *Militant* subscriptions, 120 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 92 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* to make the goals by May 10.

The latest sales efforts show this is possible as socialist workers, members of the Young Socialists, and other supporters sold subscriptions and hundreds of papers to workers on the picket lines, at plant gates, and on the job last week. Members of the United Auto Workers in Burlington, Iowa; East Moline, Illinois; and Racine, Wisconsin, bought a total of 56 copies of the *Militant* following meetings where they rejected the contract offered by the Case Corp., (see page 6). Supporters in New Zealand got back on track with a sales team to Massey University in Palmerston North selling 11 *Militant* subscriptions, two copies of *New International*, and 11 Pathfinder titles. Below are other reports of sales activities by socialist activists responding to the accelerated pace of working-class struggles around the world.

BY PAUL KOURI  
AND BEVERLY BERNARDO

VANCOUVER — We had our best week of the drive yet winning 14 new readers to the *Militant* and one new reader to *Perspectiva Mundial*. A woman from Puerto Rico bought a PM subscription at a farm workers rally in Mount Vernon, Washington. She expressed interest in building a meeting to celebrate 100 years of struggle against Yankee imperialism.

Three supporters of the socialist press, including a member of the Young Socialists, went to Vancouver Island to sell the *Militant* and express solidarity with Fletcher Challenge workers, who are returning to their jobs after a nine-month strike. Workers who drove out of the mill read our sign that said: "Read the *Militant*: For worldwide labor news. From Australian dock workers to B.C. pulp and paper workers at Fletcher Challenge." The paper workers purchased 24 copies of the *Militant* and four people left their names and phone numbers to contact them later about subscribing.

BY JIM GOTESKY

SAN FRANCISCO — We carried out most of our plans this week, selling 18 *Militant* subscriptions, five PM subs, and four copies of *New International*. Six subs were bought by co-workers on the job. We sold three *Militant* subscriptions at the College of San Mateo. The student who invited us to come there brought several of his friends over to our literature table.

Supporters of the campaign who are members of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union sold three *Militant* subscriptions and one PM sub to their co-workers during the week. They reported striking up conversations with workers they had not previously approached about subscribing. Activists who are members of the United Transportation Union and the International Association of Machinists both sold one subscription to the *Militant*.

Below we print an excerpt from an article in the May 1 "Weekend Magazine" in the *Washington Post* titled "Red Letter Day: Looking for May Day in Post-Soviet Washington." The article featured area stores where readers could find books, art, and other things related to the history of May Day and the Russian revolution. The following excerpt was accompanied by a picture of the Pathfinder Bookstore in Washington, D.C.

As has been widely reported, a new \$13 gift edition of "The Communist Manifesto" has just been published, commemorating the document's 150th anniversary. Workers of the world can save almost 10 bucks, however, if they buy the less opulent version available at Adams-Morgan's Pathfinder Bookstore, which gives its address as 1930 18th St. NW, but whose entrance is actually around the corner on Florida Avenue (202/387-2185). The revolution lives at this small shop and political activity center, which offers the basic texts of Marx and Engels in English, Spanish, and French. Like most contemporary American leftist organizations, however, Pathfinder shows little enthusiasm for the direction of the Soviet Union once Stalin took over. The store has volumes by Lenin and Trotsky, but subsequent Soviet leaders are not represented.



Selling the *Militant* to Maritime Union of Australia picket in Newcastle, Australia, April 18.

Last Saturday we sent a sales team to East Palo Alto, a mixed Black and Latino community, where many fights against police brutality have occurred over the years. The team sold three *Perspectiva Mundial* and two *Militant* subscriptions, including one sub to a woman from Togo, who said there is a growing Togolese population in East Palo Alto.

The next day we sent teams to three Cinco de Mayo events. At the San Francisco event marking the Mexican national holiday, members of the United Farm Workers contingent purchased two *Militant* and three PM subscriptions. We sold another two *Militant* subs in San Jose.

For the final week of the drive we plan to go out every evening during the week and every day where it is possible to organize teams. We are preparing to use next Friday — payday for longshore workers — to campaign at the docks with the articles on the Australian dock workers strike.

BY PAT NIXON

Los Angeles — A team of *Militant* supporters sold 50 copies of the paper to Los Angeles-area dock workers at the Friday pay line. "We've got to stick together," said one longshoreman as he purchased a subscription to the *Militant*. Many of the workers were aware of the struggle of dock workers in Australia to defend their union and were anxious to read the *Militant*'s firsthand coverage from the picket lines. They also expressed interest in the strike by the McDonald's workers in Ohio. One dock worker bought \$140 worth of Pathfinder books from our display table.

Gale Shangold, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, and her campaign supporters spent the afternoon talking with the dock workers about working-class struggles around the world.

"Supporters of the subscription campaign who work at Northwest Airlines in Los Angeles went on a special sales effort to take advantage of the discussions about the contract and the 'work safe' job actions taken by hundreds of members of the International Association of Machinists in cities across the country," wrote Mark Friedman. "Ten workers bought copies of the Pathfinder book *The Eastern Airlines Strike* and those workers who had previously purchased the book, also decided that now was a good time to reread it."

As we go to press, Friedman sent another note. "I sold 21 *Militants*, all that I had, in five hours at work. This includes seven subscriptions—five new, two renewals—and even a pamphlet *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. He continued, "All of the people who bought subs had read the paper on occasion, or in the past, but saw the need now to subscribe to follow the contract developments and to read about the AMFA victory at Alaska Airlines and what that means. There was also interest in the Australian longshore workers fight, and the article on the origins of May Day," Friedman said. "Northwest IAM members in Los Angeles want to solidarize with the work-to-rule and safety campaigns being carried out by ramp workers, mechanics, and pilots."

In responding to this development, *Militant* supporter Sam Farley, also in Los Angeles, sold four subscriptions to his co-workers in one day at another airline.

Other sales of the socialist press to airline workers at Northwest include Minneapolis where workers bought 35

## SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE MARCH 14 – MAY 10

Week 7 should be 88%

	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold	NI Goal	Sold
Sweden*	18	17	94%	6	5	12	11
New Zealand							
Wellington	4	4	100%	1	0	1	1
Christchurch	25	24	96%	1	1	8	8
Auckland	35	30	86%	2	1	8	5
N.Z. Total	64	58	91%	4	2	17	14
Canada							
Vancouver	50	48	96%	6	4	20	12
Toronto	45	30	67%	8	4	20	22
Montreal*	25	11	44%	10	11	25	27
Canada Total	120	89	74%	24	19	65	61
Australia	16	11	69%	5	3	10	9
United States							
Los Angeles	100	88	88%	50	48	50	75
Des Moines*	45	39	87%	25	25	25	11
Atlanta*	35	30	86%	13	5	18	6
Miami	45	38	84%	22	17	20	27
Houston*	40	31	78%	10	9	18	14
Philadelphia	35	27	77%	8	4	10	11
Boston	50	37	74%	20	25	40	24
Birmingham, AL	50	35	70%	10	8	15	7
Seattle	70	49	70%	15	15	25	7
Washington, DC	45	31	69%	15	13	20	20
San Francisco	80	51	64%	30	26	35	17
Twin Cities, MN	70	43	61%	12	6	20	11
Detroit	40	24	60%	8	3	15	9
New York	150	86	57%	75	45	75	50
Newark, NJ	125	61	49%	50	22	60	42
Chicago	90	42	47%	40	15	30	24
Cleveland*	35	15	43%	8	6	10	4
Pittsburgh	50	17	34%	3	0	15	8
Santa Cruz	5	1	20%				
U.S. Total	1160	745	64%	414	292	501	367
United Kingdom							
London	45	32	71%	8	9	35	28
Manchester	26	6	23%	2	0	18	6
UK Total	71	38	54%	10	9	53	34
France	3	1	33%	5	0	30	12
Iceland	9	3	33%	1	0	3	0
International totals	1449	962	69%	469	330	691	508
Goal/Should be at	1400	1225	88%	450	394	600	525
IN THE UNIONS							
Canada							
IAM	9	6	67%	1	0	5	1
CAW*	4	2	50%			3	2
USWA	6	3	50%	1	2	6	1
UNITE	2	0	0%	1	0	2	1
Canada total	21	11	52%	3	2	16	5
United States							
UFCW	15	12	80%	16	13	10	8
IAM	60	41	68%	14	8	35	17
UTU	50	26	52%	5	3	20	7
UAW	45	20	44%	10	1	22	11
USWA	55	20	36%	7	7	30	7
OCAW	27	8	30%	5	2	20	0
UNITE	10	2	20%	12	9	10	3
U.S. total	262	129	49%	69	43	147	53
United Kingdom							
RMT	3	2	67%			3	5
AEEU	5	1	20%			6	1
TGWU	5	0	0%			3	0
UK total	13	3	23%			12	6
New Zealand							
MWU	3	1	33%			1	0
EU	5	0	0%			1	0
SFWU	2	0	0%			1	0
N.Z. total	10	1	10%			3	0
Australia							
AMWU	3	0	0%		0	2	0
TCFU	1	0	0%	1	1	1	0
Australia total	4	0	0%	1	1	3	0
*raised goal							

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; 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; TCFU — Textile, Clothing and Footwear 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.

copies of the *Militant*. "Knowing the article on Northwest job actions was reported in this issue, we had our bundle sent early," wrote Tony Lane. "We beefed up our usual plant gate sales team, which sold 21 copies of the *Militant*. Two supporters of the campaign sold another 14 copies of the paper to their co-workers, plus a renewal and an introductory subscription to the *Militant*."

"This morning, May 6, we sold one *Militant* sub and a *Perspectiva Mundial* sub at a plant gate in the garment district in Manhattan," said Mary Ann Schmidt, a member of the United Auto Workers in New York. "We also sold two copies of PM. "We did something unusual to attract attention, taping broomsticks on the literature table and hanging a paper banner that read in Spanish: 'Subscribe to *Perspectiva Mundial*; Independence for Puerto Rico; Free Antonio Camacho Now!; Equal rights for all immigrants; Stop the 'Cold War' against Cuba.' A young Puerto worker stopped when he noticed the slogan to free Camacho and bought a subscription to PM."

# Bilingual education is a right, protesters say

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 SAMANTHA KERN  
AND CARLOS HERNÁNDEZ

MODESTO, California — Some 150 teachers, parents, workers, and youth gathered here April 18 to protest Proposition 227, the initiative aimed at eliminating bilingual education in California slated to appear on the June 2 state primary election ballot. If approved, the law would require children who do not speak English to learn it in one year in classes not divided by age levels. This proposition follows fights over the last four years around Proposition 187 and Proposition 209, the anti-immigrant rights and anti-affirmative action initiatives, both of which passed.

The marchers wound their way through downtown Modesto, some carrying official signs of the march reading: "Vote no on 227! Don't lose local control! Do it for the children!" Other protesters made homemade signs reading: "Defend Bilingual Education!" in English and Spanish, and "Defend Affirmative Action! Equal education for

all!" Organizers of the march lead chants emphasizing the financial cost of the initiative. Participants in the march created their own chants like: "What do we want? Bilingual Education! When do we want it? Now!"

"Proposition 227 is targeted at a certain group of people. It is a human rights issue; everyone has a right to be taught in their own language," said Gladis Williams, a teacher and head of the NAACP in Modesto, at a rally following the march. Proposition 227 "harms education opportunities for immigrant children and fortifies a climate of racism and immigrant scapegoating. It follows down the same path as proposition 187," said Bob Jackson, president of the Modesto School Board of Education.

Many protesters expressed similar reasons for participating in the march to fight Proposition 227. Two women who bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, thought it was important for their children to know their native language. The majority of the marchers were teachers, parents, or students involved in bilingual education programs.

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper from San Francisco and Los Angeles attended the march in Modesto as part of a week-long regional team in the Central Valley of California. Later that day, they went door to door in a working-class neighborhood in Modesto selling the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*. The team sold three sub-



Militant/Barbara Graham

"I've wanted to come to Miami for many years," stated Rafael Cancel Miranda during his talk in Miami May 2. He was part of a panel discussion on "100 Years of Resistance" celebrating struggles against imperialism. Cancel Miranda is a Puerto Rican fighter who was imprisoned in U.S. jails for 28 years and a leading spokesperson for the independence of Puerto Rico. Despite a counterdemonstration of about 25 right-wing Cuban-Americans outside, 175 people participated in the event, which brought together fighters from several struggles. Also speaking were Andrés Gómez, leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade; Irvin Forestier of the Orlando, Florida, chapter of the Committee for the Release of the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners; Tony Jeanthénor of the Haitian rights organization Veye-Yo; Walfrido Moreno, president of the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press.

scriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and a number of single copies of both publications.

Samantha Kern is a member of the YS in the

San Francisco Bay Area. Carlos Hernández, is a YS member in Los Angeles and the Socialist Workers candidate for the House of Representatives in District 35.

# UAW members reject contract at Case Corp.

BY TOM ALTER  
AND FRANK FORRESTAL

MOLINE, Illinois — In a close vote United Auto Workers (UAW) members at Case Corp. rejected the company's contract offer by a margin of 52 percent. UAW Local 1304, which is based in East Moline and has 1,200 members, voted the contract down by a resounding 81 percent. Case employs 3,300 workers at five plants in the Midwest.

The contract was voted up by 55 percent of the membership in Racine, Wisconsin, where Case's corporate headquarters are located. In Burlington, Iowa, UAW members approved it by a margin of 64 percent.

Moline is one of four cities that make up the Quad Cities. This area is a major farm equipment, meatpacking, railroad, and trucking center in the Midwest.

UAW members have been working without a contract since March 29. Along with John Deere and Caterpillar, Case is a leading manufacturer of construction and farm equipment. The majority of workers at all three companies are organized by the UAW. Union members at both John Deere and Caterpillar recently approved six-year contracts containing concessions. Workers at Caterpillar plants waged a six-and-a-half-year battle against the construction equipment giant, and in the process won back jobs

for 160 workers fired for union activity.

Since negotiations began earlier this year, tensions between Case and the union have been running high. One worker reported that the company has fired two unionists and suspended four more at the East Moline plant since the contract expired. In February Case let it be known that they had hired a scab outfit, Strom Engineering, to recruit strike-breakers throughout the Midwest. With this threat hanging over their heads, UAW members began organizing for a showdown.

The union set a strike deadline for 10:30 p.m. April 23. At that time, pickets went up at Case plants throughout the Midwest in a short-lived strike. Union officials called it off just before midnight, announcing that a tentative agreement had been reached.

From the beginning UAW officials said it would be a short strike. In East Moline, Dick Sanders, a local official, said, "Fifteen minutes from now, we may not be on strike," according to the *Dispatch*, a local big-business daily.

Even with this stance, UAW members headed to the picket lines. Sanders's "strike announcement was met with shouts of 'let's get the signs' from workers. Some quickly formed lines along the fence as others left in cars, most honking their horns," reported the *Dispatch*. Sanders told the *Dispatch* reporter, "I like one hour and 15 minute strikes. The economic impact is tolerable."

Picket lines were also thrown up in Racine and Burlington. Here, too, the union leadership called them off before the strike really got going. Displaying their determination, one picket carried a sign reading, "Cat and Deere, Not Here."

One Case worker in Moline told the *Militant* he thought the strike "never should have been called off. We had our foot in the door. We should have opened it all the way." In retrospect, he thought the reason for the short strike was to "blow off some steam."

The UAW-Case negotiating committee urged union members to approve the contract. In a letter signed by UAW vice president Richard Shoemaker and Paul Korman, director of UAW Region 4, entitled, "A Recommendation to Case Members," the union officials wrote, "Through the solidarity of the UAW Case members, your Negotiating Committee has reached a tentative agreement which protects and advances the interests of all current Case workers, and allows the company to continue the growth of bar-

gaining-unit employment."

The letter ends with, "We join with your Negotiating Committee in unanimously recommending the tentative new agreement for your ratification." As the voting results show, UAW members in their majority didn't think the contract would "protect and advance" their interests.

As workers filed into the ratification meeting here, it was clear that the overwhelming majority planned to vote "No." "The biggest problem for me," said Milt Brown, a member of UAW Local 1304, "is that new hires will start at 70 percent [of the maximum rate] and not reach what others get for five years." In the previous contract Case workers got to the top rate in three years. "This is a form of discrimination against young workers. I believe in equal pay for equal work," said Brown.

More than any other issue, workers were angry with the provisions that dealt with new hires. "I would not want my kids working here. New people are getting shafted," said Kurt Mitchell, who has worked at the East Moline plant for 23 years. He pointed out that new workers would not receive health coverage after retiring.

The ratification meeting here lasted about two hours. The meeting began with UAW Local 1304 president Dean Prine reviewing the provisions contained in the agreement. Then there was a question-and-answer period. Outbursts of booing, clapping, and foot stomping could be heard outside the auditorium. In some ways the mood was similar to the raucous Caterpillar ratification meetings held in central Illinois earlier this year. Workers there rejected the first contract by a wide margin.

At the end of the meeting, Prine said, "If the contract gets voted down, all the issues will be on the table." This was met with loud cheers, followed by chants of "Vote, Vote, Vote."

A small minority of workers in East Moline said they voted for the contract. In Racine, Wisconsin, there was general discontent with the contract proposal. Most asserted the contract contained "a lot of bad things," but that it would probably pass.

In Burlington, Iowa, where the contract received the largest "Yes" vote, there was mixed discontent with the contract proposal as well. While several workers said that they were frustrated they hadn't struck the company longer, some said the contract was bad but not bad enough to strike.

Karen Richardson, a new hire at the Burlington plant said, "... It's not a good

contract.... We haven't gained; they've only taken away from us."

Not using the most diplomatic language, one angry worker who works at the East Moline plant, said, "We lose our ass, the whole package sucks," a statement echoed by many. The provisions on new hires were bad, but there were many other concessions as well, these workers said.

## Lump sums, not wage increases

The contract does not contain a wage increase for production workers. Instead workers will get yearly lump sum payments of three percent, which never gets rolled into their wages. Several workers commented that they had not received a yearly wage increase since the last strike in 1979. Skilled trade workers will receive 75 cents over six years. Case wages are \$2-\$3 less than what UAW members receive at the Big Three plants (GM, Ford, and Chrysler).

Many said they didn't like the proposed changes in piece-rate and the new four-day 10-hour or three-day 12-hour work weeks. Case is proposing to restructure the piece-rate incentive system. Called Case Continuous Improvement Compensation System (CCICS) and patterned after a similar plan at John Deere, it is based on a "team rather than an individual, and on continuous improvement rather than a set standard."

In describing the new system, a few workers said they saw it as a way to "cheat" workers out of money. One UAW member said he thought he would probably lose around \$150 a week under the new system.

Another bone of contention was health insurance. *Militant* reporters talked with Roy and Jerry Hoskins, retired Local 1304 members. They both said they are worried by the language in the summary agreement. "From what we know, along with eliminating insurance for new people when they retire there will no longer be 30 years and out," one said. The brothers are veterans of the union. They began working for International Harvester (IH) in the late 1940s. Roy Hoskins said the company tried to break the union in 1949. Both of them have weathered strikes since then. Workers stopped making gains, they said, after 1979. In November of that year, some 35,000 IH workers in nine states walked out. The UAW members held firm against IH's "take aways," and after six months won their strike.

As for retirees, they both pointed out that a few weeks ago they received letters say-

Continued on Page 11

## Young Socialists Fund Drive April 17 - May 31

CITY	GOAL	PAID	%
Chicago *	1,000	185	23%
New York	800	97	12%
Seattle *	400	38	9%
Birmingham	200		0%
Des Moines	200		0%
Houston	300		0%
Los Angeles	350		0%
Miami	200		0%
Newark	350		0%
Philadelphia	200		0%
Pittsburgh	550		0%
San Francisco/			
Santa Cruz	150		0%
Twin Cities, MN	250		0%
Washington, D.C.	250		0%
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Goal/Should be</b>	<b>5,200</b>		
* Raised goal			



# Communists in Canada hold convention

## Communist League discusses openings to recruit workers and youth to revolutionary perspective

BY JASON PHELPS  
AND JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — "The opportunities to win a new generation of workers and youth to the communist movement and the line of march of the working class and its allies toward taking state power in Canada and throughout the world are greater than they have been in decades," Communist League leader Michel Prairie told the delegates in his political report to the second session of the Fifth Constitutional Convention of the Communist League in Canada.

The convention, which was held in conjunction with an international socialist conference, took place April 10-12 in Toronto. Some 240 people attended from across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Sweden. The majority were members of industrial unions in the auto, meatpacking, garment, steel, aerospace, transportation and other industries. Members of the Young Socialists and other youth, including high school and university students, also participated.

Banners hung on the walls of the hotel ballroom written in English, French, and Spanish read: "For Quebec independence — justice and equality. On the front lines in the fight against Canadian imperialism"; "Self-determination for the Albanians in Kosovo"; "Canada, U.S. hands off Iraq and Yugoslavia"; "Rebuild an anti-imperialist youth movement — join the Young Socialists"; and "1998: Year of the 100th anniversary of anti-imperialist struggle in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines." Simultaneous translation into French, Spanish, and English was available to all participants.

The featured speakers at the conference were *Militant* staff writer Argiris Malapanis, who gave an eyewitness report on the recent upsurge of struggles of working people in Kosova and Albania, and Jack Willey, a leader of the Young Socialists in the United States. Willey, who also took part in the reporting trip in the Balkans and a meeting of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Cairo, Egypt, in March, spoke on "Rebuilding an anti-imperialist youth movement worldwide."

As an example of this process, Malapanis and Willey described how during the reporting team in Kosova, they participated in a discussion with student activists at the Pristina office of the Independent Student Union. Among the students was a young woman who a year earlier had purchased a copy of the Pathfinder book *The Truth About Yugoslavia* at a Militant Labor Forum in Washington D.C.

"This fighter, who was attracted to the working-class perspective explained in the book, was one of a small number of Serbian youth who came to Kosova to participate in the demonstrations against the repression of Albanians by the Belgrade government," said Willey.

He pointed to the recent conference of the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students in Puerto Rico and the development of the Sinn Fein Youth organization as further examples of the openings as the counterrevolutionary obstacle of Stalinism disappears around the world.

### Political polarization in Canada

In his report, Prairie described the fragmentation, drift to the right, and sharpening anti-Quebecois chauvinism of bourgeois politics in Canada. The drop in the value of the Canadian dollar, the impact of the instability in Asian markets, the falling prices in raw materials on the world market, and the greater productivity of Ottawa's main competitors in the United States show the deepening crisis of Canadian capitalism. Under these conditions, the ruling class in Canada intensifies its attacks on the social wage and democratic rights.

"However, the employing class is running up against increased resistance by working people, and the determination of the oppressed Quebecois nationality to continue its historic fight for equality, justice, and self-determination," said Prairie.

"The increase over the last two years in the federal government's nationalist flag-waving is aimed at isolating the Quebecois and deepening divisions in the working class along national lines," he said. "These divisions can only be overcome in the struggle against our common class enemy headquartered in Ottawa and with active support for



Militant photos: above, Helen Nelson  
Delegates to Communist League convention (above) voted to reach out to increased resistance by working people throughout Canada. Over the previous months, most had been out to picket lines of striking meatpackers at Maple Leaf Foods, right, and other fighting workers.

the Quebec independence struggle by working people across the country.

"When I moved to Toronto, I thought I would have a problem with language at work," said steelworker Guy Tremblay, who as a Quebecois speaks French as his first language. "But English is the second language of most of my co-workers. Ottawa's chauvinist campaign against Quebec does have some impact—one co-worker suggested I stay in Quebec when I told him I was going for the weekend. But many workers, because of their own experiences in countries like India or who are from Latin America, are open to supporting the Quebecois fight for independence. Nobody knows the facts behind this fight, so I explain the real history."

Prairie reported that Communist League branches in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal had strengthened the units of the party in the industrial unions; reestablished regular weekly sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books to workers at plant gates; modestly advanced the effort to get Pathfinder books into commercial book chains; begun the process of politically rearming its members to defend the struggle for Quebec independence; and attracted a new layer of youth to the Young Socialists.

Garment worker Sébastien Desautels from Montreal reported on the recruitment to the Young Socialists that has taken place in Quebec City, Drummondville, and Montreal. "The new YS member in Drummondville is discussing with other possible recruits who go to his community college the French-language edition of Pathfinder book *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics — Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*," he explained.

Since the convention three Drummondville students have joined the YS, and the group of four has asked the national YS leadership in Montreal to recognize them as a YS chapter.

### Turning toward labor resistance

"Coming out of the January convention the League met the test of the war drive against Iraq led by Washington and its imperialist allies such as Ottawa," said Prairie. "Branches helped to initiate street demonstrations at U.S. consulates and federal government offices against the war buildup in the Arab-Persian Gulf. Over this period socialist workers and youth in Canada sold 957 single copies of the *Militant* and 42 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, a significant number of these to co-workers on the job and at plant gates."

"While the immediate war drive against Iraq has ended, the march of imperialism towards fascism and more wars continues," said Prairie. "The expansion of NATO toward the borders of the Russian workers' state and the presence of U.S. troops in the former Yugoslavia and other Eastern European workers' states points to the explosive contradictions building in Europe as Wash-

ington tries to position itself to eventually take military action to restore capitalism in this part of the world, beating out its imperialist competitors in Bonn and Paris," he noted. "Our response to these developments has been to make a greater effort to link up with workers who are fighting back and bring to them through Pathfinder books and the communist press the lessons of past struggles by working people and a scientific understanding of the line of march of the working class toward its emancipation," said Prairie.

"These recent sales of communist literature, especially to workers on strike, are the biggest in Canada since the mid-80s," noted Vancouver delegate Steve Penner, a member of the Canadian Auto Workers. "The regular sales at work, at plant gates, and in working-class communities gives more results today than anytime in recent years."

"Communist League members helped to build the picket lines of meatpackers who waged a four-month strike against Maple Leaf Foods in Burlington, Ontario, as part of a strike/lockout battle of across the country," reported Prairie. "Although, in the end the strikers were forced to take serious concessions, many have begun to discuss and think through the reasons behind the strike and where it fits into what is happening in the world. This process is reflected in the 55 *Militants* bought by strikers, along with three subscriptions and a number of Pathfinder books."

Susan Berman, a Steelworker and a delegate from Toronto, reported that a number of the Maple Leaf strikers she met on the picket line were from Eastern Europe. "One expressed the view that workers in Poland would not put up with the conditions being imposed on them by the Maple Leaf bosses."

Toronto steelworker Katy LeRougetel also explained how she was able to help organize co-workers from her plant to join the Maple Leaf picket line. "This took some patient work, but those who participated got a better view of what other workers are up against. This helped open doors to the sale of communist literature to coworkers."

In his report, Prairie also explained that communists in Vancouver had made over a dozen trips to Vancouver Island to report on the lengthy strike of Fletcher Challenge pulp and paper workers. (By the time the strike ended April 18, six strikers had bought subscriptions to the *Militant*.)

Several participants who spoke during the conference related experiences that proved the possibility to sell more *Militants* and other socialist literature to workers. A socialist worker from Cleveland said that at recent strike support rallies in Marietta, Ohio, and Spencer, West Virginia, a layer of veterans of previous labor battles were throwing themselves into the fights going on today. And a participant from New Zealand spoke about the battle against union

busting that had just broken out on the wharves in Australia.

Since the convention, Communist League members have given special attention to brewing confrontations in the pulp and paper industry, one of the most important in Canada's economy. Since the strike against Fletcher Challenge, the pulp and paper bosses in British Columbia have tried to generalize the concessions they were able to get to thousands of other workers. Communist workers and youth in Vancouver have organized to go back to Vancouver Island. In two sales at a Fletcher Challenge plant, they sold out the 24 copies of the *Militant* they had with them, and sold a subscription to a former striker. Another team went to Squamish, a town one hour north of Vancouver with two pulp and paper plants, where they sold four subscriptions going door to door, including one to a paperworker.

Communist League and Young Socialist members in Montreal and Drummondville organized a joint sale at an Abitibi-Consolidated pulp and paper plant that employs more than 700 workers in Trois-Rivières, east of Montreal on the St-Laurence River. Abitibi-Consolidated has rejected company-wide negotiations with close to 14,000 members of the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers union in eastern Canada this year, and instead demands plant-by-plant negotiations. These workers will be taking strike votes until May 20, with a possible June 15 strike deadline. The result of their negotiation will affect up to 25,000 workers in the industry.

Hundreds of thousands of other workers, such as garment and public sector workers in Quebec, will also be negotiating new contracts later this year.

### Increasing leverage of Pathfinder

One of the main decisions of the convention was to adopt a special report presented by Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters. She took up the growing need and possibility to draw more on the skills and energies of friends and supporters of the communist movement to help in many ways, from staffing Pathfinder bookstores to helping translate and produce leaflets to raising funds. This can free up members of the SWP and Communist League to spend more time getting out to picket lines, selling the socialist press at factory gates, and responding to other political openings.

One essential component of this is the effort by supporters of the communist movement to transform Pathfinder's 350 titles into electronic format, so that they can be used to produce books through computer-to-plate equipment.

Because of the sharpening of the class struggle throughout the world, along with the irreversible shattering of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist murder machine, Pathfinder has real objective weight in the world today. Waters explained that this is because these books are the only source in written form for fighters, wherever they are, of the lessons and continuity of the 150-year struggle of the modern working class.

The delegates also decided to step up efforts to help make the international subscription campaign for the *Militant* a success and to organize to work with the Young Socialists and other forces to build an October tour of two youth leaders from Cuba.

In response to a special appeal given by Young Socialist leader Maria Isabel Le Blanc, who was part of recent *Militant* reporting teams to Havana and Cairo, conference and convention participants pledged or paid US\$4,000 to the international US\$110,000 fund campaign for the *Militant*.

Greetings were read to the convention from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

The delegates decided that a third session would be needed in the coming months to elect a new Central Committee. The three branches of the Communist League held conferences soon after the second session to further discuss the specific challenges that each unit faces in transforming itself into the kind of proletarian organization capable of implementing the decisions of the first and second convention sessions.

Jason Phelps is a member of United Steelworkers of America in Montreal. John Steele is a member of the International Association of Machinists in Toronto.

# Meeting celebrates life, example of Helen

'A deeply political person,' who was a cadre of communist movement

BY TONY LANE

AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — One hundred and ten comrades, friends, and family members of Helen Scheer gathered here April 26 to celebrate her life and example. As Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes put it in his talk at the meeting, "Helen was a deeply political person, which gave organizational direction to her entire adult life."

Scheer, a veteran cadre of the communist movement for more than half a century, died in Minneapolis of cancer on April 11, at age 76. She had been an active member of the SWP since 1944.

In addition to those present from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, where Helen spent most of her political life, a significant number participated from Des Moines and Chicago. Others came from as far as Seattle, San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Vancouver, and Toronto.

As participants entered the Machinists Banquet Hall here for the reception before the program began, a display of messages caught their eye. They were sent by many friends and comrades of Helen's from across the United States, as well as from the United Kingdom, Iceland, and New Zealand. Merilee Light, Helen's hospice worker for the last few months, who took part in the meeting, wrote in her message: "I loved talking with Helen. Our conversations would meander from gardening, family, computers, the arts, world events.... No matter what the topic, Helen was involved and interested. She was alive to all aspects of the world around her."

Opposite the messages, an attractive display made by party supporters generated a lot of interest. It included photos from throughout Helen's life and highlighted major political developments in Minnesota and around the world that spanned her five and a half decades as a worker-bolshevik. From the Teamsters strikes and Midwest organizing drives of the 1930s, which built a fighting union movement in Minneapolis and paved the way for the CIO; to the defense campaign for 18 leaders of the SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters union who were imprisoned for their communist views and opposition to World War II in the early 1940s; to socialist workers election campaign activities in the 1950s and demonstrations and forums in the next 30 years — the pictures painted the decades of struggle Helen took part in and the movement she devoted her life to building.

The displays were set off by a spread of



Militant photos by Rita Lee

**Panel of speakers at April 26 meeting to honor Helen Scheer's life (above). From left to right are: Mary-Alice Waters, Doug Jenness, John Steele, Betsy Farley, Verónica Poses, Jack Barnes, and Ma'mud Shirvani. Photo display at gathering attracted much attention (right).**

food and refreshments, also organized by party supporters. One of the speakers remarked during the program that among Helen's favorite phrases was the motto from Teamsters Local 544 in the 1930s, "Whether it's a picnic or a strike, we do it right." This meeting in tribute to Helen stood in that tradition.

The local Pathfinder bookstore produced for the event a booklet with the article by Doug Jenness, "Helen Scheer: a worker-bolshevik for 54 years," from the April 27 *Militant*. It also contains "Socialist women and labor struggles, 1934-54: A report by participants," from the March 1975 *International Socialist Review*. This compilation includes the transcript of a talk Helen gave as part of a panel discussion at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, August 1974. In it, Helen recounts her experiences as a trade unionist from 1946 to the early 1950s. Participants bought 30 copies of the booklet, helping defray some of the expenses of the meeting. (It can be obtained from the Twin Cities Pathfinder bookstore, see address on page 12, for \$5 per copy plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.)

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New International*, and Doug Jen-



ness, organizer of the Twin Cities SWP, co-chaired the meeting. In introducing the program, they gave a brief summary of who Helen was and what she was a product of.

Jenness said that the Minneapolis branch that Helen joined in 1944 was "the party unit most deeply stamped by the labor upsurge of the 1930s and the best habits of the workers' movement of that time, with leaders like Carl Skoglund, Oscar Coover Sr., and V.R. Dunne." Of these, Jenness said, "Helen worked most closely with Ray Dunne. From him she learned discipline, hard work, pride, party patriotism, and attention to detail — the importance of party forums, a bookstore, a library, and a culture of reading."

#### 'Honor graduate' of Minneapolis SWP

Waters read a message from veteran SWP leader Harry Ring, who said, "Like many young people of the depression era, I was pretty much devoid of personal ambition. But after I joined the SWP, I acquired an ambition. I wanted to someday be a member of the Minneapolis branch. I never realized that ambition, but I don't think it was wasted."

Waters added that "Helen was an honor graduate" from the school in party building for which the Minneapolis branch was famous. When she first met Helen in the spring of 1961 as a student at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, Waters said, "I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life yet. But I knew what I didn't want to do." Waters joined the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) about a year later. Helen's warmth and genuine interest in the young people attracted to communism at the time made you understand that what you did with your life was important. Helen was a working-class woman with a family who never let that prevent her from carrying out what was

necessary politically and what she wanted to do. This included taking a six-month leave in 1959-60 to participate in the party's national leadership school in New Jersey.

In addition to her contributions in party building in Minneapolis, Helen also served for 12 years on the SWP's Control Commission, a national, elected body that investigates matters related to the party's security, integrity, and democratic functioning.

#### Helen Scheer fund appeal

At the conclusion of the program, Waters presented the Helen Scheer Memorial Fund Appeal. The printed program for the event explained that contributions will provide seed money for the capital fund needed to purchase equipment that will make it possible to keep in print the 350 titles in the arsenal of Pathfinder Press and do so with lower costs and less labor (see text of appeal below). At the meeting, \$7,859 was collected in donations and pledges, and more continues to come in. Thank-you letters have been sent out to contributors with a reminder to those who pledged that the deadline for payment is May 20.

In the program, speakers described their experiences with Helen extending back more than three decades. They recalled how she had helped recruit and educate them, and scores of other young people, as they were drawn to and became active in the socialist movement, and in particular, the books Helen sold them.

Ma'mud Shirvani remembered meeting Helen at a Militant Labor Forum in 1964 when, as a student from Iran, he was studying at the University of Minnesota. At the time, he had told some youth that he was looking for a genuine Marxist group. "Two days later I got a phone call from YSA members inviting me to the forum," said Shirvani. "They impressed me as being serious."

After the forum, Shirvani said, Helen sold him *The Third International after Lenin* by Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution. "I couldn't put that book down," he said, and was "even reading it as I was doing laundry." Shirvani said he knew about the 1945-46 revolution in Azerbaijan, when a workers and farmers government came to power but was defeated. "The rise and fall of revolutionary movements, and how to avert defeats, was a burning question for me." Through studying the book Helen sold him, Shirvani said, he began getting answers to his questions.

As party members plunged into the anti-Vietnam War movement and other activities at the time, Shirvani said the example of people like Ray Dunne, Helen, and her husband Charlie Scheer (who was a railroad worker) and their connections to the struggle of the working class helped win him to the communist movement. Shirvani, currently an editor for Pathfinder, concluded he would always remember Helen for "putting a weapon in my hand when I desperately needed it."

John Steele, a leader of the Communist

## Helen Scheer Memorial Fund Appeal

**The following is the Helen Scheer Memorial Fund Appeal that was printed in the program of the April 26 meeting to celebrate and life and example of Helen.**

The importance of keeping Pathfinder's arsenal of 350 books and pamphlets in print and increasing the distribution of these invaluable political weapons to fighting workers and youth is underscored by new opportunities everyday.

To meet the demand, however, the method by which the books are produced must now be transformed, in fact, revolutionized. The current production methods are too costly and labor intensive to keep pace.

Pathfinder supporters in the San Francisco Bay Area have responded to this challenge by taking responsibility for organizing volunteers around the world to digitize, proofread, and format the text of every Pathfinder title, preparing electronic files that are ready for production. At the same time, the staffs of Pathfinder and its print shop will begin to use advanced computer-to-plate technology to print books prepared in digital format. *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky, due for delivery the first week in June, will be the first book to be pro-

duced in the new manner. The use of this technology will help make it possible to keep every book in print — substantially cutting the labor time required to produce each title and lowering the skill level needed by print shop workers, while at the same time maintaining Pathfinder's high quality standards and driving down the cost of small runs.

Pathfinder's ability not only to provide new titles dealing with the most important questions facing class-struggle fighters today, but to also keep in print hundreds of titles produced by Pathfinder and its predecessors over a period of some 70 years — because they are needed today and will be needed tomorrow — is a powerful revolutionary legacy, worthy of the movement Helen devoted her life's energies and imagination to building.

Substantial capital will be needed to acquire the new equipment. Today's special appeal in Helen's name will provide seed money necessary to begin the fund that will enable Pathfinder's production techniques to be transformed. Every dollar will count. Contributions should be made to Pathfinder Press and sent to 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Mary-Alice Waters  
April 26, 1998

#### FROM PATHFINDER

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Leon Trotsky

Writing in 1939-40, Leon Trotsky replies to those in the revolutionary workers movement who were beating a retreat from defense of the degenerated Soviet workers state in face of looming imperialist assault. He describes how the rising pressures of bourgeois patriotism in the middle classes during the buildup toward U.S. entry into World War II were finding an echo even inside the communist movement. And he explains why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can steer a steady revolutionary course.

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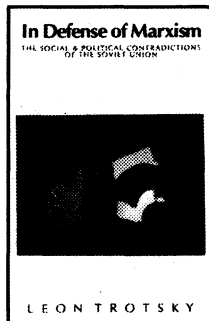
#### The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

James P. Cannon

In this companion to Leon Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*, Cannon and other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party defend the political and organizational principles of Marxism against a petty-bourgeois current in the party. The debate unfolded as Washington prepared to drag U.S. working people into the slaughter of World War II.

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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. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.





# Scheer for 54 years

League in Canada who works at Ford Electronics in Toronto, said he showed the *Militant* article "Helen Scheer: a worker-bolshevik for 54 years" to a fellow union member. The worker said he found it interesting but commented skeptically, "How can someone fight for 54 years and not get there?" Then he asked, referring to the title of the story on Helen's life, "What is a worker-bolshevik?" The break ended before Steele could explain, but he pledged to help answer that question for his co-worker when he returned. "Helen Scheer once again touched another member of our class," Steele said.

Steele met Helen at the Friday Night Socialist Forum in Minneapolis, while he was a student at the University of Minnesota in the early 1960s, and explained how she helped win him to the SWP. "Helen wanted to know what you thought, she was genuinely interested in what you had to say," he noted. After U.S. immigration deported him to Canada, Steele joined the communist movement there. "Helen practiced party-building steady as she goes for a lifetime. She is not replaceable as an individual. But her 54-year-long contributions helped ensure that reinforcements are in the room."

Betsy Farley was one of a group of nine young activists in Minneapolis called the Peoples' Press collective who joined the YSA in 1971. Before they joined, she said in her remarks at the meeting, she recalled visiting the party bookstore to purchase Marxist literature. Helen helped steer her and the entire group toward *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and *State and Revolution* by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin. Later, she said, it was Helen and Charlie Scheer who "spent a lot of time with us, invited us to their house time after time for political discussions with party leaders." Farley is today a member of



**Helen and Charlie Scheer in Nicaragua, 1983, four years after the revolution that overthrew U.S.-backed dictatorship and brought workers and farmers government to power. Helen and Charlie's faces in this photo, said SWP national secretary Jack Barnes, are the faces of revolutionary workers surrounded by a sea of magnificent fighters who were proving that revolution is possible and that workers and peasants will lead it, transforming society and themselves in the process.**

the United Auto Workers and the organizer of the SWP in Philadelphia.

## Propaganda and proletarian habits

Verónica Poses spoke on behalf of the National Committee of the Young Socialists. Poses met Helen when Helen was 73, she said, after a number of YS leaders moved to Minneapolis to set up the organization's national office there after the first national YS convention in April 1996. "Many of us came for a few days and ended up staying over a year," Poses said. The YS national center is now in Chicago. It was Helen, Poses said, "who welcomed us, drove me around, said to ask her if there was anything I needed as I had just moved here from Miami."

Poses recounted experiences with Helen from a number of YS leaders who had recently lived in the Twin Cities but were now

doing political work in other cities — Chicago, Birmingham, and some who are volunteers in the party's print shop in New York. They all had two things to say about Helen, Poses said. One was "her total conviction of the central role that propaganda plays in the class struggle — seeking to get the *Militant* and Pathfinder books into the hands of workers and young people."

Secondly, the YS members had all been impressed by Helen's professionalism. Poses said she saw a great deal of Helen because Helen staffed the bookstore at least every other day. Poses pointed to Helen's proletarian habits. "She would make sure the bookstore was clean, that the plants were taken care of — the basic things that not all of us pay too much attention to," she stated.

"You can read a lot about the need for discipline," Poses said, "but the biggest impact comes from working with comrades

like Helen who, in every single thing they do in daily life, set the example of how it can be done and why it is necessary."

## Helen was a political person

SWP national secretary Jack Barnes referred to the presentation that Helen had given at a conference in Oberlin, Ohio in 1974. It is one of the few contributions of Helen's that is in print. Just in case anyone thought she had special qualities, Barnes pointed out, Helen insisted that what she accomplished in the labor movement in an earlier period was because she was political.

In the 1974 talk, Helen explained that she was in the United Electrical Workers union (UE) from 1946 to 1953 — a period encompassing both the upsurge in the labor movement after World War II and the reaction and witch hunt that followed. She worked in a General Mills-owned appliance factory, participated in a wide range of fights on the job, and served as a shop steward, and on the union grievance committee. "I want to point out that I became a leader of the Home Appliance Division, among the women and throughout the plant, primarily because I was a political person," Helen said, "and understood, from being in the socialist movement, what the purpose of the union was — to fight the bosses and work for the members and to build the union bigger and stronger."

In speaking about these experiences, Helen was part of preparing for the opportunities to get the big majority of party members back into the industrial unions, Barnes said. What she was announcing, was that the next time the party went into industry it would be universal for both women and men.

The SWP leader said that the fact that Helen was a political person was what gave organizational direction to her entire adult life. "It didn't come from anything that wasn't available to others. It did not come from special attributes. What we accomplish, we accomplish because we are deeply political, because we know the conscious organization of working people is the only hope for humanity to put aside the muck and mire and horror that is capitalism."

Barnes pointed to a message sent to the meeting by Jon Hillson, a party supporter. "It was a wild Minnesota winter day, frigid, alternating between sleet and hail, a black sky in the morning, then sunshine in the afternoon, then snow," Hillson said, referring to a day he had a discussion with Helen. "I was complaining about it to her, and I asked how she could endure this for so many winters. Because, she said, eyes wide, big smile, 'It's so exciting.'" Helen was answering a slightly different question than the one asked, Barnes said. For many people under capitalism, blue skies and sunshine can be boring or demoralizing. Helen found interest in all aspects of life, as Marilee, her hospice worker noted, because she loved poli-

Continued on Page 14

## In greetings, many honor Helen Scheer and movement she devoted her life to building

Printed below are excerpts from a few of the numerous messages that were read or were on display at the April 26 meeting to honor the life and example of Helen Scheer.

We join you in celebrating the life of Helen Scheer, a veteran cadre of the Socialist Workers Party. Alan first met Helen at the 1959-60 SWP cadre school, when he was selected by the Canadian comrades to study over several months Marx's *Capital* and the history of the United States.

Like everyone else at the school Helen found reading and assimilating the lessons of *Capital* a real challenge. Through her hard work, serious and disciplined study, she set a high standard and a good example for all of us to follow.... Her confidence in the working class to change society, her determination and dedication to build the SWP, are attributes that all communists can emulate, regardless of which country they live in.

Alan and Connie Harris  
Communist League  
London, England

I noticed Doug's fine article in the *Militant* about Helen was a little lean about the 1950s period when I personally knew her best. Maybe one of the following observations could be used to help broaden that out a little.

Helen Scheer was a totally up front politician. What you saw and heard is what she was, whether you knew her during the decade of the 1950s or the decade of the 1990s.... Among attributes that clearly stood out was she never seemed to lose a responsible political rhythm in her day-to-day life, and always seemed to be there when times were tough. That's mainly because Helen herself was quietly tough — as well as politically conscious. This combination stood her in good stead during the McCarthy witch-hunt which she actively fought against....

Helen was an active fighter and revolutionary who commanded respect because of

her all-sided abilities and political consciousness. Without these attributes she could never have sustained an entire adult lifetime of communist political activity. This showed in another way during the socialist regroupment that followed the Khrushchev revelations or admissions of Stalin's crimes in the mid-1950s. Helen became part of the numerous programmatic meetings and debates between members of different left political currents in Minnesota, in an attempt to win agreement on a common socialist program....

These brief examples of some of Helen's life and activity in the 1950s help shatter a myth held by many that the capitalist witch-hunt of that period devastated independent political thinking inside the United States. It's true carrying out communist political work was not always easy in that decade, but thanks to fighters like Helen it was definitely sustainable.

PS: I am really enjoying the opportunity to take a small piece of the Crown action!

Tom Leonard  
Houston, Texas

I've been a supporter of the party, rather than a member, for about ten years now. But Helen had such a profound and positive impact on my life that I wanted to express my appreciation of her life and my solidarity with the meeting celebrating her life.

I can't remember exactly when or where I first met Helen. I'm sure that it was sometime in the early 1960s, and it was undoubtedly at one of the political activities I was involved in at the time. It might have been at the Minneapolis picket line against a Governor George Wallace speech where we protested the Jim Crow policies then in force in Alabama.... But whatever the occasion, she and Charlie, her companion, were an extremely important influence in my life. They used to put me up in their spare room when I came up from Northfield for a forum or a demonstration in the early sixties.... After the political events, where we participated side by side, Helen and I used

to sit up talking about political matters.... They had a personal integrity and honesty that I had never before seen.

Peggy Brundy  
Bay Area, California

Dear Charlie,  
I was sorry to hear of Helen's passing.

The months I spent as a young person with you both and with Hank made a lifelong impression upon me. It was through that experience that I came to understand what set the Socialist Workers Party apart from any other political organization I had ever met — a self-confident working-class cadre that was and is its heart and soul. It helped me to realize that this is what had to be emulated everywhere if the worldwide struggle against capitalism is to succeed....

Russell Johnson  
Upper Hutt, New Zealand

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# N.Y. dairy farmers face price squeeze

BY DON MACKLE  
AND WENDY LYONS

NEW YORK — Rising production costs and the steady lowering of federal milk price supports continues to force family dairy farmers in New York state out of business.

"Twelve years ago we had 15,000 family dairy farms in the state. Now there are less than 9,000," said Jo Bates, a dairy farmer and president of the Empire State Family Farm Alliance.

In an interview at her farm in the rolling hills of northeastern New York, Bates explained, "We went from 1,000 dairy farms to 300 here in Washington County in the last 10 years." In the first six months of 1997 New York state lost 200 additional dairy farms.

Dairy farming generates more than one-half of the total farm cash receipts in New York state, which is the third-largest dairy producing state in the nation. Bates explained that 70 percent of all milk is produced by family farmers.

New York dairy farmers are unable to get prices for their milk that meet their costs of production, according to John and Pat Bender. The two are vegetable and greenhouse farmers in Johnstown, New York, and members of the Empire State Family Farm Alliance. As of April 10, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) says that the farmers' cost of production is \$19 per hundredweight milk, the Benders reported. The price they receive for the milk has varied recently from below \$12 to as much as \$14.15 per hundredweight last December.

Federal price supports have been systematically reduced since the 1980s from roughly \$15 per hundredweight to around \$10 today, said John Bender.

These price supports actually benefit the cooperative management and handlers, the Benders explained. "The supports are actually paid to the handlers when the government buys the product," said John Bender. "They pay the farmers that price," added Pat Bender, "but they sell the product they don't need immediately to the government. The government stores it and the dealers can buy it back when they need it to sell."

"In a way, the government lends them the money until they need the product," said John Bender.

Bates pointed out that lowering of price supports has not stopped milk processors and retailers from raising the price to consumers. While the price farmers receive is actually slightly lower than what they were paid in 1981, the cost of a half gallon of milk has risen by almost 90 cents.

Currently, the actual price dairy farmers are paid each month by milk buyers varies based on a pricing formula set on cheese prices on the Chicago Board of Trade. Bates said the handlers that buy from farmers issue checks a month after buying the milk. "You only find out what the price was after you get the check," she said.

John Bender explained that farmers often find themselves in a weak position to

press their demands to receive a living income "By law, farmers have to sell their milk within two days. The buyers can go somewhere else to buy it, even if they pay slightly more, until a particular farmer or co-op decides to sell it at the price they offer," he said. Many farmers have survived this long only because increasing land values have allowed them to continue borrowing to get through bad years.

New York farm activists are currently fighting to keep the income they receive up by lobbying the New York legislature to join the Northeast Dairy Compact. The compact was authorized under the 1996 Farm Bill as part of the federal government's efforts to reduce farm subsidy programs. A 26-member commission from among the six participating New England states has set a base price for fluid milk above the national milk subsidy price. The price is set for six months at a time, providing some measure of stability for farmers.

Bates and the Benders acknowledged the efforts to get into the Northeast Compact was not as ambitious a demand as calling for "parity," a demand long made by farm activists.

Parity is a calculation used to describe the relationship between prices farmers receive for their commodities and their production costs and living expenses. One hundred percent parity means that if the costs of production today are 50 percent higher than they were in 1910 to 1914, then the prices the farmer gets should be 50 percent higher than they were then. The index is based on those years when there was a relationship between costs and prices supposedly favorable to farmers.

Bates said parity for dairy farmers today would bring farmers \$27.60 per hundredweight.

## Latino students demand affirmative action



Militant/Nancy Cole

Representatives from 14 Latino student groups at the University of Pennsylvania marched on that campus April 24 protesting the "abysmally low number of Latino students, faculty and staff" at the Ivy League school. Only 3.8 percent of the students and just over 1 percent of the faculty there are Latino. Students are demanding increased financial aid for Latino students, a Latino studies department, and a resource center. "The only way to make anything happen at this university is to make noise," said Amy Maldonado, one of the protesters.

"It's like getting a minimum wage that's still not good enough," said John Bender referring to his efforts to get New York into the compact.

Bates compared the compact to "a Band-Aid that fits on your pinky. Parity would be stitches and a bandage." But, she stressed, getting into the compact would be a step forward in providing some stability for farmers.

The New York state senate has passed legislation approving entry into the Northeast Dairy Compact. To go into effect it still needs approval by the state assembly and the signature of the governor.

The farm activists continue reaching out in solidarity with other farmers and explaining conditions family farmers face. John

Bender attended the Second National Black Land Loss Summit in North Carolina earlier this year. He joined in hearings and protests in Washington D.C. backing the discrimination suit of Black farmers against the USDA.

Bates was interviewed on a half-hour radio program broadcast over the public radio station WNYC. She described the situation facing dairy farmers, in answer to the campaign to blame them for high milk prices.

Don Mackel is a member of the United Auto Workers. Wendy Lyons is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and the Socialist Workers candidate for attorney general in New York.

## 'Occupy, resist, produce,' says Brazil peasant leader on Los Angeles tour

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES — Daniel Correia, a leader of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil, spoke to a total of about 300 students and workers on three campuses here April 23. Meetings were held at Santa Monica Community College, University of California in Los Angeles, and California State University in Los Angeles. He was accompanied by Brazilian activists from the Social Humanist Movement, members of the International Association of Machinists, and local student activists.

The MST was formed in 1985 to organize landless rural workers to defend their right to land. While the richest 20 percent of the population own 90 percent of the land in Brazil, there are 12 million landless peasants and rural workers.

Correia is a state leader of the MST from Rio Grande do Sul, and has coordinated education and agricultural training for participants in land occupations.

The programs featured a photographic display of Brazilian peasants, as well as performances by Capoeira and Samba dancers.

Correia said that "62 percent of the land is nonproductive, and the high concentration [in the hands of a few] generates a social crisis where 4.8 million families need work. Our mass strategy is to organize land occupations. We identify a big piece of land that is nonproductive and at night we occupy it. The landowners hire gunmen to try and expel the families. Often the landowners get the government to send the army or military police to expel the landless peasants." According to the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, "property should fulfill a social function" and, the "Federal government has powers to expropriate in the social interest and for the purpose of agrarian reform, rural property which is not fulfilling its social function."

Sometimes, Correia added, the MST reaches an agreement with the government to begin expropriation procedures. In those cases the peasants suspend their occupation and set up a camp nearby. But some of these camps are now seven years old.

The MST has settled 150,000 families, and there are 75,000 more families waiting in camps in 23 Brazilian states. The MST defines its objectives as "First the struggle for land. Second, the fight for agrarian reform that through a series of measures gives the producers land and access to health and education. Third, the struggle for social change through creating alliances with workers," said Correia. "Our slogans are: Occupy, resist and produce."

The MST has faced repression from government troops and paramilitary groups, but that hasn't stopped the occupation. The organization is also carrying out a literacy campaign involving 600 educators and 7,000 students, as well as land occupations.

On April 17, 1996, 19 landless rural workers were killed and 60 wounded at

Eldorado dos Carajás, Pará state. Another nine were killed and 170 peasants hurt in Corumbiara the year before. On April 17 of last year, a commemorative march took place. Three thousand workers walked for two months and some 622 miles, from three originating cities, to join a rally of 100,000 workers and students in Brasília. There, they demanded implementation of agrarian reform and jobs.

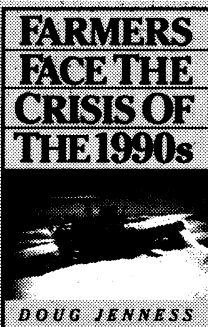
A video of the land occupations and the police attacks on demonstrations preceded a lively question and answer period.

Jim Dong, a student who helped organize the Santa Monica Community College, asked about the repression. Correia replied, "Violence in the cities by the military and paramilitary police is strong, including the killings of street children. Large student organizations like the National Union of Students and Brazilian Union of High School students have organized mobilizations to force the government to improve education. They have been repressed."

In response to another question about José Rainha, an MST leader facing more than 26 years in jail on trumped-up charges of killing a landowner and a cop during a 1989 land occupation, Correia said, "The Federal government is trying to criminalize our movement and turn public opinion against us. His trial has been postponed; the government is waiting until after the elections in October because they know that it will mobilize large numbers of people." Evidence presented at Rainha's first trial showed that he was in a different state at the time of the incident. There is an international campaign to demand justice for Rainha, and petitions and brochures were circulated at the meeting.

The speaker added that two more MST leaders were killed three weeks ago, and urged an international campaign of solidarity by writing the Brazilian government demanding justice and an end to the repression.

Mark Friedman is a member of the International Association of Machinists.



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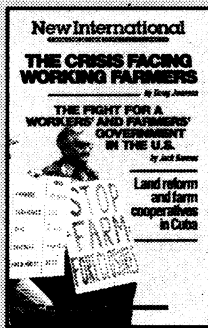
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# Steelworkers walk out at Titan Tire in Iowa

Continued from front page

the strike deadline, Local 310 activists leafleted at their plant urging "Let's show our support!" During the 1994-95 strike at Bridgestone/Firestone, workers from Titan staffed the Local 310 pickets during union meetings.

At 11:45 p.m. the crowd, now numbering about 400, massed in the street and marched up to the plant entrance. Workers cheered, hooted, and banged frying pans in anticipation of the midnight deadline as company security looked on. Chants of "We will win!", "No contract, No peace!", and "Take it to the streets!" echoed off the walls of the plant. A little after midnight the nightshift workers emerged to a roar of welcome. The fight was on.

A rally was held on the spot. Speakers included officials of USWA Local 164, the Iowa AFL-CIO, and Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO. Jeff Doornenbal, president of USWA Local 310, pledged the support of unionists at Bridgestone/Firestone.

LeRoy Kinart, a 19-year veteran of the plant, was among those who walked out. "We went out with dignity, with our heads held high," he said. "All the new workers still on company probation came out, too."

Tom Gift, who has worked at Titan two and a half years, explained, "The union has made every new hire a member, and we've told them that if you walk out with us, we won't go back until you go back." For Gift, the strike was needed because "we have no time with our families. We've been working 26 days straight with only 2 days off, for over two years."

The owner of the plant, Maurice Taylor Jr., angered workers throughout Des Moines when he raged in a televised interview hours before the strike, "They're stupid! They're stupid! If they think walking out is going to change anything, they're nuts! Every one

of their wives should smash them over the head with frying pans!"

Many workers brought frying pans to the rally, and pounded them together as the strike began. A picket sign read, "Why would I beat my husband? The one I should beat is Morry Taylor!"

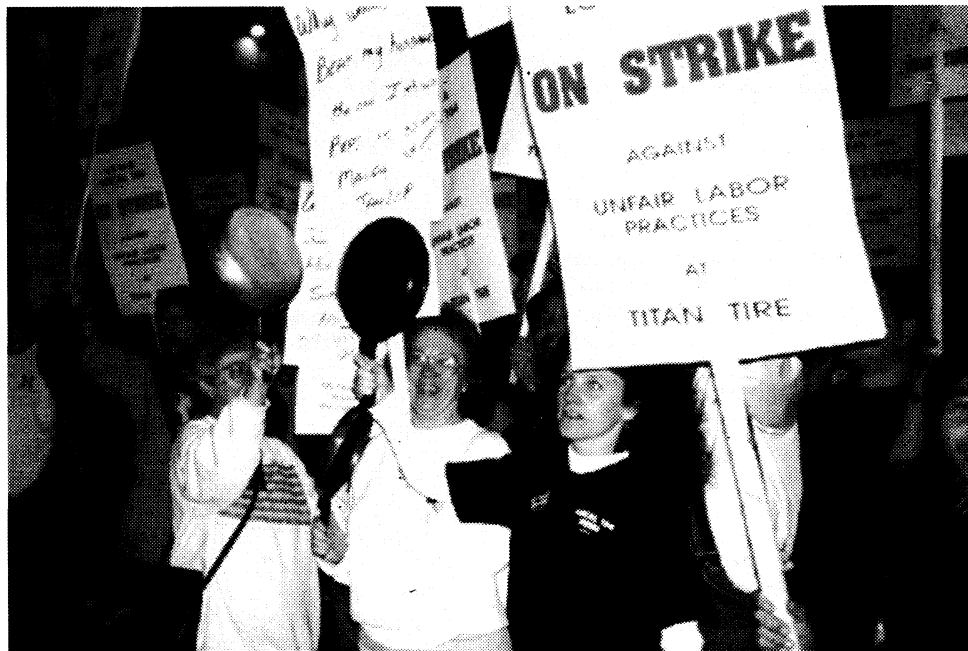
In the same interview Taylor had fumed that in the failed contract negotiations "I've given them everything but free beer and girlfriends." The unionists took great offense at this. One worker said, "He thinks we're dumb, not even human!"

In 1994 the union accepted a pact that imposed deep concessions, slashing wages as much as \$4 an hour. A two-tier wage scale was imposed for some job grades. New hires in those job grades never rise to the same pay as long-time workers.

The pension plan was eliminated and workers were forced to begin paying for medical coverage. Incentive pay was also eliminated, lowering wages even more on some jobs. The contract mandated a workweek of up to 60 hours, and allows for only one weekend off per month.

In the recent contract talks, Titan offered a 1.5 percent wage increase, "which is only 22 cents per hour," explained Gift. "We are demanding a fair wage." Other union members reported that Titan sought the right to unlimited overtime. On the day before the April 30 strike deadline, John Peno, president of Local 164, reported, "We cannot get an agreement on overtime, pension, affordable retiree medical [coverage], or a one-tier wage structure."

Titan has waged a propaganda campaign against the strike in the big-business media. On May 1 a company spokesman claimed that some workers in the plant make \$100,000 per year, and that overtime is voluntary. Tom Ballard, who has worked at Titan just over one year, has taken this on in discussions with neighbors and others



Militant/Ray Parsons

Supporters of the Titan workers brought frying pans to the picket line, insulted by comment made by Titan boss Maurice Taylor that wives should use them on strikers.

around town. "I was in a donut shop when someone asked me, 'if you're making \$100,000, what are you doing on strike?' I set them straight on our strike."

Ballard added, "I think we should get groups of us together to go out to the supermarkets and other places and explain about our fight." The union has begun to organize a solidarity rally for May 16.

The Steelworkers strike at Titan comes amidst another area labor battle. Contracts covering more than 2,500 construction workers in central Iowa expired April 30 and picket lines have been set up at building sites around Des Moines by the carpenters, painters, bricklayers, and operating engineers unions.

Taylor has taken his antilabor program

into the political arena. In 1995 he campaigned for the Republican Party's presidential nomination. His rightist views, printed as a full page ad in *USA Today*, include raising the retirement age, sterilizing welfare recipients, televised whipping as punishment for misdemeanors, and solitary confinement for felons. He painted his candidacy as that of a "shop floor populist." But when Taylor announced his campaign to workers on break at Titan Tire, he was met with jeers and pelted with cups and soda cans.

Currently, management personnel are trying to maintain some production inside the plant. In a press interview Taylor declined to say if strikers would be replaced but threatened, "What do you think we're going to do? We have to keep it operating."

Linda Burgess, a veteran of 18 years at Titan, said, "I've been waiting three years for this strike. Taylor didn't expect us to go out, and he looked awful tired and worn out on TV."

Striker LeRoy Kinart added, "Working-class people are on the upturn, fighting for a decent living, and that's all we ever wanted."

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310 at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines.

## Rally to protest racist killing in Canada

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO AND STEVE PENNER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — An April 27 meeting of some 200 people representing a broad range of anti-racist activists, defenders of democratic rights, and other organizations agreed to call a protest against the January 4 racist killing of Nirmal Singh Gill in Surrey, a suburb of Vancouver.

The 65-year-old caretaker of the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple was found badly beaten and bleeding in the temple's parking lot around 3:30 a.m. He died soon after.

On April 22 Robert Kluch, 24; Radoslaw Synderk, 22; Daniel Miloszewski, 20; Nathan LeBlanc, 25; and an unnamed 17-year-old were charged with second-degree murder at the Surrey Court House. Police allege that the five suspects are members of a white supremacist skinhead group calling itself White Power, which is affiliated with other ultraracist outfits. This contradicts the media's unsubstantiated claims that Gill's death was due to a clash among Sikhs.

Many Sikh residents at the Guru Nanak temple's senior center, where Gill lived and worked, crowded into the courtroom to hear the charges laid. Temple members are planning to attend the May 6 court hearing for the accused and are considering holding a public vigil in the parking lot where Nirmal Gill was killed. Charan Gill, president of the B.C. Intercultural Services Society, accused the police of not taking recent acts of van-

dalism seriously, including window-smashing at the Sikh temple where Nirmal Singh Gill worked.

The press has reported several other incidents of Surrey and Vancouver residents being attacked by racist groups.

Participants at the April 27 anti-racist meeting discussed a plan of action presented by Baljinder Sandhu, which included a protest march to Surrey city hall and a rally.

A number of those who spoke at the meeting also expressed support for the call by Surrey mayor Doug McCallum and B.C. Attorney General Ujjal Dosanjh for tougher so-called anti-hate laws, which would make possession of hate literature a crime. Dosanjh has called on the federal government in Ottawa "get off its collective rear...and give me a better law... give our police force better tools."

Mary Ellen Marus, a member of the International Association of Machinists, argued at the meeting that giving governments the power to ban ideas they consider to be racist was more of a threat to the democratic rights of all working people than a means of fighting racism.

### Gov't promotes anti-Sikh campaign

For more than a decade since the bombing of an Air India plane in 1985, the Canadian government and the media have conducted a systematic campaign portraying Sikhs as terrorists. One of the most recent examples is the Dec. 23, 1997, deportation

of Tejinder Pal Singh to India. About 200 Sikhs demonstrated in Vancouver against the deportation order.

Singh spent 14 years in prison after being convicted of taking part in the 1981 hijacking of an Indian Airlines jet while he was a participant in the fight to establish an independent Sikh nation in the Punjab area of India. Two weeks before the deportation order, Immigration Minister Lucienne Robillard had signed an order prohibiting Singh from seeking refugee status.

Singh's lawyers said the deportation order came despite a request from a United Nations committee on torture that wanted to look into the case.

In the two years prior to his deportation, the media reported that Singh had been living in Surrey's Khalsa School, a Sikh religious school in North Surrey. Then in mid-February on the basis of allegations that members of the International Sikh Youth Federation had attended weekend meetings at the school, the provincial ministry of education launched a probe of the Khalsa school. Ministry official Karen Johnston said that if the school was found to have been in violation of the Independent School Act again, it could face stiff reprisals from the provincial government.

Earlier this year the federal government faced a wave of protest actions over proposed changes to the immigration laws that would require new immigrants to know either English or French prior to coming to Canada.

Fifty percent of the immigrants who came to British Columbia between 1991 and 1995 could not speak English. Most spoke Chinese languages. Under the proposed new rules, those 92,000 applicants would be rejected.

In another move to scapegoat immigrants, the new proposals include charging new immigrants for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for children and spouses. In Vancouver ESL students make up half the school population. Under changes implemented several years ago new immigrants must now pay a \$975 landing fee for each adult.

Beverly Bernardo is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 178. Steve Penner is a member of the Canadian Auto Workers union.

## Case contract

Continued from Page 6

ing that from now on they would have to pay \$56 a month to their insurance company. Previously, they had 100 percent coverage. Roy Hoskins was particularly irate when he found out that his wife was placed in a different health plan from his own without him knowing about it.

Another eye-catcher in the contract summary is the section called, "Understanding Regarding Permanent Replacements." It says in part, "Case Corporation has, in the interest of our long term relationship, elected to refrain from continuing production operations by hiring new employees as permanent replacements for striking workers."

In the event of a strike, according to the letter, "the UAW recognizes that Case must continue to protect equipment, facilities and, most importantly, fulfill its commitments to customers by using salary employees as are available to continue critically necessary operations in an orderly manner." Some Case workers said they saw this as a partial backing off of the threat to hire scabs, but they still didn't like the sound of this so-called "letter of understanding."

The company allowed workers three hours off so that UAW members could vote on the contract, but with one catch. One Case worker pulled a company flyer out of his bag that said employees would get paid for those three hours *only* if they voted for the contract. Many Case workers got a good laugh out of that. For now, union officials are urging their members to continue working without a contract. No new talks are in the offing.

Tom Alter is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa. Maggie Trowe from Des Moines and Joel Britton and Claudia Hommel from Chicago contributed to this article.

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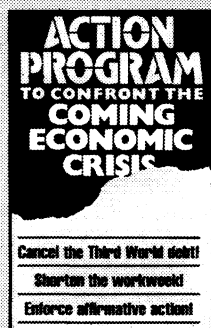
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# U.S. Senate okays pushing NATO line east

Continued from front page

ticians over NATO expansion reflected nervousness among a layer of the U.S. capitalist class that the move could provoke more instability in Russia and elsewhere in region.

Sen. Daniel Moynihan said the military expansion would put relations between Moscow and Washington "back on a hair trigger." Warning of a military collision with Moscow, he asserted April 27 that expanding NATO could lead Washington to "stumble into the catastrophe of nuclear war with Russia." The liberal Democrat cited his colleague Sen. Paul Wellstone who asserted, "NATO could defend the Baltic by only one means, nuclear attacks." A week earlier Moynihan delivered a speech titled "Could NATO Expansion Lead to Nuclear War?"

Moynihan approvingly cited a letter from Paul Nitze of Johns Hopkins University calling for "lending political and economic support to the development of a democratic, market-oriented society in Russia" as a better approach to achieving Washington's aims. A sharp debate occurred on the Senate floor several weeks before the vote. Moynihan described the imperialist encirclement as forming an "iron ring" around Russia. "We have no idea what we're getting into," he warned March 19.

"I find this absolutely astounding," exclaimed Democratic Sen. Joseph Biden. "If my friends are saying anyone who votes for expanding NATO to include Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, are tying this noose around a Russian neck, this iron ring...then I don't quite get it."

When Republican Sen. John Warner voiced concerns that Washington could become embroiled in military actions similar to the Vietnam War or the U.S. military fiasco in Somalia, Biden objected, "Vietnam and Somalia are not Central Europe, they're

not Poland, they're not Hungary."

New York Times writer Thomas Friedman, a staunch opponent of NATO expansion, quoted George Kennan in his May 2 column, who said, "I think it is the beginning of a new cold war." Kennan was the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1952 and chief architect of Washington's policy of "containment" of the Soviet workers state, which heralded the Cold War.

Overthrowing the workers states in Europe and defeating the struggles of workers and peasants around the world was Washington's objective when it founded NATO in 1949. It codified U.S. imperialism's immense economic and military superiority in Europe in the aftermath of World War II.

Rightist opponents of the NATO enlargement also commented on the Senate vote. "It would obligate us to go to war to defend the borders in Eastern Europe," said right-wing activist Phyllis Schlafly. "We see this as one Bosnia after another," referring to the U.S. military occupation in the Yugoslav workers state.

"With NATO expansion, we give up forever our freedom to decide when and whether to go to war," declared Patrick Buchanan in a May 2 syndicated column. "And we lock ourselves into virtually every future European war." The ultranationalist politician noted, "Moscow is now opposing U.S. policy almost everywhere."

Buchanan referred to Moscow's 10,000 nuclear weapons, which the U.S. big-business media has stepped up its propaganda against. "Russia's deteriorating control of its nuclear weapons is increasing the danger of an accidental or unauthorized attack on the United States," an article in the New York Times asserted April 30. "And Russia formally abandoned its long-standing policy

that it would never be the first nation to use those weapons four years ago."

With Washington's military pressure mounting on the Kremlin, Russian president Boris Yeltsin approved a shift in security policy that asserts the right to use nuclear weapons first if attacked. "We are not speaking of making a first strike in order to secure an advantage, but if we are driven into a corner and are left with no other option, we will resort to nuclear weapons," said Boris Berezovsky, then-deputy head of the Security Council, who announced the policy change in a radio interview May 9, 1997.

The Times article omitted the fact that Washington is the only government to have ever used its nuclear arsenal — twice, in blasts that incinerated hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians in 1945. Meanwhile, U.S. Minutemen nuclear-armed missiles are still being upgraded and aimed at Russian targets. A March 20 New York Times Magazine article quoted nuclear expert William Arkin as stating, "We actually have a greater capacity to destroy Russian nuclear forces than we did 10 years ago."

The Russian government is attempting to counter the expansion of the imperialist war machine by deepening ties to governments Washington has denounced as "rogue states." U.S. government officials and Tel Aviv alleged that Moscow is helping the Iranian military develop strategic missiles that could hit Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Israel.

Washington has also begun to step up its probes for intervention in the Caspian Sea region, pressing for the withdrawal of the 15,000 Russian troops deployed in Georgia, a former Soviet republic. Under a 1994 pact that Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze signed under "intense pressure," 4,000 Russian soldiers patrol the Georgia-Turkey border, 11,000 are stationed in Georgia, and Russian Navy vessels patrol Georgia's Black Sea coast. The Times claims the accord has not been ratified.

Shevardnadze, a procapitalist politician, recently decided to conduct military exercises with the government of Turkey, a member of NATO, and allow Turkish naval vessels to dock at Georgian ports.

from Pathfinder

## Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

Jack Barnes

How the working class and its allies respond to the accelerated capitalist disorder will determine whether or not imperialism's march toward fascism and war can be stopped. In New International no. 10. \$14.00

Available from bookstores on this page.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### ALABAMA

#### Birmingham

**The Fight for Jobs and a Clean Environment: What Stand Should Workers and Youth Take on Kyoto Treaty?** Speaker: Kristin Meriam, Socialist Workers candidate for Alabama governor. Fri., May 15, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**Defend Bilingual Education! Oppose Proposition 227!** Speakers: Carlos Hernández, bilingual teacher, Socialist Workers congressional nominee; Omar Quijada, Valley College student who was in bilingual program; Mirna Nuñez, mother of children in Santa Barbara bilingual programs. Fri., May 15, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**Politics and Culture in the Fight Against Racism.** Celebration of *Black Music and White Business* and *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, two new books by Frank Kofsky. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Washington, D.C. Fri., May 15, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Philadelphia

**The Struggle for Puerto Rican Independence Today: 100 Years of Resistance to U.S. Imperialism.** Panel discussion with: Luis Senabria, National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War; Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers candidate for attorney-general of New York. Fri., May 15, 7:30 p.m. "Struggles in Steel: the Fight for Equal Opportunity." Video portraying how the historic fight by Black steelworkers to establish plant-wide seniority and affirmative action strengthened the steelworkers union. Fri., May 29, 7:30

## CALENDAR

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Pittsburgh

**What Socialists Stand For.** Speaker: Mark Gilsdorf, member of the Young Socialists and United Steelworkers of America, representing the Socialist Workers election campaign of Dorothy Kolis for Congress in the 14th district. Thurs., May 14, 7 p.m. Room 207 David Lawrence Hall, University of Pittsburgh. For more information, call: (412) 381-9785.

p.m.  
Both events to be held at 1906 South St. (at 19th).  
Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

**"We want a contract": Northwest Airline Unionists Speak Out.** Fri., May 15, 7:30 p.m. 1930 18th St. NW (entrance on Florida). Dupont Circle or U Street-Cardozo metro stops. Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**A New Stage in the Irish Freedom Struggle.** Speaker: Brendan Gleeson, Communist League. Fri., May 15, 7:00 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 379-3075.

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for Puerto Rican independence, Camacho was removed from Puerto Rico and flown to Miami, where he is now incarcerated.

In a message to the May 7 picket, the jailed activist's sister, Marilyn Camacho, stated, "Antonio Camacho's incarceration and extradition clearly illustrates the colonial status of Puerto Rico. It is a new assault on the independentista movement and on the political organizations fighting for the self-determination of the Boricua nation. It demonstrates the United States's total control over the political and judicial systems of the island despite its claim to being the number one democracy in the world."

Right-wing groups in the Miami Cuban-American community have been building a counterprotest against the picket to free Camacho.

Ernie Mailhot is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

101515,2702

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**Miniporcine?** — Senior British detectives have decided to spiff up the name of stool pigeons so that they'll have greater self-esteem and work harder. They're weighing such



**Harry Ring**

niceties as "agent," "source," or "intelligence asset." To assure a good choice, they may consult a psychologist.

**Another branch of Murder Inc.** — General Electric shareholders rejected a proposal that the company clean up accumulations of the

toxic compound PCB in the areas of its plants in the Northeast. PCB contamination had generally become so pervasive that in 1977 the government banned its use. GE chairman John Welch said, "We simply do not believe" PCBs are dangerous.

**Safe as cigarettes** — PCBs "bioaccumulate in organisms and can cause skin disorders, liver dysfunction, reproductive disorders, and tumor formation. They are one of the most abundant organochlorine contaminants found throughout the world." — *Gale Encyclopedia of Science*.

**As long as it's not for fun** — Before putting the impotence drug Viagra on the market, the Pfizer company checked with Vatican

medical experts who gave it the okay.

A Pfizer spokesperson said they don't normally discuss new drugs with the Vatican, but because Viagra is used to improve sexual relations, "we just thought it was the responsible thing to do."

**New academic standard** — Amanda Lemon, 18, a student with top grades, was barred from joining her Ohio high school's honor society when the faculty council learned she was a mother. School officials said parenthood is a barrier to membership in the society.

**Sock it to 'em** — Disney doesn't often lose in the courts, but Denise Winters, 24, was awarded \$65,000 damages by a Southern California jury. Disneyland had falsely ac-

cused her of shoplifting a \$30 Mickey Mouse doll. She said she pressed the case to convince her son, five, of the need to stand up for your rights.

**Wait, there's more** — A Disneyland security cop had busted Winters several hours after she bought the doll. She and her fiancée were grilled for two hours and released. Leaving the park, she found the receipt in one of her pockets, returned and had the purchase verified. Yet Disney pressed charges. She was found not guilty and then sued.

Meanwhile, she notes, "They never even gave us the doll back."

**Try shrink wrap** — Joining in with other carriers, American Airlines said that beginning June 1,

passengers will be limited to two carry-on items that must fit into baggage sizers at the gates. We predict: Less baggage will mean more seats and less leg room. To minimize the problem, travelers will have to fit into a people sizer prior to boarding.

**Whoops!** — With mounting air traffic congestion, the number of reported near misses in Britain doubled. In 1996, 26 incidents were reported, compared with 16 in 1995, 11 in '94, and 13 each in '93 and '92.

Safety officials said the increase was due to improved monitoring and an increased inclination by air traffic controllers to report incidents. Meanwhile, it was reported that passenger traffic is at a record high.

## Israel is imperialist beachhead in Middle East

Below we print excerpts from "Israel and the Arab Revolution," a resolution adopted by the 1971 convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The full resolution appears in a booklet of the same title as part of the Education for Socialists series. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

1. The Socialist Workers Party gives unconditional support to the national liberation struggles of the Arab peoples against imperialism, that is, we support all these struggles regardless of their current

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

leaderships. Our foremost task in implementing such support is to educate and mobilize the American people against U.S. imperialist actions in the Mideast.

2. Israel, created in accordance with the Zionist goal of establishing a Jewish state, could be set up in the Arab East only at the expense of the indigenous peoples of the area. Such a state could come into existence and maintain itself only by relying upon imperialism. Israel is a settler-colonialist and expansionist capitalist state maintained principally by American imperialism, hostile to the surrounding Arab peoples. It is an imperialist beachhead in the Arab world that serves as the spearhead of imperialism's fight against the Arab revolution. We unconditionally support the struggles of the Arab peoples against the state of Israel.

3. The principal victims of the creation of Israel were the Palestinians — i.e., the Arabs who inhabited the region where Israel was established, who have been driven from their homes or placed in subjugation within Israel and the newly occupied territories. The Palestinians are a part of the Arab peoples, but they also form a distinct national grouping, with its own history of struggle against imperialism. There were Palestinian uprisings in 1921, 1929, and during the 1930s, reaching a high point in 1936-1939. At the height of the 1936 rebellion, the Palestinians conducted a six-month general strike. Expulsion from their homeland through the creation of Israel greatly intensified national consciousness among the Pal-

estinians. The upsurge of Palestinian nationalism in the recent period, especially after the 1967 war, was particularly marked in the refugee camps and newly occupied territories as a result of the direct oppression these people have suffered at the hands of Israel. The September 1970 civil war in Jordan further intensified Palestinian national consciousness.

The struggle of the Palestinian people against their oppression and for self-determination has taken the form of a struggle to destroy the state of Israel. The currently expressed goal of this struggle is the establishment of a democratic, secular Palestine. We give unconditional support to this struggle of the Palestinians for self-determination.

An integral part of our program for the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution as a whole is support of full civil, cultural, and religious rights for all nationalities in the Mideast, including the Israeli Jews. The major Palestinian liberation organizations also advance this concept and view it as essential to their attempt to win the Israeli Jewish masses away from support to Israel.

4. Our revolutionary socialist opposition to Zionism and the Israeli state has nothing in common with anti-Semitism, as the pro-Zionist propagandists maliciously and falsely assert. Anti-Semitism is anti-Jewish racism used to justify and reinforce oppression of the Jewish people. Marxists have been and remain the most militant and uncompromising fighters against anti-Semitism and the oppression of Jews.

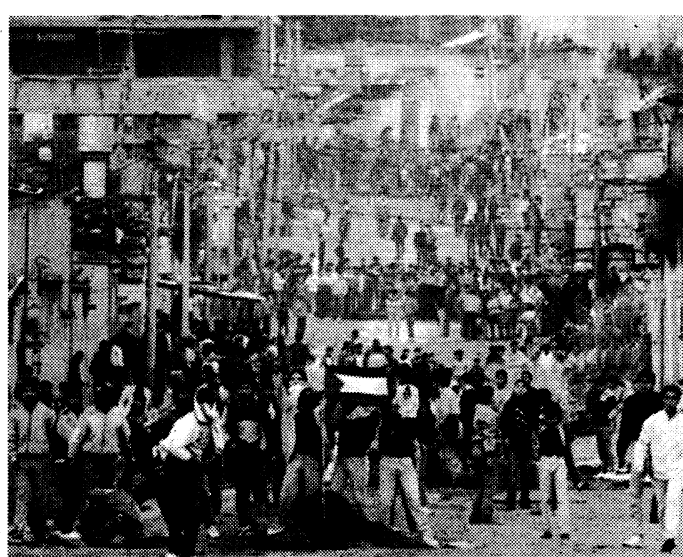
The source of the oppression of the Jewish people in this era is the capitalist system, which in its period of decay carries all forms of racist oppression to the most barbarous extremes. This was horribly illustrated in the holocaust directed against the Jews of Europe by German imperialism under the Nazi regime. Today, anti-Semitism remains widespread in all of the Western imperialist countries. Until the capitalist system is abolished in these countries there is the everpresent danger that a new variety of virulent anti-Semitism can arise....

Zionism is not, as it claims, a national liberation movement. Zionism is a political movement that developed for the purpose of establishing a settler-colonialist state in Palestine and that rules the bourgeois society headed by the Israeli state today in alliance with world imperialism.

Zionism does not represent or promote the interests of the Jewish people. Within Israel,

the Zionists lead the Jewish masses into the trap of opposing the national liberation struggle of the Arab peoples, a just and democratic struggle that will ultimately be victorious. The racist oppression of the Israeli state against the Arabs is paralleled by racist oppression within Israel against Jews who come from the Arab countries and other colonial and semicolonial countries. Israeli capitalism exploits the Jewish workers in addition to superexploiting the Arab workers. Police repression against Arabs carries over to increasing repression against those Jews who oppose Zionism. Clerical restrictions on civil liberties affect Jews, and Arabs even more....

The imperialists and Zionists to the contrary, the basic interests of the Jewish masses of Israel reside in alliance with the Palestinian liberation struggle and support of the goal of a democratic Palestine. We



Palestinians protest Israeli occupation in Gaza, January 1998. Communists give unconditional support to their struggle.

have incessantly warned Jews throughout the world: Zionism leads you into conflict with your potential allies — the oppressed of the world — and has led you to ally with your worst enemy, imperialism. Imperialism in its death agony has already led to one holocaust against European Jewry; it can inflict similar catastrophes again unless it is overthrown in time by the mass force of the socialist revolution....

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

### 25 CENTS THE MILITANT

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

May 18, 1973

Some people say that feminist demands are of no concern to Black women. But 700 Black women who met in Detroit a few weeks ago say the opposite. The Women's Conference of Concerns was called by Black Detroit Councilwoman Erma Henderson for Black women to discuss "the many problems affecting employment, career opportunities, child care, the legal status of women, consumer problems, equal pay for equal work."

The large conference held workshops and passed resolutions on a variety of issues, including the terrorist police unit in Detroit called STRESS ("Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets"). When the reporter from the workshop on STRESS told the conference that the workshop decision was to take no action on the STRESS issue, a mass outcry of objection came from the audience. The chairwoman decided to handle the dispute by a stand-up vote. When those in favor of demanding abolition of STRESS were asked to stand, almost the entire audience was on their feet. Those who favored STRESS or were undecided were a tiny minority.

Another theme, however, was the recognition that Black women must join forces and form alliances with other oppressed people in order to be effective. They noted that Blacks, women, and Chicanos must unite to fight a common enemy.

The demands being raised by feminists today are in the interest of Black women. Black women and other women from the

oppressed nationalities, suffer the most from lack of child care, and unequal pay and job opportunities. They also suffer because they are Black, and because Black women in their vast majority are working women, they are also oppressed as workers. They are triply oppressed.

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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

May 17, 1948

75,000 Auto workers in Michigan, Indiana and California struck against the Chrysler Corporation on May 12 after talks between the union and the company broke down completely. "We'll give them the damndest strike they ever had," Norman Matthews, head of the union Chrysler department told reporters, as he emerged from a meeting with 100 rank and file representatives of the Chrysler locals.

The union representatives, in the last meeting with the company, scaled down the original demands for a 30 cent hourly wage increase plus 5 cents an hour for supplementary demands to a straight across-the-board 17 cent an hour increase. The company turned this down and offered no counter proposal. In big ads run in the Detroit daily papers, the auto union pointed out that Chrysler profits in 1947, after taxes, came to 25.6 % of its investment; greater even than the industry averaged, which was 17 %.

In contrast, the Chrysler workers are forced to live on an income thirteen dollars below the minimum weekly income fixed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as the bare subsistence budget for a city worker's family of four.

#### Israel and the Arab Revolution

Education for Socialists

Gus Horowitz

\$7.00

#### Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?

Maxime Rodinson

Examines the Zionist colonialization of Palestine and how the state of Israel was formed. \$11.95

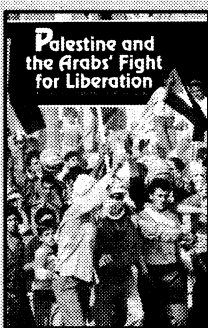
#### Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation

Fred Feldman and Georges Sayad

An overview of the Palestinian struggle from World War I to the beginning of the *intifada* in 1987. \$4.00

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.

From Pathfinder



# Labor resistance accelerates

Continued from front page

this kind since the blows suffered by the union movement in the previous decade. Participation in these fights prepared communist workers to face the pressures of Washington's war against Iraq in 1990-91. But over the following years the working-class movement continued to retreat for several years in face of the bosses' offensive, which has been driven by falling profit rates and the resulting rise in worldwide competition between capitalists.

By the middle of last year, a number of working-class struggles indicated this retreat had ended or at least bottomed out — above all, the victorious nationwide strike against United Parcel Service by 185,000 Teamsters, who set an example for the whole labor movement. The shift was also registered internationally in the electoral defeats of the ruling Tories in the United Kingdom and the Gaullists in France, who were replaced by social democratic-led governments.

In the past couple months, the resistance has widened and picked up:

After a nearly seven-year battle to defend their union, the United Auto Workers (UAW) at Caterpillar emerged stronger and more seasoned, forcing the corporate giant to rehire 160 "illegally terminated" unionists. Elsewhere in the Midwest, UAW members at Case Corp. and Steelworkers at Titan Tire are engaged in militant fights for a contract. Resistance has spread among airline workers around the country, with job actions by Machinists at Northwest, TWA, and United Airlines.

The recent successful five-day strike by workers at a McDonald's restaurant in Macedonia, Ohio, gave a foretaste of the combativity and boldness that millions of young workers will bring to coming labor battles. The mostly teenage workers demonstrated more class consciousness and tactical savvy than bosses and union officials had imagined was possible.

Teamsters at Anheuser-Busch's 12 breweries, who already took a strike authorization vote, have rejected the company's so-called final offer. Labor skirmishes have

been breaking in local areas everywhere, from a strike by anthracite coal miners in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to the union-organizing drive by farm workers in central California, to an "illegal" teachers' strike in Paterson, New Jersey.

There are more instances of workers turning to their unions — like the dozens of Mexican meatpacking workers at a Thorn Apple Valley plant in Detroit who recently protested an unjust firing and company abuse.

These stirrings of resistance are welcomed by broader layers of workers, who are increasingly receptive to examples of leadership in action.

The new awakening in the working class is evidenced in broader struggles, such as the increased political activity among Puerto Rican youth and workers, numerous protests against police brutality, and actions in support of the advancing struggle for a united Ireland.

This sea change in working-class politics creates new responsibilities and opportunities for socialist workers and other vanguard fighters to turn to this resistance. This means responding fast — especially since strikes today are often short — by joining with workers in struggle, getting the *Militant* into their hands, and introducing them to other fighters.

It includes turning more systematically to political work in Black communities, given the vanguard role of workers who are Black. It means going to industrial areas that socialist workers have not been to in a while, such as the docks, where in several cities there has been a good response to the *Militant* by longshore and maritime workers.

The heightened resistance underscores the political leverage of the revolutionary literature produced by Pathfinder Press — such as *The Eastern Airlines Strike* and *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*. It gives greater importance to socialist election campaigns and Militant Labor Forums as ways to reach fellow working-class fighters. Above all, this is how some of the best fighters will be introduced to the communist movement and will decide to join it.

# Life and example of Helen Scheer

Continued from Page 9

tics. And she surrounded her political activity with other interests that gave a glow to her party building work.

## Cuban revolution reenergized Helen

Helen lived through three interconnected periods in the communist movement, Barnes pointed out. The first was the period of labor upsurge after World War II. The McCarthyite witch-hunt that followed marked some of the dog days of the revolutionary movement, when, under the pressure of the long postwar economic expansion, the labor movement and its vanguard retreated. The pace of political activity slowed down and divisions grew. This affected Helen too, who began to settle into the rhythm of family life.

Helen pointed out later that the Cuban revolution "saved her," Barnes said. The triumph of the first socialist revolution in the Americas in 1959 posed the reversal of the retreat of the previous decade. That was the third period in Helen's life.

By being political, Helen meant she understood the fact that the decline and crisis of capitalism are inevitable. The question is what you do about it, especially when it becomes possible to win new generations to a revolutionary course and activity.

For communists, a victorious socialist revolution — the practical demonstration in life of how the working class can do it — is the decisive test of everything they've previously learned and done. It revitalizes revolutionary ideas and produces a commitment to press forward the struggle in new ways. The working class has only experienced this twice this century, coming out of the October 1917 Russian revolution and then after the Cuban revolution in the early 1960s.

Barnes said he already considered himself a revolutionist before he met the internationalist cadres of the SWP who recruited him to the communist movement, while he was a student at Carleton College. After returning from a trip to Cuba in the summer of 1960 — when most foreign-owned mines, factories, and utilities were expropriated and nationalized — Barnes said he was on the lookout for people who would be like the Cubans, who would work to emulate the Cuban revolution in the United States. This is what the core of the Minneapolis branch of the SWP was like, Barnes said, people for whom the Cuban revolution was their own. Helen, he pointed out, never went to Cuba. But one does not have to go to Cuba to be a great defender of the Cuban revolution.

Helen became an activist and organizer of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the Twin Cities, and continued to take part in many actions in defense of Cuba until the end of her life.

Barnes pointed to a photo on display with Helen and Charlie Scheer when they visited Nicaragua in 1983 on a tour sponsored by the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. That was four years after the victory of the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship and put in power a workers and farmers government — extending the example of the Cuban revolution. Helen and Charlie's faces on that photo, Barnes said, are the faces of revolutionary workers in a sea of magnificent fighters who have taken their destiny in their own hands and are proving that *si se puede!* (yes, we can do it).

Like others, Barnes commented on the books that Helen introduced him to when he first met her. "She didn't hand them to me, she sold them to me," he noted, and told him there was a sale on.

He added that Helen knew which books the group he was part of had, and which one they didn't. "She wanted me to get *History of American Trotskyism*, *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, and *In Defense of Marxism*."

A month later, Barnes said, Helen was selling more books. "I said, 'I have that.' She said, 'it's a much bigger sale now and this is the best thing you can give to people.'"

Barnes explained that through reading and studying *In Defense of Marxism* and *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, he learned that attributes of character, ways of organizing, one's approach to other human beings, discipline — all have a class character to them. These are qualities that are not just part of one's personality, or moral attributes.

Helen, Barnes said in concluding his remarks, was truly a selfless person, truly objective in politics. She was always straight with herself and with other people. She was never gratuitous or cruel. She always remained the person who welcomed a whole layer of youth — with her characteristic smile — many of whom became party leaders later. To her last conscious days, she never stopped being this person. That's how she redeemed those who came before her. The example of Helen, and the comrades of her generation, is something we must live up to, Barnes said. "If you emulate them, it will be the finest thing you can do as a human being."

Tony Lane is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1833 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

# Machinists hold job actions, demand contracts

Continued from front page

TWA have been without a contract since August 1997. Talks between the company and the IAM have been taking place with a federal mediator. A central issue in the negotiations for the Machinists union is that of pay parity because IAM members at TWA earn far less than the industry average. With no progress on these talks, the IAM proposed that an interim contract be worked out while negotiations continue. But two days prior to the work stoppage, James Martin, a senior vice president at TWA, rejected the IAM's proposal. Speaking on behalf of the company, he stated that instead further concessions from the workers would be needed. These concession demands include an end to the incentive pay that ticket agents now receive to supplement their low base pay, as well as the elimination of union jurisdiction over some jobs that are now organized by the IAM. Machinists union officials say that these cuts would result in the loss of more than 1,000 IAM jobs.

Over the last decade, TWA workers have given more than \$4 billion in concessions. These include no pay raise in over six years, a frozen pension, reduced vacation time, and cuts in crew sizes. In 1997 alone TWA eliminated 500 jobs. Having been in and out of bankruptcy twice since 1993, TWA is struggling against its competitors for a greater market share.

The work stoppage, which followed a similar job action in St. Louis last December, was front-page news in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the major daily in that city, where TWA is one of the main employers. The effects of the walkout at Kennedy Airport in New York was the lead story on many local TV and radio news shows that night and the next morning.

TWA called the walkout "an illegal work stoppage," referring to the Railway Labor Act, which governs labor relations for workers in the transportation industries. The union countered that its members combined their break time and meal time. The company filed for a court restraining order against any further job actions and announced it will sue the IAM in court for "damages incurred" as a result of the stoppage.

The effect of the stoppage on the job has been one of increased self-confidence, unity, and organization of workers at TWA. The resistance of TWA workers comes in the midst of continued activity by the 40,000 IAM and other union members at Northwest Airlines to press their demands for a contract settlement. After nearly 20 months, contract talks with a federal mediator stalled on April 9 for 26,000 members of the Machinists union. IAM members in Los Angeles and Newark airports plan to begin informational picketing, which has already begun in Washington, D.C. On March 4, some 150 IAM workers on the afternoon shift came to work early and conducted a walk-through of the Minneapolis airport, making sure to issue pro-union chants as they passed the Northwest Executive Officers office suite in the airport.

In the break rooms in Atlanta and D.C., clippings and cartoons related to the Northwest workers' situation, and handwritten signs urging co-workers to "work safe" abound. Atlanta Machinists are planning another "dress down," or not-wearing-the-company-uniform, day to indicate their displeasure with the lack of a negotiated settlement.

The Northwest bosses have lashed out against the union workers, blaming the IAM members for flight cancellations and rising passenger dissatisfaction with the carrier. The May 1 *Detroit News* reported that more than 100,000 passengers on Northwest have had their travel plans disrupted by late or canceled flights over the past two weeks. Company spokesman Jim Faulkner told the press, "If you want someone to blame, blame those that are causing the slowdown."

The union has gone on record to explain that many workers are carefully and deliberately working in compliance with all of the company's safety rules in order to defend themselves against harassment and victimization by management. This 'work safe' ethic, on top of staffing shortages in many NWA stations, adds up to a sharp increase in the number of delayed and canceled flights over the past two weeks.

Meanwhile, mechanics and ground service workers began to work to rule at United Airlines the week of April 27, causing a delay on many flights at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Workers there are protesting the imposition by the company of a new requirement that they swipe in and out on time clocks.

Several years ago a concession contract was negotiated by the International Association of Machinists with the company that included an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), a half-hour extension of the workday, and a wage cut. At the time the company agreed to get rid of the swipe in an attempt to undercut opposition to the ESOP, which passed by a relatively small margin of votes. Now the company is reimposing it, despite widespread opposition to this among workers and union officials.

Nancy Rosenstock is a member of the International Association of Machinists and works for TWA in New York. Mary Martin is an IAM member at Northwest in Washington, D.C. IAM members Jeff Jones in Minneapolis and Elizabeth Stone in Chicago contributed to this article.



# Meatpackers in Detroit protest firings, working conditions

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

grievances against him.

Several workers translated the discussion at the union meeting between Spanish and English. The union officials agreed to organize a

meetings the union organized. The company, according to Malloy's, was engaged in activities "that were calculated to monitor, watch, identify and survey employees who were attending the meetings. In some plants the supervisors were under orders to list the names of employees attending these meetings."

One union supporter confirmed, "This company will resort to any kind of tricks to keep the union out." The worker, who also declined to give his name, said he'd been in the miners' union before, and so he understood that the union was "a question of dignity."

The timing for another election is still up in the air. The NLRB Board in Washington, D.C., has yet to hear and approve of Malloy's recommendations, and the company, now owned by Pillowtex, could appeal. In general, the sentiment of workers at the plant seemed to be optimistic. A Black woman who'd worked there for nine years told the *Militant*, "I might give out, but I'll never give up."

meeting with company representatives so the unionists could air their grievances. They said that the grievance for the fired worker still had to go to the fourth step. They also urged the workers to document further abuses by the company in writing.

The following week 12 workers from the plant got together to discuss the next steps to take and to write down more grievances.

## Fieldcrest workers may vote again on union

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina — "The next one will be it. I got a feeling about it," said a woman at the Fieldcrest Cannon plant in Kannapolis, North Carolina. The worker, a cutter in the washcloth area with 29 years at the plant, was referring to the possibility of another vote at the mills in this area on whether to join the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. She said she's been through four organizing drives at the plant.

The news broke on April 20 that a hearing officer for the National Labor Relations Board recommended that last August's union election be thrown out, on grounds that the company spied on workers attending union meetings. The union had lost the vote by a slim margin.

The 1997 election had been ordered by the NLRB after it set aside the results of the 1991 organizing drive on grounds that the company had violated federal laws in its anti-union campaign. It was cited for 150 unfair labor practices. In 1991 the union lost by 199 votes; the union lost the 1997 election by 369 votes with almost 5,000 workers in the sprawling mill complex voting.

The cutter, who preferred not to give her name, said one of the reasons she was optimistic about the next vote was that a lot of the immigrant workers in the plant were coming around, and had voted for the union. A young Laotian worker who bought a copy of the *Militant* at the plant gate said he'd voted for the union.

The company's spying had been blatant. According to the *Salisbury Post*, workers testified before NLRB representative Randall Malloy that they had to walk by a "gauntlet of supervisors" to attend

## 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.

DETROIT — "It is we, the workers, who with the sweat of our brows and backs, and with our labor, make possible all the meat orders this company has. That is why we deserve to be considered and listened to." So read one of the handwritten complaints handed to union officials at the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 26 meeting April 21 in Detroit.

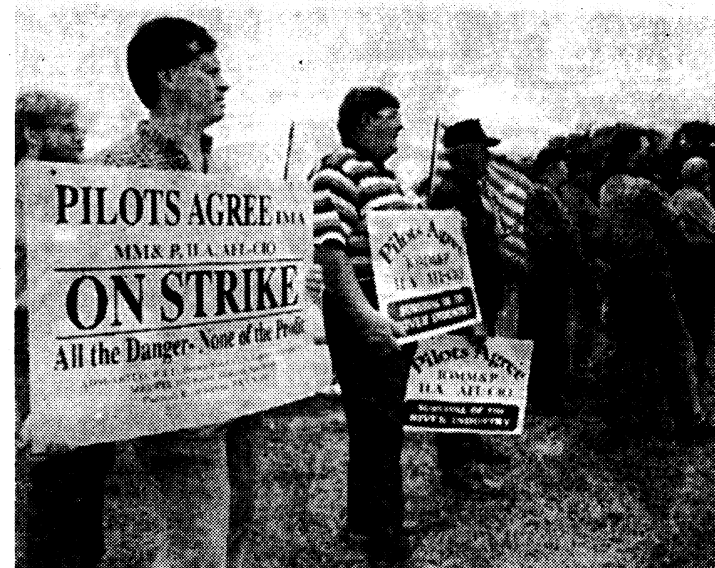
Forty workers from the ham boning department at Thorn Apple Valley's Frederick plant showed up at the meeting after working their regular 11-hour shift. The turnout was triggered by the firing of a young Mexican worker, who was falsely accused of chasing a lead man with a knife. Ten workers testified that they had witnessed the incident and that the lead man was lying about what happened. A few days later two of the witnesses were suspended for supposedly violating company rules. After two weeks management told the fired worker that he had to wait another two weeks for their decision on his reinstatement.

Three-quarters of the workers in the ham boning department left work a half hour early to carpool to the union meeting. Most are Mexican immigrants who do not speak English. In addition to protesting the unjust firing, the workers related examples of verbal abuse by the foreman, unequal pay for skilled jobs, violations of seniority provisions, and the bosses' refusal to allow workers to take bathroom breaks.

Several workers had taken time during the day to write out their grievances and opinions on scraps of paper and paper towels. They asked a co-worker who is bilingual to help translate their testimony.

A target of the workers' complaints was the foreman in ham boning. UFCW Local 26 president Sharon Lairy told the workers that there had been a long history of

## 740 river boat pilots strike nationwide



More than 75 river boat pilots attended a strike rally April 29 near Houston, Texas. The strike by members of the Pilots Agree union began April 3 when 98 companies refused to negotiate increases in benefits and salaries. Organizers say there are 3,000 pilots in the country and 1,200 are members of the union. They estimate 740 members are on strike nationally, including 100 in Texas. Other unionists joined the picket, including 10 locked-out workers from the Crown refinery, one of whom spoke.

right to a union. Shortly after they ratified their first contract, July 31, 1997, the company sold itself to Res-Care, which refused to honor the contract.

Zientarski explained their willingness to fight by saying, "There's no way we'll go for an open shop. It won't work. We're not having it." He added that many people regarded union struggles as outmoded. "People thought that stuff was over. The pendulum was swinging and unions were passé. Now I think it's swinging the other way."

## Newark school staff fight concession demands

NEWARK, New Jersey — Chanting "the people united will never be defeated" and "We don't want welfare, we want jobs," some 300 members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 617 and Local 3 rallied April 28 in Newark, New Jersey. Some 2,000 SEIU members, many of whom are Black or Latino, are fighting against the school district's attempts to impose a three-year concession contract. The unionists have been working without a contract since Feb. 28.

"This is just the beginning," said food service worker Ami Taylor-Wilson. "If they [school district officials] think they're going to drag this on forever and give us a slap in the face, then they have to think again. We'll be out here time after time, and if that means strike, then we'll do it."

The state-controlled school district seeks to establish a two-tier wage scale for new custodians, drivers, cafeteria workers, and laborers at \$10 per hour, down from an average starting wage of \$14.50 per hour. Other concessions include

mandatory weekend work for new custodians, cuts in medical benefits and vacation days, and a time limit of five working days for filing grievances.

The Newark Public School Advisory Board is attempting to roll back many of the rights the workers won during their last strike in 1978, including job title changes to avoid rehiring workers who lost their jobs during a massive layoff in 1996. "You have to sacrifice and fight sometimes to get what you want," said Thomas Crawford, member of Local 3, who has worked 17 years for the school system.

## Busch brewery workers reject contract offer

Members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters at Anheuser-Busch's 12 breweries rejected what the company called its final offer May 1.

The 8,000 Teamsters members have been working under the terms of their previous contract since it expired March 29. After earlier voting to authorize a strike, the workers voted 5,447 to 1,652 to not accept an offer they say threatens full-time jobs. Union negotiators had recommended rejecting the deal, which the company says is the best it will offer.

The company and union officials say they will resume negotiations.

Rosa Garmendia and Holly Harkness, members of UFCW Local 26 at Thorn Apple Valley in Detroit; Jane Roland, a member of the United Transportation Union in Greensboro; Chris Remple, a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Pittsburgh; and Aaron Armstrong in Newark contributed to this column.



Some 300 SEIU workers rallied in downtown Newark, New Jersey, April 28. Unionists are demanding a contract and protesting concessions put forward by the Newark school board.

## LETTERS

### Racist 'justice'

"Railroaded again." That's how two Black men from Florida, Freddie Pitts and Wilbert Lee, saw the meager proposal from the state senate to make up for 12 years stolen from their lives. Pitts and Lee were arrested in Port St. Joe, a tiny segregated town in Florida's Panhandle, in the summer of 1963. Two gas station attendants had been killed in a robbery, and the local cops picked up the two men. Pitts and Lee were beaten by the cops, denied legal counsel, and coerced into signing a phony confession. In less than a month, an all-white jury convicted the pair and sentenced them to die in the state electric chair.

This came at a time in the South when police and government agencies would routinely and brazenly

spy on, beat, and frame-up Black people, defending the racist Jim Crow system from the civil rights movement. Outfits like the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission stand exposed today because of the victory of this movement.

The frame-up wore thin over the next decade, as evidence mounted that the two men were innocent. Finally, spurred by a detailed confession of the real killer, the governor of the state finally released the men in 1975.

For the past 23 years various state legislatures, all controlled by Democrats, have voted down bills to pay restitution to the two men. This year the Florida senate finally agreed to pay each man \$1.5 million for the injustice, but "legislative infighting" reduced the pay-

ment in the end to a measly \$500,000 a piece, just over \$40,000 for each of the years they spent behind bars.

State senator Pat Thomas, whose district includes Port St. Joe, opposed paying the two men anything. "The Constitution of the United States doesn't guarantee that innocent people from time to time won't be convicted," he maintained.

Bill Kalman  
Miami, Florida

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.

## National strike paralyzes Denmark

BY HILDING EKLUND  
AND ANITA ÖSTLING

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — Half a million workers have launched a general strike here over demands for vacation time. This is the country's first general strike in 13 years, involving 10 percent of the population. Workers have shut down workplaces in industry, construction, freight, retail, air traffic, and other vital sectors of the economy.

At the Copenhagen international airport, unionists have stopped all major flights, allowing only small planes to land. Airlines have had to fly passengers to neighboring Scandinavian capitals and bring them into Denmark on buses, ferries, or small planes. Meanwhile, Swedish auto maker Saab announced plans for temporary layoffs of 4,000 workers, citing a lack of auto parts as a result of the strike in Denmark.

Some 200,000 workers demonstrated here on May Day, the international workers holiday. Support for the strike was the axis of the mobilization. The confrontation escalated May 5 when employers locked out 60,000 nonstriking unionists, mainly shop assistants and electricians.

The strike began April 27 after members of the national federation of trade unions, LO, voted down a contract proposal by a 55 percent margin. Negotiations between the unions and the Employers Confederation had begun in January but broke down in February, and a government mediator stepped in. Angry at the drawn-out process, unions called a "Day of Action" March 13 in which thousands of workers demonstrated for a contract.

LO and the Employers Confederation reached agreement March 31 on a contract proposal from the mediator. The two-year contract included a raise in the minimum wage of about 27 cents each year, reaching \$10.75 an hour; a 4 percent wage hike, Christmas Eve as a holiday; a 34-hour workweek for workers with rotating shifts, down from 35 hours; and a raise in pensions.

The employers and 13 of the 14 leadership committees in the union federation recommended a yes vote. But workers surprised both employers and union officials with their decisive "no" vote. The strike was on.

The main unresolved issue in the strike is the unions' demand for a sixth paid vacation week. With an upturn in the economy and Danish bosses raking in huge profits, many workers feel confident to demand some improvements themselves.

"Our normal workweek is 37 hours and we have five weeks vacation a year," noted Bjarne Høpner, secretary of the Warehouse and Retail Workers Union, in an interview.

The employers offered Christmas Eve as a holiday. "But 70 percent of industrial workers already have that day off," remarked an indignant Jan Pedersen, a member of the Electricians Union. "It was our own negotiators who said okay to that deal. The employers just did their job, and they did it well. But we felt betrayed when the employers were on TV beaming with pleasure [announcing the contract proposal]. I ask myself whether our negotiators really squeezed out what they could get."

Ben Larsen, another union worker, commented, "We want to put pressure on the employers to grant a sixth vacation week. But if we can only get a few days off this time, it must not be Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve." The demand for a sixth vacation week was prominently featured in a demonstration and a strike rally of 5,000 called by LO in downtown Copenhagen on the second day of the strike. Unionists carried out another day of national demonstrations in the eight largest cities on May 5. The main slogans of the demonstrations were "More free time!" and "Less pressure!"

Some employers have tried to move work to other countries. The Transport Workers Union in Sweden announced it would block Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) and the catering company Gate Gourmet as of May 8. SAS has rerouted flights from Denmark to Sweden, but some unions in Sweden say they will refuse to carry out struck work from Denmark.

The previous general strike took place in 1985 and was ended through government intervention. The conservative government imposed the mediator's proposal and ordered workers back to work, a highly unpopular move among union members.

The current strike follows the March 11 general elections, which gave a boost to the

### May Day from south Korea to Cuba



Above, south Korean toilers celebrate May 1 with a national strike, protesting government plan to sell Kia Motors to private investors. May Day in Havana (right) drew more than 500,000 Cuban workers and others into the streets with signs defending their revolution. "We are reminding the world that this is the socialist and democratic revolution of workers, and no one or nothing will ever strip us of our status as owners and masters of our own lives," said Pedro Ross, the head of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. Cubans dedicated the workers' international holiday to Jesús Menéndez, an Afro-Cuban trade union leader assassinated in 1948 by the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.



Social Democratic prime minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. In a surprise move, Rasmussen called the elections in February, at a time when the standing of the Social Democrats in the polls was poor. The opposition was expected to win by a wide margin. Two days before election day, the leading poll indicated support for the Social Democrats at 30 percent of voters.

Two days later, the Social Democrats received 36 percent of the vote, allowing Rasmussen to remain prime minister with the backing of a few smaller parties. These election results follow a pattern of electoral victories for social democratic parties in France and the United Kingdom last year.

This electoral backing from working people, who have heightened expectations,

has put the Rasmussen government in a bind. The pro-Social Democratic daily *Politikken* noted that "the Social Democrats also fear that [government] intervention that sets aside the 'no' vote by the workers will increase the danger of a 'no' vote in the referendum on the Amsterdam treaty May 28. Angry voters could find an outlet here to punish Nyrup."

The Amsterdam treaty is supposed to replace the Maastricht treaty as the basis for the European Union. In Denmark the treaty must be ratified through a national vote.

Hilding Eklund is a member of the Metalworkers union and Anita Östling is a member of the Transport Workers Union in Stockholm.

## Thousands mobilize against rightists in Germany

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

LEIPZIG, Germany — This city, the capital of the eastern German state of Saxony, was at the center of the political polarization in Germany on May Day. The ultrarightist German National Democratic Party (NPD) had applied to have a demonstration of 15,000 people at the war memorial Völkerschlachtdenkmal. This stone monument, which commemorates the defeat of Napoleon in 1813, was a traditional meeting place both for the Nazis in the 1930s and for the Stalinist government in the

former East Germany.

The NPD demonstration was called in the tradition of the Nazis, who in 1933 declared May 1, the international workers holiday, as a day of "national" celebration.

The city council of Leipzig prohibited the rightist demonstration, but a higher court overruled the ban.

A rock concert called "Leipzig shows courage" against Nazism was organized in April 30 by local unions, political parties, churches, and artists at the plaza around the war memorial. More than 10,000 people attended and hung a banner reading, "Fascism never again" on top of the memorial to protest the NPD demonstration.

The banner was still there the next day when several thousand police escorted and protected about 4,000 NPD members and supporters in the plaza.

A counterdemonstration drew youth and others from all over Germany. By nine o'clock in the morning May 1, several hundred youth, most of them from Leipzig, had already gathered at the riot fences the police had set up overnight around the plaza.

Markus Finger a student in his late teens, commented, "The concert yesterday was great," when he saw this reporter taking a photo of the banner on top of the war memorial.

"Nazis out!" the early protesters shouted, leading chants from a yellow Volkswagen bus with a loud speaker.

Soon the police drove several water cannon wagons up to the fence and provocatively demanded that the counterdemonstrators leave the area.

Then close to 1,000 people came marching down the street to join the antifascist protesters at the riot fence. They had arrived on buses from Berlin, a little delayed because the police had searched the buses for weapons but found nothing. In the front of the demonstration was a banner declaring, "Unemployment is not a question of foreigners but a question of the market economy."

Now the police put on the water and sprayed the demonstrators, who peacefully turned around and began marching through the streets of Stötteritz, as this area of Leipzig is called, shouting slogans against Nazism and gathering new forces. Both youth from Leipzig and people arriving from other parts of Germany joined the protest. When the march grew to several thousand, a new attempt was made to reach the fences around Völkerschlachtdenkmal, but the water cannon again forced the counterdemonstration to retreat. A few of the antifascist protesters raised barricades and threw stones dug up from the street at the cops' water cannon wagons. The counterdemonstration assembled its forces again and about 5,000 people eventually assembled, reaching the riot fences around the war memorial from another direction. The demonstrators massed there peacefully for more than an hour, shouting slogans against the NPD. The police tried to provoke a confrontation, this time unsuccessfully. From the loudspeaker in the bus, organizers called time and again, "Don't let yourself be provoked! Don't throw stones! That is just what the police want."

The daily paper *Berliner Zeitung* reported

May 2 that the NPD demonstration numbered 3,000-4,000, much less than the organizers had projected. NPD leader Udo Voigt spoke at the rally, condemning "the parties of the system in Bonn" and "international capital." Banners carried by participants included "Jobs here for Germans," "Here the national resistance is marching," and "Don't complain — fight."

Some of the youth at the antifascist rally were consciously looking to the labor movement for help. Georg Rode and Udo van Lengen, two students from Berlin, were carrying flags from IG Metall. They said they had asked officials of the metalworkers union to support the demonstration. They got the flags, but no endorsement.

Frieder Weissbach, a medical student at the University of Leipzig, came up on his bicycle to look at the counterdemonstration. He had been at the May Day event organized by the DGB union federation in the city center. "There are more people here and it's much younger than at the DGB demonstration," he observed. "I feel sympathetic to this demonstration, but I was afraid it could become violent so I didn't participate. I think many people here in Leipzig feel like that."

Across Germany, about 500,000 people participated in union-organized May Day events. In Berlin, 10,000 marched in a demonstration called by the DGB.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden. Dag Tirsén, a member of the metalworkers union in Stockholm, contributed to this article.

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