

# THE MILITANT

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

## Nicaraguan masses advance revolution

### Cuba pledges aid and defense



In wake of victory over dictatorship, Nicaraguan workers are organizing popular committees to carry out tasks of revolution. For direct report from Managua, see page 5. Eyewitness story from Havana on Cuban solidarity, see page 6.

'The land of the assassins belongs to the peasants'

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Headed by a column of armed Sandinistas, more than 5,000 peasants and agricultural workers marched from Diriamba to Jinotepe—two towns about thirty miles south of here—on July 29.

More than twenty cooperatives of farmworkers from Carazo Province participated in the action, which was organized by the Field Workers Association (ATC). Their slogan was "The lands of the assassins belong to the peasants."

According to an account published in the July 30 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*, the peasants "expressed their firm decision to expropriate the land of the *Somocistas* [Somoza and his supporters] and administer them in a collective way to strengthen the process of agrarian reform in the area."

At a news conference here July 30, Sandinista leader Jaime Wheelock explained the aims of the new government in the countryside. Wheelock heads the newly formed Nicaraguan Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA).

"The agrarian reform is aimed above all at solving the problems of the peasants without land or with tiny plots," Wheelock said. "The lands of the *Somocistas* will

be handed mainly to these peasants, as well as being used for large agricultural enterprises that will be administered by the state."

For the present, Wheelock said, only those lands owned by the Somoza family and its hangers-on will be affected by the agrarian reform. But this involves huge amounts: "practically the whole country belonged to Somoza and his clique."

Under the dictatorship, Somoza handed out huge parcels of land to his favorite generals, who then drove the peasants off the plots they had farmed for generations. These holdings were all expropriated by the new government under Decree Number Three, issued July 20. The Sandinista National Liberation Front is now organizing the peasants to recover these lands and put them to use. Fields are now being planted with rice, beans, corn, and grain so as to meet food needs in the future.

The peasants are also preparing to defend their new gains. In León Province, the July 30 *Barricada* reported, "peasant militias are already in formation, since the peasants themselves have asked to be armed to defend their production in blood and fire—a display of enthusiasm for joining a revolutionary process in which they will be the first to benefit."

## Trotskyists run workers slate in Iran elections

TEHRAN—The Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) has announced a slate of seventeen candidates for the elections slated for August 3.

Among the candidates are three imprisoned HKS members, Hamid Shahrabi, Mahsa Hashemi, and Mustafa Gorgzadeh; Nourik Aghazian, a soldier from Isfahan; Ali Mazraeh, a steelworker from Ahwaz; Babak Zahraie, editor of *Kargar*, the HKS newspaper; and Hojabr Khosravi and Mahmoud Sayrafizadeh, national leaders of the HKS. The Trotskyist slate includes metal, textile, meatpacking, and port workers; five women; youth; and other anti-shah fighters.

The Khomeini-Bazargan government has scheduled the elections to

select an "expert assembly" of seventy-five people.

The HKS announced that it would campaign against the undemocratic nature of the "expert assembly" and the capitalist government's restrictions on who may run as candidates. The government said it would bar those under thirty years of age, as well as soldiers, from running. It also stipulated that candidates must support the "Islamic Republic," which means supporting a capitalist government.

Despite these undemocratic restrictions, the dailies *Ayandegan* and *Kayhan* reported that the HKS slate in Tehran had been officially approved.

The HKS platform calls for the im-



Four of seventeen socialist candidates in August 3 elections: Hojabr Khosravi, Shohreh Amin, Hamid Shahrabi, Babak Zahraie.

mediate election of a sovereign constituent assembly; for an end to the yoke of imperialism; for democratic rights and the release of revolutionaries imprisoned by the regime; for thoroughgoing land reform; workers control of

industry; the right of self-determination for oppressed nationalities; and equal rights for women.

To accomplish these tasks, the Trotskyists call for a workers and peasants government.

## Solidarity with Nicaragua!

With the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship, the Nicaraguan workers and peasants have moved rapidly to advance their revolution. The masses are now establishing popular committees to defend the revolution and carry out the tasks of reconstructing their ravaged country, distributing food, and providing health care. This process is being encouraged by the guerrilla fighters of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

On July 27 the Sandinista daily *Barricada* urged "all the working people . . . in every factory and plant . . . to meet immediately in assemblies to form Sandinista Workers Defense Committees (CDTS). . . ."

The article declared that "all the tasks of defending the revolution and national reconstruction today are passing to our combative working class. . . ."

*Militant* correspondent Fred Murphy reports that in Managua popular committees are being organized on a block-by-block basis to deal with defense and basic services. Similar reports have come from León, Nicaragua's second-largest city.

Faced with continuing attacks from remnants of Somoza's National Guard, and with efforts by Somoza diehards to reorganize an army in neighboring Honduras, Sandinista leader Humberto Ortega Saavedra declared July 28 that "we need to build our own army to defend the gains of the revolution from the dangers of those outside the country and from people within who don't accept the fact that Somozaism is over."

Although the Carter administration has refrained so far from public attacks on the newly established government, its hostility is barely concealed. Washington is well aware that the needs of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants cannot be met without eliminating imperialist domination of the country.

As the Nicaraguan masses seek to rebuild their war-shattered country, the issues of how the factories put back into operation will be

administered, of the distribution of land to the peasantry, and similar social issues, will increasingly come to the fore. To the extent that the workers and peasants are able to organize themselves and drive forward their own solutions, they will come into greater and greater conflict with the businessmen and bourgeois politicians who hope to preserve capitalist property relations in Nicaragua.

With this in mind, the State Department has openly stated that reconstruction aid for Nicaragua will depend on its new government adopting policies approved by the U.S. rulers.

While engaging in this blackmail operation, Carter has the gall to send his ambassador back to Nicaragua July 28 with a measly 11,000 pounds of food and medical supplies "as an expression of his personal good will."

Just compare this cheap gesture to Fidel Castro's offer of unlimited numbers of teachers and doctors. On July 25, Cuba was able to send a transport plane to Managua loaded with *ninety tons* of food and sixty medical personnel.

A large crowd shouting "Viva Cuba!" greeted the Cuban doctors.

In his July 26 speech in Cuba Castro explicitly called on both Washington and Moscow to join in a competition to aid the Nicaraguan people in rebuilding their country.

The Nicaraguans themselves know where to look for help. As Alfonso Robelo, one of twenty-three Sandinista leaders who visited Cuba for its July 26 celebration said, Nicaragua needs aid in the areas of health and education, and "that is where the Cuban revolution has shown the greatest gains."

For more than four decades the U.S. government gave unfaltering support to the murderous Somoza dictatorship, which it had imposed on the Nicaraguan people. It hoped that Somoza would be able to drown this latest rebellion in blood. Now that Somoza has gone, Washington is doing its best to keep the pressure—economic, diplomatic, and military—on the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

It is more important than ever to get the truth out about the Nicaraguan revolution and for working people here in the United States to continue to defend the right of the Nicaraguan people to determine their own future. That means demanding that the Carter administra-

tion keep its hands off Nicaragua, and demanding that it provide massive reconstruction aid to Nicaragua with no strings attached.

## 100 million gallons of poison

On July 16 near Gallup, New Mexico, a dam burst, sending 100 million gallons of radioactive water and 1,100 tons of radioactive uranium tailings churning eighty miles down the Rio Puerco. This staggering new accident is apparently the subject of another attempted coverup. The *New York Times*, for instance, did not report it until twelve days later!

The river's radiation count skyrocketed to an incredible 100,000 picocuries per liter of water. Fifteen picocuries per liter is considered safe.

There is, of course, real danger that radioactive water will get into the human food chain. The Rio Puerco provides water for cattle in the area. Gallup residents get their water from wells. The Rio Puerco flows right by the city.

The July 16 accident underlines why the nuclear industry must be abolished. Government and industry assurance of "safety" are totally worthless. This dam was fully licensed by the federal government and was considered "state of the art" in dam building. This was an accident that "couldn't happen," like Three Mile Island.

And like Three Mile Island, the July 16 spill shows Washington will continue to cover for the corporate giants that produce nuclear power and atomic weapons. A hundred million gallons of radioactive water is unleashed and government officials repeat the insulting "reassurance" that there is no "immediate" hazard.

Producing uranium, whether for bombs or power plants, means more tailings, more dams, more spills. The radioactive waste from uranium for an atomic bomb is just as deadly as the waste from uranium for a nuclear power plant.

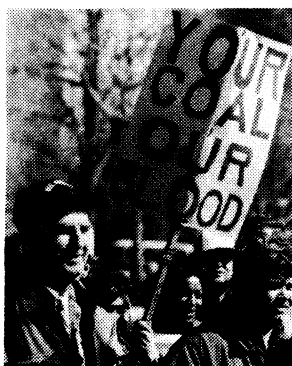
The Church Rock dam burst shows that no precautions with radiation are enough. No one even can guess what the toll will be from this latest nightmarish accident. But one thing is for certain. Every day that goes by adds greater urgency to the need for building a mass movement to stop nuclear power.

*This issue of the 'Militant' will be the last before our summer break. We will resume publication with the issue dated August 31.*

## Militant Highlights This Week

- 10 Letter from Iran Trotskyists
- 23 Marroquin files new appeal
- 25 National Education Assn. meets
- 27 ARCO threatens outspoken worker
- 26 In Review
- 28 In Brief
- 29 The Great Society  
By Any Means Necessary
- 30 Our Revolutionary Heritage  
Letters
- 31 Learning About Socialism  
If You Like This Paper . . .
- 11-22 International Socialist Review

**Va. Steelworkers debate next steps**  
Solidarity needed as Newport News shipyard workers confront stepped up victimization by Tenneco. **Page 8.**



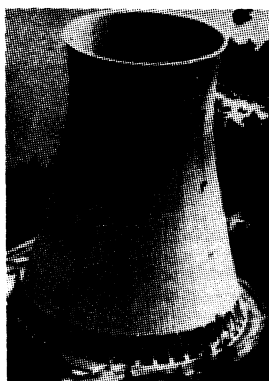
### Alabama mine safety

United Mine Workers local charges coal company is deliberately ignoring 'time bomb.' **Page 9.**



### 'Coal is the answer'

Miner speaks out against nuclear danger. **Page 24.**



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# PRICES & LAYOFFS SOAR AS NEW RECESSION OPENS

## How labor movement can fight back

By Dick Roberts

The U.S. economy is in a recession. Gross National Product (GNP) dropped in the second quarter of 1979 at an estimated 3.3 percent annual rate. This is the first sharp drop in four years.

Living standards, already hard hit by double-digit inflation, are now further threatened by increased unemployment.

The auto industry is slashing jobs. At the end of July General Motors announced it was putting 12,600 workers on indefinite layoff. They joined the 33,500 auto workers already laid off indefinitely by Ford and Chrysler.

Prices in the first half of this year soared at an annual rate of 13.2 percent, the highest for any six-month period since 1951. Yet the Carter administration is still demanding that workers' wage increases be limited to 7 percent.

Admitting that workers' real income is falling, outgoing Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal warned last month that trying to keep up with prices would be "futile."

A couple of weeks later Blumenthal's replacement, G. William Miller, said he expects unemployment to rise to 7.5 percent by the end of 1980. That would mean an unemployment increase of nearly two million—if not more.

This is the dismal future offered by American capitalism and its government spokesmen: lower wages, fewer jobs, energy shortages, higher prices, sacrifices, and austerity. And Carter complains that Americans lack confidence!

### War budget

Despite the prospects of joblessness and impoverishment facing millions, the Carter administration remains determined to cut back government spending on health, education, and other social services. Meanwhile the war budget—a staggering \$136 billion this year alone—is raised at a faster and faster pace. Deficit spending to pay for this military colossus is the prime cause of inflation.

Now the rulers of this country hope that increased unemployment will demoralize working people and undercut the fight for decent wages. The hardship of millions can be turned into profits for the wealthy few, they hope.

But layoffs in the auto industry are running into angry resistance. The energy crisis met with widespread disbelief and outbreaks of protest, from the truckers' strike to the Levittown riot. And union members, showing no inclination to heed Carter's 7 percent limit, are pressing for their unions to defend their living standards.

The new recession will not be a simple repetition of the economic slump of 1974-75. It comes when work-



Chrysler workers demonstrate against plant shutdown in Detroit.

Militant/Elizabeth Ziers

ing people are most distrustful of the government and the corporations. It comes when more and more workers are open to radical solutions and are looking to their unions to fight back.

### Oil profit-grab

The boom-and-bust business cycle is a permanent feature of capitalism, a product of its inherent contradictions and social irrationality. But each economic crisis has its own specific features and immediate causes.

It is easy to pinpoint the main factors that toppled the economic upturn underway since 1975. These are the unbridled profit grab of the U.S. oil trust on one side and the inadequate wages of working people on the other.

Most Americans have correctly placed the blame for the gasoline shortages and price increases on the U.S. oil companies, not "Arab oil sheiks." But any lingering doubts should have been put to rest by the latest profit reports (see table on next page). The twenty-two largest U.S. oil companies racked up a staggering 63 percent profit increase. Their profits will move even higher as Carter proceeds to remove all price controls on domestic oil production and gasoline at the retail level.

The combination of wage restraints and energy ripoff has taken a sizeable bite out of workers' buying power. The government's own figures show that real spendable earnings (after inflation) have dropped 3.5 percent in the

past year. Real wages are lower today than in 1965!

As purchasing power dropped, auto, appliance, and home sales began to slip, auto sales the most sharply.

In the case of General Motors there is a further reason behind the sudden layoffs. GM was stockpiling cars in preparation for a possible United Auto Workers strike.

This is clear from the statistics: In June GM produced 515,390 cars, or 4 percent more than in June 1978. Yet GM's sales dropped to 406,372, a fall of 25 percent from June 1978.

This stockpiling made a drastic cut-back in GM production levels inevitable, strike or no strike.

### Layoffs spread

A downturn in the auto industry, especially if it is coupled with a housing construction downturn, quickly affects the entire economy. The workers laid off in these industries must reduce their own purchases. That leads to cutbacks in consumer goods production elsewhere in the economy.

Meanwhile the reduced demand for capital goods—machinery and raw materials—works its way back from auto and housing into steel, rubber, aluminum, machine tools, and so on. More workers are fired.

At the bottom of the 1974-75 depression more than 8.5 million U.S. workers were officially counted as unemployed. Millions more jobless were left out of the statistics.

The fact that workers are entering this downturn with lowered wage-increase rates is a point the capitalists are congratulating themselves on. It bodes well for corporate profits.

"Overall," the *Wall Street Journal* said July 26, "corporate profits to some extent are being buoyed by smaller-than-expected increases in wage costs. Employers have slowed new hiring and average hourly earnings rose only 0.1% in May, the smallest increase since April 1975."

In similar fashion the August 6 *Business Week* declared, "A little-noticed silver lining in the inflationary cloud darkening the economy has been the success of the President's wage-guideline program. In the face of double-digit inflation sparked by exploding food and energy prices, the Labor Dept.'s index of average hourly earnings has decelerated from an 8% annual rate of gain to a 7.2% clip in the last nine months."

Consumer spending is consequently turning down fast—faster, in fact, than in the beginning of the 1974-75 depression.

### Carter appointments

Considerations about how to deal with the impending recession weighed heavily in the behind-the-scenes maneuvering leading up to the move of Federal Reserve Board Chairman G. William Miller to the Treasury Department and Miller's replacement at the

*Continued on next page*

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# Cleve.: laid-off auto workers turn to union

By Alyson Kennedy

CLEVELAND—Hit by 1,100 layoffs, hundreds of auto workers at Ford Motor Company in Brookpark, Ohio, are turning to their union—many for the first time.

In response to the July layoffs, 700 members of United Auto Workers Local 1250 jammed into a special local meeting July 13. A follow-up meeting July 27 drew 200. Most of the workers there—victims of the layoffs—had never attended a union meeting before.

It was evident in looking around the room at these meetings who was the hardest hit. More than half of those present were female, and a large number were Black and Latino workers.

A majority of the layoffs affected the new eight-cylinder assembly line in Engine Plant #1. This assembly line started production a year ago, making the 302 engine. Ford claims cars using this engine are not selling because of the energy crisis.

On July 3 long-standing rumors of the impending layoffs were confirmed. When we returned from the July 4 holiday, we were greeted by fifteen to twenty engineers and time-and-motion-study "experts" from Ford headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan. Their purpose, they openly told us, was to eliminate jobs on the line.

After lunch that day, our foreman informed me and my co-worker that we would be doing our job plus another job for the rest of the afternoon.

We would have no trouble keeping up, he claimed, because the speed of the line was being reduced. This doubling on jobs was done throughout the

area where the 302 engine is made—speeding up the same workers slated for layoff.

The repair bays for the rest of the day were filled with rejects. Our foreman came up to us throughout the afternoon demanding that we keep up with the work. He said we *had* to keep up because this was the way it was going to be from now on.

One of the line inspectors told me he had rejected more than 700 engines that day—and the line speed had been cut by only three seconds.

It's no wonder 700 of us responded to the local's call for a meeting of unemployed members. The purpose was to inform us of procedures for applying for food stamps and unemployment. But we came to discuss much more than this.

Thurman Payne, the president of our local, told us he would do everything he could to get our jobs back. But, he said, we have to remember that times are tough and the real culprit is OPEC. He told us to write our senators, representatives, and Carter himself to ask for our jobs.

Although Payne got a warm response, not everyone went along with his denunciation of OPEC. One of my co-workers told me she thinks the energy crisis is a "farce." Why should we have to suffer, she asked, just because Ford can't sell big cars? All Ford and the oil companies are interested in is making money. This was her first union meeting and she was listening to every word.

A young worker got up in the time allotted for discussion and put the blame for our layoffs on the U.S. oil companies. He proposed that the UAW send busloads to Washington to protest the energy ripoff. He received a standing ovation in response.

Another indication of the sentiment for a union-organized resistance to the layoffs was the fact that more than fifty workers present signed up for the local's newly formed Unemployed Committee.

Discussion about what action our union should take spilled over into the July 27 meeting. Right before the general meeting the Unemployed Committee met and established a Special Activities subcommittee to discuss what we should do.

At the membership meeting various suggestions were made. Again the idea of a UAW demonstration in Washington was raised. Another proposal was

to demonstrate outside Sohio (Standard Oil of Ohio) headquarters in downtown Cleveland. Drawing other UAW locals into planning such actions against auto layoffs was widely supported.

Our next meeting has been set for August 31. As the weeks go by, with a majority of us ineligible for Supplemental Unemployment Benefits and no prospects for rehiring in sight, readiness for union action is bound to grow.

Many of us will be back at the union hall August 31 to see that some of the ideas we've discussed are put into practice.

## 'GM layoffs unfair to women'

By Dianne Groth

ST. LOUIS—On July 27 General Motors announced plans to discontinue the second-shift passenger car line at its Chevrolet assembly plant here. Citing a slump in big car sales, GM also announced a production cut of 20 percent on the first shift.

Altogether 3,200 out of 9,400 workers will be "indefinitely" laid off in September, when production on 1980 models begins.

GM's axe fell in the wake of massive layoffs throughout the St. Louis auto industry. Employment at area assembly and parts plants has plummeted from 29,000 in January to barely 19,000 today.

When GM made its surprise announcement, most of those laid off—like myself—were already on temporary layoff due to model-change shutdown. So we haven't yet had a chance to exchange reactions.

I was able to talk with Will Lester,

a Black truck-line assembly worker for thirteen years. While not likely to be laid off himself, Lester remembers when GM laid off the second shift in December 1973—for two and half years!

"GM keeps talking about the Supplemental Unemployment Benefits that auto workers get," Lester said. "First of all, there are a lot of workers who won't get a cent in SUB pay because they haven't got enough seniority. And even those who do qualify will get it for maybe ten weeks before all the money runs out and they have to get another job."

Lester added that the layoffs are especially unfair to women, almost all of whom were hired during the 1978-79 upswing in car production. "Women don't have a chance," he said. "I think the government should come up with a program to keep the women employed."

## ...labor & recession

Continued from preceding page

Federal Reserve by Paul Volcker.

Both of these men are outspoken adherents of tight-money policies aimed at holding down inflation in the United States and protecting the dollar abroad.

The Carter administration wanted to make it clear to capitalists in this country and abroad that the White House would stick to its antilabor, wage-control policies, despite the oil-profit grab, the impending recession, and the 1980 elections.

Volcker—who has served in various banking posts—was immediately acclaimed. It "appears to be among the most popular actions President Carter has taken in quite a while, at least among business executives," the July 26 *Wall Street Journal* reported.

### Labor program

While the Carter administration appeals for sacrifice as our patriotic duty, fewer and fewer working people agree. Across the country, workers are beginning to look to their unions to seek ways of defending themselves against the deepening contradictions and crises of American capitalism.

Southern workers are demanding the right to organize unions—from the Newport News shipyard in Virginia to the new General Motors plant in Oklahoma City. And many workers who already have unions are getting involved for the first time, as the response to auto layoffs shows (see story above).

The labor movement *does* have the power to take on the capitalist austerity drive—if the potential power of the union ranks is mobilized, and if labor's potential allies such as farmers, Black and Latino communities, and women are drawn together in a united struggle.

Workers are not responsible for inflation, unemployment, energy crises, or any of the other ills of the capitalist system. Workers should not have to

suffer any decline in living standards. Let the capitalists, who now own and control the wealth of society, pay for the problems of their profit system.

Socialist workers are putting forward the following suggestions for how labor can fight back:

**PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF ENERGY INDUSTRY:** The price gouging and artificial shortages created by the energy trust require immediate action. All the financial books and secret records of the energy industry should be opened to public scrutiny, so workers can learn the truth about the hidden stockpiles, contrived shortages, and monopoly superprofits behind the energy crisis.

The entire energy trust should be taken out of the hands of the profit-

eers. It should be publicly owned and run to meet society's needs.

**FOR DEFENSE AGAINST SOARING PRICES:** All union contracts should include cost-of-living escalator clauses that automatically raise wages to promptly and fully compensate for each rise in retail prices. Escalator clauses should also cover pensions, Social Security, welfare, veteran's compensation, and other social benefits.

Union-consumer price committees composed of unionists, housewives, working farmers, should determine the real rate of price increases. They should be empowered to inspect the books of all retail and wholesale businesses. Such committees can be a step toward the working class exerting control over prices, since the capitalist government has shown its price controls are a fraud.

End government interference with union activity. No wage guidelines or

controls. Repeal anti-union "right to work" laws and all restrictions on labor's right to bargain collectively, strike, picket, or boycott.

**FUNDS FOR JOBS, NOT WAR:** Emergency relief is the most elementary need of those now being thrown out of work by the capitalists. All jobless workers, including youth and others just entering the labor force, should receive unemployment compensation at full union-scale wages for the entire time they are out of work.

The sole purpose of the \$136 million arms budget is to guard the profits of U.S. corporations around the world and to enrich the armaments profiteers. That money should be used instead for an emergency public works program to provide millions of useful jobs, expand social services, and rebuild the country.

There is an urgent need for high-quality low-rent housing, decent schools, hospitals, clinics, child-care centers, libraries, and parks. The entire transportation system needs overhauling—upgrading the railroads, providing more passenger service, repairing the highways.

**SHORTER WORKWEEK:** Government figures show the productivity of labor has increased at least 200 percent since 1938, when the forty-hour week became law, yet there has been no general reduction of hours since that time.

Shortening the workweek to thirty hours, with no reduction in weekly pay, would create millions of jobs. It would mean increased leisure time for working people to develop their talents and interests in all spheres of life.

**DEFEND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:** Discriminatory layoffs, hitting hardest at women, Blacks, and Latinos, threaten the unity of the labor movement and its ability to defend the jobs and wages of all workers. No layoff should be allowed to decrease by even 1 percent the proportion of women, Blacks, or Latinos in the work force.

## Oil Companies: Second Quarter Results

Company	Revenue	Net Income	Net Income Percent Change From '78
Exxon	\$19,614,000,000	\$830,000,000	+ 20.3
Mobil	10,600,000,000	404,000,000	+ 37.9
Texaco	8,532,000,000	365,400,000	+132.1
Standard Oil (Calif.)	7,000,000,000	412,000,000	+ 60.9
Gulf	6,108,000,000	291,000,000	+ 65.3
Standard Oil (Ind.)	4,600,000,000	401,200,000	+ 36.4
ARCO	3,731,485,000	260,400,000	+ 23.5
Shell	3,500,000,000	277,000,000	+ 54.7
Conoco	3,000,000,000	215,800,000	+ 67.6
Sun Company	2,530,000,000	158,500,000	+ 56.6
Phillips Petroleum	2,160,300,000	214,600,000	+ 44.0
Union Oil	1,866,300,000	128,200,000	+ 48.0
Standard Oil (Ohio)	1,820,000,000	201,400,000	+ 70.1
Marathon Oil	1,590,000,000	84,800,000	+ 67.6
Cities Service	1,446,200,000	76,700,000	+ 30.5
Getty Oil	1,150,000,000	139,500,000	+149.1
Pennzoil	493,200,000	58,000,000	+ 89.9

New York Times



# On the scene in Nicaragua

## Workers form committees to defend revolution

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Ten days after the collapse of the Somoza dictatorship Nicaraguans face gigantic tasks of rebuilding their country.

Shattered by eleven months of civil war, the Nicaraguan economy is in ruins. Entire factories have been destroyed. Telephone service is sporadic at best. Much of the housing in the poor neighborhoods of major cities was razed by Somoza's terror bombings. Food is scarce. Most stores and restaurants have yet to reopen.

Following the disintegration of Somoza's National Guard, small groups of individual guardsmen hid among the civilian population. These bands venture out at night to sow confusion and fear, carrying out sniper attacks on unarmed civilians or Sandinista patrols. For this reason, the provisional government has imposed a 7 p.m.-to-dawn curfew on the capital.

On July 25 the Costa Rican press reported that Sandinista military leader Edén Pastora had left Managua with 2,000 troops to deal with remaining pockets of National Guard resistance in the north.

Some anti-Somoza fighters were reportedly disarmed here in Managua when Sandinista units from the southern front entered the city July 20. The reaction against this was immediate and it was apparently halted. The provisional government is now calling on all persons with weapons to either give them up or to join units of the militia that is being formed under the command of the Sandinista general staff.

At present, all major means of communication are under the control of the provisional government. Radio



Sandinista fighters celebrate victory. Now popular committees are being organized on a block-by-block basis.

Sandinista calls continually for efforts to consolidate the victory against Somoza and "build a new Nicaragua."

Radio Sandino and the television channels also carry live broadcasts of all the major events, such as the mass held here yesterday by Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo for those who fell in battle against Somoza.

The only newspaper now appearing here is the daily *Barricada*, "official organ of the Sandinista National Liberation Front," which began publication July 25. *Barricada* is distributed free and is extremely popular. In Rivas, we joined a crowd of enthusiastic readers that mobbed a

young Sandinista who had just arrived with a big bundle. All his papers disappeared within minutes.

The July 27 issue of *Barricada* carries the full text of Fidel Castro's speech at the July 26 celebration in Holguín, Cuba. Castro devoted his entire speech to the Nicaraguan revolution, hailing it as an "extraordinary event" and urging an international campaign to aid in the rebuilding of Nicaragua. He called on the United States to fulfill its pledge to provide 300 tons of food a day.

A Cuban cargo plane with ninety tons of food and a team of sixty medical personnel arrived at the

Augusto César Sandino Airport in Managua on July 25. The medical team, headed by Cuban Deputy Health Minister Pedro Azcué, was greeted by a large crowd shouting "Viva Cuba!"

The July 27 *Barricada* also carried an article headlined "To Organize Ourselves Is to Make the Revolution." Among other tasks this called on "all the working people . . . in every factory and plant . . . to meet immediately in assemblies to form Sandinista Workers Defense Committees (CDTS). . . ."

"All the tasks of defending the revolution and national reconstruction today are passing to our combative working class, in the organization, participation, and mobilization of the CDTS."

There is wide support for the economic measures so far taken by the new government. These included nationalization of all Nicaraguan-owned banks, and expropriation of all property owned by Somoza and those who fled with him.

What is on everyone's mind right now are the immediate and pressing tasks of organizing the distribution of food; restoring public services such as water, sewage, and electricity; and providing housing for those displaced by the war. Popular bodies, such as the Civil Defense Committees, are being set up on a block-by-block basis to deal with these needs.

## Help get out the truth about Nicaragua

The revolution in Nicaragua is inspiring workers and peasants throughout Latin America and sending tremors of fear through Wall Street boardrooms and offices in Washington. Events are moving fast. Already the workers and peasants are organizing their own committees to push forward the revolution.

The *Militant* is determined to do everything in its power to defend the Nicaraguan revolution from the threats of American imperialism, and to draw the lessons of this revolution for U.S. working people. The best way

to do that is to get out the truth about what is happening in Nicaragua.

Together with *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, we have sent Fred Murphy to Managua. His first on-the-scene reports appear in this issue.

The big-business press has more than enough money to send reporters and photographers to Nicaragua. But it is a different matter for the *Militant*, with our tight budget, to take such a step.

We have done it because we are convinced that it is politically necessary. And we are convinced that

*Militant* readers will agree and help to make this act of solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution possible.

Financial contributions are urgently needed. Please make yours today.

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Clip and mail to *Militant Business Office*, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.

## Reporter's diary: a visit to Somoza's mansion

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Along with thousands of Nicaraguan refugees trying to return to their homes, I approached the Costa Rican frontier on July 27. My press pass helped me move rapidly through the three lines of automobiles and trucks, which at times are forced to wait a day or more to cross the border.

Once on the Nicaraguan side I was met by young Sandinista soldiers who, although informal, had the whole immigration process well organized. Everywhere one sees arms, all kinds of weapons—pistols, hunting rifles, automatic rifles, submachine guns, hand grenades.

The Sandinistas' uniforms are as varied as their weapons. U.S. paratrooper-type outfits taken from the proimperialist National Guard and civilian clothes are mingled among the predominant green fatigues. Black and red bandannas along with flags adorn the soldiers, their weapons, buildings,

and almost every house among the poor.

After a two-hour wait to process my papers and an informal discussion with some Costa Ricans who recognized the *Militant*, I managed to catch a ride on top of 7,000 copies of the provisional government's program, being delivered in a small truck to Managua.

Every ten miles Sandinista posts stopped us to check our papers. They were extremely friendly and polite. The effects of the recent civil war are everywhere. Homes and buildings with bullet holes. Burned-out trucks and other vehicles along the road. Even one smashed-up airplane lies alongside the highway.

The road itself still has various barricades, holes, and obstacles left over from the battles of almost two weeks ago.

After a flat tire and the gradual collapse of the engine, I abandoned my ride about seventy kilometers from

Managua. With the help of Sandinista militia, I boarded a truck loaded with bananas for the rest of the ride into Managua.

I had hoped to make a 6 p.m. Sandinista news conference, but the problems of the immigration process, the breakdown of the first truck, and the slowness of the banana truck delayed me beyond the 7 p.m. curfew.

I entered Managua at 7:30 p.m. The streets were totally deserted. Only here and there could you see pockets of Sandinista troops. Our truck went straight for the central market, leaving me in a seemingly dark and desolate area. With suitcase in hand, I started walking along the middle of the road toward the Intercontinental Hotel, whose lights I could see a few kilometers away.

Most hotels here are closed, but since the new government is housed at the Intercontinental, I thought that I could find out there where I could stay.

Suddenly I became aware of two

Sandinista soldiers with their guns pointed at me, hidden in the grass along the road. I approached them to ask for directions.

Then the Sandinista asked me quietly and politely if I would mind standing over by a wall, because there was a report of rightist terrorists on this block who might kill me.

Since the fall of the Somoza dictatorship, there have been reports of rightist snipers attempting assassinations, especially against young Sandinista troops, but also against any worker whether in uniform or not.

One of the facts I was hoping to confirm was whether such snipers really existed. The two young Sandinistas carefully crossed the street and checked out a small building. I waited in disbelief that I was in real danger.

My disbelief was answered by a volley of automatic weapon fire apparently aimed at the two

*Continued on next page*



# Castro urges solidarity, aid to Nicaragua

By Matilde Zimmermann

HAVANA—Every year on the 26th of July, Cubans commemorate the anniversary of a 1953 assault on the Moncada Garrison by a group of anti-Batista fighters led by Fidel Castro. It is a three-day national holiday, involving the biggest celebrations and festivities of the year. On the evening of the 26th itself, Fidel Castro always gives a major speech, each year in a different city.

This year is the twenty-sixth anniversary of Moncada, and a new popular song is being sung all over Cuba entitled "El veintiseis del 26" ("The twenty-sixth 26th").

All the festivities this year have one overriding theme—solidarity with the revolutionary movement in Nicaragua and celebration of the overthrow of the dictator Somoza.

I traveled around Cuba for two weeks leading up to July 26. With me were Cathy Sedwick, the national secretary of the Young Socialist Alliance, and Rich Ariza, circulation director of the socialist magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*.

In Havana, during the days before the fall of Somoza, we were told that Nicaragua was the number-one topic of discussion in every quarter—in the streets, at the university, among people waiting for buses. People told us that Nicaragua was the first item on the agenda at trade union meetings and that workers got a little daily report on the current situation when they showed up at their workplaces in the morning. The radio, television, and newspapers all featured news from Nicaragua.

## Solidarity in the air

The night before Somoza fled to Miami, at ceremonies to open a week-long cultural festival in Havana, a huge crowd at the Sports Palace greeted the Nicaraguan delegation with the same standing ovation they gave Fidel Castro. At concerts and other events, just the mention of Nicaragua was enough to produce tumultuous applause.

"What else could we talk about?" Castro asked as he opened his July 26 speech in the city of Holguin.

"Has any other recent event been more extraordinary or of greater historical importance than the Sandinista

victory in Nicaragua? Is there anything that has affected our emotions more strongly, that we have followed more closely over the last few weeks, that has moved and inspired us more than this heroic popular victory?"

The rally's guests of honor were twenty-six young Sandinista commanders, both men and women, who had led various fronts in the offensive that toppled Somoza.

Castro's entire speech dealt with Nicaragua. He explained some of the similarities and differences between the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutionary struggles. And he pledged that the people of Cuba would do whatever was necessary to help overcome the U.S.-backed dictator's devastation of Nicaragua.

Castro explained that U.S. imperialism is politically weaker and more isolated today than it was twenty years ago at the time of the Cuban revolution. He pointed to the tremendous growth of anti-interventionist sentiment in Latin America today, reflected in the Organization of American States' refusal to go along with the United States' proposal for a military force to intervene in Nicaragua.

"For the first time we can mention the name of the OAS without epithets, because for the first time—the first time in its history—the OAS has been the site of a real act of insubordination on the part of the Latin American states." The OAS vote was rightly hailed as "a great victory for the people of our America."

## U.S. threats

Castro warned that the United States would continue to do everything it could to block the popular upsurge in Nicaragua and back counterrevolutionary elements.

But he also explained that powerful anti-interventionist sentiment presented a real obstacle to direct U.S. military intervention. "It is clear—as Vietnam showed—that U.S. intervention in Nicaragua would have been truly a suicidal act for the United States in this hemisphere. Because we have no doubt that the Sandinistas would have continued their struggle, even if it meant fighting off a Yankee intervention. We have no doubt of this at all.

"We are extremely happy that such an intervention did not occur. Who knows how many lives were thereby saved! But we are confident of what the result of such an intervention would have been. It would have come up against a tremendous resistance on the part of the Sandinista people. And that's not all. We could have seen a gigantic Vietnam develop all over Central America and throughout Latin America—a gigantic Vietnam."

The most dramatic part of Castro's speech was his promise of all-out Cuban help to repair the destruction caused by Somoza's bombs and begin to build up Nicaragua's health and



Sandinista leader Humberto Ortega Saavedra was embraced by Fidel Castro at July 26 celebration in Holguin, Cuba. Nicaraguan revolution is main topic of conversation for people throughout Cuba.

education systems. He pointed out that Cuba was itself a poor and underdeveloped country but that it had great human and social resources to contribute.

"We know our Cuban doctors and our teachers. They go wherever they are needed. If they are needed in the mountains, they go to the mountains; if in the countryside, they go to the countryside. Here in Cuba. In Ethiopia. In Vietnam. In Yemen. In Angola. Wherever.

"And Nicaragua is very close. It's no distance at all. From Cabo de San Antonio [in Cuba], it's almost as close to go to Managua as to go to Punta de Maisi [in Cuba]. It's right around the corner. And I think I reflect the feelings of our party and of the Cuban people when I tell our Nicaraguan brothers that if they are planning a big health program and don't have enough Nicaraguan doctors, then we are ready to send them all the doctors they need to launch such a campaign."

Castro announced that Cuba had already sent an initial brigade of sixty health care workers, including forty doctors, who were mobilized and dispatched in a matter of hours. But if it was 500 doctors Nicaragua needed, Castro promised that Cuba would send 500.

"Only a revolutionary government can carry out a big campaign to provide health care and education. And who knows how many lives can be saved! In particular, how many lives of children can be saved through campaigns against polio, tetanus, tuberculosis. In a few years, many lives can be saved. In fact, even in a much shorter period, in a matter of a few weeks we can begin to save lives. And everybody knows how enthusiastically people respond to a campaign around health care, a campaign around education!

"Even in the midst of tremendous

destruction and a country in ruins, a revolutionary government can launch a big campaign around health and education. We have a lot of experience in this in our own country. We have some advice we can offer, both on the question of health care and on the education campaign. And—I repeat—if Nicaragua doesn't have enough teachers to carry out this kind of massive education campaign, we are ready to send them as many teachers as they need."

Castro said he hoped other countries—including the United States—would follow Cuba's example. "What's more, we are ready to issue a challenge to the United States, for a contest to see who can provide the most aid to Nicaragua. We invite the United States, all the Latin American countries, all the European countries, Third World countries, our fellow socialist countries, everyone, to join in this contest to see who can help Nicaragua the most."

## Internationalism—a way of life

Cuba has a commanding lead in this contest.

And there is every reason to believe Castro when he says the Cuban people are prepared to make sacrifices to help advance the Nicaraguan revolution.

That was certainly the impression I got traveling around Cuba.

In the countryside and in small towns we saw freshly-made signs that said, "No to Yankee intervention in Nicaragua." (We also signs that had obviously been up a little longer, which said things like, "Today as yesterday, we will give even our own blood for Vietnam.")

"Internationalism is just a way of life with us," several Cubans told us. July 26th—with its theme of active solidarity with an ongoing revolutionary upsurge—provided a good illustration of what they were talking about.



Matilde Zimmermann (left) and Cathy Sedwick in Havana. For Cubans 'internationalism is a way of life.'

## ...reporter's notebook

Continued from preceding page

Sandinistas or at me. This made a substantial impression on me, convincing me that the Sandinista's concern for my safety was completely justified.

I was directed around the corner to a metal gate leading to a Sandinista command post. Several more Sandinistas appeared, then the commander of the station. They asked me to sit beside a car while four of them, one in civilian clothes, went to try to flush out the terrorist sniper.

I heard a few more shots but they seemed farther away. Soon the patrol

came back and asked if I would mind sleeping on the floor at their headquarters, as that would be the safest thing. I agreed.

Thinking my accommodations would be quite spartan, I was surprised when we entered a beautiful mansion. I was in the home of the late Luis Somoza, now called Casa Ricardo Morales Avilés. I was placed in the living room. All lights were dim. Sandinista soldiers of all ages but mostly in their teens or early twenties were traveling back and forth as they carried out different assignments protecting the local neighborhood. Gunfire could be

heard sporadically throughout the rest of the night.

After a while I was able to talk with several of the Sandinistas. They couldn't catch the terrorists. This is a continuous problem. One activist from the Proletarian Tendency of the Sandinistas spoke proudly of their belief in the working class as the vanguard in the Nicaraguan revolution. Another, a founding member of the Insurrectionalist Tendency, called Terceristas by the others, spoke of the recent unification of the Sandinistas.

Yes, they favored socialism, they told me, but it would take longer to achieve in Nicaragua than in Cuba. "We will not end up like Allende. Allende had the government but not the power. We have the power. The

guns are in our hands."

Moved from the main house to another building in the ex-Somoza mansion, I was given dinner by the ex-servants, now Sandinistas. While I was eating, a twelve-year-old girl was learning how to handle an American-made revolver.

The Sandinistas were of both sexes. Everywhere one sees armed women along with men—women of all ages. They seem to make up about 25 to 30 percent of the patrols.

Our political discussion continued, until finally, exhausted from the trip and with yet much to learn about the Nicaraguan revolution, I slept my first night appropriately in the home of Somoza among Sandinistas.



# Carter sends Navy on phony boat people rescue

By Harry Ring

President Carter's decision to send Navy ships into the coastal waters near Vietnam in a search for "boat people" is deliberately provocative.

Initially the great propaganda hue and cry of the capitalists was that the Vietnamese government was driving masses of people out of the country, literally forcing them into the ocean in unseaworthy boats.

The Vietnamese government responded that this was not true. The departures, it insisted, were voluntary.

The Vietnamese government noted that those leaving included large numbers of people who had prospered under U.S. puppet regimes in South Vietnam, as well as others who were unable or unwilling to adjust to the difficult life that the U.S. war of devastation and the economic boycott subsequently organized by the U.S. rulers, imposed on the country.

Hanoi also charged that the U.S. government, together with the Beijing Stalinists, were deliberately fostering the exodus.

The latest U.S. moves add to the mounting evidence for the Vietnamese government's claims.

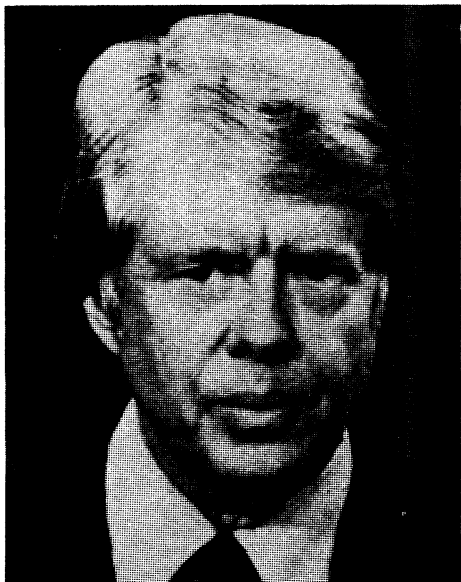
At the July 20-21 international conference on refugees in Geneva, no proof was presented for the charge that Vietnam is carrying out massive expulsions.

On the contrary, the U.S. and its allies demanded that Vietnam impose tight new restrictions on emigration. Hanoi's representatives indicated that for a time the government would seek to curb "illegal" emigration.

What did the United States do next? Carter announced the mission of the U.S. Seventh Fleet boats and planes. In a five-day period, the Navy task force picked up sixty-five refugees, a far cry from the thousands the U.S. press claims are pouring into the South China Sea each day.

The U.S. fleet wasn't simply looking for "boat people." It was trying to create them and use them for propaganda purposes against Vietnam. That was the meaning of Carter's announcement.

One of those picked up at sea, a former petty officer in the U.S.-controlled South Vietnamese army, told the July 29 *New York Times* that he and his family had stolen a boat and taken off after they heard a BBC



CARTER: Makes new propaganda move.

Vietnamese-language broadcast announcing Carter's "mercy" patrol.

Another, a former South Vietnamese air force pilot, told the *Times* he and some friends had been planning to leave for months. When they heard U.S. and British broadcasts beaming in the Carter decision, the *Times* reported, "it encouraged them to steal a boat and leave."

Responding to this provocative activity of the Seventh Fleet off its shores, the Vietnamese government charged July 28 that it represented an attempt to prolong the outflow of emigrants and thereby "create an explosive situation in Southeast Asia."

"The same people defeated in Indochina are luring Indochinese away," a government broadcast said.

Another purpose of the military "rescue" operation is to obscure the fact that Washington had joined in demanding at Geneva that Hanoi halt the emigration. The "rescue" operation is intended to demonstrate continuing concern for those who want to leave.

The fakery of that pose is shown by one simple fact. Vietnam has offered to help organize an airlift of 10,000 emigrants a month to any country that is willing to accept them.

That surely would be a lot simpler, and safer, then sending carriers to pick up a few dozen at sea.

But thus far the Vietnamese offer has been met with stony silence—plus copious crocodile tears about the plight of the emigrants.

## Abbie Hoffman hits anti-Vietnam campaign

The paid newspaper ads sponsored by Joan Baez and others supporting Washington's demagogic campaign against the Vietnamese revolution have evoked strong objection from various figures who opposed U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

One such objection was voiced by Abbie Hoffman in the letters columns of the July 20 issue of 'SevenDays' magazine. Hoffman was a prominent figure in the antiwar movement. The following is the text of his letter.

As someone who fought against U.S. involvement in Vietnam since 1963, undergoing more than 15 arrests on the issue, I would like to reaffirm my solidarity with the forces now running that country.

I do this fully conscious and accepting the fact that there might be some excesses in the denial of individual freedom. These excesses have been exaggerated by Joan Baez and her statements in turn have been blown out of proportion by the mass media.

She states that in the past she was misused by the left. That's difficult for me to understand since the U.S. left has always seemed a commitment of the heart rather than allegiance to any organized hierarchy capable of misusing people. One wonders how she plans not to be "used" by the right.

Essentially there are two reasons that concern me in this heated debate. Two years ago I read in several respectable papers about the following incident:

A small platoon of Cuban soldiers fighting in Angola entered a village and raped all the young girls. Later, higher-ups in the Cuban military found out about the incident, court-martialed the soldiers, and executed them.

I had a lot of strong, mixed feelings about the incident and got into several heated exchanges with fellow socialists and anarchists. This incident with all its ramifications lodged in my mind for some time.

Last February I heard a speech by

John Stockwell, who had recently resigned as chief of the Angolan task force for the CIA. He described in detail how this incident was fabricated in an African CIA office, fed to local newspapers, picked up by Agence-France Presse in Europe, passed on to the Associated Press, and from there into stateside dailies.

He explained how he dreamed up the execution idea to add further authenticity to the lie.

I was so furious at myself because somehow the lie filtered through to a radical such as myself and came to be accepted as truth. I made a resolution to tread cautiously when hearing any similar stories about socialist countries or armies.

The other main reason for opposing Baez's position has to do with the definition of human rights. The United States has (per capita) one of the highest prison and mental-hospital populations in the world.

I don't find it out-of-line to make a strong case that many of these inmates are political prisoners because they are victims of neglect because of our political system and its priorities.

How can one measure human-rights violations in a place like Bangladesh or India or our own inner cities? Doesn't anyone find it curious that of the 9,500 or so daily newspapers, television and radio stations, 99.999 percent (the only exceptions being the *Daily Worker* and some Pacifica FM stations) support the Mid-East Treaty between Israel and Egypt?

You would think the omission of a principal belligerent from the negotiations would move one or two voices to question; but no. Agreement is unanimous. So what's so free about our press?

I've just touched on a few aspects of this important debate, and I want to say honest well-meaning people can disagree. By reaffirming solidarity with Vietnam one is not necessarily condoning abuses of power. One is simply stating loud and clear their refusal to play with only half a deck of cards.

Abbie Hoffman

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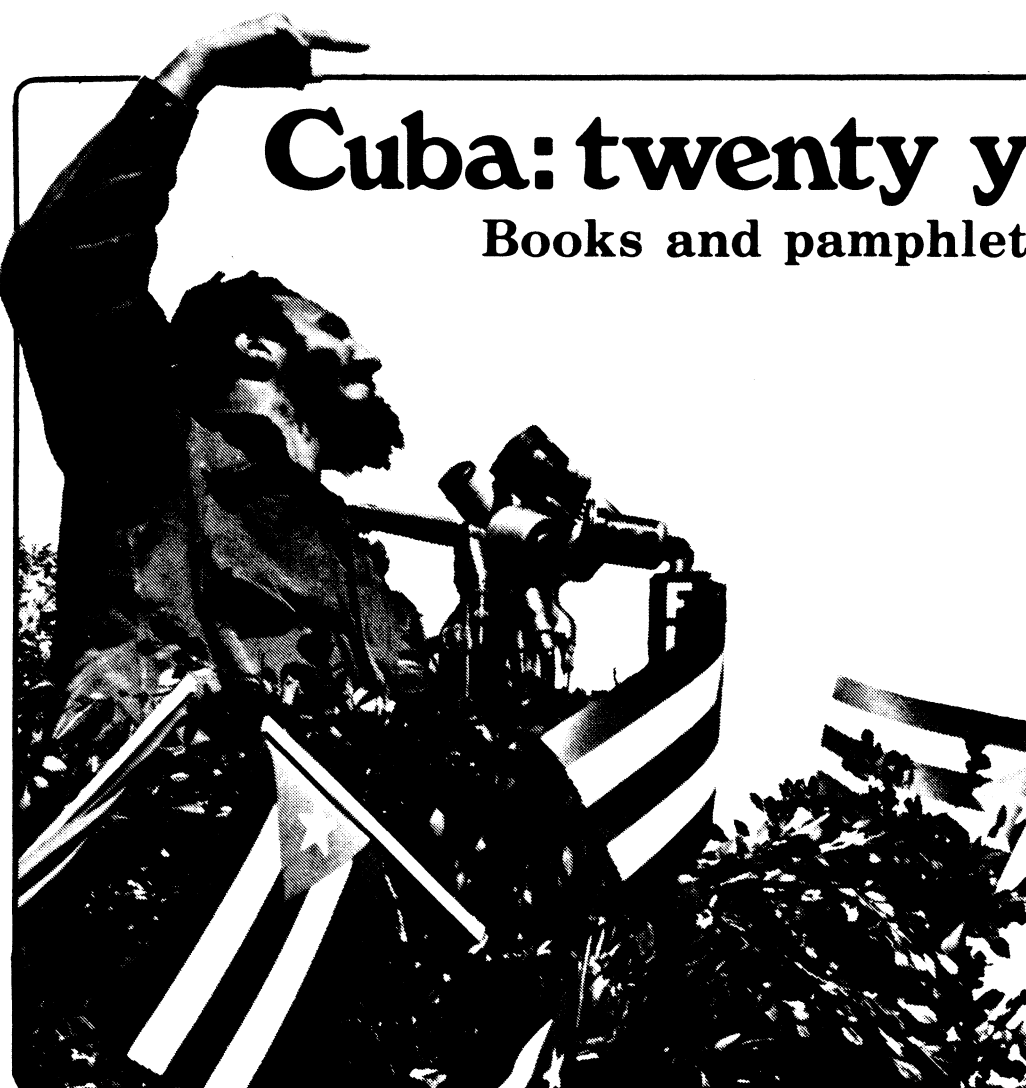
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# Va. Steelworkers debate next steps in union recognition battle

By Jon Hillson

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.—Twenty-five hundred members of Steelworkers Local 8888 met at Hampton Coliseum July 29 to decide what course of action to take against Tenneco's latest union-busting moves.

Some were eager to immediately relaunch their strike for union rights. Others felt the time was not yet ripe for a strike. But all were looking for a serious and democratic discussion of how to prepare for battle against the company.

They were presented with a set of proposals from USWA President Lloyd McBride, conveyed by his personal assistant Jim Smith. (For text of resolution, see box.)

By the time a vote was taken, after two and a half hours of heated debate, half of those initially present had left. The McBride motions were then adopted by an overwhelming vote.

The local pro-Tenneco news media are having a field day playing up the "split" in Local 8888. This sensationalism is not accurate. The shipyard workers at that meeting, however they voted, share the same concerns: How to strengthen Local 8888. How to defend its victimized members. How to win union recognition and a decent contract.

To accomplish these common goals they need the active solidarity of unionists across the country—more than ever before in their courageous battle for union rights.

## Anti-union campaign

In the weeks preceding the July 29 meeting, Tenneco, the oil-rich corporation that owns the Newport News shipyard, had escalated its anti-union campaign.

On July 2 the company announced its intention to appeal the latest National Labor Relations Board decision ordering the shipyard to recognize and bargain with Local 8888.

A majority of the shipyard's 15,500 production and maintenance workers voted for the Steelworkers on January 31, 1978. For a full year Tenneco successfully used the courts and NLRB to stall recognition. On the first anniversary of their election victory the Steelworkers struck for union rights. The walkout was suspended in April.

Now Tenneco is turning to the Court of Appeals again. A new hearing is scheduled for September; a decision could be months in coming.

In the meantime, Tenneco is doing all it can to break the back of the union inside the yard. It tries to segregate and isolate union activists. Many have been harassed and fired.

In a July 12 public statement



Newport News shipyard workers from naval carrier 'Carl Vinson' march on company offices July 27.

Militant/Jon Hillson

McBride condemned Tenneco's moves and stressed Local 8888's readiness to strike. The July 29 meeting was called at his request as a special meeting to hear his recommendations.

The next seventeen days were marked by union rallies of a few hundred workers inside the yard and outside the gates.

## Heavy-handed conduct

Smith, McBride's assistant, chaired the July 29 meeting. After reading and explaining McBride's resolution, he announced that the meeting would be divided between speakers for and against. This immediately put the accent on division—yes or no on a set proposal—and tended to cut off a free flow of discussion and suggestions on how to confront the challenges facing the union.

Smith's heavy-handed conduct of the meeting, many workers felt, brought a new atmosphere into the local. They were used to speaking their minds. Earlier meetings had seen a free give and take between leadership and membership. But Smith's tone made it sound like any criticism or suggestions from the floor were somehow improper.

Smith turned off the microphone on one of the first workers who spoke, on the grounds that he was speaking from the wrong mike. The worker left the meeting in anger.

"People are getting fired from all

over the yard," a Black worker said, opposing the proposals.

James Mahaney, a shop steward, noted that the Tenneco grievance procedure was worthless and stacked against the workers. He announced that 136 welders, whose Department X-18 was a stronghold of the last strike, had been fired last week. Another 106 were on discipline.

"I've been patient for two years," Mahaney said. "Tenneco only understands force against force." This remark brought applause.

"How long do you think the union can strike?" Jim Pagels, who coordinated job assistance during the last strike, asked in response. "Look how many people are here," he said, pointing to the small percentage of the work force attending the meeting. "We need to get together in the yard."

"It takes a long time to get into an offensive position," negotiating committee member Waymon Free said, speaking for the McBride proposals. It would be "awful to strike when we waited so long as we have [for a court decision]. We probably only have to wait a couple more months," he said.

"We should be together when we go on strike. We don't have enough to win now," Free said. "We should be ready to go out when the court decides."

## 'We are the union'

When Local 8888 President Wayne Crosby announced the negotiating committee's unanimous support to McBride's proposals, he urged the union members to "get behind your elected officials and let them make decisions for you."

This remark brought a loud chorus of boos. The anger was directed not only against Crosby—whose announcement sparked an outflow of Steelworkers from the meeting—but also against the way the proposals

were being treated as an accomplished fact.

"We are the union," said several workers at the meeting.

Immediately after Crosby spoke, another worker noted that Tenneco's workload was such that a strike could have a crippling effect now. "Now's the time to walk out," he said to cheers of support.

"We are still unorganized," Ed Coppedge, one of the union's four original organizers, told the gathering. He said a union poll had found an absence of majority support for an immediate strike.

"We came back from the strike to regroup and we're still on 'suspended strike,'" he said. "We have to go back to get people to go out." He also got a warm response.

Another worker, Gary Justice, said he had taken a poll of the second shift and found 95 percent of the workers ready to go out.

When one Steelworker made a motion to table discussion on the McBride proposals in order to allow for a strike vote, Smith ruled him out of order.

## 'Still with the union'

Outside the meeting, the *Militant* talked with many of the departing workers. They were disappointed, frustrated, and angry. But they remain committed to Local 8888.

"I'm still with the union," one Black worker told me. "But I didn't like that stuff up on the stage. We're the union. This proposal was just handed down. We got to get our act together."

To many, McBride's proposals did not seem adequate for defense of the union against Tenneco's stepped-up attacks.

"We voted for the proposal because that's all there was," a young strike militant told me.

"I don't think McBride's proposals

## Designers win court victory

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.—Striking members of Steelworkers Local 8417, representing shipyard designers, received a shot in the arm on July 26.

The U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board that Tenneco caused the designers to strike April 1, 1977 by refusing to bargain in good faith. Thus Local 8417's action is legally a strike against "unfair labor practices."

The ruling prohibits Tenneco from hiring scabs as permanent replacements for the strikers.

Any strikers not rehired by Tenneco, when the designers settle their contract dispute, are eligible for back pay for every day they do not work, starting five days after failing to get their jobs back.

Tenneco provoked the strike by attempting to reclassify union-eligible workers out of the designer

job category.

The company's "contract offer" to Local 8417 would amount to a yearly 1.67 percent wage increase from the time of the designers' last pay hike in 1976 to the end of the proposed contract in 1981. It also seeks to make company cops out of officers by making them cleanse the ranks of persons found guilty by Tenneco of "strike misconduct."

Last April, the designers voted 429 to 0 to continue their strike against Tenneco. "We've got a continuing strike," Local 8417 president Lee Johnson stated. "As a matter of fact, the court ruling reinforces the strike," he said. He called on the shipyard to begin bargaining.

After twenty-eight months, determined designers continue to picket the shipyard. They show no sign of letting up.

—J.H.

## Solidarity needed

The Newport News Steelworkers need your help. An outpouring of solidarity from unions across the country can help combat Tenneco's harassment and firing of union members.

Send protest messages to Edward Campbell, President, Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry

Dock Company, 4101 Washington Avenue, Newport News, Virginia 23607.

Telegrams and resolutions of support can be sent to Steelworkers Local 8888 Suspended Strike Headquarters, Bank of Newport News Building, 3301 Washington Avenue, Newport News, Virginia 23607.



give us anything new or anything to hold on to," a shop steward said. He had felt an immediate strike would be most effective. But the meeting, he said, was probably not big enough to launch an effective strike.

The discussion "just dragged on and wore people out," he said. "It was a dead end."

"I'm not for the recommendations," one woman said at the meeting. "But I'm not for a strike now either. What do we do?"

Her question is on the minds of hundreds of Steelworkers here. And the answers are here as well—in discussions inside the shipyard, in union meetings, in informal gatherings of Steelworker activists. The ranks have raised ideas and proposals that would prepare Local 8888 for a successful fight. These have included:

- Launching an effective union defense of victimized workers, who now number in the hundreds. Workers are looking for answers to the gutting of the key X-18 welding department. Many feel that filing a grievance is not only ineffective, but provides Tenneco with an easier target for further blood-letting. They feel that showing that the union can defend its members is key to winning new workers inside the yard.

- Resumption of the Local 8888 newspaper, the *Voyager*. At a June 16 local meeting, members unanimously voted to ask for international funding for the paper, since the local has no treasury of its own. They see a paper as essential to breaking down isolation and improving communication within the union.

- Organizing a massive solidarity campaign within the USWA and among other unions. This would include publicly exposing the conditions facing shipyard workers and rallying

broad support for the justice of their cause. Many workers know that the solidarity expressed during their last strike needs to be dramatically stepped up to take on Tenneco a second time.

- Starting a wide-ranging discussion of the content of the demand Steelworkers have been shouting at Tenneco's gates for weeks: "What do we want? *Contract!*" Such deliberations, begun now, "could show workers in the yard what we're really fighting for," one Steelworker told the *Militant*.

- Discussing "how to stop scabs," a question raised again and again at the July 29 meeting. How to stop production in the face of the anti-union, antipicket "right to work" laws—laws the Steelworkers will confront again in any future strike.

### Union democracy

These ideas could help shape the kind of battle plan Steelworkers are looking for.

Only by organizing the most free and full discussion within the union can the best course of action be chosen and put into practice. Such an exchange of ideas will boost the unity and confidence of the men and women of Local 8888.

By avoiding a strike that many members considered ill-timed, Local 8888 now has some time to prepare for the next stage of the fight. The challenge before the union is not a small one.

It requires the energy, ideas, and commitment of every Local 8888 member, whatever their position at the July 29 meeting.

And it requires renewed solidarity from unionists and all those across the country who recognize what is at stake for labor in this historic organizing battle.

## McBride proposals

The following is the text of the proposal from Steelworkers international President Lloyd McBride presented at the July 29 meeting in Newport News.

Our thirteen-week strike persuaded Tenneco to agree to a prompt schedule of court proceedings and NLRB hearings unheard of in recent labor law cases. There could have been a two-year delay—we compressed that to a few months.

The time schedule established by the Fourth Circuit Court on Tenneco's appeal of the second NLRB order to bargain indicates that the Court understands the urgency of a decision in this matter.

Our purpose is not simply to punish Tenneco, or to injure our communities. Rather, we seek to bargain collectively for an honorable labor agreement. Basically, we seek the rights of free working men and women.

When we suspended our strike, we did not give up any of our rights under the laws of our nation. Even though we do not yet have a contract, we will insist on fully exercising our legal rights. To accomplish this, we hereby adopt the following program:

### PROGAM LOCAL 8888

1. The Officers are authorized to conduct a strike vote, on an emergency basis at any time circumstances justify such action. The calling of a strike after such vote would conform to the Union's rules in such matters.

2. To strengthen our organization the Officers, Negotiating Committee, and Staff are mandated to conduct:

- A. Section Meetings for all workers in specific work locations as often as twice a month.

- B. Area Meetings for workers who live in outlying areas.

- C. Lunch-time Meetings in non-

work locations of the shipyard.

3. To more fully inform Local Union members the Officers and Staff are authorized:

- A. To conduct a weekly meeting of shop stewards.

- B. To prepare for distribution of a weekly leaflet.

4. Following the election of new Officers a monthly meeting of full Local Union membership shall be held.

5. As trade unionists we will insist on our right to meet with management on our legitimate grievances, and we will represent and assist one another when called upon to do so.

6. We will not endanger our own lives or those of our fellow workers.

We will not perform work in an unsafe manner unless directly ordered to do so. We will protest any such order as a grievance, and we will report any such order to OSHA.

7. As skilled shipbuilders we will exercise every right we legally have to return to the tradition of Newport News—to build good ships which are safe for the Navy and commercial sailors who sail them. We will not do bad work unless directly ordered to do so, and we will report any such orders in writing to the Navy or commercial ship owners.

8. We will circulate a petition for the signature of every Newport News worker, calling on Congress to investigate the unfair labor practices of Tenneco, and the arrogant abuse by this Company of the labor laws of the United States.

9. We will join with our fellow Steelworkers in Local 8417 in a comprehensive effort to explain our problems in attempting to deal with Tenneco to every minister, merchant, civic leader, and public officeholder in our communities. It is time for those who depend on our support to recognize the moral issue which is involved in our fight.

# Ala. miners demand safe working conditions

By Ellen Bobroff and Sara Jean Johnston

BROOKWOOD, Ala.—"I never saw such a heap of violations in one mine in my life and the state won't do anything," said Dave Lawson, an international safety inspector for United Mine Workers District 20, covering the state of Alabama.

At a July 22 meeting here of nearly 100 members of UMW Local 2245, Lawson explained why the union has filed charges against three officials of the Jim Walter Mines Resources.

The local's safety committee called Lawson to the mine on the night of July 5. They had discovered that 100 shots of dynamite—wired to shoot off—had been left in the Number Four mine over the July 4 holiday in violation of safety procedures.

When Lawson and other safety investigators arrived at the mine they were kept above ground while the general foreman sent a crew down to fire off the shots. As they approached the trouble spot inside the mine, they saw the shots fire and heard a blast. No proper warning had been given.

The July 22 meeting capped a tumultuous week in which the UMW filed charges against Jim Walter and released a public statement to the press. The union also sent a letter to Paul Messina, acting chief of the Division of Safety and Inspection for the state of Alabama, "requesting that the certificates of those foremen (responsible for the blast) be immediately revoked."

Returning July 4 from a two-week vacation closing of the mines, UMW members were eager to get the "real story" hinted at in the major daily papers.

Safety was the talk of the mine.

The union safety committee put the heat on federal and state inspectors to conduct a complete check of the Number Four Jim Walter mine.

Thursday and Friday, July 19 and 20, two entire sections had power cut by federal inspectors for multiple viola-

tions of safety laws. These included working in unsafe methane gas levels that could have caused an explosion throughout the mine.

The company's response: send sections home and threaten to cut their pay during those hours. Company inspired rumors circulated about a six month's shut-down if this "safety nit-picking" continued.

Answering questions from the membership, Lawson summed it up: "Brothers and sisters, we've got a time bomb in this mine waiting to explode. And the only people who can stop it are you miners. We've got a safety clause in that contract book over there and we've got to force Jim Walter to honor that."

Lawson's "time bomb" description tells it straight. The J.W. Number Four mine, at twenty-two hundred feet under, is known as the deepest and gasiest mine in North America.

The majority of the UMW members present at the meeting were brand new to mining and the union. Seventeen were women. At the Jim Walter Mines eighty percent are inexperienced miners including ten percent newly hired women.

The women were the most vocal. They had just filed a sex discrimination grievance against the company's refusal to give women the same right as men have to work during the two-week vacation period.

"They think they can fool us because we're new and we don't know what's going on," said a young white woman from the back of the room.

"Y'all on the safety committee have got to help us out. I'm willing to fight but I need to know how."

"I filed one," said a young Black woman, "and I got labelled 'trouble-making nigger' by my boss."

After a long discussion on how to get the membership to stick together, Lawson flashed a smile and said, "Get it straight. When the UMW filed charges against those foremen we declared war on Jim Walter and you better believe they're going to try to break you any way they can."

"But I never met a UMW member that got scared of a little fight."

Ellen Bobroff and Sara Jean Johnston are members of United Mine Workers Local 2245.

## 'Bolgerville' protests firings



Militant/Nancy Cole

JERSEY CITY—"Welcome to Bolgerville. Pop.: 200 Fired Postal Workers."

The above sign introduces a tent encampment outside the New York Bulk and Foreign Mail Center here. Set up July 21, the fired postal workers have pledged to stay put until "we get our jobs back or the army kicks us out." Bolgerville is inhabited around the clock.

The encampment is named after Postmaster General William Bolger, who fired a total of 200 workers at four centers across the country after an unauthorized walkout one year ago. The strike was in protest of the initial national contract proposal. One hundred and thirty-five of the

fired workers are from this facility.

Cars going in and out of the bulk mail center here, which employs 4,000, beep at the protesters, responding to the sign asking them to honk to show support. Some \$500 has been collected from workers here and at the Meadows mail distributing center. In addition, supporters have donated food and other supplies.

"Because N.Y. Metro will support all necessary actions to win the jobs back for these fired workers, we officially announce our support of the opening up of BOLGERVILLE," declared a statement from the 25,000-member New York Metro Area Postal Union.

## Letter from Iranian Trotskyists

# 'Frame-ups can't silence us or stop our fight'

The following letter, written in early July and signed by fourteen members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) imprisoned in Ahwaz, was published in the July 19 issue of the party's newspaper, 'Kargar.' The translation is by 'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor.'

More than a month ago, nine members of the HKS were arrested because of our socialist views. Eleven days ago, seven other HKS members were arrested for defending us.

Mr. Satarian, the Islamic revolutionary prosecutor who issued the warrant for our arrest, has not brought any formal charges against us. In the many discussions we have had with him and Mr. Khalkhali [the judge of the Islamic Revolutionary Tribunal], the following accusations have been raised against us:

"Plotting against the national interest."

"Inciting the workers."

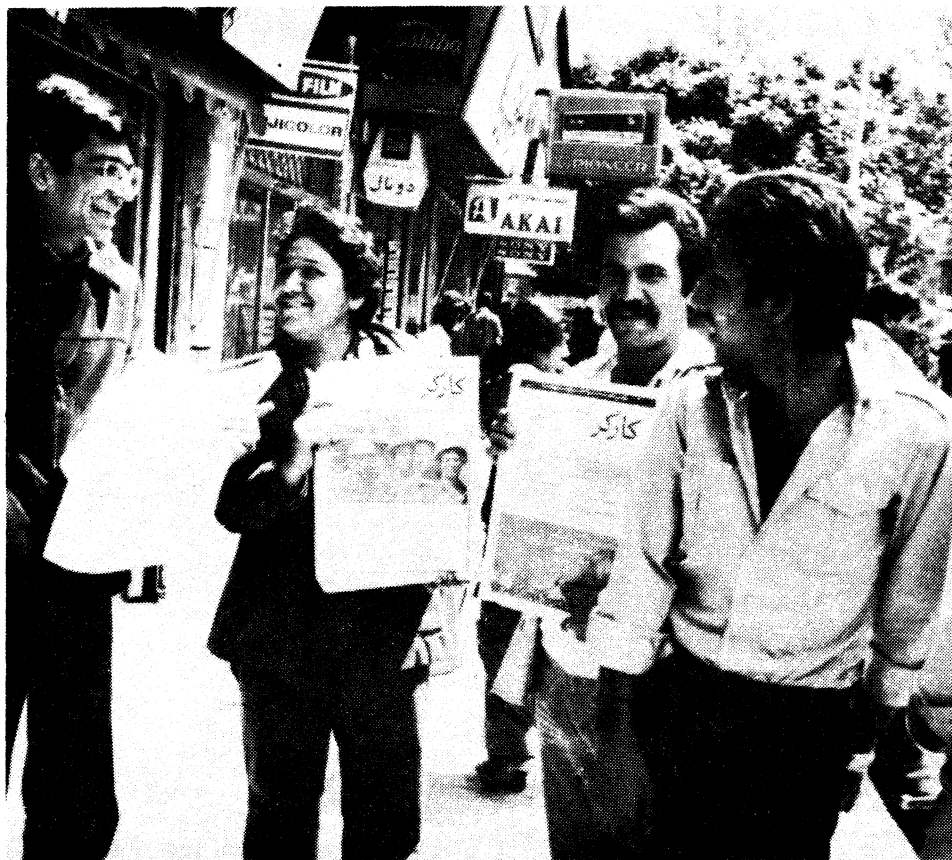
"Organizing a fifth column."

"Inciting the Arabs."

They also accused us of being defenders and followers of Sheik Ezzedin Hosseini [the religious and national leader of the Kurds] and Ayatollah Al Shobeir Khaghani [the national and religious leader of the Arabs], who they said are agents of the shah and the CIA.

Do you remember the speeches that were given over TV by Sareti, the spokesman of the diabolic SAVAK, and the shah's press conferences and the sort of things they called those fighting against the regime? Mr. Satarian's accusations are reminiscent of the dirtiest slanders used in the propaganda operations of the toppled Pahlavi despotism, slanders that were used in the attempt to discredit revolutionary fighters.

Mr. Satarian, the Islamic revolutionary prosecutor in Ahwaz, is the agent of a government that represents the capitalists, who are a small minority in the country. His real job is to fabricate charges against those who want to fight in opposition to the interests of this minority. By arresting revolution-



Iranian militants selling 'Kargar,' the HKS newspaper. Regime has responded to popularity of socialist ideas by framing up activists in Ahwaz.

ary socialists and trying to frame us up he wants to prove to the Iranian capitalists that he is not sparing any effort to defend their interests.

It is absolutely clear what our arrest and the charges raised against us mean. In order to help the capitalist employers hold the workers in slavery, any struggle or organization by the workers must be crushed. But it is only a few months since the victorious insurrection of the Iranian people. So, these servants of the capitalists have to do their job under the cover of claiming to be "defending the revolution" and "thwarting plots."

What is the meaning of their charge that we were "inciting the Arabs"? In order to rule Iran, the capitalist minority needs a strong central government. It needs a government that can oppress the people and deny the Kurds,

Arabs, and Baluchis their basic human rights.

With the overthrow of the shah, the Arab people got a chance to raise their demands. They rose to their feet to claim the rights they were deprived of for fifty years. So, now these servants of the capitalists have to turn their guns on the Arab people and their supporters and throw them in jail. They have to do this to eliminate the danger to capitalist rule. To justify this, they have to claim that the Arab militants are separatists and try to frame-up on charges of "incitement" those who defend the Arab people.

After the victory of the February revolution and the development of deep solidarity between the army and the people, between the soldiers and the workers and toilers, the Iranian army nowadays is not the best instrument for the property owners and the rich. In order to be a reliable instrument for crushing the struggles of the people it has to be isolated from the rest of society. The old oppressive atmosphere has to be restored in the barracks. The fight for democracy in the army is frustrating this plan of the capitalists and the officers, and so it has to be stopped.

In addition to punishing the soldiers for "infractions of discipline," the authorities have to deny the rights of the parties that are fighting for democracy

in the army. The activists of these parties have to be jailed and charged with "inciting the soldiers."

If the prosecutor and the government think that they can intimidate us by threatening us and jailing us, if they think that repression can keep us from telling the truth, they should be told that they are not going to be successful.

It is the revolutionary duty of the Socialist Workers Party to fight for the rights of the workers and the other oppressed and exploited sections of the masses, and we are not going to stop this for one minute. Just as the terror of the Pahlavi dictatorship could not silence us, neither will the prosecutor's charges against us, his jailing us and trying to frame us up, stop us from continuing our fight.

By arresting the three militant oil workers; many Arab fighters; the Mujahadeen leader Sa'adati; the Fedayeen leader Homad Sheibani; and by arresting us, sixteen members and leaders of the HKS, Bazargan's government has launched a sweeping attack on the rights of political parties. At a time when they are talking about electing an assembly of "experts" to rule on the constitution, the fact that socialists and other fighters are being imprisoned shows most clearly how empty the government's promises are.

We call on the government and the prosecutor to consider our demands immediately. We want our lawyers to be present when we are questioned. If there are definite charges, they should be reported in the mass media, and we should be given a public trial. The seven of us who are being held incommunicado should be allowed to have visitors.

Up until now they have kept us apart in prison. We demand that they put us all together. We demand that Fatima Fallahi, who is seriously ill, be hospitalized immediately. We have been jailed because of our political views. We demand that we be released immediately and unconditionally. We have gone on hunger strike twice to press our demands, once for two days and the second time for six. Many public figures and organizations have called for our release. But so far we have gotten no positive response from the authorities to our demands.

We appeal to all individuals and organizations interested in democratic rights to do their utmost to help secure our release as well as that of the other political prisoners.

We would add that we are not allowed to read such publications as *Ayendegan* and *Tehran Mossavar* [independent liberal publications]. We demand that this censorship be ended.

## Int'l campaign defends imprisoned Iranian militants

An international campaign demanding the release of members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party, oil workers leaders, and other anti-imperialist militants arrested by authorities in Ahwaz, is winning broad support.

Protests have been issued by the Spanish Communist Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers Party, the two biggest workers parties in that country. Jim Anderson, president of the New Zealand Labor Party, and Lionel Jospin, national secretary of the French Socialist Party, have also issued protests, as have prominent members of the anti-shah Iranian Writers Association.

Three thousand people turned out in Paris June 25 at a rally organized jointly by the three French Trotskyist groups, the Revolutionary Communist League, Workers Struggle, and the Internationalist Communist Organization.

In the United States, Anthony Mazzocchi, vice-president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union has protested the arrest of members of the Iranian oil workers council.

A July 18 news release from his office said, "Mazzocchi noted that last January he had denounced the attacks by the shah's military re-

gime on Iranian oil workers. He added that he had supported the oil workers' efforts to defend themselves against the shah's repression, and had also expressed his support for the struggles of the Iranian workers for a just government."

Mazzocchi told Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, "I am deeply disturbed to learn that leaders of oil workers in Ahwaz were arrested by your government last month and are being held in Karoun prison without charges. Their imprisonment is a threat to the right of all oil workers—and all workers in Iran—to organize."

Others who have demanded the release of the imprisoned activists in Ahwaz include Jim Grant of the Charlotte Three, South African exile Dennis Brutus, and Robert and Michael Meeropol, sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

Continuing protests are needed. Telegrams should be sent to the Iranian Embassy, 3004 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20008; Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Office of the Prime Minister, Tehran, Iran; and to the Tehran daily *Ayandegan*, Jomhuri Islami Avenue, Farzardin Square, Tehran, Iran. Copies should also be sent to the *Militant*.

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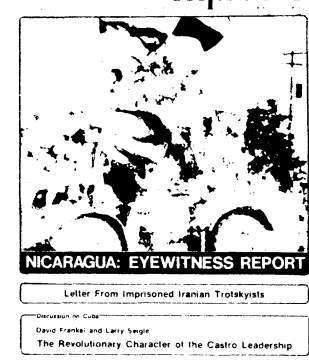
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# international **socialist** review



Cuban workers in a sugar mill

Militant/Harry Ring

# CUBA:

- **Cuban-Americans and the Cuban Revolution**
- **A Firsthand Look at Cuba Today**

# THE MONTH IN REVIEW

## 'Crisis of Marxism' or Crisis of Stalinist 'Theory'?

This month's column was contributed by Leslie Evans. Evans is the author of the book *'China After Mao'* published by Pathfinder Press.

In the June issue of *Monthly Review*, Paul Sweezy, the journal's founding editor, who still commands some reputation as a Marxist economist, proclaims "A Crisis in Marxian Theory."

The crisis that Sweezy perceives can be summed up in the fact that the principal workers states, the Soviet Union and China, are not moving to eliminate inequality, have clung doggedly to a repressive state apparatus, and, in Sweezy's view, "They go to war not only in self-defense but to impose their will on other countries—even ones that are also assumed to be socialist." Sweezy no doubt had Peking's invasion of Vietnam in mind as an example.

From this summary, Sweezy draws a pessimistic conclusion about the prospects for establishing a genuine socialist society:

"We do not need to rule out the possibility of a post-revolutionary society's being socialist in the Marxian sense. That would be foolish and self-defeating. But we do need to recognize that a proletarian revolution can give rise to a non-socialist society. . . . Having recognized this, we can proceed along one of two lines: (1) the hypothesis that the only alternative to socialism is capitalism, and (2) the hypothesis that proletarian revolutions can give rise to a new form of society, neither capitalist nor socialist. I believe that the second line is the fruitful one." (Emphasis in original.)

In the past, Sweezy used the term "socialist" to describe all workers states. His new terminology does not mark a recognition that these are societies in transition from capitalism to socialism. He has concluded that a new form of class society has emerged, qualitatively different both from capitalist and workers states. He appears ready to apply this label to all workers states, whether Stalinist-governed as in the Soviet Union, or led by revolutionists as in Cuba.

Sweezy maintains that revolutions against capitalism carry within them a monster that gestates in the state apparatus of a successful revolution, emerging as a new repressive ruling class.

Clearly, a "new ruling class," if we mean by that what Marxists mean, rests on a definite new set of production relations. Such a new ruling class must be assumed to have a fairly long historical life-span ahead of it, until it has exhausted the potential of its productive system. So the outlook for the workers is pretty bleak, from Sweezy's standpoint.

This theory is not new. It is usually called "bureaucratic collectivism," that vision of a monolithic, totalitarian superstate described in the novel *1984*.

The first thing that must be said in reply to Sweezy's dismal perspective is that it lacks the first

requirements of a serious Marxist analysis: it does not examine either the causes, development, or the specific manifestations of the bureaucratization of the Soviet and Chinese workers states.

That is not surprising, given Sweezy's own political trajectory. He began as a Stalinist fellow-traveler in the 1930s, who closed his eyes to the destruction of workers democracy in the USSR under Stalin. He accepted and still accepts the reactionary theory of constructing an isolated "socialism in one country," the diametric opposite of Marx and Lenin's concept of a world socialist society transcending previous national boundaries.

Having defended Stalin's rule, Sweezy turned away from Moscow towards Peking when many of Stalin's crimes were revealed for all to see by his successors in the late 1950s.

He moved in recent years toward the views of French economist Charles Bettelheim, who developed an elaborate theoretical justification for Mao's claim that the socialist revolution in the USSR had been reversed.

Sweezy was a proponent of Mao's "cultural revolution." He refused to recognize that Mao was the leader of the bureaucratic caste in China, not its proletarian opponent. When Mao's Red Guard broke up trade-union meetings, burned books, and assaulted leaders of the Chinese Communist Party who belonged to factions Mao sought to crush, Sweezy assured his readers that this was a great emancipation of the masses from traditional bureaucratic elites. Even today, Sweezy clings to this false judgment. In his current article he writes of the existing workers states:

"They have not eliminated classes except in a purely verbal sense; and, except in the period of the Cultural Revolution in China, they have not attempted to follow a course which could have the long-run effect of eliminating classes."

With blinders like these on, it is small wonder that the revelations of the crimes of the Mao era that have poured out of China in the past two years caught Sweezy unawares. It must seem to him that a "new ruling class" inexplicably walked into power upon Mao's death, deposing the followers of his beloved Chairman.

To worsen Sweezy's predicament, China's working people gave every indication of being pleased at the fall of the "proletarian" four. What they saw as an opening to press for concessions looked like a counterrevolution to Sweezy.

For those like Sweezy, recent events must indeed seem like "A Crisis in Marxian Theory."

The truth is that it is impossible to understand the real nature of the bureaucratized workers states while clinging to a belief in Mao's self-serving justifications for the great purge that he called a "Cultural Revolution."

It is necessary to go further back, to the struggle in the 1920s between the proletarian wing of the Russian Communist Party, led by Lenin and Trotsky, against the rise of the reactionary bureaucracy led by Stalin.

Sweezy never came to grips with the Trotskyist analysis of the social character of Stalinist bureaucratic castes as privileged layers that live as parasites on nationalized and planned economies. The progressive dynamics of the economic structures, established as a consequence of working-class victories, are in contradiction to the long-term existence of the governing castes.

The bureaucratic caste's need for a monopoly of political power—and repressions like the "Cultural Revolution" that flow from this—is an expression

of its weakness and vulnerability, not of strength. It is not a ruling class linked to a mode of production which cannot exist without it—as is the capitalist class. The mode of production in a workers state is in the interests of the working class. The bureaucratic caste feeds off the workers state by keeping tight political control within it.

In complaining that the workers states—in a world still dominated by imperialism—have not abolished classes or inequality, Sweezy protests the fact that Stalin's and Mao's promises to build socialism in one country have been exposed by actual events as a fraud.

But this, like the origins of the castes themselves, was explained by Marxists in the 1920s and 1930s. Trotsky showed that socialism could not be achieved in individual backward countries while imperialism remained dominant on a world scale.

He demonstrated that "socialism in one country" was no theory at all but a rationalization that the bureaucracy used to justify its rule and its collaboration with imperialism against the spread of socialist revolution. The invasion of Vietnam by Peking's forces is a recent example.

"Socialism in one country" is not the slogan of a new ruling class confident of its capacity and destiny to rule the world, as would follow from Sweezy's theory. It is the watchword instead of a conservative, bureaucratic governing caste that seeks to preserve its privileges by reaching a live-and-let-live arrangement with world imperialism. Far from seeing proletarian revolutions as the prologue to its rule, the bureaucratic castes join with imperialism in trying to block them, for the overthrow of imperialism would doom the castes as well.

Rather than recognize that the "theory" of building socialism in one country was fallacious, Sweezy now repudiates the workers states as new class societies because of their failure to accomplish the impossible.

He continues to reject the Marxist view that the working masses—not bureaucratic saviours like Mao—have the capacity to establish proletarian democracy by overthrowing the bureaucratic castes. And he shows no interest in the struggle for an internationalist course aimed at removing the imperialist obstacle to building world socialism.

Quite the contrary. Sweezy's growing pessimism leads him to adopt a theory that has invariably led its proponents to renounce the defense of the workers states against imperialism on the grounds that the workers had nothing to choose between them. Unless he plans to rally to the defense of the "new ruling class," what else can be the political significance of his theory of the "new form of society."

Ironically, the events that threw Sweezy's "Marxism" into crisis—such as the exposure of Stalin's crimes in the USSR, the Hungarian, Polish, and Czechoslovak antibureaucratic upsurges, and the precipitous decline of the Mao cult in China—inspire real Marxists with added confidence in our socialist perspective. Along with such recent events as the overthrow of the shah, Somoza, and Pol Pot, they indicate that the working people of the world are growing stronger relative to their enemies and have the power to topple capitalist exploiters and bureaucratic parasites.

Such events provide new confirmation of the Marxist analysis of Stalinism, developed most thoroughly by Trotsky in *The Third International After Lenin* and *The Revolution Betrayed*.

## CONTENTS

The Month  
in Review . . . . . 2

Cubans in the United  
States and the  
Cuban Revolution  
By José G. Pérez . . . . . 3

A Firsthand Look at  
the Cuban Revolution . . . . . 5

'The Third International  
After Lenin'  
Review by  
Duncan Williams . . . . . 12



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# Cubans in the United States and the Cuban Revolution

## The Meaning of the Dialogue



Fidel Castro gives a news conference on December 9, 1978, following second meeting of representatives of the Cuban community abroad

Granma

By José G. Pérez

*I believe—sincerely—that what we have done and are doing is revolutionary. If we'd let ourselves be carried along by routine, by what's easiest to do, we wouldn't have taken on what we have. I firmly believe we wouldn't be doing it if we weren't revolutionaries. I believe we're doing it because we are revolutionaries.*

*To our way of thinking, being a revolutionary means defying routine, turning off the easy road, and many times it means taking the difficult road. But we don't doubt for a moment that what we're doing is highly positive, highly constructive, highly moral, and that it will benefit all Cubans: the Cuban community at home and the Cuban community abroad.*

*... men must not act in order to write pages in history. There's no point to that. But always history will record the things that have some human, social, political value; and we believe that this has value, a high human, social and political value.*

\* \* \*

*We must bear in mind that if this emigration reached such a height and the counterrevolution achieved a certain strength in Cuba, if that division took place, it was largely due to the power and influence of the United States.*

*I believe that above all this means a defeat for the enemies of our people.*

—Fidel Castro on the Dialogue  
December 9, 1978  
Granma, December 17, 1978<sup>1</sup>

Almost a year ago, the revolutionary government of Cuba ditched its twenty-year policy of undifferentiated hostility to the Cuban emigrés and initiated a rapprochement—known as “the dialogue”—with the Cuban communities abroad. As part of this change, tens of thousands of Cubans living in the United States have visited Cuba since the beginning of the year; mecha-

1. This and all other references to *Granma* are to the English-language weekly review, which is different from the daily. I have used *Granma's* translations. Simultaneous weekly review editions of *Granma* are also published in Spanish and French, and their contents are identical to the English edition.

*José G. Pérez was born in Cuba and came to the United States with his parents at the end of 1960. Pérez, editor of 'Perspectiva Mundial,' is currently traveling in Cuba with the Antonio Maceo Brigade.*

nisms have been set up for reunifying divided families; and, as a gesture to the community abroad, the overwhelming majority of people who were imprisoned in Cuba for crimes against the security of the workers state are being released.

Whereas in the past the Castro leadership had not paid attention to the political life of the advanced capitalist countries, this initiative represents a ground-breaking policy shift that could transform the impact of the Cuban revolution on American politics. It has brought to the surface the growing political differentiation and polarization among the 700,000 Cubans in the United States.

### Myths About Cubans in the U.S.

The image that most people have about the Cubans in the United States is composed of three interrelated myths.

The first myth concerns “la anorada Cuba de ayer” (the longed-for Cuba of yesteryear). This supposes that the exiles were all capitalists and other very well-off people, as well as the politicians and assassins associated with the old Batista dictatorship.

It is true that the overwhelming majority of those people left the country after the revolution. But many of the people who left were urban middle class or relatively privileged workers who had not necessarily lost much economically. Many of these people came for economic reasons—not that things were so bad in Cuba, but simply because they had the opportunity and sought to obtain the standard of living they thought was possible in the most advanced capitalist country in the world.

The second myth is that Cubans here have done exceptionally well in “el exilio de oro,” the golden exile. In fact, Cubans do not do as well as the average Anglo. Many former businessmen and professionals are washing dishes. Many formerly well-off women now work in sweatshops. Cubans suffer higher unemployment than Anglos. The average wages of Cuban workers are substantially lower than those of their Anglo counterparts. The rate of participation of Cuban women in the work force is the highest of any sector of the American population, showing the degree to which Cuban working-class families find it impossible to meet their expectations with only one income. This is especially significant given the qualitatively lower rate of participation by women in the labor force in pre-revolutionary Cuba, and the continuing strong influence among many Cubans of the backward idea that a woman's place is in the home.

All the socio-economic indexes show Cubans to

be worse off than Anglos in areas such as wages, family income, unemployment, and percentage of persons employed as professional, technical, or managerial personnel.

Cubans suffer from the same racist and language discrimination as all Latinos. Most Anglo bosses who discriminate against Latinos don't care whether you're Puerto Rican, Chicano, or Cuban: to them, a “spic” is a “spic.” Like Blacks, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans, Cubans are vastly underrepresented in all levels of government, elected or appointed.

The third myth is that virtually all Cubans are hostile to the Cuban revolution. This myth is promoted by the U.S. capitalist media and was accepted, for a time by the Castro leadership and by radicals in the United States, who labeled them all as *gusanos* (worms), the term used to describe active counterrevolutionaries.

### A Changing Mood

The truth is that most Cubans in the United States were never active supporters of the militant right-wing groups, and of those who were, the vast majority have by now given up hopes of overthrowing the revolution. If the right-wingers still seem stronger today than they really are, that is mainly due to the image projected in the media by the American ruling class. The handful of ultra-right terrorists enjoy complete immunity from the cops and FBI, and probably count with their active cooperation on some projects.

Most Cubans who were initially hostile to the revolution have changed their minds. The majority of Cubans in the United States favor lifting the U.S. economic blockade of the island, and they support the normalization of diplomatic relations. Even many deeply held anticommunist prejudices are breaking down, and this process has been accelerating as thousands of Cubans visit the island every month and come back telling their friends of their favorable impressions.

A growing differentiation among the Cubans has been developing since the late 1960s, beginning with the campuses and spreading throughout the communities. One of the most prominent groups is the Christian Evangelical Reformed Church in Miami, headed by Rev. Manuel Espinosa, which has several thousand members. The Cuban-American Committee for Normalization of Relations is composed primarily of college professors, and the Antonio Maceo Brigade is a group of young Cubans who had been brought out of the country by their parents after the revolution. The left-wing magazine *Areíto*, which is generally favorable to the revolution, has a circulation of several thousand.

The political differentiation in the Cuban communities is rooted in several interrelated factors, most of all the class differentiation within the communities and the national oppression suffered by Cubans in the United States. These interact with the fact of the revolution, which is by far the most important event that ever happened to the overwhelming majority of Cubans, totally transforming their lives.

### Initiative of Cuban Revolution

The political move by the revolutionary government in initiating the dialogue is more complicated and far-reaching than it might seem at first.

Beginning in the mid-1970s a few selected Cubans, most of them friendly to the revolution, started to visit the island, usually with no publicity. These visits led to a proposal to the Cuban government that young Cubans who had been taken out by their parents before the age of eighteen be allowed to visit openly, in a group similar to the Venceremos Brigade.

The first such group, called the Antonio Maceo Brigade, visited the island at the end of 1977 and early 1978. Their trip coincided with the publication in Cuba of the book *Contra Viento y Marea*

"How and when the idea first came up, I couldn't tell you because I don't remember. I recall that one day some comrades told us that there was the possibility that a brigade of children of emigrés might come. We might say it was a strange thing. And we even wondered whether such a thing would be understood—that was the first thing we asked ourselves. Some comrades felt they should come. But, would the people understand? How would the people react? . . .

"Well, it proved to be a test. We might say it was a test. Later, they went everywhere and met with everyone from the very first moment they arrived. And they met with many leaders as well. I also met with them near the end of their visit. But I had noticed that all the people, the political cadres and leaders who had met with them, were all very favorably impressed and deeply touched. The meetings were very moving. . . .

"They also helped us become aware of the problems of the community. Because there is something which we have started to realize, the fact that, as I see it, the Cuban community, like all other communities in another environment, in another country, tries to maintain its national identity. . . . Actually, we view this sympathetically. Regardless of what they might be, whether

the possibility was raised of forming a special government agency to handle this question and of publishing a magazine, and so forth.

Fidel said these questions should be discussed between the Cuban government and representative individuals from the community abroad. Only active counterrevolutionaries would be excluded.

### Release of Prisoners

A group of Cubans (the "Commission of 75") went to Havana and met with top leaders of the Cuban government in late November. A few weeks later the commission returned, having by this time almost doubled in size. Further discussions were held, and a joint declaration was signed by all parties to the talks.

The Cuban government agreed to release some 3,000 political prisoners, that is, the overwhelming majority of the people still imprisoned for counterrevolutionary acts, as well as all 600 people imprisoned for trying to leave Cuba illegally. Return visits by the emigrés would be permitted and organized, and a mechanism was set up to facilitate the reunification of divided families.

For its part, the Commission of 75 promised to do the necessary paperwork and take other steps to encourage the U.S. government to permit those prisoners and ex-prisoners who wanted to do so to emigrate to the United States. The joint declaration also included further ideas for strengthening the links between Cuba and the Cuban community abroad, presenting these as items for further study and discussion.

The document also reported that it had been decided to "maintain the contacts and communication channels that have been established."

### U.S. Campaign Against Cuba

The Cuban government made the proposal for the dialogue at a time when, from its point of view, relations with the U.S. government were—as Castro put it recently—"perfectly bad."

For the past four or five years, the U.S. government has been on a stepped-up anti-Cuban campaign in response to the aid Cuba has given national liberation struggles against imperialism in Africa. President Ford branded the Cubans "international outlaws" for daring to drive back the South African invasion of Angola.

At the beginning of his administration, Carter made some gestures that appeared to be conciliatory toward Cuba, such as lifting the travel ban (long ago declared constitutionally unenforceable by the Supreme Court). But these were followed by renewed imperialist propaganda and military threats against Cuba in response to Cuba's aid to Ethiopia against the imperialist-inspired Somali invasion. Following these, Carter publicly accused Cuba of backing the Katangese rebellion in Zaïre; the charge was hotly denied by Cuba, and the United States was eventually forced to withdraw it. The CIA mounted a "disinformation" campaign trying to link Cuba to the Ethiopian junta's military drive against the Eritrean rebels, despite Cuba's publicly stated differences with the junta on this question.

In a report to Congress drafted in December 1978, Carter told his fellow ruling-class politicians: "We will continue to express our concern to the Cubans over their military activities in Africa and emphasize that these will condition the pace at which normalization [of relations] moves forward, or, indeed, whether it moves forward at all. . . .

"While we cannot reimpose the multilateral sanctions [i.e. the Organization of American States economic blockade], we will continue to indicate to the Cubans that we cannot consider a total lifting of the US embargo on direct trade until 1) there is some dramatic improvement in their African posture and 2) we reach agreement on a formula for payment of compensation for expropriated US properties. We should also continue to make it clear to them that we cannot consider reestablishing diplomatic relations until these major problems are resolved."

### Reactions to the Dialogue: Carter

The reaction of the U.S. government and capitalist news media to the dialogue was one of feigned indifference, but in reality of hostility.

Shortly before the first session of the dialogue, the U.S. government leaked to the news media the "news that Cuba had obtained MIG-23 jet fighters from the Soviet Union, and suggested

*Continued on page ISR/9*



CIA-organized counterrevolutionaries captured during April 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion. Cuba is now freeing counterrevolutionary political prisoners.

(Against the Wind and the Tide), which depicts the experiences of this layer of younger exiles, describing how they had eventually come to reconcile themselves to the Cuban revolution and then in many cases to become enthusiastic supporters of it. This book was awarded a prize by the Cuban literary institution, Casa de las Americas, in the special category (created for the occasion) of "Testimony: Youth in Our America."

The book is basically a collection of interviews with fifty young exiles and includes a section devoted to critical evaluation of some weaknesses in Cuba today, including the attitude toward homosexuals, the poor quality of *Granma* and other printed media, the treatment of artists and intellectuals, bureaucratism and privilege, and the strides still to be made in advancing equality of women. This is another piece of evidence to show that the image of Cuba as a totalitarian society painted by the imperialist press is a slander.

In his initial press conference on the dialogue last September, Fidel Castro explained the impact of the brigade's visit:

"For example, I'd say that something that helped make us conscious of this, and which made a great impact on Cuban public opinion, was the visit of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Those young people, who had nothing to do with these problems and who are not to be blamed for these problems, who visited Cuba with an attitude of peace, with a friendly attitude, made a great impact in our country. That is one example."

### A Stirring Visit

Later on at the September news conference, Fidel Castro returned to the visit of the first contingent of the brigade, explaining that it had provoked quite a discussion in the Cuban leadership:

a Cuban millionaire or a worker in the emigré community. Because there are many workers who have emigrated; many Cubans abroad work hard at earning a living in factories. . . .

"This, logically, arouses our solidarity. I mean just that: it arouses our solidarity and appreciation. . . . I repeat, this arouses our solidarity and appreciation, even if they don't support the Revolution.

"Because we support all communities which try to maintain their identity. We support the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Latin Americans, blacks and Indians as well—in short, all the minorities who struggle for their interests. We support them. Why not view the Cubans in the same light? . . .

"In our contacts we were able to note this angle of the problem. But our contacts have been made primarily with these young people, because it had a great impact on us. There is even a documentary film about the Brigade, and I know that many people cry when they see it. There is no doubt that national feeling is very strong. . . .

"We had thought there might be criticism of the government and the Party as a result of the Brigade's visit, but there was no criticism. The reaction was just the opposite. . . .

"You shouldn't think this is easy. We need the understanding of the people, because we don't do anything behind the backs of the people nor contrary to their feelings. Everything we do must always be in accordance with this. If it is not understood it can't be done." (*Granma*, September 17, 1978).

In his news conference Fidel explained a series of problems that concerned both Cubans abroad and in Cuba. These included reunification of divided families, return trips to Cuba by exiles to visit, and the freeing of political prisoners. There was also the broader question of ongoing relations between Cuba and the community abroad;



# 'Internationalism is the important thing' A Firsthand Look at the Cuban Revolution

The following interview with Bob Warren, a member of the Young Socialist Alliance, was given to the 'International Socialist Review' in May. Warren joined the Young Socialist Alliance in early 1978 while a student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

*ISR. How did you come to visit Cuba?*

**Warren:** I was asked by people associated with the Venceremos Brigade in Ann Arbor last December about going to Cuba with the brigade this spring.

The Venceremos Brigade views itself as an educational project that annually sends hundreds of Americans to Cuba to perform a contribution of solidarity to the Cuban revolution in the sugar cane harvest, other agricultural work, or in construction.

We left the United States on March 31 and got into Havana early in the morning April 2. Because of the blockade no airplanes fly directly to Cuba from the United States. From Ann Arbor we flew to New York, then to Montreal, and from there to Havana. That was the route for people from the eastern half of the United States. From the western half people went by way of Mexico City.

*ISR. How many went on this trip?*

**Warren:** One hundred thirty-three people.

## Housing for Cuban Workers

*ISR. What did you do while in Cuba?*

**Warren:** The *brigadistas* did construction work, building apartments for textile workers in Ariguanabo, a town about forty-five miles from Havana.

There were eleven contingents in the brigade. And these were divided into six work brigades. Each work brigade carried out a different task each week.

The first week our brigade was working on a monument in honor of the martyrs and heroes of Angola—all the Cubans who served in any capacity in Angola. We went into the marshes around the work site and collected thousands of rocks to use for this monument.

The next week my work brigade shifted to the actual apartment site and we worked on mixing cement and plastering the walls of the apartments. That was one of the most highly skilled work projects.

The next week we built the prefabricated slabs for the apartments. The walls, the beams, the ceilings, the floors. That week we made a special effort to surpass our quota.

And during the last week we made the metal frames to be used to support the slabs—a boring job.

During our four weeks there we accomplished 116 percent of our quota. The value of our work was 74,000 pesos, the equivalent of nine apartments. So nine families will have new homes because of our work.

All these tasks required ten times as much time and ten times as much labor as would be required in the United States. That is because the economic blockade cuts Cuba off from sources of labor-saving technology.

## Red Sunday for Vietnam

One Sunday we did voluntary work for *el domingo rojo*, Red Sunday. The workers in many of the workers states participated in doing voluntary agricultural labor for the Vietnamese revolution. And the value of our wages that day were sent to Vietnam, earmarked for the needs of Vietnamese children.

In Cuba millions contributed their labor, the highest participation in the world.

No one had to participate. It was completely voluntary.



Women members of the Centennial Youth Column practice marching in Camagüey Province. Women have made massive gains in their struggle for equality through the revolution.

Of course people in the brigade felt a real obligation to participate. Our desire to be part of internationalist activities was one of our reasons for coming to Cuba.

*ISR. You mentioned you were working on a monument to the martyrs and heroes of Angola. What was the attitude of the Cuban people toward Cuba's role in Africa?*

**Warren:** This was one of the most impressive things I experienced in Cuba. Everyone I talked to in the streets—my co-workers, other workers, youth, or older people—considered themselves to be revolutionaries. They all thought that internationalism, and especially doing international service as in Angola, was the highest service to the Cuban revolution.

People told me that they were angry because they volunteered to go to Africa and were turned down. More people volunteered than they could send without draining the work force. People aspire to go to Africa. Some of the people we worked with had just returned from Africa, where they had fought with the MPLA government against the South Africans, and others had returned from fighting in the Ogaden Desert. And they were all proud of what Cuba had done there.

## Elections to 'People's Power'

*ISR. While you were there, Cuba held elections to local organs of "People's Power." What were these like?*

**Warren:** People's Power or *Poder Popular* is divided into three main sections. Over 10,000 people are elected to the municipal assemblies. Out of the municipal assemblies people are elected to the provincial assemblies. There are fourteen provinces in Cuba. And from these provincial assemblies people are elected to the national assembly.

In Cuba you don't have several parties or factions or tendencies organizing people. People are nominated by the local Committees for the Defense of the Revolution to run for election to People's Power.

There is no campaigning. For about a week pictures of the candidates go up in various areas of the town or district, with their vital statistics and their history.

The Cuban Communist Party doesn't put up a candidate. There is no official slate. Each district had between two and eight candidates.

People vote for the person they think will best serve the revolution and be most representative of them.

The night before the election and during the week the candidates go through the neighborhood and talk to everyone about themselves. But people don't campaign on individual or group

platforms. They don't say, "If elected, I'll try to do such and such."

Less than half of those elected were in the party. About a third may have been in the Communist Youth League. No more than 70 percent of those elected were party or youth members.

Thus organs exist for nonparty members to play a role in the government.

There is the right to immediately recall delegates, and such recalls have been carried out.

The role of People's Power seems to be to implement decisions that come from the party. It recognizes the party as the guiding force of the revolution.

Interest was high. About 97 percent of the eligible voters participated. And people talked about the elections. The supervisor where I worked, Maria Luis Muñoz, told me the choice in her district was between a sixty-year-old comrade who had been in the party for many years and a young Black trade-union leader who had recently returned from fighting in Angola. She emphasized it was a choice between a white man and a Black man. She was white.

She was going to choose the Black man, she said, because he was younger, more in tune with the times, and a participant in the revolutionary movement of today. She had more confidence in him.

*ISR. What is the role of youth in Cuba?*

**Warren:** That was a striking thing about the elections. Eighteen year olds were elected to People's Power. The right to vote begins at the age of sixteen, and sixteen year olds have been nominated.

In one presentation a Cuban official told us that the youth of Cuba were the privileged class. And that stands out especially in the field of education.

## Education in Cuba

The educational system is very advanced. We visited a number of schools. One was the Jorge Dmitrov school, located in a rural area outside our camp. There the children work and study six days a week and visit their parents one day a week.

Like all the other workers of Cuba, they get up at six in the morning. Then they do agricultural work. They have a long rest period and then go to classes in the afternoon. A lot of recreational and cultural activities are provided.

All the subject matter has a practical goal, related to what the Cuban revolution needs.

The children are socially and politically advanced. They are very vibrant and revolutionary. They view themselves as preparing to serve the revolution. Nine and ten year olds were quite

clear and realistic about what they wanted to do when they got out of primary school, secondary school, the pre-university, and the university. If people want to change their career goal, they can do so. But they are taught and deeply believe that the most important thing in deciding their future plans is what they can do to help the revolution.

About 99.6 percent of the children between six and fourteen are members of the *pioneros*.

The children participate daily in service to the revolution. They wear maroon uniforms and often act as protocol for visitors. They participate in community clean-ups, they are the poll-watchers at elections, and they often care for the aged.

They have special school cities for the *pioneros*. They want to build one in each province. We visited the José Martí School near Havana. For sixteen days during the school year they go out to this camp-school. They have political education, cultural presentations, an amusement park, and other recreation. It gives the children a break from school. During the summer vacation they go to the camp for another week.

The Cubans treat the children as the highest part of the culture.

*ISR. What is the scope of adult education in Cuba?*

Warren. It's very intensive. By next year the Cubans aim to provide a sixth-grade education to everyone who is older than the sixth-grade level. This is a country that had massive illiteracy before the revolution. By 1985 they want everyone to have a tenth-grade education.

Education is provided through three main sources: school, home, and television and other media (newspapers, billboards). Television is very important in educating Cubans.

*ISR. What are the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution?*

Warren. People in every community are organized into a CDR, which gets together and discusses the condition and needs of the neighborhood. They make sure that every child is going to school and that everyone is adequately clothed and fed. They try to get everyone participating in the upkeep of the neighborhood.

This formation started very early in the revolution. It played a major role in fighting the Bay of Pigs invasion organized by the United States Central Intelligence Agency in April 1961.

We were there during the Playa Giron anniversary April 17. Playa Giron is the Cuban name for what the Americans called the Bay of Pigs. There was a very big parade. The Cuban victory at Playa Giron was the first big defeat of imperialism in the Western Hemisphere. The Cubans think this is one of the greatest things they've been able to do.

The Committees for the Defense of the Revolution are an aspect of Cuban society that gives people a sense of getting together to maintain and extend their revolution.

### Living Conditions

*ISR. Do people get enough to eat in Cuba?*

Warren. There is rationing in Cuba, which assures that working people eat pretty well. Most people eat two meals at their workplaces or schools, and this is not counted as part of the ration. So people eat a fair quantity of meat and other proteins. Children are assured plenty of milk.

But we in the brigade probably ate better than the Cubans. We had meat at every meal, especially pork.

*ISR. What is the housing situation?*

Warren. It's very tight, despite the advances the Cubans have made.

We visited the Alamar housing project where about 30,000 people live. They have a goal of building units for 100,000 people in a few years. This is a whole new city on the south side of Havana.

It is being built by microbrigades, work groups which workers volunteer to join for a year. Workers in an area participate in building the housing project after working hours, and afterwards there's a priority for those who worked on the project in terms of getting apartments.

Apartments are at a premium. Because of the housing shortage, couples usually live with one of the spouse's parents after marriage.



A new housing project being constructed in 1968 in the midst of impoverished peasant huts. Eventually the

Alamar was very impressive. It has more than 8,000 units now, as well as movie theaters, playhouses, supermarkets, seven primary schools, and thirteen child-care centers. The Cuban government wants to do this type of thing in each province.

The Cubans emphasized that they wanted us to talk about this when we got back to the United States. They regard projects like this as among their finest achievements

*ISR. What are rents like in Cuba?*

Warren. Rents are fixed at 6 percent of income. If you earn 100 pesos a month (that's \$130 in American money), 6 pesos goes to rent, 5 to electricity, 4 for gas. So 15 pesos out of 100 goes to such fixed costs.

The rest can be spent on food, vacations, an outing to a restaurant, or such. But if you get two meals at work or school, that leaves a lot of money left over.

People also get 150 liters of salt water per day, which they conserve carefully. There is no hot water in Cuba.

*ISR. What are transportation costs like for workers in Cuba?*

Warren. A bus trip costs five centavos, or 6.5 cents. Many workers get free transportation to work in rural areas.

The Cubans want to build more buses to ease their transportation shortage. Cuba produces 500 buses per year, way below what they need. The buses in Havana were packed like sardine cans.

There were also 180,000 television sets distributed to Cuban families last year.

There are long lines, as you walk through the city on Saturday, of people getting their rations. And there is a black market where people pay exorbitant prices for scarce goods.

### Socialized Medicine

*ISR. How is medical care organized in Cuba?*

Warren. It is totally free. Before the revolution there were only 95 hospitals in Cuba, and virtually none in rural areas. Now there are 261 hospitals, 64 in rural areas, and hundreds of polyclinics. Polyclinics are local clinics where people can go for immediate medical care. Doctors at the polyclinic can decide whether people need to go to a hospital.

There were 6,000 doctors before the revolution but 3,000 left the country. But now there are 14,000—many of them women. About 60 percent of the doctors were in Havana in 1959. Now only 39 percent are there.

Cuba is sending doctors all over the world to help countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. More than half of these people are women,

and women are becoming leaders of this whole process.

The Cubans have made outstanding progress in their system of mental health care. The whole concept of mental health care and, I am told, of the prison system is trying to reintegrate people into society and to prevent a complete breakdown of their connection with society.

We visited a hospital where there were both chronic and acute cases of mental illness as well as people who were transient, just there for a brief stay. They were all doing productive labor. Often these were simple tasks, but necessary for the people of Cuba.

Patients were handling knives and sharpening wooden stakes for rocking chairs. They do a lot of art work. And they feel that they're really a productive part of society, not castoffs—which is the way the mentally ill are treated in the United States. All this makes the prospect for reintegrating them into society much better.

*ISR. What are the conditions of Cuban workers like?*

Warren. On construction jobs, which we were told had working conditions similar to those of Cuban workers in general, the day goes like this:

Workers rise at 6 in the morning and work starts an hour later. At 9:15 a.m. they get a fifteen-minute *merienda*, or snack break. A drink and a snack is provided to all. Then work resumes till 11:30, when there is a long lunch break and *siesta*. Work resumes at 1:30 or so and continues till 3:30, when a second *merienda* takes place. The working day ends at 5:30.

Throughout the day, workers are free to leave the work spot for water breaks or rest if needed. And if a worker considers a job dangerous or too difficult, the worker could leave the work site and ask for reassignment. The workplace was so clean we could have eaten off the floor.

As with the youth, Cuban workers are educated to view what is needed by the revolution as the first priority.

The Cuban Federation of Trade Unions has representatives at every workplace. We asked whether there were strikes in Cuba and the union officials claimed no. They said the right to strike exists, however.

Strikes weren't necessary, they told us, because the goals of the trade unions are not only political education, but also to help production. They participate in management and therefore, they argued, workers have constant contact with the trade union. If workers have some criticisms of how production is organized, they can go to the trade union.

*ISR. What is happening in the area of women's rights in Cuba?*





Militant/Harry Ring

peasants moved from their huts to the new housing.

Warren. The Family Code was passed a couple of years ago. It says that both the man and the woman in the family must participate fifty-fifty in raising the children, caring for the house, and work.

Now implementing this kind of resolve is a process that involves changing a whole culture and a strong tradition.

But some big changes have occurred. Women's equality is the law of the land.

There are 750,000 women in the work force now—up from about 100,000 before the revolution.

The weight of household tasks has been eased by the fact that children and most workers eat two meals a day on the job. Children are often at school most nights of the week, and child-care centers—overwhelmingly staffed by women—are everywhere.

There is no such thing as illegitimacy in Cuba, so single women who raise children face no economic or social discrimination. There are many single mothers in Cuba.

Abortion and birth control are provided, and information about these is made readily available by the government. These are regarded as matters of choice.

These are huge changes. But there is also this idea among many people of revolutionary chivalry, which has many elements of the idea of *machismo*, which is now condemned.

Cuban men talk about the need to protect the women, and this centers around protecting their reproductive capacity. There is a tendency not to give women many of the jobs that men do in construction, for instance. Much of the work that women do on the brigades is work that most Cubans won't allow women to do—carrying heavy bags and cement.

We went to the offices of *Juventud Rebelde*, which is the youth paper in Cuba. Someone asked the question of how many women worked there. About half the staff was female—they were leading reporters and played every other role.

But if a newspaper uses hot-type press, women are not allowed to work there because they say it causes sterility.

Women are directors and managers in factories, in the party and government, and are paid the same as men or even more in certain jobs. Several chiefs of our sub-brigade were women. There is no effort to relegate women to the bottom socially. And Cuban men will often say, "Well, why would women want those heavy jobs when they can do anything else." But it is a restriction on the contribution women can make. It reflects this deep cultural tradition.

ISR. Did you find an attitude that women's liberation had been achieved?

Warren. No. The editor of *Juventud Rebelde* described what was going on as a revolution within the revolution on the role of women. "We are learning a lot from the women, and the women are helping the men" to confront this issue. He admitted that Cubans had been immature in their attitude toward women in the past.

And the Cuban Federation of Women plays an important role in advancing women's position. More than 80 percent of Cuban women are members of the federation. It proclaims that it will cease to exist when women have the same access to all aspects of Cuban society as men and have assumed an equal role in the continuation of the revolution.

### Racism Abolished

ISR. What is the situation of Blacks in Cuba?

Warren. Institutionalized racism has been totally abolished in Cuba. Blacks have access to all facilities and occupations. Although we spent most of our time in Havana Province, one of the few with a white majority, we met many Black plant directors, managers, trade-union officials, doctors, educators, and high party officials.

Blacks and whites socialize freely, and all new housing is integrated. But there are still neighborhoods that used to be all Black where Blacks have not yet moved out due to the housing shortage. So there are still some pockets of Black concentration. But beaches and recreational facilities are wholly integrated.

Racist attitudes seem to have been subjected to systematic destruction through education. People went out of their way to emphasize that racism had ended, and this was a point of great pride.

Children explained to me the equal treatment and love between Afro-Cubans and white Cubans, and they proposed Cuba as a model for other countries on this.

I was talking to two Black men in a bar one day. They told me how before the revolution they would have been arrested for sitting at that bar. They described how they had learned to read and write while they were in their fifties because of the literacy campaign.

Black Cubans feel that they could not exist in a racist society like the United States.

The Cuban culture is always emphasized as being an Afro-Cuban culture. There is much Latino music, but a heavy African influence pervades the music. And modern dance almost entirely centers on Afro-Cuban themes.

The intervention of Cuba in Africa is deepening the solidarity of Black and white Cubans. It is a common theme of discussions and speeches that Cuban troops landed in Angola at the same port where thousands of Africans had left centuries earlier for slavery in Cuba. "This is our people. This is where we come from. We share the same heritage," people would tell me of Africa.

ISR. Is there freedom of religion in Cuba?

Warren. Yes. The only religious institutions I saw firsthand were Catholic and Jewish. The government doesn't finance them but gives them freedom to continue practicing their faith.

Many of us visited a synagogue one day to see what is happening to Jewish culture. There are 1,400 Jews in Cuba today, 1,100 of them in Havana.

There has never been antisemitism in Cuba

before or after the revolution, the president of the synagogue told us. But from what I could see, the culture is dying out. It's not important to the youth. Most of the members of the synagogue were over fifty.

The same seems to be true of the much-bigger Catholic Church as well. Fewer and fewer people attend services, and the youth don't see it as very important.

ISR. What is the status of gays and lesbians in Cuba?

Warren. To my knowledge and experience, there is no antihomosexual campaign in Cuba today. Public displays are discouraged, however, and I think you can be arrested for this.

But gays and lesbians have more human rights in Cuba than anywhere in the world. The gays and lesbians we met said the things they had gained through the revolution are the most important things in their lives.

We met one woman, a lesbian, who is a highly respected author and a member of the Communist Youth League. And straight members of the party can tell you of other gays and lesbians in the party. It is known in a circle of friends, but not in the party as a whole.

The attitude now is similar to the attitude toward people who still practice religion—they aren't viewed as the most exemplary revolutionaries, but they aren't persecuted.

The official party position now is that this is a personal matter and shouldn't be made a public political issue. But one lawyer I talked to went into a diatribe about homosexuality as unhealthy for the family and the revolution. Even he ended by saying that the party doesn't intervene in personal affairs and the government stays out of private life.

There is one bar in Havana—a very expensive bar—where gays gather.

You have to be careful if you are homosexual, but it's worth keeping in mind that Cubans are very demonstrative and affectionate with each other. People think nothing of two men walking down the street with their arms around each other's waist.

Another factor in the changing situation is the stand taken by the Cuban Federation of Women on lesbians. It said that it *respects* the attitudes of individuals and will not interfere even if it doesn't support some aspect of their personal life.

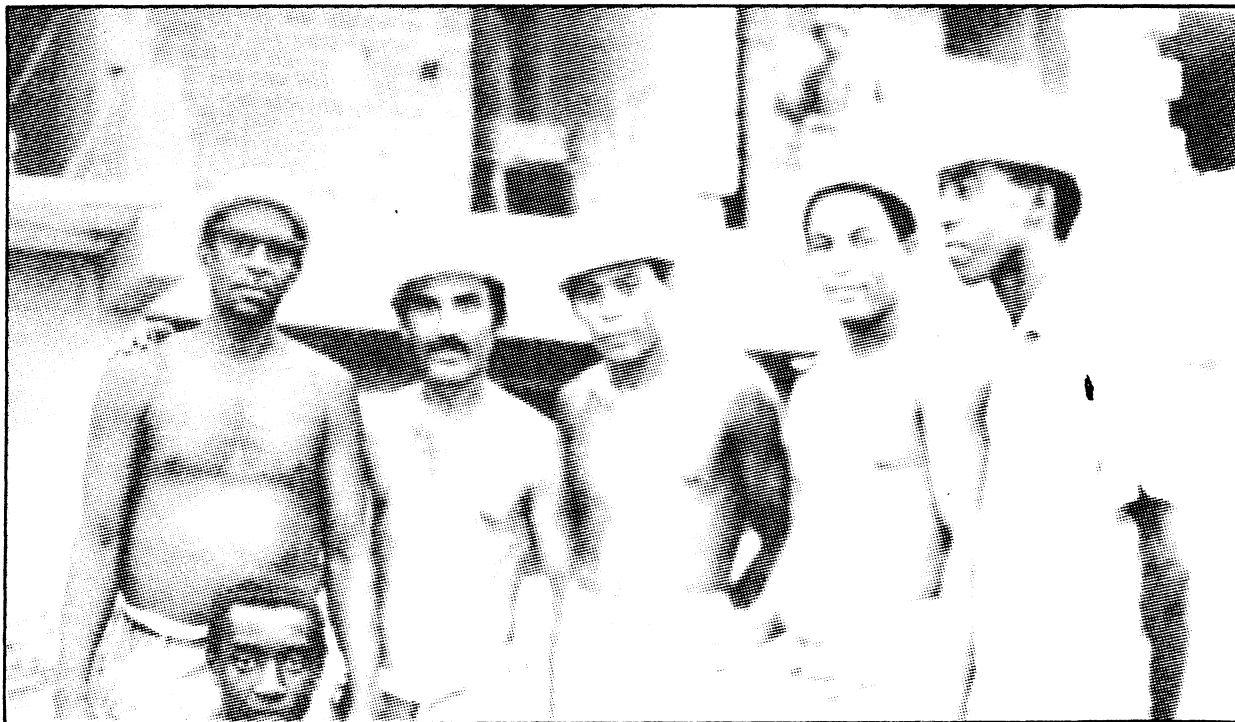
We on the brigade felt that there is an opening-up process. As homosexual rights become more accepted by the party ranks, and as party leaders decide it's time to open up more, there may be further progress.

### Che and Fidel

ISR. How do you become a member of the party in Cuba?

Warren. It is a process. A Cuban may begin by serving as a *pionero*, and then gets nominated to the Communist Youth League, and builds up a record of exemplary service to the revolution. Then you are nominated by fellow workers who take into consideration your role at work, your record of service. The party then votes on membership.

There are a lot of construction workers and other factory workers in the party, among them some of the people we worked with. And sugar



Workers from a volunteer minibrigade working on the Alamar housing project, which is intended to eventually house 100,000 people.

mill workers are very proud of their party membership.

Many others are intellectuals, translators for the ministries, and officials.

*ISR. What is the attitude of people in Cuba toward the Soviet Union?*

Warren. People are grateful to the Soviet Union for the aid it has provided to the Cuban revolution. But most people don't talk about the Soviet Union as they do about Africa or Vietnam.

This is reflected in political billboards, which are the only billboards in Cuba. We saw slogans about constructing socialism; "The Revolution is Permanent"; "Two, Three, Many Vietnams"; "Conserve Energy"; "Liberate Palestine"; "A Sixth Grade Education for Everyone by 1980."

But we saw no billboards about the Soviet Union in Cuba.

The president of the synagogue we visited came as close as anyone did to criticizing the Soviet rulers. We asked him what he thought about the Soviet Jews and other persecuted dissidents.

He said, "I don't know how the Soviet Union takes care of its problem, but I know what Cuba does. There has never been antisemitism in Cuba. We always had our rights. But Russia has a history of pogroms and persecution." He implied, at least to my understanding, that the Soviet bureaucrats are in this chauvinist tradition.

I ran into a number of people who said that Soviet culture bores them because it's not very vibrant like Cuban culture.

*ISR. Occasionally radicals make a distinction between Che Guevara and the other leaders of the Cuban revolution, arguing that Che was revolutionary and some of the others like Fidel are not. How do people in Cuba see Che Guevara?*

Warren. Che Guevara is the most revered person in Cuba. Fidel is alive and he makes a point of insisting that he doesn't want reverence or monuments.

The feeling about Che in Cuba is that he was internationalism personified. He fought in so many countries and tried to extend the revolution in Vietnam, in Africa, and in Bolivia where he was murdered. He is a symbol to emulate.

But Fidel is regarded by Cubans as having the biggest impact of just about any individual leader in recent time. There is an awareness that masses, not individuals, make revolutions. But nonetheless people think that Fidel has led them to victory, and that without him they would not be so advanced. At the May Day demonstration this year, pictures of Che and Fidel were much in evidence. People don't distinguish between Fidel and Che politically.

### The U.S. Economic Blockade

*ISR. Did people ever talk about American politics?*

Warren. They emphasized over and over that they love the American people and hate the



Martyred Che Guevara is a symbol of internationalism to Cubans.



Banner in the May Day 1979 parade in Havana. It reads, 'There is nothing more important than a child! Long live May Day!'

American government and its imperialist role. In the past, the Cubans didn't have much confidence in the American workers, but since union members began to come down on the brigade their attitude has begun to change. They've begun to realize that there are unionists in this country who support the revolution and want to help end the blockade. They want more union members to visit.

*ISR. How severe an impact does the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba still have?*

Warren. Well, there are a lot of conveniences and consumer goods that Cubans don't have and would like to have. And there are a lot of basic things that could be imported more easily from the United States than from the USSR or from Czechoslovakia. But the Cubans don't get upset about not having them.

I have never seen so many people who seemed satisfied with their lives.

But the blockade requires intense concentration by the Cubans on certain areas where they have to make up the gaps caused by the blockade. This bars them from diversifying in certain other areas. It keeps them from building up their transportation system fast enough to allow them to intensify their present efforts to build industry in rural areas.

If the blockade was ended, more machinery and higher technology would be available. They could free up labor for other projects they have in mind, like developing a steel industry.

The main gap is in the area of spare parts. They don't get enough spare parts. They also have to import oil 16,000 miles, from the Soviet Union.

That's why the Cubans want to develop nuclear power. You could see their concern about this in the way the Three Mile Island incident was handled in the Cuban press.

There was no attempt to cover it up or play it down as in Moscow. It was given widespread coverage on television and in the newspapers.

They talked about how under capitalism a disaster like this was possible because profit came before human needs, but in Cuba they would take all necessary safety precautions to prevent an accident like Harrisburg. They talked about building power plants in rural areas far away from people. The vice-president of ICAP (Instituto Cubano del Planificación) told me that they were interested in doing more with solar power but the technology just wasn't there. The Cubans feel they are turning to nuclear power out of necessity.

Lifting the blockade would probably have an affect on their attitude toward nuclear power since it would make coal and oil more readily available.

*ISR. What was the Cubans' thinking about the fight to end the blockade?*

Warren. They strongly wanted us to go back and fight the blockade.

They want to end the isolation between the Cuban and American peoples. And they want to do business with American firms. They urged us to work toward getting more church support for ending the blockade.

They didn't have a worked-out strategy about how to do it. But they think the opening is there.

They told us they had hoped that when Carter lifted the travel ban, the situation would improve, but then the Carter administration said relations can't improve until Cuban troops are out of Africa and the Cuban government stops supporting Puerto Rican independence.

The Cubans emphasized in every discussion that they wanted peaceful coexistence. But they insisted they would never compromise on their right to help the fight against imperialism all over the world. Cuba won't pull its troops out of Africa or stop supporting Puerto Rico's right to independence for any crumbs American imperialism might want to offer.

### A Living Revolution

*ISR. What was your strongest overall impression?*

Warren. The revolutionary spirit in Cuba still exists twenty years after the revolution. That was the fact that struck me everywhere. Every person I talked to—youth of six and old people of seventy-five—said they supported the revolution and wanted to be part of building socialism.

And they all felt that internationalism and fighting imperialism are the most important things. The only way the Cuban revolution will survive, I was told, is if imperialism is defeated everywhere in the world.

This concept isn't popular simply with the working people. It is taught in the schools. If imperialism has a foothold anywhere, people are continually told, that affects Cuba. Just as in Cuba and Vietnam, the struggle in Africa is a struggle for the survival of the Cuban revolution. You get a real feeling that they want to see the revolution extended. A good sign.



Continued from page ISR/4

that they might be carrying nuclear weapons. At the same time, a flotilla of thirty-six U.S. warships, an aircraft carrier, and nuclear submarines moved toward Cuba, in what was later officially described as training "maneuvers." Carter ordered the resumption of U.S. spy flights over Cuba, a transparent provocation and outrageous violation of Cuba's national territory.

This warmed-over "Cuban missile crisis" was soon shown to be a hoax. The planes had, in fact, been in Cuba for months; the U.S. government was forced to admit they were defensive tactical fighters and were not nuclear-armed.

Another indication of the Carter administration's real posture was its attitude on admitting the counterrevolutionary prisoners to the United States. Attorney General Griffin Bell said the United States would have to check every single one to screen out "spies, terrorists, and common criminals." Although shortly after Bell's statement the United States government claimed it would be willing to admit up to 400 ex-prisoners a month, it didn't do so. In fact, it tried to sabotage the release program by imposing interminable delays in processing visa applications. That policy continues.

Washington was clearly trying to delay the amnesty program. But in May the Cuban government decided to continue releasing prisoners independently of whether the U.S. government granted visas, and to increase the number released so that all would be freed by September. As of the end of May, some 1,900 prisoners had been freed.<sup>2</sup>

### The Cuban Communities' Response

The reaction to the dialogue by the Cuban communities was very different from Washington's. Members of the Antonio Maceo Brigade,

2. The day I was putting finishing touches on this article, the *New York Times* reported a decision by the revolutionary government to free the remaining 610 political prisoners not covered by the dialogue accord. This group is composed mostly of former members of Batista's armed forces convicted of war crimes. The decision was announced July 9 by members of the Cuban community abroad who had traveled to La Habana to discuss the release of these prisoners with the government.

Rev. Espinosa's church, and others set up travel agencies to organize tours to Cuba by Cubans in the United States. Despite the high cost—about \$800 for one week—the special tourist offices have been swamped since the day they opened their doors. For example, Cubatravel in New York has itself been organizing trips by nearly 3,000 people a month, and is constantly turning people away because flights are booked far in advance. Overall, of the roughly 1 million Cubans living abroad, some 100,000 will visit the island this year, with the overwhelming majority coming from the United States.

The trips are having a tremendous impact. Some people have gone to Cuba two or three times in the past few months and are saving money to go back again. For many, it is simply an opportunity to visit their loved ones or see their hometown. But seeing revolutionary Cuba today, and comparing it with what it was twenty years ago, is an experience that leaves few unchanged.

According to tour organizers, the overwhelming number of visitors are working class, primarily emigrés from lower social-economic strata in Cuba who still have many or most of their relatives and friends there. The ex-bourgeois families (who most often are the better-off ones here, even if no longer bourgeois) tended to emigrate in toto, taking every last cousin and grandmother along.

The dialogue shows the continuing capacity of the Cuban leadership to see an opportunity and figure out how to take advantage of it.

- Fidel Castro took Jimmy Carter's human rights rhetoric and crammed it down his throat. All of a sudden, in the eyes of masses of Cubans in the United States, it is the U.S. government that is the obstacle to freeing the prisoners.

- Washington has lost what it thought was a stable base of support and a demagogic debating point for its anti-Cuba policy. It is clear the majority of U.S. Cubans want the U.S. economic blockade lifted and diplomatic relations normalized.

- By affirming the Cuban national identity of Cubans abroad, Havana has stimulated the awareness of Cubans in the United States that as a group they suffer national oppression, and that in fighting it they have the complete support

of Cuba. This was succinctly expressed in Fidel's parting statement to the first contingent of the brigade: "*La patria ha crecido*" (The homeland has grown). In a country where "*Patria o Muerte! Venceremos!*" (Land or Death! We will win!) has been the battle cry of the revolution for twenty years, such a statement implies a far-reaching political commitment.

### Advance for Cuban Revolution

- The Cuban government is for the first time trying to directly influence U.S. politics, seeking to find support among a mostly working-class layer of the population for lifting the blockade and normalization of relations. If only by exposing Cubans in the United States to the reality of revolutionary Cuba, the dialogue means a tremendous step forward. In addition, more and more trips are being arranged by groups such as Latino educators, doctors, and rank-and-file trade-union members to Cuba.

- The dialogue has strengthened the prestige and popularity of the revolutionary government among the masses in Cuba. Like the Cubans in the United States, many in Cuba have also suffered from being cut off from family members and friends for close to twenty years.

- At a time when the world market price of sugar is less than what it costs Cuba to produce it, the income generated from the visits by Cubans abroad are a welcome source of sorely needed foreign exchange with which to advance Cuba's economic development.

- The dialogue is helping to break down the imperialist information blockade and slander campaign against revolutionary Cuba. Tens of thousands of U.S. workers are seeing with their own eyes and hearing from their relatives and friends that Cuba is not a totalitarian police state and that the Cuban people are not starving to death.

- The dialogue has helped to shift the relationship of forces within the Cuban communities in the United States. The ultra-rightists are becoming increasingly isolated. For example, in Miami recently they were only able to mobilize a few hundred (as opposed to many thousands a few years ago) in an all-out effort to show opposition to the revolution. In other areas, their situation is worse. On the other side, groups such as the



Readiness of millions of Cubans, regardless of age, to defend their revolution has defeated imperialist efforts to restore the old order. This made possible the opening of the dialogue with Cubans abroad.



Committee for Normalization of Relations, Rev. Espinosa's church, and the Antonio Maceo Brigade are growing rapidly. The brigade's second contingent will consist of 250 people, compared to 55 on the first one, and there were more applications than available slots.

- The dialogue and everything associated with it has tremendously raised the prestige of the revolution and its central leaders among the Cubans in the U.S., even among those who remain ideologically opposed to the revolution.

- Finally, it is useful to single out what the dialogue is not, since it has been misreported in the U.S. capitalist press. It is not an approach by the Cuban government to the U.S. government through exile intermediaries. In his first news conference on the dialogue, Castro stressed that:

"None of these problems has been discussed with the Government of the United States. The U.S. Government has absolutely nothing to do with this, absolutely nothing! . . .

"These problems are internal problems which we are not willing to discuss with the Government of the United States, because they are internal to Cuba, and we do not discuss nor will we ever discuss with the Government of the United States questions referring to Cuba's internal affairs or to Cuba's sovereignty.

"However, we're willing to discuss these particular problems with the Cubans abroad. In other words, we're willing to discuss, to talk over these questions that concern the Cuban community—but not with the Government of the United States." (*Granma*, September 17, 1978).

Fidel went to great lengths to communicate to the Cubans abroad that they should look to Havana, not to Washington, for real solutions to questions such as the release of prisoners and restoration of the right to visit relatives in Cuba. It was a political move to take away from Washington several issues it had used to keep many U.S. Cubans tied to its counterrevolutionary line.

#### Role of Antonio Maceo Brigade

As can be noted from Castro's news conference, the Antonio Maceo Brigade has played a special role in the dialogue.

The brigade's central core consists of several

circles of longtime friends and political associates that emerged from student movement milieus in the United States and Puerto Rico. Some came out of the left wing (the so-called *tercerista* faction) of the Puerto Rican Independence Party. Others were associated with a group known as Cuban Socialist Youth that functioned on a few Florida campuses in 1970 and 1971. Still others had been active in struggles by Latino communities, including the District 1 struggle for community control of the schools in New York City. Over time, they tended to group around the magazine *Arelto*, whose editorial board made the original proposal for the brigade to the Cuban government and put together the book *Contra Viento y Marea*.

To be in the brigade, it is not necessary to be a supporter of the revolution or a *fidelista*. The requirements are that a person be of Cuban birth or parentage, be between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, have left Cuba due to parental decision before the age of eighteen (in the case of those who are Cuban born), not be a member of a counterrevolutionary organization, and support lifting the blockade and normalizing relations. However, many members of the brigade are sympathetic to the revolution, and many of the leaders identify politically with the Cuban leadership, although not uncritically. They consider themselves revolutionaries and, more specifically, Cuban revolutionaries.

In April, Carlos Muñiz, a central leader of the brigade in Puerto Rico and a member of its U.S.-Puerto Rico National Committee, was assassinated by right-wing terrorists. A eulogy published in *Granma* explains how the Cuban government views this layer:

"Carlos Muñiz was 26 years old when he died, and he had reached what Che called 'the highest condition of the human species': the condition of being a revolutionary. . . .

"You had to have seen his eyes that night when Fidel told them: 'Let there be no doubt in your minds that we consider you part of our family.' He was one of the first—always one of the first—to understand when Fidel said that their duty did not necessarily lie in Cuba but there, where they were most useful. . . .

"He died in battle, as teacher Conrado Benítez

did, as literacy campaigner Manuel Ascunce did, as young Puerto Ricans Soto and Rosado did, as the internationalist soldier that he was. Over his body we'll say the words of José Martí: 'Death gives us leaders, death teaches us lessons and leaves us examples. Thus, these invisible threads are woven steadily together to form the soul of the homeland.' With his leadership, his lesson and his example, ever present in our people's memories, we say with Carlos Muñiz the irrevocable watchword of Patria o Muerte, Vencemos." (*Granma*, May 13, 1979).

#### A Permanent Dialogue

An editorial in the first issue of the brigade's paper, *Baraguá*, explains the position of the brigade leadership on the dialogue:

"We are concerned with the freedom of the prisoners and the reunification of the family. But we—at least those of us in the Antonio Maceo Brigade—are also concerned with developing a permanent Dialogue with Cuba. This is why we have raised in both sessions of the Dialogue, the possibility that the Cuban government give those of us abroad our constitutional rights. Those rights might include voting in elections to the Assembly of People's Power, joining Cuban mass organizations, studying in Cuban universities and sending our children to Cuban camps and schools.

"The Antonio Maceo Brigade is, therefore, not a travel agency. We went to Cuba not only moved by nostalgia for the past, but moved, above all, by the revolutionary course of the Cuban people begun on October 10, 1868, continued by José Martí and the Cuban Revolutionary Party and culminated on January 1, 1959.

"In 1977, we were opposed to the blockade and defended our right to experience the achievements and shortcomings of the revolutionary process. Today we also want to insure an ongoing Dialogue with Cuba. The second contingent of the Brigade and all those that follow will be made up of young people who, while not necessarily socialist in orientation, want to experience Cuba more deeply than they might in a tourist trip. It is important to emphasize, however, that many young people will first travel to Cuba as tourists and then become interested in a different



Cuba has abolished illiteracy and vastly expanded education. Such gains have made many who left Cuba in earlier years take another look at the revolution.





**Antiracist stance of Cuban government and abolition of all forms of racial segregation and discrimination has added to prestige of the Cuban revolution.**

experience of Cuban society. That different experience is what the Brigade has to offer.

"The current situation allows us to think that the process of losing our nationality, a process that in one or two generations would have prostituted the Cuban national identity, has largely been stopped. Although many young people speak Spanish haltingly and do not know Cuban history, the doors are now open for them to know their roots. Although many Cubans of our parents' generation may retain their conservative positions, knowing the Revolution's reality will weaken these positions, at any rate with respect to the normalization of relations between Cuba and the US. The fact that contact with Cuba slows down the loss of nationality may well result in changes in political attitude among Cubans abroad. After all, in today's Cuba, national identity is much more than a cultural definition; being a Cuban also involves a world view formed by the revolution."

The favorable reaction of the Cuban government to the idea of a "permanent dialogue" is reflected in the joint declaration on the dialogue signed by the Cuban government and the Cubans from the United States who participated in it.

"There were a number of issues brought up during the talks by representatives of the Cuban community abroad, among them:

"—The setting up of a Cuban state institute to attend to matters concerning the community abroad; the right to repatriation; the possibility of scholarships for young Cubans and participation by children living abroad in the Pioneer vacation camp program; and exchanges between Cuban artists, intellectuals and professionals. These ideas were listened to with interest by the Cuban government.

"—Also raised by a number of persons representing the community were issues of Cuban citizenship and the legal status of emigrants; possible connections between persons residing abroad and national social and mass organizations; the suitability of putting out a publication for the Cuban community abroad; and other matters related to facilitating visits to Cuba.

"The Government of the Republic of Cuba will study all these matters very carefully in order to find the most just and reasonable solutions to them." (*Granma*, December 17, 1978).

One of the ideas raised in the brigade's platform for the dialogue and in the "Final Act" has already been adopted, that of sending Cuban children abroad to summer camps in Cuba where they will stay for several weeks with the *pioneros*. Several dozen *maceitos* (little Maceos) will go on the first such trip this summer, under the auspices of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and the Cuban government.

Nationalist sentiment is evident in the Antonio Maceo Brigade editorial and in other writings of

the younger pro-revolution exiles (such as the book *Contra Viento y Marea*).

This nationalism has nothing to do with—or rather, is precisely the opposite of—the phony, pro-imperialist prattle of the right-wing exiles about how much they love (the old) Cuba.

At root, the nationalism of these younger, pro-Cuba Cubans is no different from the nationalism of Chicanos, Blacks, or Puerto Ricans. It reflects their perception that Cubans in the United States aren't getting a fair shake, face common problems, and are predominantly working class in composition. It is a nationalism that is directed against a real national oppression; as such, it is progressive. Moreover, this nationalist sentiment is also directed against the imperialist attacks on Cuba. It is directed against the right-wing puppets with their huge Cuban flags—which they use to try to hide the strings through which the U.S. government manipulates them. The radicalizing young Cubans tend to be anti-imperialist from the outset.

Twenty years of living in the United States has changed the Cuban exiles. But the greatest effect has been on those who were brought out as children. The U.S.-born or-raised Cuban is very different from those in Cuba or even their parents who came here as adults. Nevertheless, the national identity that the younger radicals identify with is Cuban, not Cuban-American, although that term is occasionally used. And the Cuban government considers them Cuban too. In fact, all Cubans who travel to Cuba have to get Cuban passports and are considered to be Cuban citizens, even if they are also naturalized U.S. citizens. Those of Cuban parentage born abroad are encouraged to register as Cuban citizens if they wish, since Cuba recognizes dual citizenship.

### The Terrorist Counteroffensive

As a result of the dialogue, the polarization within the Cuban communities has sharpened. The ultra-rightists oppose the dialogue, and as they became progressively more isolated, they have resorted to increasingly desperate actions. In addition to murdering Muñiz, there have been many bombings (sometimes not publicized even in the local capitalist press or the radical press). There has also been a systematic campaign to silence Cuban journalists who report favorably on the dialogue and to intimidate those who took part in the Commission of 75, including assassination threats and attempts against the Rev. Manuel Espinosa, one of the best-known figures among them.

The U.S. government is in complicity with these attacks. Police have been totally uncooperative in responding to threats made against pro-dialogue Cubans.

The Antonio Maceo Brigade has had an increasingly difficult time finding places to hold public forums or film showings in New York. Even before any publicity is given to an event, the right-wing terrorists seem to know who has agreed to rent them a meeting hall, and pressure is mounted on the owners to cancel the event.

Employees of Cubatravel agency, who are mostly members of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, have faced extraordinary delays in obtaining the necessary U.S. papers to travel outside the United States, although the U.S. government now claims it does not restrict travel to Cuba.

There have been repeated public charges that the main terrorist group is the Cuban Nationalist Movement, with public headquarters in Union City, New Jersey. Its central leader is currently imprisoned for the assassination of Chilean Orlando Letelier. In addition to functioning in its own name, it also acts in concert with other right-wing Cuban groups, such as Abdala, Alpha 66, and the 2506 Brigade, through a front group known as the Bloc of Revolutionary Organizations.

When carrying out their actions, the terrorists use several different names. Domestic Cuba-related assassinations are signed by "Comando O." The name "Omega 7" is used to take credit for bombings. In international operations against the Cuban revolution, their actions are signed "CORU." The acknowledged head of CORU, Orlando Bosch, is in prison in Venezuela for having blown up in midair a plane of Cubana de Aviacion with more than seventy people on board. Fidel Castro—whose track record in surviving countless assassination attempts indicates he has substantial sources of information—publicly accused the American CIA of having engineered the airplane bombing.

Communiques from the terrorists and interviews with their "military chief," one "Commander Z," are published in the right-wing *periodiquitos*, weeklies distributed free in the exile communities. These kinds of papers have been publicly accused of extorting advertising revenue from local Cuban businessmen. Similar fund-raising techniques are used to get money to defend arrested terrorists, etc.

The American government claims it stopped supporting the right-wing terrorists at the end of the 1960s. Fidel Castro has stated several times that the policy of direct U.S. government backing of the terrorist groups ended only in 1977. Nevertheless, U.S. government complicity with the terrorists continues. As Fidel pointed out in one of his news conferences on the dialogue, "If it [the U.S. government] wanted to it could eliminate the terrorists immediately. The U.S. Government knows who they are, what weapons they have, where they live and what they do." Castro added that one explanation of why the government doesn't eliminate the terrorists "is because it doesn't want to." (*Granma*, December 17, 1978).

In addition to attacking pro-dialogue forces, the terrorists continue their attacks against Cuban diplomatic missions, cultural and sporting events that involve participants from Cuba, and similar targets. Anti-Cuban statements by Carter, whether pegged around Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, or Africa, reinspire the terrorists and encourage the cops to wink at their crimes. The way the terrorists see it, they are only carrying out U.S. foreign policy through other means.

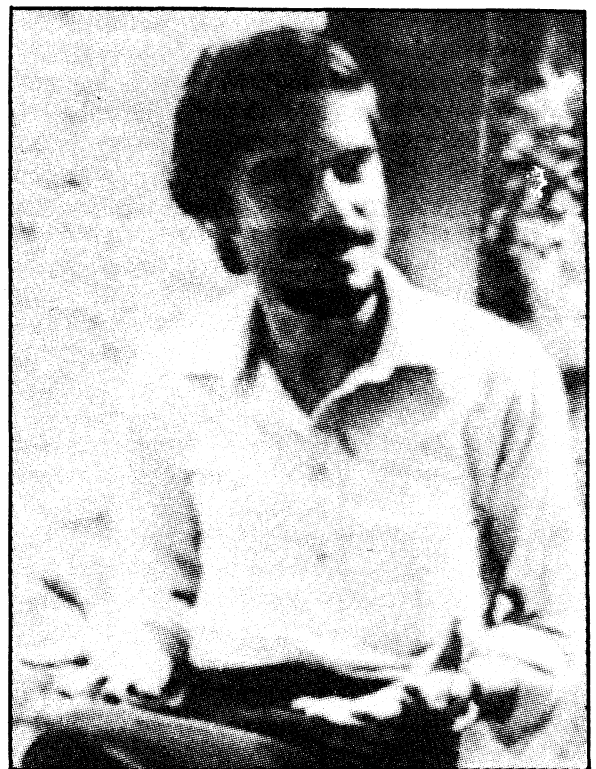
The Antonio Maceo Brigade and other pro-dialogue groups launched a campaign in response to the terrorist attacks, and especially the assassination of Carlos Muñiz. They held simultaneous news conferences in half a dozen cities demanding that the government crack down on the terrorists, and calling on all Cubans and all supporters of democratic rights to send messages to President Carter and Attorney Griffin Bell along this line. They also held highly visible, public events in the Cuban communities—including those where the terrorists are strongest—to show them that the supporters of the dialogue would not be driven underground. These usually took the form of religious memorials for Muñiz followed by car caravans. Several hundred cars participated in Miami, about 150 people participated in Union City, New Jersey, and similar numbers in other cities.

### Defending the Cuban Revolution

In carrying out the dialogue, American revolutionists can do well to follow the example of the Cuban leaders in spotting an opening to advance the revolution and moving to take advantage of it.

Cuba's demand that the U.S. government lift the economic blockade and normalize diplomatic relations deserves support. "The economic blockade," as Fidel Castro has explained, "is like a knife at Cuba's throat." (*Granma*, December 3, 1978). The blockade prevents Cuba from buying anything from the United States or exporting to the United States. This is a great burden on the

*Continued on next page*



**Carlos Muñiz Varela, a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, was murdered by counterrevolutionary Cuban terrorists on April 28 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.**

What is "socialism in one country"? Why is it an unrealizable goal in the world today? Why is a revolutionary strategy for the overthrow of capitalism both possible and necessary? What is the fundamental basis of such a strategy?

*The Third International After Lenin* gives the basic answer to these questions from a Marxist point of view.

The first two sections, "The Program of International Revolution or a Program of Socialism in One Country?" and "Strategy and Tactics in the Imperialist Epoch," contain the basic characterization of the epoch we live in, its revolutionary possibilities, and the strategic tasks of an international revolutionary party.

Other sections take up the lessons and aftermath of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 and develop-

## The Third International After Lenin.

By Leon Trotsky. New York. Pathfinder Press. 346 pages.

ments in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s.

From 1924 on, the slogan of the privileged bureaucratic layer heading the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet government has been "socialism in one country." In this book Trotsky exposes the unrealistic nature of this theory, which marked a repudiation of the previous gains and aims of the revolutionary socialist movement.

The idea of building a socialist society in one country, and a backward one like the USSR in the 1920s at that, was an attempt to separate the development of the Soviet Union from the fate of the working-class struggle in the rest of the world, with which it was inextricably linked by the objective laws of economic development.

## Pathfinder's Choice for August

# Internationalism versus 'Socialism in One Country'

As Trotsky pointed out, "In our epoch, which is the epoch of imperialism, i.e., of world economy and world politics under the hegemony of finance capital, not a single communist party can establish its program by proceeding solely or mainly from conditions and tendencies of developments in its own country. This also holds entirely for the party that wields the state power within the boundaries of the U.S.S.R. . . . In the present epoch, to a much larger extent than in the past, the national orientation of the proletariat must and can flow only from a world orientation and not vice versa."

The errors of the Stalinists, still current today, are not simply or even primarily theoretical. "Socialism in one country" as a strategy not only blocks the road to socialism, but it provides ideological cover for the Stalinists' rejection of the struggle to take power from the capitalists, and for active collaboration with the imperialist ruling class on a world scale.

"Socialism in one country" is the pretext for the treacherous policies followed by Stalinist bureaucratic castes and parties today, policies which have brought about many defeats and setbacks for the world revolution.

In opposition to this policy of betrayal, Trotsky pointed to the need to extend the revolution, not only to defend the Soviet Union, but to create the real basis for a world socialist system.

The leaders of the Russian Communist Party had the obligation not to sit back on their "socialist" haunches, but "to spread the revo-

lution . . . and to support insurrections . . . with arms in hand. . . ." The best example of this policy today is the revolutionary aid that the Cuban leadership has given to the liberation struggles in Africa.

More important still, the Communist International had the obligation to aid in the development of revolutionary parties in other countries, to help them in working out a correct program and strategy. Trotsky's document made its biggest contribution in this respect.

This section of *The Third International After Lenin* was a basic programmatic statement of the views of the Left Opposition led by Trotsky, which opposed the rise of Stalinism in the Soviet Union and the Communist International. It was written as a criticism of the program proposed for the sixth congress of the Comintern in 1928.

There it fell into the hands of an American delegate, James P. Cannon, and a representative of the

Canadian Communist Party, Maurice Spector. Both had had gnawing doubts about the course of events in the Communist parties and in the Soviet Union. Cannon describes what followed:

"We let the caucus meetings and the Congress sessions go to the devil while we read and studied this document. Then I knew what I had to do, and so did he. Our doubts had been resolved. It was as clear as daylight that Marxist truth was on the side of Trotsky."

Trotsky's most important message was indeed his answer to the question "what to do": construct a revolutionary working-class party with a program and strategy aimed at placing the workers in power and reconstructing society. This task still confronts the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International today. That is why this book is must reading for all revolutionists.

—Duncan Williams

## 25% Discount Offer

*The Third International After Lenin* is available at a special discount rate of \$4.15. The regular price is \$5.45. Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014. Send check or money order or return this coupon to one of the socialist bookstores listed on page 31. Offer expires September 30, 1979.

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## ...Dialogue

Continued from preceding page

small, underdeveloped country. The Cubans are forced to deal through expensive third-party intermediaries for essential parts for U.S.-made machinery. They must do without many common items, or order them from as far away as the Soviet Union. And Washington then has the hypocrisy to attack the Castro government for inflicting privations on the Cuban people, and for turning Cuba into a "Soviet satellite."

At the same time, Washington hopes to use its détente relationship with Moscow to exert pressure on the Cubans to moderate or abandon their internationalist foreign policy. In his June 18 speech to Congress reporting on his summit meeting with Brezhnev, Carter said, "I made it clear to President Brezhnev that Cuban military activities in Africa . . . and also the growing Cuban involvement in the problems of Central America and the Caribbean, can only have a negative impact on U.S.-Soviet relations." (*New York Times*, June 19, 1979).

Fortunately, the Cuban revolutionists have stood up to this kind of pressure; and in this too, they deserve our support and that of working people throughout the world.

We should also vigorously campaign against every U.S. military threat or hint of military threat against Cuba. The revolutionary upsurge in Nicaragua, coming on the heels of the Angolan and Ethiopian events, demonstrates again that defense of struggles in semicolonial countries is inseparable from defense of the Cuban revolution.

The example of what the Cuban workers and peasants have accomplished in the past twenty years can help show workers and farmers in the United States how well we could do here without

bosses, especially because we could begin with greater material advantages. Socialists should publicize the revolution and its accomplishments, and should become known as those who favor American workers and farmers solving their problems by taking the Cuban road.

American socialists should work with pro-dialogue Cuban groups as the Cuban-American Committee for Normalization of Relations, around projects such as the petition campaign that group is sponsoring demanding that Carter lift the blockade and normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba.

One of the most successful activities sponsored by brigade units in various areas are showings of documentaries and other films from Cuba, especially highly political films that don't usually make it into any theaters in the United States. We socialists can publicize and attend brigade showings, or do the same thing ourselves.

The second contingent of the Antonio Maceo Brigade—named "Contingente Carlos Muñiz Varela" in memory of the murdered brigade leader—will return in mid-August from a month-long visit to Cuba. The firsthand account of the *brigadistas* on what they did and what they saw should make exceptionally interesting public meetings.

### Support the Dialogue

Supporting the dialogue is part of defending and extending the Cuban revolution. By releasing the prisoners, for example, the Cuban leadership has dealt a powerful blow to the anti-Cuban propaganda and shown that it understands that defense of the revolution is above all political. The Cuban government is correct in saying that

the U.S. government has a moral responsibility to admit to the United States those prisoners who wish to come here. And the Carter administration deserves denunciation for preaching about human rights while trying to sabotage the humanitarian gesture of the Cuban government.

Supporters of the dialogue must punch through the blackout of news on this development by the imperialist news media.

Socialists should also support the idea of the "permanent dialogue," the idea that Cubans in the U.S. should maintain an ongoing relationship with the revolution. The relationship with the revolution—not simply support for one or another measure—is what's really at the heart of the dialogue. That's why it has become the dividing line within the Cuban communities, and why the terrorists and the U.S. government are making their target all those who support the dialogue or are associated with it.

The dialogue is more than the two meetings held in Havana last fall; it is an ongoing process. It will not only affect the Cuban layer of the U.S. working class, but will tend to have a growing impact on all working people. It won't just mean increased attention by the Castro leadership to the politics and problems of the Cuban communities in the United States, but also to U.S. politics as a whole. The dialogue shows that far from being weighed down with an entrenched bureaucratic caste, the Cuban revolution still counts with a leadership capable of seeing a possibility for advancing the revolution and making good use of it—in short, that Cuba still has a revolutionary leadership. The dialogue means a new stage in the interrelationship between the Cuban revolution and the coming American revolution.



# Marroquin files new appeal for asylum

By Roger Rudenstein

Another round in the fight to save the life of Héctor Marroquín opened July 30 with the filing of an appeal brief with the Board of Immigration Appeals. The sixty-eight-page document, filed by Marroquín's attorney Margaret Winter, challenges the decision of immigration judge James Smith to deport Marroquín to Mexico. Smith's ruling was not only "arbitrary and capricious," but was also motivated by his opposition to Marroquín's socialist politics. Smith simply ignored the evidence presented at Marroquín's deportation hearing in April.

Winter's brief asks the appeals board to reverse Judge Smith's decision and grant Marroquín political asylum in this country. While his appeal is being considered by the board, Marroquín cannot be legally deported.

Marroquín is a twenty-six-year-old trade unionist and socialist. A student activist in Mexico, he was forced to flee to the United States in 1974 after cops falsely accused him of terrorist activity.

In her brief, Winter makes an airtight case for political asylum. She points out that the law unequivocally states that any person fleeing persecution for their political beliefs must be given asylum here. Using evidence originally introduced at the deportation hearing, the brief documents how Marroquín's frame-up was concocted by Mexican authorities.

### Police frame-up

On January 17, 1974, a librarian at Marroquín's school, Joel Rojo, was assassinated.

Two days later, accounts appeared in the press fixing the blame on members of the "Revolutionary Student Front," a nonexistent group. Police gave the papers a list of the supposed leaders of this imaginary front—a list that included Marroquín.

Police also supplied a photograph of Marroquín supposedly found in the dead librarian's home. Actually, it was a copy of a photo Marroquín had given the university when he first applied for admission.

The murder of Rojo was used as the occasion for a witch-hunt of the entire student movement at the University of Nuevo León.

Marroquín, correctly fearing his life was in danger, left Monterrey and sought refuge with relatives. Other activists, however, were not so fortunate. The brief describes in detail the fate of other students accused of the murder of the librarian along with Marroquín—they were "disappeared" or murdered by police.

According to Judge Smith's twisted logic, Marroquín has nothing to fear in Mexico because he managed to return there on several brief, clandestine visits in hopes of finding a lawyer to clear his name. If Marroquín is so "notorious," and the Mexican police so bent on killing him, argued the judge, then why wasn't he caught?

Smith thus reduces the right of political asylum to a posthumous one. Only those who are caught and killed by the Mexican police can qualify.

The Mexican police themselves informed the INS that Marroquín was wanted for terrorism. They even sent out a copy of a wanted poster claiming he is "armed and dangerous."

### 'White Brigades'

Had Marroquín been caught, the brief points out, his life would have been in grave danger. Expert witnesses at Marroquín's deportation hearing described how the terrorist White Brigades kidnap students, unionists, and peasant activists, hold them incommunicado, torture them into signing false confessions, or kill them outright.



Protest in Mexico last year against government repression. Contrary to documentary evidence, Judge Smith claims Marroquín would face no danger if returned to Mexico.

Robert Goldman, author of a report on Mexico for the International League for Human Rights, testified that the White Brigades are made up of police and army personnel and operate under government orders. Goldman's report was even accepted as authoritative and quoted by the U.S. State Department in its report on human rights practices abroad.

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, a leading spokesperson for the Mexican human rights movement, confirmed the danger Marroquín faces in Mexico. She told the hearing how police torture activists as a matter of course. In one incident related by Piedra at the hearing, police kidnapped the two-and-a-half-year-old son of an activist couple and also tortured their three-month-old infant in the presence of the mother to force her to sign a false confession.

Another argument advanced by Judge Smith is that such abuses have been halted because the Mexican government passed an amnesty law.

### Sham amnesty

The brief shows that the Mexican amnesty law, enacted in the fall of 1978, was a cynical maneuver designed to take the heat off the government for its violations of human rights.

Both Goldman and Piedra, who Judge Smith admitted were "impressive" witnesses, testified that the amnesty law was a sham.

According to the brief, "When lists appeared of those granted amnesty under the law, they contained numbers of persons who had never been impri-

soned and many others who were already dead. Persons who already were free on bond and who appeared before the authorities to claim the amnesty were thereupon arrested, tortured into confessing new crimes, and then charged."

Another part of Smith's ruling is the contention that Marroquín was "exactly like countless other undocumented Mexican aliens" who come to the United States simply to get work, not to flee political persecution.

Smith made his attitude toward undocumented workers clear when he told reporters a week after his ruling that Marroquín was like "the average wetback" and that he "complained of the low wages in our horrible capitalist system."

Of course, Marroquín is like other undocumented workers: here in the United States he was forced to work for low wages. His rights were trampled on by *la migra*. However, he is also a political refugee.

In saying that he came here to seek work, the brief points out, Judge Smith "chose to ignore . . . Marroquín's employment status and prospects at the time he left Mexico," where he was in his fourth year of studies at the university and earning money as a high school teacher.

### Red-baiting attack

A particularly pernicious part of the judge's ruling is his attempt to slander Marroquín's association with the Socialist Workers Party. Smith baldly asserts that Marroquín joined the SWP

only after the INS tried to deport him and that the SWP wanted Marroquín as a "cause to promote."

In the brief, Winter explains that the judge erred on the simple question of when Marroquín joined the SWP. Marroquín testified at the hearing that he joined the SWP in 1976, more than a year before he was picked up by *la migra*.

Smith's assertion to the contrary, Winter says, "displays the immigration judge's deep hostility to Marroquín's political beliefs, as do the other references in the opinion to Marroquín's politics."

These include the remark that Marroquín "prefers Castro's Cuba" to the United States. This was prompted by Marroquín's strong defense of the Cuban revolution and Cuba's revolutionary role in the world today in response to red-baiting by the INS prosecutor at the hearing.

While Marroquín stands by his views, they are "wholly irrelevant" to whether he should get asylum, Winter says. The fact that the judge raised Marroquín's political views in his decision shows its political nature.

A ruling on Marroquín's appeal is expected sometime in the fall. Meanwhile, his defense committee is keeping the pressure on the INS and plans to tour Marroquín.

"The brief just underscores the fact that the INS has violated Marroquín's rights from beginning to end," says Winter. "Every supporter should help keep the pressure on until the government reverses itself and allows Marroquín to stay in this country."



## New literature on Marroquin

The Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee has issued two new pieces of material to be used in winning support for Marroquín's right to political asylum. A new basic brochure for the case, entitled "Can a Socialist Find Asylum in the U.S.—The Case of Héctor Marroquín," and an appeal to trade unionists are now off the press. Both are available in bulk from the defense committee national office in New York City.

The new brochure incorporates material from Marroquín's deportation hearing in Houston, Texas, April 3-5.

"I hope all Marroquín's supporters will order big quantities of the new literature," said Jane Roland, coordi-

nator of the defense committee. "They are important in reaching out to new supporters and mobilizing to put pressure on the Immigration and Naturalization Service. It's that pressure that has kept the INS from deporting Marroquín thus far."

"The labor appeal can be handed out to co-workers on the job and shown, along with other materials, to trade union officials whose endorsement we are seeking."

Both the new brochure and the trade union appeal cost three cents apiece and can be ordered from the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, Box 843 Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003.

## 'Coal is the answer'

# Mine worker speaks on nuclear dangers

The following are excerpts from a talk by Michael Bruckner, a legislative representative for the United Mine Workers of America in Washington, D.C. Bruckner spoke at a meeting organized by the Essex County, New Jersey, SEA Alliance, an antinuclear power group, in Montclair on July 22.

I'm a rank-and-file coal miner. I worked in the coal mines for about three years. My family has a rich tradition in the coal fields—I'm a fifth-generation coal miner. My family and my union do have some experience dealing with large, hostile corporations and fighting with the government.

We have a large, well-financed electric utility industry that is deeply committed to nuclear power. You have equipment manufacturers like Babcock & Wilcox, Westinghouse, those sort of people, who have a well-financed representation in Congress.

This situation is very similar to the things we've seen down through the years, with the United Mine Workers facing the coal corporations and the government trying to beat us in our strikes.

As I looked around the room here tonight, I was amazed at the cross-section of people that we see.

Probably before Three Mile Island this audience would be somewhat smaller than it is now. But because that accident brought the realization to us just what kind of monster we've created with nuclear power, we see a broad coalition forming of women, other minorities, of senior citizens, of young people, labor organizations. It's pretty encouraging to see so many people coming together and focusing on an issue.

The Mineworkers have taken the position that until the problems associated with nuclear power—the health and safety aspects, waste problems—until those things are addressed, the development of nuclear power should be halted.

### Health & safety

Basically, our position results from several different things. Number one, the health and safety aspects of nuclear power. Number two, the economics of nuclear power. And number three, the jobs issue.

As far as health and safety goes, I think everyone realizes just what kind of thing we're dealing with. The nuclear waste issue is something that [lasts] hundreds of thousands of years. If Neanderthal Man, who lived in a cave, had nuclear power, we today would be in danger from their waste.

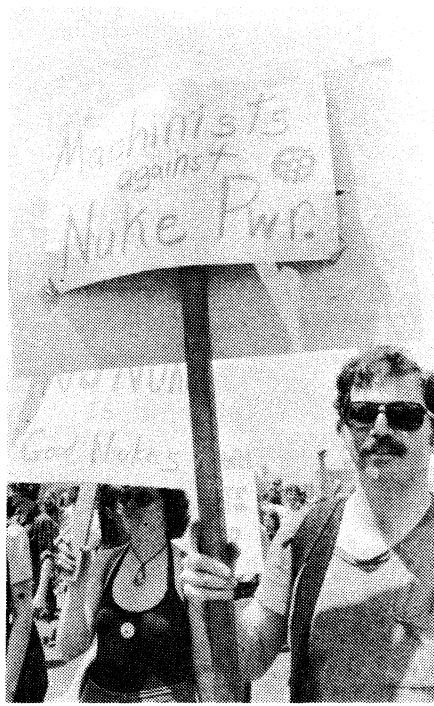
This isn't something that's going to go away in your grandchildren's generation, it's not something that's going to go away in your great-grandchildren's generation. We're going to have to live with this for thousands and thousands and thousands of years.

We don't have the capacity to build something that can hold it in. If we build it in a salt mine out in Arizona, who knows when an earthquake will come along, split the encasements apart, and seep it into the water table?

You'll hear the politicians tell you that we're so deeply committed to nuclear power that we can't fall back.

That's not true. Thirteen percent of the electricity produced in this country is produced by nuclear power. Conservation, more money put into solar development to help with conservation, and a switch, a national commitment to utilization of our massive coal reserves [could make up that 13 percent].

We could burn coal in this country for the next two, three, four hundred years with our own domestic proven reserves, and take the next two or three



Militant/Lou Howort and Arnold Weisberg

Industrial workers and their unions are increasingly voicing opposition to nuclear power. United Mine Workers of America is in forefront of this development.

hundred years [to] develop something that's safe.

We can shut down nuclear power plants, halt the construction of any more, phase the ones that we have out now, increase our ability to wheel power [that is, shift electricity from one place to another].

### Economics & jobs

On the economics of nuclear power. Construction costs alone—a billion dollars for a nuclear power plant. Now they're saying cost estimates for the cleanup at Three Mile Island could even overshadow the billion-dollar capital cost investment.

So, the economic argument that we need nuclear power because all other power sources will continue to escalate in costs and nuclear power will be virtually free—I think we all know, by looking at our power bills, that that was a pretty silly argument.

The capital cost for comparable coal and nuclear power plants, right now, without the increased safety precautions that will have to be taken if we're to continue with our nuclear power industry, are roughly the same. And I don't think anyone would tell you the cost of nuclear power is going to go down in the near future.

On the jobs issue, after you build a power plant, you have very little employment that's created from the nuclear power industry, outside of the construction industry. If we decided to have a non-nuclear future and develop our resources of coal, the construction industry would in all likelihood get those plants to build. So we're not

talking about a loss of construction jobs.

What we are talking about is an increase in employment for coal miners in this country. We're talking about an increase in employment for railroad workers, to haul the coal. We're talking about an increase in employment for truck drivers, who haul coal over the road. The whole fuel cycle for coal involves jobs.

### 'Its message is money'

I have the occasion once in a while to view the nuclear industry lobbyists. They're all over Capitol Hill. You can believe and you can bet on it, that the nuclear industry gets its message across to the Congress. And its message is money. Profit.

The insurance industry went to Congress recently on a hearing on the Price-Anderson Act, which limits the liability under any accident to \$560 million. That's a very small sum when you consider that although no one died immediately from Three Mile Island—we may have some problems on down the road—no one was killed immediately, and we've already reached that limit in civil suits.

Now suppose that twenty-five, fifty thousand people had died. What would be the damage? What would be the lawsuits? What would be the total for property damage, damage in human lives, damage to farm animals? It would be staggering. It would be billions. Five hundred and sixty billion might not cover it.

But our government has put on a liability limit. They say they don't

subsidize the nuclear industry. But they have a liability limit of \$560 million. And the insurance carriers, who provide that insurance for them, they say point-blank in Congress, "If you do away with this limit, we won't insure these plants."

They know. Why won't they insure it? Because they know that the things are dangerous.

### 'We need an alternative'

We have to provide an alternative [to nuclear power]. We can't just say, "Shut 'em down and we'll worry about what happens afterwards." We have to have a viable alternative energy source.

We don't have enough oil in this country to waste it making electricity. We need to produce gasoline and diesel fuel to keep our industries running and we need home heating fuel to heat our homes. Solar power one day may provide the answer. But the simple fact is that we're thirty, forty, fifty years away from any meaningful and significant solar power electricity generating. In the meantime, we need to increase our funds for solar power.

The one alternative that we do have is coal. Now, coal has a very dirty reputation in this country. Everyone, when they think of coal power, they see smokestacks with black billowing smoke and soot all over the cars and all over the houses. And in fact, twenty years ago, that's exactly what we saw.

But today we have scrubber mechanisms that can remove as much as 95 percent of the sulfur in coal. We have particulate control mechanisms which can capture as much as 98 or 99 percent of the particulate matter, which is the soot that used to come out of the stack.

We have new methods of burning the coal itself, such as the fluidized bed combustion unit.

### Clean air and water

We've seen in Appalachia for years what the effects of uncontrolled strip mining can do. We've worked hard to address some of those problems. In 1977 we passed the Strip Mine Act. The final regulations are out. We've seen some opposition to this around the country from the coal operators.

Well, the only thing I can say to the coal operators is that these laws were not passed to please them. These laws were passed to address the problems of society.

Environmental control, clean air, clean water—these are things that the United Mine Workers are deeply committed to. And we have seen in the ten years since we've passed the Clean Air Act a tremendous improvement. The coal-fired plants that have come on line since then, that do have some kind of emission control technology, pollute at a level four to seven times less than what we have with the uncontrolled emissions.

And these are only partial controls. We just had promulgated the new source performance standards for the electric utility industry, which say that all new coal-fired generating plants that come on line after September 1978 will have to install scrubbing emission control technology. Between 70 and 90 percent of the uncontrolled emissions will have to be taken out.

We look at the next ten years with a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of optimism. We were very, very pleased with the momentum which the antinuclear movement has gathered.

What we need to do now is get the antinuclear movement to take a close look at coal, take a close look at the things that can be done about coal. And I think you'll come up with a decision that coal is a viable alternative. Coal is the answer.



# ARCO threatens outspoken oil worker

By Susie Winsten

HOUSTON—Oil giant Atlantic Richfield (ARCO) has threatened "disciplinary action" against Debby Leonard, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston, because of her outspoken denunciation of the oil crisis swindle.

"The energy czars are deliberately cutting back on gasoline and diesel production by refining only a small portion of available crude," Leonard had declared in a campaign statement. "There is plenty of crude oil available."

Leonard works at ARCO's Houston refinery and is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union Local 4-227.

This and similar declarations, expressing the views of tens of millions of American working people, ARCO charged, "bordered on the irresponsible."

On July 20 Leonard was called in to a meeting with two top refinery executives. Also at the meeting, at Leonard's request, was union committeeperson Lloyd Carter.

During the course of the meeting, Leonard told the *Militant*, the executives quoted to her remarks she had made during the campaign that had never appeared in print. "The company let me know that they have an extensive file on my political activity," Leonard commented.

Carter backed up Leonard's right to free speech, telling the company that union members would continue to exercise their right to speak out freely on the energy situation.

ARCO's heavy-handed attack re-



Militant/Regina Dotson  
Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidate Debby Leonard was threatened with 'disciplinary action' for denouncing oil monopoly's gas price swindle.

veals how weak the oil monopoly's political position is. Their claim of an "oil shortage" has been rejected overwhelmingly by American workers. They feel threatened even by a single oil worker speaking out.

This effort at intimidation has failed. Leonard has widespread support in her plant for her right to tell the truth about the oil swindle.

ARCO's move against Leonard came after a series of newspaper articles and campaign appearances at which the socialist candidate denounced the oil giants' conspiracy to hold back supplies and force prices up.

A July 1 article in the *Dallas Morning News* by Elna Christopher cited several ARCO workers as disbelieving

the company's claims.

"There's no one that I've talked to, outside of management personnel, that believes there's any such thing as a shortage," said a ten-year ARCO employee, Christopher wrote.

Christopher also reported: "Debby Leonard works at ARCO and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston. When her candidacy was announced in May, Ms. Leonard openly questioned whether there was an oil shortage."

"Joe Campbell, secretary-treasurer of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, Local 4-227, is acquainted with Ms. Leonard because she is a union member."

"He doesn't like her politics, but says

he has talked with refinery workers for ARCO, Shell Oil Co., Charter Oil Co. and Crown Central Petroleum Co. in Houston and believes Ms. Leonard is right about there not being a real shortage."

A few days after this article appeared, Leonard and her supporters passed out 200 copies of a campaign statement called "Stop the gas swindle" at a Houston-area protest meeting.

"We are being swindled by the huge energy corporations and their partners," the statement began. "I know. Like thousands of other refinery workers, I have a bird's eye view of the real oil situation. There is so much crude oil at the ARCO refinery where I work, it's overflowing!"

The statement called for opening the oil company books to public scrutiny.

"The energy industry should be turned into a real public service providing abundant energy at a price workers, farmers, and truckers can afford. The industry should be managed by an elected board that operates completely in the open and is policed by workers in the industry."

With both Democrats and Republicans backing the oil monopoly's contrived gasoline shortage, working people are increasingly looking for an alternative that can represent their interests.

As Leonard explains: "The kind of fight I'm talking about will need a political organization as well. There is no better time for our unions to run independent labor candidates—committed to working-class solutions to the gas crisis—than now."

## Rail worker runs for Minneapolis mayor

By Christine Frank

Gayle Swann announced her campaign for mayor of Minneapolis on the Socialist Workers Party ticket at a June 27 news conference.

Swann, 32, works as a laborer for the Burlington Northern Railroad. She is also a board member of the Twin Cities chapter of the National Organization for Women.

Speaking at the news conference, Swann stated her determination to help build a militant protest movement to stop the threatened shutdown of the Milwaukee Road Railroad.

Loss of Milwaukee Road services "means the loss of essential rail service to the people of Minneapolis and the loss of thousands of jobs," Swann said.

"On June 5, in Minneapolis, employees of the Milwaukee Road and

other rail workers held a public protest meeting to demand that the secret books and financial records of the Milwaukee Road be opened up to public scrutiny. I support this demand and will center my campaign on continuing the struggle against the company-manipulated effort to shut down this important railroad."

Swann's union, the Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers, Lodge 292, recently passed a resolution supporting a meeting to protest the liquidation of the road to be held in Chicago July 31.

The socialist candidate calls for Congress to immediately take over the Milwaukee Road to prevent any layoffs and cutbacks in service. "The Milwaukee Road should be publicly owned," says Swann, "and run by an elected board that would function in the open, making all the facts known. The opera-

tions of the road, especially on safety questions, should be directly controlled by the workers."

Swann's campaign supporters have filed nominating petitions with 3,000 signatures to ensure the socialist candidate a place on the November ballot.

"The response from the people of Minneapolis during our petitioning drive convinces me my campaign will receive a serious hearing this fall," she said.

Women's right to choose abortion will be an important issue in the Minneapolis mayoral race. The Democratic Farmer-Labor party (DFL) is deeply divided over abortion rights. The Twin Cities have been the scene of terrorist attacks against Planned Parenthood and the antiabortion movement is vocal throughout the state.

Don Fraser, Swann's DFL opponent

in the race, is a former U.S. representative with a reputation for supporting legal abortion. His decision to name a campaign manager who is openly opposed to women's right to abortion has created something of a scandal among Fraser's followers.

"Donald Fraser is showing his true colors," explained Swann.

"I intend to challenge Fraser every chance I get—on women's rights, the energy crisis, the Milwaukee Road shutdown. I'm going to explain to working people in Minneapolis that we need our own political party, based on our unions, to organize the fight to defend our standard of living and our political rights."

"We need a labor party that can take on the misrule of the twin parties of big business."

## Canadian woodworkers angry over new pact

By Ned Dmytryshyn

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—A new two-year contract for 40,000 British Columbia forest workers was ratified July 27. It raises wages by ninety cents the first year and 9.5 percent or ninety cents, whichever is higher, the second year. The base wage was \$8.16 an hour.

This offer was met with significant opposition within the three forest unions in British Columbia.

Officials of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) and the Canadian Paperworkers Union (CPU) urged their members to accept, while the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC) leadership recommended rejection.

Opposition to the contract centered on the lack of a cost-of-living adjust-

ment (COLA) clause, a four-year freeze on pensions, and a first-year wage offer that falls far short of the original IWA demand of \$1.50 an hour. Woodworkers needed a big immediate increase to make up for wages lost during three years of government wage controls, as well as protection against an inflation rate officially reported at around 10 percent.

From the last week in June until mid-July, more than 10,000 workers were involved in strike actions as negotiations with forest bosses were concluding. In response to this situation, the union leadership mounted a campaign to dampen the rank-and-file upsurge and to sell an inadequate contract to the membership.

This explosive situation could easily have led to an industry-wide shutdown, as the ranks of forest workers sensed that further concessions could be won from the companies.

When details of the offer became

known, the initial reaction by many forest workers was anger. In Parksville, on Vancouver Island, 150 IWA workers urged rejection and called for the resignation of Jack Monroe, chief negotiator for the IWA.

More than 1,000 loggers wildcatted after the final offer came out. Their militant action forced the companies to concede an additional one dollar an hour increase for the loggers, whose work is seasonal and extremely dangerous.

Strikes, slowdowns, and study sessions quickly spread to involve one-quarter of the forest workers in the province.

In the 6,000-member New Westminster IWA local, a caucus calling itself Woodworkers for a Better Contract began organizing for rejection. The caucus initiated distribution of more than 10,000 leaflets to woodworkers across the province. The theme of the leaflet was: "No COLA, no contract."

The union leadership's pro-contract campaign was finally reflected in the voting results. Twenty-eight thousand coastal IWA members voted 65.8 percent to accept. The CPU, representing 7,500 workers, voted 82 percent to accept. The PPWC, with 5,500 members, voted 52 percent to reject.

Voting on the same contract is now proceeding for 10,000 southern interior members of the IWA. Five thousand northern interior IWA members begin negotiations in August.

The fact that the IWA and the pulp unions negotiate separately with several giant forest monopolies on an industry-wide basis makes this set of contract talks very important for the Canadian capitalist class.

The forest workers' 11 percent first-year increase is larger than most union settlements to date since the lifting of wage controls. However, in the face of record company profits, it was clear to many woodworkers that bigger gains were left on the bargaining table.

## Ballet Nacional de Cuba

Ballet Nacional de Cuba. Alicia Alonso, Director and Prima Ballerina. At the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York.

American audiences had the opportunity to see the Ballet Nacional de Cuba perform this July at New York City's Metropolitan Opera. Due to the U.S. embargo of Cuba, this was only the second time that this internationally respected dance company has been allowed to visit the U.S.

Large audiences, including many Cuban-Americans, vigorously applauded the Cuban performers. Some reviews in the capitalist press were favorable, and some were even enthusiastic.

This however, was not the reaction of the New York *Daily News*—the daily with the biggest circulation in the country. The *News* reviewer, one

### Dance

Barton Wimble, ranted about "Bolshevik beefcake ballet . . . much macho Marxists from El Maximo Leder's island paradise." A female dancer was described as looking "strong enough to man a Czech machine gun." He ended by calling the company's artistic director, Alicia Alonso, "the Commissar of Dance . . . the red witch."

The *News* had earlier gone on record claiming that the United States has the greatest dancers because, "To be a dancer in America is tough. Low pay, few jobs, short careers. . . . In contrast, in a Communist country the jobs are highly paid, have status and pensions."

While such reviews reveal most crudely how capitalism subordinates art to politics, they tell us nothing about the artistic achievements of the Cuban ballet.

Cuban choreography is not a clumsy attempt at propaganda. It addresses themes that are of interest to working people, approaching such issues as women's oppression, personal conflicts, and war with subtlety. The company emphasizes communicating with and being understood by the public.

One of the company's repertory pieces, "Canto Vital," is described by the *Daily News* reviewer as, "Soviet agitprop work about Communism (in a red bathing suit) subduing capitalism, NATO or whatever . . ." The actual choreographic conception comes nowhere near these ideological absurdities. As Alonso explicitly states, "We are only interested in quality, and there are no political pressures on us to do any particular type of work."

As well as sponsoring the development of natively conceived contemporary pieces, the Ballet Nacional de Cuba also includes many classics of



Alicia Alonso as Carmen

Western ballet in its broad repertory.

We were fortunate enough to see the classic "Gran Pas de Quatre" presented. This delightful choreography was restaged by Alicia Alonso with carefully researched accuracy, and strict attention to the Romantic style's details.

The two other pieces performed that evening, "Carmen" and "Prologue for a Tragedy" also dis-

played the company's artistic vitality. The corps, or lower ranks of the company, have a precision that would be the envy of the best American companies. The corps members are also given solo performing opportunities, where they show considerable dramatic talent.

The development of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba was made possible by the Cuban revolution, now celebrating its twentieth anniversary. Prior to the revolution, while Cuba remained under the domination of U.S. imperialism and the Batista dictatorship, only the rich were exposed to ballet. The development of dance received no government support.

During the revolution, the national ballet (then known as the Ballet Alicia Alonso) shut down in protest against the Batista dictatorship. Soon after coming to power, the revolutionary government began to lavishly support the arts. It provided the where-with-all to launch the Ballet Nacional de Cuba in 1959.

The newly formed company went to orphanages to recruit youth to train as dancers, housing them at its new headquarters—a converted millionaire's mansion taken over by the state. The company rapidly built up its ranks and artistic standards, and set out to make ballet a popular art throughout Cuba. They bring the ballet to everyone in Cuba—riding trucks to mountain villages, performing in factories, and for farm workers on portable stages. The children of workers and peasants are given scholarships to study ballet, and they, in turn, become instructors to teach others.

Commenting on their achievements, Alicia Alonso said, "Artistically our objectives have not changed . . . the biggest change is that now the ballet is popular . . . people who have never known the theatre [come here]. . . . When I give talks to worker groups I'm always impressed. One forgets how wide awake the people are. They're interested in the craft of dancing."

This is quite a contrast to the condition of the arts in this country today.

That so few of us have the time, money, energy, or educational background to enjoy cultural activities like dance is a not unimportant aspect of what's wrong with capitalism. The fact that so much has been done to support the arts and to give workers and peasants access to culture on the small island of Cuba, even while it is under the guns of U.S. imperialism, is a great achievement of the revolution. We look forward to the victorious American revolution which will end the "art-for-the-elite" legacy of decaying U.S. capitalism, and foster conditions in which *all* individuals can develop their creativity and artistic appreciation to the fullest.

—Letitia Coburn  
& Hal Leyshon

## Northern Lights: revolt of the farmers

Northern Lights. Produced and directed by John Hanson and Rob Nilson. A Cine Manifest Production.

The 1980's will bring yet another cycle of devastation for the working farmers of capitalist America: machinery prices, and seed costs that take second and third mortgages to meet; market prices for the farmers' crops and livestock that show little or no return.

Forever forced to "buy retail and sell

### Film

wholesale," another generation of American farmers is being driven off the land into bankruptcy. There are those who remember the "Great De-

pression" of the 1930's, when foreclosures became the rule of the day. But few are still alive who recall the earlier depressions and how the farmer struggled to survive.

*Northern Lights* is a story of the small working farmer of 1916 and the conditions which touched off an agrarian revolt that swept like a prairie fire through fourteen states. The film depicts the desperation and ruin faced by North Dakota grain farmers in the winter of 1915-16.

With the struggle against the elements as a background, *Northern Lights* shows the farmers' political struggle against the capitalists who control their livelihood: the grain traders, the railroads and the banks.

Their political awakening came through the formation of the Non-Partisan Leagues, a Populist move-

ment organized by the Socialist Party. Within a single year the Non-Partisan League signed up and mobilized 40,000 North Dakota farmers to sweep the state elections of 1916.

The film is told through the eyes of a ninety-five-year-old participant in the struggle—Henry Martinson, farmer, unionist, socialist. Children and grandchildren of the militant farmers who stood up to the banks and railroads in 1916—the farmers of Crosby, North Dakota—provided the clothing, the props, and the farm machinery necessary for the authenticity of the period.

And, with the exception of three professional actors, these same farmers and their wives played major roles, speaking their old dialect—sometimes Scandinavian, sometimes

English, sometimes a mixture of the two.

Filmed in black and white against the snowy landscape, the movie gives one the sense of reality found browsing through an old photograph album of an American family farm. It leaves the viewer with the feeling that not all that much has changed: the banks and the livestock and grain marketeers are still the enemy, and the farmer again must organize and seek allies to protect his very existence.

*Northern Lights* was produced by Cine Manifest, "a San Francisco-based film production company devoted to making progressive films for mass audiences." It was selected for the 1979 Cannes Film Festival.

—Allan Grady



## Backs affirmative action

# NEA meets as attacks on teachers continue

By Jeff Mackler

By a near unanimous vote, the 8,000 delegates to the 117th annual convention of the National Education Association registered their continued commitment to affirmative action.

The 1.8 million-member teachers' union voted that the "NEA hails the recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Brian Weber vs. the United Steel Workers of America and Kaiser Aluminum Corporation* which affirmed the right of labor organizations to negotiate affirmative action provisions in contracts with employers, including specific goals, time-tables and quotas."

Speaking in support of the resolution, Ralph Schwartz, a delegate from Minnesota, reminded the convention that NEA action is required to make the *Weber* decision a reality. He noted that "the simple right to vote, guaranteed by the constitution, was not won without the pressure of a mass civil rights movement in the 1960s."

The NEA had previously filed a brief with the Supreme Court opposing *Weber's* phony "reverse discrimination" charge.

In a related action, the convention voted to seek the repeal of all provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act, "which prevent or restrict the right of labor organizations to include in their governance documents provisions for proportional representation of ethnic minorities at all governance levels of the organization."

The NEA was recently compelled to comply with a reactionary Labor Department order, backed by federal courts, to eliminate provisions guaranteeing proportional representation for minorities from its constitution and bylaws.

By a close vote, however, the delegates rejected a proposal for the NEA to initiate, in cooperation with labor and civil rights groups, a mass demonstration in Washington, D.C., protesting the Labor Department action and in support of the right of unions to guarantee minority representation.

The 1979 NEA convention marked the union's commitment to several key social issues, including affirmative action and women's rights. The NEA increasingly views itself as a militant and progressive labor union, as opposed to a "professional association."

At the same time, the NEA leadership, like most labor officials today, continues to rely on lobbying so-called friendly politicians to advance the cause of teachers and public education. In his address to the convention, NEA



Outgoing NEA president Ryor with Carter and Mondale at 1976 convention. Policy of backing Democratic Party has proven catastrophic.

President John Ryor stated, "I want to make it clear that the Carter-Mondale administration has achieved a fine record on behalf of education. And they deserve our praise for their accomplishments in this area."

1976 was the first year since the NEA's founding in 1857 that the organization endorsed a candidate for president of the United States. It committed hundreds of thousands of dollars to elect candidates of the Democratic Party. The results have proved catastrophic.

With the Democratic Party leading the charge, teacher strikes have been broken; teachers arrested; local, state, and federal education budgets slashed; schools closed; tens of thousands of teachers fired; and new legislative attacks, including antibusing initiatives and anti-collective bargaining bills, introduced.

These facts were recorded on a daily basis during the proceedings, formal and informal, at the NEA convention.

Despite his pro-Democratic Party stance, Ryor did make it clear that the Carter administration had defaulted on NEA priorities such as the passage of federal collective bargaining legisla-

tion for teachers, health care, closing corporation tax loopholes, and energy policies.

A major portion of Ryor's speech was devoted to a scathing attack on the government's energy proposals. Ryor said: "There is something indecent about a government that allows oil companies to rip off profit increases of 300 percent while teachers are accused of being greedy for asking for 8 percent or 9 or 10 percent. . . . The oil companies' books must be opened. It is absolutely insane that our government . . . cannot even find out how much oil there is."

But like most labor officials who threaten and bluster about Carter's broken promises, Ryor presented no clear alternative to the NEA's current policy of support to the Democrats other than an implied threat that the NEA would support friendly Republicans.

Ryor and every other candidate for NEA office talked about the crisis facing education. But none of them offered a perspective for mobilizing the power of teachers and the rest of the labor movement in a fight to defend education.

Such a fight would rapidly bring the NEA into direct conflict with the Democratic and Republican parties and would pose the need for independent labor political action.

Another key issue debated at the convention was a proposal to amend the NEA's vague position on nuclear power. Andy Farrand, a delegate from the Newark (New Jersey) Education Association moved that the NEA support the "immediate closing of all nuclear power plants and the shifting to the clean use of coal as an energy alternative."

While the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated, it is clear that this will be an ongoing debate in the NEA as it will be in the labor movement as a whole.

The strong commitment of the NEA to abortion rights was evidenced when delegates by a two-thirds vote refused to consider resolutions opposing federal or state funds for abortions.

Strong resolutions supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, the struggles of Texas farm workers for collective bargaining, and in favor of comprehensive bilingual-bicultural education programs were also adopted overwhelmingly.

Unfortunately, no progress was made in healing the deep division between the NEA and its rival, the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

At several points during the convention, NEA leaders, including Ryor, scored the reactionary policies of the leadership of the AFT under President Albert Shanker. This included Shanker's opposition to affirmative action and school busing, his past support to a suspension of collective bargaining in New York, and Shanker's advocacy of increased military spending, which the NEA opposes.

But the NEA leadership failed to distinguish between the policies of the bureaucratic Shanker leadership of the AFT and the union itself.

A strong NEA position favoring the opening of merger discussions between the two organizations would have been welcomed across the country by teachers who have no interest in continuing the ongoing bitter factional warfare.

Ryor failed in an effort to win the necessary two-thirds vote to amend the NEA constitution to allow him to run for a third term. Willard McGuire, NEA vice-president, was elected president with little opposition.

## Atomic striker: gov't 'in bed with the company'

By Arnold Weissberg

The members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 3-677 at Nuclear Fuel Services in Erwin, Tennessee, have ended their three-month strike on terms favorable to them.

In a telephone interview, local committeeperson Frank Tipton told the *Militant* that the union had resolved the two main strike issues. Both relate to workers exposed to radiation. Nuclear Fuel Services makes nuclear fuel for U.S. Navy submarines and is owned by the giant Getty Oil Company.

The "hot people"—workers contaminated by radiation over the federal limit—will no longer lose seniority when they are shifted to other jobs.

The union also won a gain for workers on long-term disability after accumulated overexposure to radiation. "At one time, they just wanted to get rid of people after twenty-four months" on disability, Tipton said.

Under the new contract, however, workers will receive greater protection.

Tipton said that the company's decision to keep operating during the strike had created health hazards for the surrounding communities "by letting unqualified people work during the strike."

He said that the risks included not only release of radioactive materials to the environment, but the possibility of accidentally creating a critical mass and setting off a small nuclear explosion.

Nuclear Fuel Services operates under the jurisdiction of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Forty-four strikers traveled by bus to Washington, D.C., during the strike to demand the NRC investigate the plant.

The members of Local 3-677 were joined in Washington by about 160 members of OCAW Local 3-689 in Portsmouth, Ohio, on strike against Goodyear Atomic. The Goodyear strike

was still on as the *Militant* went to press.

The 1,551 members of Local 3-689 went on strike May 3, after Goodyear demanded a series of "givebacks" from the workers on such questions as layoff and overtime procedures and sick leave.

Local 3-689 President Dennis Bloomfield told the *Militant* in a telephone interview that the company has continued to operate the plant, using unqualified personnel. Bloomfield said this poses the serious risk of the release of radiation to the surrounding area.

The federal government owns the plant and the Department of Energy (DOE) oversees it. It produces highly enriched uranium, one of only three such plants in the country.

"According to the Department of Energy, everything's fine, everything's dandy," Bloomfield said. "But we know better." The union has asked for an impartial investigation of plant

conditions since the strike. "We're willing to let the facts speak for themselves," Bloomfield said.

The local president cited a DOE official who claimed there had been only one release of radiation at the plant since 1977 as an example of the "cover-up situation."

"Even the company admits there have been more than that," he said. The DOE is guilty of the "most flagrant lies that can ever be told," Bloomfield declared.

Although Goodyear operates the plant, the company has zero liability, Bloomfield explained. Its profits and all its expenses are guaranteed by the government. So Goodyear has no reason to seek a settlement of the strike.

The federal government is "in bed with the company," Bloomfield charged. "The government owns the facility and is also responsible for safety," he said. "Which will they choose? The almighty dollar—production."



Militant/SkipBall

**NORA DANIELSON**

## PHILA. SOCIALISTS FILE FOR BALLOT

The Philadelphia Socialist Workers Party filed 10,200 signatures August 1 to ensure a place on the ballot for the party in the November election. SWP activists obtained more than twice the required number of signatures.

Nora Danielson, a member of Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks Lodge 518, is the SWP candidate for mayor. Steve Eckardt, a member of Transportation Workers Union Local 234, is the party's candidate for controller.

## COURT DENIES TRUCKERS UNION RIGHTS

On July 9 the Third Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the shutdown by independent steel haulers last November-December constituted an "illegal restraint of trade."

The appeals court upheld an antitrust injunction issued against FASH (Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers) as a result of a suit filed by Pittsburgh steel companies. The judges ruled that FASH is not a labor union—despite its claims to the contrary—but

that the owner-operators are small businessmen without a legal right to strike.

They extended their decision to truckers covered by FASH-negotiated agreements as well.

This legal action can open the way for prosecution of independent truckers who participated in the recent job protest against fuel shortages.

"The whole court system is geared for big business," said FASH chairperson Bill Hill. "I don't think working people get justice from the court system."

"To say this isn't a labor dispute ignores reality," added FASH attorney Paul Boas. "This case is significant for every working man and woman in the U.S. The use of antitrust injunctions such as big companies employed in the 1920s and 1930s should not be happening in 1979."

## HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS ON CUSTODY UPHELD

A New Jersey appeals court ruled that a parent cannot be denied custody of a child because she or he is a homosexual.

The court split two-to-one, automatically sending the case to the state supreme court for review.

The ruling overturned a lower court order that took two children away from their lesbian mother and turned them over to the father.

The court noted that the record showed the mother to be a responsible parent.

## TAKING A DC-10? BUY INSURANCE

DC-10's are back in the air after thirty-eight days on the ground. But evidence is mounting that despite assurances from McDonnell Douglas, maker of the craft, from the airlines that own them, and from the government, the DC-10 is still a death trap.

Following the May 25 crash that killed 273 people aboard a DC-10 in Chicago, attention

focused on the plane's faulty engine mount. Now it turns out that more than sixty incidents involving problems with the DC-10's flight control systems have been documented.

A group of European DC-10 operators wrote to the Federal Aviation Administration in 1973 and expressed "great concern about the high failure rate of the hydraulic system built into the DC-10."

The FAA, whose concern with the profits of the airline industry has always been greater than its concern for the lives of passengers, told the complainers not to worry.

Meanwhile, in what FAA officials said was an "unrelated incident," a United Airlines DC-10 with 175 people aboard was forced to make an emergency landing at

## U.S. hid GI deaths at Hiroshima

The United States government kept secret the fact that as many as twenty American GIs were killed when the A-bomb was dropped on Hiroshima August 6, 1945.

This was disclosed by Barton Bernstein, a Stanford history professor, at a July 23 press conference.

He said the Red Cross and the U.S. Sixth Army had information on the deaths of prisoners of war being held in Hiroshima, "but the U.S. government kept silent . . . so as not to weaken, impair or damage the reputation of U.S. leaders and to block any moral doubts at home about combat use of the atomic bomb."

A secret 1945 Army message, Bernstein said, advised that there were twenty American POWs in Hiroshima when the bomb hit and eighteen died instantly.

In 1975, two ex-GIs shot down two days after the

bombing said they had met two POWs who had survived but were dying of radiation poisoning.

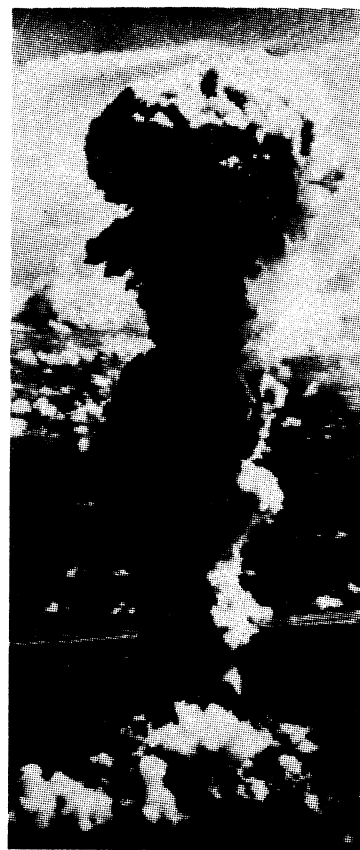
At the press conference with Bernstein was an attorney for Cleo Neal of Louisville, Kentucky, mother of one of these two servicemen. She has asked the Pentagon for the "official version" of her son's death.

She said that in 1945 the Army had sent her a telegram that her son was missing in action.

Last year she received a letter from a brigadier general asserting that her son had been wounded in combat and died "as a result of those wounds while a prisoner of war."

"Now I just want them to reveal the true facts of how he died," Mrs. Neal said. "I'd like to know why he died from a bomb dropped by the Americans."

"It's time they told the truth."



Baltimore-Washington International Airport July 22 after one of its engines failed.

And on July 28, a DC-10 was forced to turn back shortly after taking off from Lisbon when a fault was discovered in one of its engines.

No wonder they insist on seat belts.

## STRIKERS IN U.S. BLAST ARGENTINE JUNTA

Rallying at the United Nations July 26, striking employees of the Argentine Airlines in the U.S. scored the Argentine military junta for massive human rights violations and attacks on union rights.

The nearly 250 strikers are ground employees of the government-owned airline and are mostly of Argentine origin. Members of the Transport Workers Union, AFL-CIO, they have been out since May 11.

They charged at the rally that the military officers who operate the airline have refused to bargain in good faith. They are protesting a number of issues, including the use of part-time workers and mandatory overtime.

Supporters at the rally included representatives of Amnesty International and the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA).

According to a local union official, the Argentine repressive apparatus is functioning in the U.S. and is compiling dossiers on airline strikers who have relatives in Argentina with the intent of forcing the workers to end their strike by threatening their relatives.

## UAW 'REPORT' JOINS ASSAULT ON VIETNAM

The July 6 issue of the United Auto Workers *Washington Report* added its voice to the U.S. government's campaign against the Vietnamese revolution by reprinting an inflammatory cartoon by Conrad on the Vietnam "boat people."

The cartoon shows people huddled on a boat sailing past barbed wire and is captioned "Auschwitz East," comparing Vietnam to Hitler's concentra-

tion camps.

Reprinting this cartoon follows the action of UAW President Douglas Fraser in signing the reactionary advertisement sponsored in major dailies by Joan Baez and others. The ad repeats horror stories about Vietnamese "atrocities" which have proved to be fabricated by individuals with CIA connections.

Fraser was the only major union official to sign the ad, which helped promote Washington's current "get Vietnam" drive.

For union officials to be party to such reactionary moves is doubly damaging. It serves only to strengthen the hand of the capitalist forces that are as much out to get U.S. labor as they are the workers' state in Vietnam.

## NEVADA RECONSIDERS ON ATOMIC COMPANY

Officials of North Las Vegas are having second thoughts about approving the American Atomic Corporation locating there.

AA just shut down in Tucson in the middle of a state hearing on revoking its license.

The Arizona probe came after it was found that the company had violated safety regulations. This resulted in radioactive contamination of food and water in the area, including at a nearby school cafeteria that provided food for the entire school district.

North Las Vegas city officials said the company had not mentioned the problem in Tucson and assured them that they had a good safety record.

AA also assured city officials that the radioactive elements used in making luminous signs and dials were "completely harmless."

In Tucson, contamination showed up in swimming pools and in the urine of some residents.

At the school cafeteria, a chocolate cake baked on the premises contained radioactive tritium.

And on July 27, the Tucson school board said it would have to dump food and paper products worth \$645,000 because

## The Navajo uranium death toll

In twenty-three years of practicing medicine among Navajo Indians, a Utah doctor found but one case of cancer.

But in the tiny community of Red Rock, where Navajos have been employed as uranium miners, fifteen miners have died so far among fifty families there.

Damage claims have been filed against the U.S. Department of Energy on behalf of the widows of these fifteen victims, as well as for eleven others still alive.

Studies have established that among non-smoking, non-mining Navajos, the cancer rate is 1.7 per 100,000. Among uranium miners the figure shoots up to 147 per 100,000.

Last June, Dr. Merrill Eisenbud, an industrial hygienist, described to a Senate committee the conditions he had found in uranium mines when the "rush" began in the late '40s.

He and an associate had found high levels of radiation contamination in the mines and proposed to the Atomic Energy Commission, then in charge, that ura-

nium contractors be obligated to meet certain safety standards.

But, he testified, "a decision was made in the Washington headquarters that the AEC would not regulate working conditions in the mines. The results of this decision proved tragic, as we now know."

A former Utah miner, George Snow, told the committee that miners absorbed so much poisonous radon gas that they could "blow a

Geiger counter off the scale" just by breathing on it.

"I don't think the government did all it could to protect the health of the miners," he declared. "A lot more men would have been a lot more careful if they had known."

He showed the committee a list of forty-two friends and relatives who had worked with him in the mines. Twenty-two, he said, have died of cancer, including his father and brother.



Washington, D.C., protesters May 6 Militant/Anne Teesdale



of the contamination problem. Legal action has been initiated against the company to recover this.

In North Las Vegas, Councilwoman Brenda Price said that two weeks ago she had told American Atomic officials that the city was "very hungry" for new industry.

After the revelations, she commented, "But we're not hungry enough to eat radioactive cake."

#### PUGET SOUND TEAMSTERS STRIKE

SEATTLE—One thousand general freight drivers of Teamsters Local 174 went on strike July 8 after rejecting the latest contract offer by the Pudget Sound Transportation and Storage Conference, which represents 30 companies in the Puget Sound area.

Teamsters are striking for the same contract as the national master freight agreement. The companies want to limit the cost-of-living adjustments, take away some health benefits, and reduce overtime pay from doubletime to time-and-a-half.

A mass picket line was held July 9 at Becker Transfer in Tukwila in response to the company's attempts to continue its operations by using scab drivers. Employers countered with a court injunction limiting pickets.

On July 12 officials of Local 174 reported to the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* that the government is aiding employer efforts to break the strike by allowing scab drivers, who have no customs identification cards, to pick up and deliver cargo at waterfront docks. Rod Schmidt of Local 174 said, "They [customs agents] are letting anyone in to pick up the bonded cargo."

#### INDIAN ACTIVIST RECAPTURED

Indian activist Leonard Peltier who escaped from federal prison last week was captured without incident July 25.

Peltier had escaped from the federal correctional institution at Lompoc, California, along with two other Native Americans. One of Peltier's companions was killed and the other captured during the breakout.

Peltier was serving two consecutive life sentences after being convicted in the case of two FBI agents who were shot on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1975.

Peltier insisted on his innocence, and his case was widely regarded as a political frame-up.

He was captured in Santa Maria, California, after officials were notified by a grower of a man he had chased off his property.



LEONARD PELTIER

#### Quote unquote

"There is a widespread feeling among consumers that they are getting ripped off. These strong profits are bound to increase that impression."

—An analyst commenting on the oil industry's soaring take.

#### SHARP JUMP IN JOB SAFETY VIOLATIONS

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has reported a 63 percent increase in serious violations of federal job safety rules for fiscal 1978 over 1977. The jump comes despite fewer OSHA inspections during 1978.

Although the total number of violations cited by OSHA declined, serious violations rose to 33,155 from 20,914.

OSHA levied fines totalling \$19.8 million in 1978 but collected only about \$8 million. Ten percent of the violations were contested by employers.

#### CONGRESS DEFEATS BAN ON BUSING

A proposed constitutional amendment that would forbid busing as a means of desegregating public schools was defeated in the House of Representatives July 24 by a vote of 209 for to 216 against.

Although the antibusing amendment has been introduced regularly for the past decade, this was the first time it was brought to a vote by the full House. Its failure to get a majority in the House, let alone the two-thirds necessary for a Constitutional amendment, was hailed as a victory by civil rights leaders.

#### Ohio farm organizing parley

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) was slated to hold its first Midwest Farmworkers/Organizational Convention in Holgate, Ohio, August 4.

FLOC said the gathering would set organizational policies through 1981 and would act on a number of resolutions concerning political action, government migrant programs, farmworker legislation, and other related issues.

An executive board and officers will be elected.

César Chávez, president of the United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO, was announced as the featured guest speaker.

The theme of the convention is the Ohio tomato strike which, FLOC said, will continue this summer.

FLOC has been organizing field workers in the Midwest for several years. Last summer large numbers of migrant workers responded to a FLOC strike call against growers whose crops are grown under contract to Campbell's and Libby's.

FLOC is promoting a boycott against these two major food processors, who stand as the major barrier to decent wages and conditions in the fields.

# The Great Society

Harry Ring



**Like he was saying—**Oil company executives told a congressional committee they were ready to swear under oath that there was no conspiracy to hold oil off the market until the price was right. However, added Harold Hoopman, president of Marathon Oil, "If we do not let domestic crude oil prices rise to world market levels . . . literally billions of barrels of United States oil will be left in the ground."

**Shopping tip—**Perhaps for a back-to-school gift, the new Seiko watch, as thin as a quarter and finished in 18-karat gold. The digital model, \$3,500. With the old-fashioned hands, \$5,000.

**There's a difference?—**A federal judge dismissed indictments against the Uni Oil company, which was charged with setting up paper companies in Grand Cayman to certify "old" oil as "new" to

boost prices. The judge said the racketeering statute under which the indictments were brought was intended for use against organized crime, not "legitimate" businesses.

**Not divulging company secrets?—**When federal prosecutors asked Judge Ross Sterling why he was dismissing the second indictment against Uni Oil, he responded, "I don't have to give you my reasons."

**Scout's honor—**The federal Council on Wage and Price Stability granted permission to fifty-nine companies to decide for themselves if they qualify for "exceptions" to price-hike guidelines. Goodyear Tire, Allied Chemical, and Gillette are included. The council, it can be assumed, however, will continue to police wage increases.

## By Any Means Necessary

### Jesse Jackson on 'Weber'

Beginning this week staff writer August Nimtz will be writing the 'By Any Means Necessary' column.

The general reaction in the Black community to the Supreme Court's *Weber* decision has been one of relief and jubilation. This was especially the case for Black workers, who are most directly affected by the ruling.

Operation PUSH head Jesse Jackson, however, has thrown a wet towel on that enthusiasm by attributing little significance to the decision. He does so because he fails to see what was at stake in this case and, in the process, does the Black community a grave disservice.

In his syndicated column, Jackson took the position that the Court decision on *Weber* "failed to get at the real problem," which is to make a "serious commitment . . . to achieve racial equity and parity. . . ." That is because, he says, the *Weber* decision permits, but does not require, affirmative-action programs.

This argument misses the point. What was the *Weber* case all about?

In his suit, Brian Weber, a white lab technician, charged that the affirmative-action training program at the Kaiser Aluminum plant in Gramercy, Louisiana, violated his constitutional rights. The program, negotiated by the United Steelworkers union, set aside half of the slots for Blacks and women.

Lower courts ruled the program was indeed "reverse discrimination." The Supreme Court rejected this.

By ruling as it did, the Court upheld affirmative action and the right of unions to negotiate such measures in their contracts, thus greatly enhancing the fight to extend affirmative action.

What would have happened if the Court had struck down the Kaiser program?

Would Jackson have advised us to not treat the ruling seriously?

Such a position would be as absurd as the one that ignores the positive impact of the decision.

Jackson should take a lesson from the ruling class, which certainly did not miss the significance of the Court's decision. Two leading mouthpieces of capitalism, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Fortune*, bemoaned the fact that the decision will become a tool in the hands of advocates of stronger affirmative action including quotas.

Does the implementation and extension of affirmative action depend on whether

the Court makes such programs obligatory?

Jackson knows as well as anyone that Supreme Court decisions are always fundamentally political rulings. What happens with them depends on the relationship of class forces—that is, the strength of the working masses in relation to the capitalist elite.

What will advance affirmative action is the alliance of Blacks, Latinos, and women with the labor movement. But Jackson's attitude toward labor prevents him from grasping this fact and leads him to other serious errors.

"The *Weber* decision," he writes, "says U.S. corporations and unions may voluntarily establish affirmative action programs. But, historically, these have been two of the most racially discriminatory institutions in our society."

By lumping the unions together with the corporations, Jackson fails to see the necessary role of the labor movement in furthering affirmative action.

Under the pressure of the union ranks, labor officials, who in the past have adamantly opposed affirmative action, have been forced to support such programs.

Jackson seems to forget that the program under attack by Weber's suit had been negotiated by the Steelworkers union. The Steelworkers defended the program against *Weber*, along with almost every other major union. Labor rallies and meetings were held around the country to defeat *Weber*.

The most important gain from the *Weber* decision is that it furthers the fight for equality between Black and white workers, and thus increases the chances for a united, working-class struggle for more affirmative action and other goals that serve the interests of all workers.

In discounting the role of labor, Jackson ends up calling for reliance on the government to win job equality. However, there is nothing to suggest that the government will do anything to enforce affirmative action without the mobilization of the Black and labor movements.

Jackson also threatens a return to mass demonstrations to implement affirmative action. Such actions are indeed needed. And the real lesson of the *Weber* case is that for the first time we have the potential to draw the most powerful force in society—the labor movement—into a real fight for Black equality. To turn our backs on this opportunity, as Jackson seems to suggest, is to undermine the struggle for freedom.

## Struggle in Ireland

Beginning in 1967 there was a new upsurge in the ancient struggle of the Irish people. A mass movement demanding equality for the oppressed Catholic population in Northern Ireland, and modeled in part on the Black civil rights movement in the United States, challenged the colonial regime in the North.

Although the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland focused its demands on equality in employment, housing, education, and political representation, it quickly came up against the fact that in fighting against the oppression of the Catholic population, it was actually challenging the basis of imperialist domination in all of Ireland.

Robert Langston reported in the September 5, 1969, issue of the *Militant*:

"After three weeks of bloody clashes between North Ireland's oppressed Catholic minority on one side and frenzied mobs and deputized 'special constables' drawn from the most reactionary and bigoted sections of the Protestant community on the other, the British government has intervened directly in Ulster with troops. More than 6,500 English soldiers now patrol the streets of Derry City . . . and Belfast."

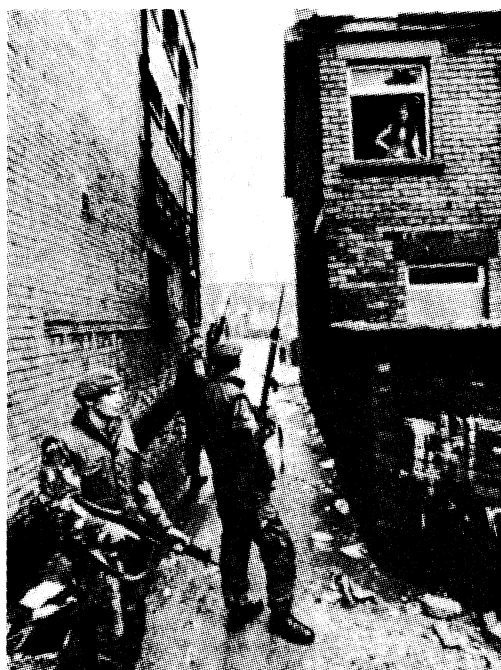
The British army still occupies the cities of Northern Ireland after ten years. In August 1971, the British instituted internment without trial in Northern Ireland. They were later forced to abandon this policy, but Irish nationalist prisoners continue to be sentenced to savage jail terms on the basis of confessions beaten out of them by the British.

Although the population in Northern Ireland appears to be divided along religious lines, the basis of the struggle there is the fight for national liberation. Catholicism is the chief distinguishing characteristic of a population that originally spoke its own language, had its own distinctive culture, and lived under a tribal system in which land was held in common.

As the country was conquered by the English monarchy, colonists loyal to the English crown were settled on land confiscated from the native Irish. This was the origin of the Protestant minority, which became the landowning aristocracy throughout the country, and a majority in parts of what is today Northern Ireland.

During the struggle for Irish independence in 1916-1922, the British imperialists were able to use the Protestant population in the North as a base of support, splitting Ireland in two and maintaining British rule in the six northern counties.

Discrimination against the Catholic population in employment, education, and political representation was institutionalized in Northern Ireland. To give only one example, 20,102 voters from Catholic areas returned eight representatives to the Derry city council in 1966, while 10,274



British troops were sent into Northern Ireland in August 1969.

voters from Protestant areas returned sixteen representatives.

Socialists have long recognized that the struggle for social justice in Ireland—and in Britain too—cannot be separated from the struggle for Irish national liberation.

Karl Marx wrote in 1870 that "it is a precondition to the emancipation of the English working class to transform the present forced union (i.e., the enslavement of Ireland) into equal and free confederation if possible, into complete separation if need be." (*Ireland and the Irish Question*, By Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, p. 163. Emphasis in original.)

In an earlier letter on the same point, Marx argued that support by the workers in Britain was required "not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat. If not, the English people will remain tied to the leading strings of the ruling classes, because it will have to join with them on a common front against Ireland." (*Ibid.*, p. 281. Emphasis in original.)

The great Irish revolutionist James Connolly explained in 1896 that, looked at from the point of view of Ireland:

"The struggle for Irish freedom has two aspects: it is national and it is social. Its national ideal can never be realized until Ireland stands forth before the world a nation free and independent. It is social and economic, because no matter what the form of government may be, as long as one class owns as private property the land and instruments of labour from which all mankind derive their substance, that class will always have power to plunder and enslave the remainder of their fellow-creatures."

—David Frankel



### More on Puerto Rico

It is about time the *Militant* wrote a good article on Puerto Rico. It makes me sad not to read about Puerto Rico in your paper every week. Although I like what you say, you do not say enough. From now on I will buy the *Militant* only when you write about Puerto Rico.

J.C.

Chelsea, Massachusetts

### Telegram to Tehran

Your coverage of the Iranian revolution and recent arrests of leftists has been excellent.

A few moments ago, I sent a telegram to Tehran. Because I am currently unemployed and could not afford the extra money required to have a copy sent to you, I am sending along the contents of the telegram. It reads as follows:

"As a supporter of the Iranian revolution I strongly protest the arrest of oil workers, steelworkers, and Trotskyists and urge immediate release."

Donald Winters

Minneapolis, Minnesota

### Ballot laws

I was pleased to see the "In Brief" item in the June 29 *Militant* about the California election law changes.

There were two errors—the independent petition is 101,000 valid signatures, not 70,000 as the article said.

Also, the article said that Republican legislators as well as Democratic ones seem intent on pushing the bad bill through. In fact, not one Republican voted for it in committee, and the Republicans in the legislature are unanimously committed against the bill. It is 100 percent Democrats who have supported the bill.

On Thursday, June 28, the bad bill died. The author put it on third reading (meaning up for a vote in the full assembly).

Before the vote, the Democrats and Republicans both caucused in separate rooms. Afterwards, the author of the bill moved to "strike the bill from the record," which means it is officially dead. This is a victory.

Richard Winger

San Francisco, California

### Against the pope

This is in answer to the letters defending the pope. Thousands of Jews, gays, and socialists were slaughtered not only under the sign of the swastika but also under the crucifix as well. The German Catholic church supported Hitler. The Roman Catholic church is today in the forefront of the attacks on abortion rights. The Roman Catholic church is guilty as charged of crimes against Jews, gays, atheists, socialists, and women. The pope is a fascist butcher.

Karen Moshewitz

Indianapolis, Indiana

### On immigrant workers

An article in the *Los Angeles Times* of July 10, 1979, describes the immigrant composition of the work force in the "marginal industries" of agriculture, the garment trade, and the restaurant business. The bulk of these workers appear to be *mexicanos* and what the article calls "new immigrants" or "other immigrants" or "newly arrived immigrants."

It is a fairly short article, but you still have to wait until the last paragraph to find out who are these new immigrants. "We are seeing more and more of the 'boat people' from the Far East—Vietnamese, Cambodians and others. They land here thinking they are escaping from repression. But they seem to end up in another form of repression as our marginal workers." So says Joe Razo who heads up a

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# Learning About Socialism

federally funded program to protect aliens in San Diego County. Of course the *mexicanos* did not pay in gold to leave their country. Some of the "other immigrants" may have. In the United States everyone has the chance to be treated equally.

Jim Odling  
Los Angeles, California

## Toledo election campaign

The July 6 issue of the *Militant* contained an article by Sue Skinner, a press operator at Bingham Stamping in Toledo, on her discussions with co-workers about her campaign for mayor as a socialist. That issue of the paper generated a lot of interest in the plant.

One of several Black women I work with asked to see a copy. A little later, after I mentioned the *Militant's* coverage of the Jericol coal miners' strike, a young woman born in Harlan County asked to see one.

A young Black worker, after reading the article on the Weber decision, asked Sue about the socialist position on the Bakke case and affirmative action in general.

On Thursday, when we received our paychecks, a young woman in the inspection department told Sue that more than a day's pay went to taxes. This worker thought that, "we shouldn't have to work that day and just let the company pay the taxes. A \$100 is nothing to them and a lot to us."

A worker who gets a kick out of finding arguments against socialism mentioned to me the frustration of trying to plan a vacation and realizing you can't go because you don't have enough money for the price of gas. He said, "it's like being in prison," a feeling we all have because the entrance gate to the plant is locked the whole time we're working. He got a paper on Friday.

So much interest was generated that some older workers, not as disposed to consider socialist ideas, were talking about Sue's campaign for mayor.

All in all twenty-six co-workers got the *Militant* and we expect more and more interest among our co-workers in socialist solutions to the capitalist crisis.

Glen Boatman  
Toledo, Ohio

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.

## The SWP convention

Last week's *Militant* reported on the meeting held by socialist workers in the auto workers', steelworkers', railroad, and machinists' and aerospace workers' unions.

They discussed the new opportunities that exist to win the unions to fight in the interests of their members.

They talked about how workers can best respond to Carter's price-gouging energy program; attempts to block passage of the Equal Rights Amendment; the U.S. war drive against the revolutions in Iran, Indochina, and Nicaragua; and many other subjects.

They also discussed the favorable prospects for winning unionists to socialism.

These discussions will also be the focus of the thirtieth convention of the Socialist Workers Party being held in Oberlin, Ohio, August 5-11.

The convention is the highest decision-making body of the Socialist Workers Party.

The gathering will discuss the progress the party has been making in winning working people to socialism and what to do next in the struggle to defend the interests of working people against the ruling-class offensive.

Those who attend our convention will find that the SWP practices the principles of working-class democracy. The revolutionary socialist movement has learned through long experience that the fullest discussion and collaboration among the membership is the best way to hammer out a program and a course of action. It is the only way to choose policies that realistically express the interests of the working class and the opportunities and obstacles confronting revolutionists.

The resolution, "The Organizational Character of the SWP," adopted by the 1965 convention (and available in an Education for Socialists edition from Pathfinder for \$.35), states:

"A properly conducted discussion of internal political differences contributes to the good and welfare of the party. It facilitates the hammering out of a correct political line and it helps to educate the membership. These benefits derive from the discussion provided that every comrade hears all points of view and the whole party is drawn into the thinking. . . . In that way the membership as a whole can intervene in disputes, settle them in an orderly way by majority decision and get on with the party work. This method has been followed by American Trotskyism throughout its history and has resulted in an effective clarification of all controversial issues."

A great deal of prior preparation goes into making sure that every SWP member understands, participates in, and contributes to the process of discussion that culminates in decisions by our national convention.

For three months prior to the convention, branches of the SWP (the basic party units) place priority on organizing preconvention discussions at regularly scheduled weekly meetings. All members have the right to speak for and against the main resolutions and counterresolutions to be voted on, as well as submit ideas and proposals of their own.



Militant/Lou Howort

Another aspect of the SWP's internal democracy is the written discussion. The constitution of the SWP requires that "an internal bulletin shall be issued during the convention discussion period." Any member of the party can have their views published in this way and circulated among the whole membership. This year twenty-eight bulletins have been issued, containing about a thousand pages of contributions by dozens of socialist workers.

After this thorough discussion, the membership votes on the key resolutions and reports submitted to the Discussion Bulletin. Delegates are then elected by the party branches through secret ballot. The number of delegates a branch is allowed is determined by the size of its membership, with provisions made for the representation of opposing ideas.

After the discussion at the convention, the delegates will come to decisions on many important questions: how to transform the trade unions into powerful democratic fighting organs for the workers; how to win the unions to the idea of a labor party; what revolutionists should say and do to defend the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions, and anti-imperialist struggles in Africa, Nicaragua, and Iran; what to do next in the struggles for women's equality and against racism; and the launching of the 1980 SWP presidential campaign.

This democratic process leads to unity in action. Having participated fully in deciding what the party will do, the party membership pulls together to carry out the majority decisions afterward.

These organizational methods were taught to American revolutionists by the leaders of the Bolshevik party in Russia. This combination of democracy and united action made it possible for the Bolsheviks to lead the Russian workers and peasants in opening the first successful socialist revolution in 1917.

Socialist workers have made big gains in rooting the SWP in the industrial trade unions in the last year or more. Because of this and because of the thorough and democratic discussion we have carried out in preparing the SWP convention, SWP members have reason to be confident that this convention will mark a step forward in the struggle to replace capitalism and its attendant inequality and deprivation, with socialism.

—Paul Montauk

## If You Like This Paper, Look Us Up

Where to find the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and socialist books and pamphlets

**ALABAMA:** Birmingham: SWP, Box 3382-A. Zip: 35205. Pathfinder Books, 1609 5th Ave. N. Tel: (205) 328-9403.

**ARIZONA:** Phoenix: SWP, YSA, 1243 E. McDowell. Zip: 85006. Tel: (602) 255-0450. Tucson: YSA, SUPO 20965. Zip: 85720. Tel: (602) 795-2053.

**CALIFORNIA:** Berkeley: SWP, YSA, 3264 Adeline St. Zip: 94703. Tel: (415) 653-7156. Los Angeles, Eastside: SWP, YSA, 2554 Saturn Ave., Huntington Park. Zip: 90255. Tel: (213) 582-1975. Los Angeles, Westside: SWP, YSA, 2167 W. Washington Blvd. Tel: (213) 732-8196. Zip: 90018. Los Angeles, City-wide: SWP, YSA, 1250 Wilshire Blvd., Room 404. Zip: 90017. Tel: (213) 482-1820. Oakland: SWP, YSA, 1467 Fruitvale Ave. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 261-1210. San Diego: SWP, YSA, 1053 15th St. Zip: 92101. Tel: (714) 234-4630. San Francisco: SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1992. San Jose: SWP, YSA, 942 E. Santa Clara St. Zip: 95112. Tel: (408) 295-8342.

**COLORADO:** Denver: SWP, YSA, 126 W. 12th Ave. Zip: 80204. Tel: (303) 534-8954.

**CONNECTICUT:** Hartford: YSA, c/o Joe Carmack, Univ. of Hartford, 11 Sherman St. Zip: 06105. Tel: (203) 233-6465.

**DELAWARE:** Newark: YSA, c/o Stephen Krevisky, 638 Lehigh Rd. M4. Zip: 19711. Tel: (302) 368-1394.

**FLORIDA:** Miami: SWP, YSA, 8171 NE 2nd Ave. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 756-8358.

**GEORGIA:** Atlanta: SWP, YSA, 509 Peachtree St. NE. Zip: 30308. Tel: (404) 872-7229.

**ILLINOIS:** Champaign-Urbana: YSA, c/o Andy English, 1111 S. Third St. #304. Zip: 61820. Chicago: City-wide SWP, YSA, 407 S. Dearborn #1145. Zip: 60605. Tel: SWP—(312) 939-0737. Chicago, South Side: SWP, YSA, 2251 E. 71st St. Zip: 60649. Tel: (312) 643-5520. Chicago, West Side: SWP, 3942 W. Chicago. Zip: 60651. Tel: (312) 384-0606.

**INDIANA:** Bloomington: YSA, c/o Student Activities,

Desk, Indiana University. Zip: 47401. Indianapolis: SWP, YSA, 4163 College Ave. Zip: 46205. Tel: (317) 925-2616. Gary: SWP, YSA, 3883 Broadway. Zip: 46409. Tel: (219) 884-9509.

**KENTUCKY:** Louisville: SWP, YSA, 1505 W. Broadway, P.O. Box 3593. Zip: 40201. Tel: (502) 587-8418.

**LOUISIANA:** New Orleans: SWP, YSA, 3319 S. Carrollton Ave. Zip: 70118. Tel: (504) 486-8048.

**MARYLAND:** Baltimore: SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Amherst: YSA, c/o M. Casey, 42 McClellan. Zip: 01002. Tel: (413) 537-6537. Boston: SWP, YSA, 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Zip: 02215. Tel: (617) 262-4621.

**MICHIGAN:** Ann Arbor: YSA, Room 4120, Michigan Union, U. of M. Zip: 48109. Detroit: SWP, YSA, 6404 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-5322.

**MINNESOTA:** Mesabi Iron Range: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 1287, Virginia, Minn. Zip: 55792. Tel: (218) 749-6327. Minneapolis: SWP, YSA, 23 E. Lake St. Zip: 55408. Tel: (612) 825-6663. St. Paul: SWP, 373 University Ave. Zip: 55103. Tel: (612) 222-8929.

**MISSOURI:** Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4715A Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 6223 Delmar Blvd. Zip: 63130. Tel: (314) 725-1570.

**NEW JERSEY:** Newark: SWP, YSA, 11-A Central Ave. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

**NEW MEXICO:** Albuquerque: SWP, 108 Morning-side Dr. NE. Zip: 87108. Tel: (505) 255-6869.

**NEW YORK:** Capital District (Albany): SWP, YSA, 103 Central Ave. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 463-0072. New York, Brooklyn: SWP, 841 Classon Ave. Zip: 11238. Tel: (212) 783-2135. New York, Lower Manhattan: SWP, YSA, 108 E. 16th St. 2nd Floor. Zip: 10003. Tel: (212) 260-6400. New York, Upper West Side: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 1299. Zip: 10025. Tel: (212) 663-3000. New York: City-wide SWP,

YSA, 108 E. 16th St. 2nd floor. Zip: 10003. Tel: (212) 533-2902.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Piedmont: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 733, Greensboro. Zip: 27401.

**OHIO:** Cincinnati: SWP, YSA, 970 E. McMillan. Zip: 45206. Tel: (513) 751-2636. Cleveland: SWP, YSA, 13002 Kinsman Rd. Zip: 44120. Tel: (216) 991-5030. Toledo: SWP, YSA, 2120 Dorr St. Zip: 43607. Tel: (419) 536-0383.

**OREGON:** Portland: SWP, YSA, 711 NW Everett. Zip: 97209. Tel: (503) 222-7225.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Edinboro: YSA, Edinboro State College. Zip: 16412. Philadelphia: SWP, YSA, 5811 N. Broad St. Zip: 19141. Tel: (215) 927-4747 or 927-4748. Pittsburgh: SWP, YSA, 1210 E. Carson St. Zip: 15203. Tel: (412) 488-7000. State College: YSA, c/o Jack Craypo, 132 Keller St. Zip: 16801.

**TEXAS:** Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Dallas: SWP, YSA, 5442 E. Grand. Zip: 75223. Tel: (214) 826-4711. Houston: SWP, YSA, 806 Elgin St. #1. Zip: 77006. Tel: (713) 524-8761. San Antonio: SWP, YSA, 112 Fredericksburg Rd. Zip: 78201. Tel: (512) 735-3141.

**UTAH:** Salt Lake City: SWP, YSA, 677 S. 7th East, 2nd Floor. Zip: 84102. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

**VIRGINIA:** Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 782. Zip: 23607.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699.

**WASHINGTON:** Olympia: YSA, c/o Deann Rathbun, Rt. 1, Box 504, Shelton, Wa. 98584. Seattle: SWP, YSA, 4868 Rainier Ave., South Seattle. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330. Tacoma: SWP, YSA, 1306 S. K St. Zip: 98405. Tel: (206) 627-0432.

**WEST VIRGINIA:** Morgantown: SWP, YSA, 957 S. University Ave. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

**WISCONSIN:** Madison: YSA, P.O. Box 1442. Zip: 53701. Tel: (608) 255-4733. Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 3901 N. 27th St. Zip: 53216. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

# THE MILITANT

## ERA labor conference 'If we unite, we can win'

By Suzanne Haig

For equal rights fighters in Virginia and around the country, the Labor for Equal Rights Now Conference August 12 is an inspiring occasion.

Steelworkers, auto workers, teachers, food and retail workers, rail workers, social service workers, miners, and garment workers are standing up to join the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment.

They are joining with the ranks of the women's movement—with groups such as the National Organization for Women—to add their voice and muscle to the battle for equality.

The conference, sponsored by major labor organizations in the state, will discuss mobilizing support for ratification of the ERA in Virginia.

The conference will be held at the Richmond Hyatt House, West Broad and I-64, in Richmond, Virginia, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, August 12.

Labor has a big stake in the fight for the ERA. If this battle is won, it will mean a big step forward in the fight for equal rights for women—42 percent of the work force. It will also be a big victory for the labor movement.

In the words of the pamphlet "Labor's Case for the ERA," put out by LERN, the conference organizers:

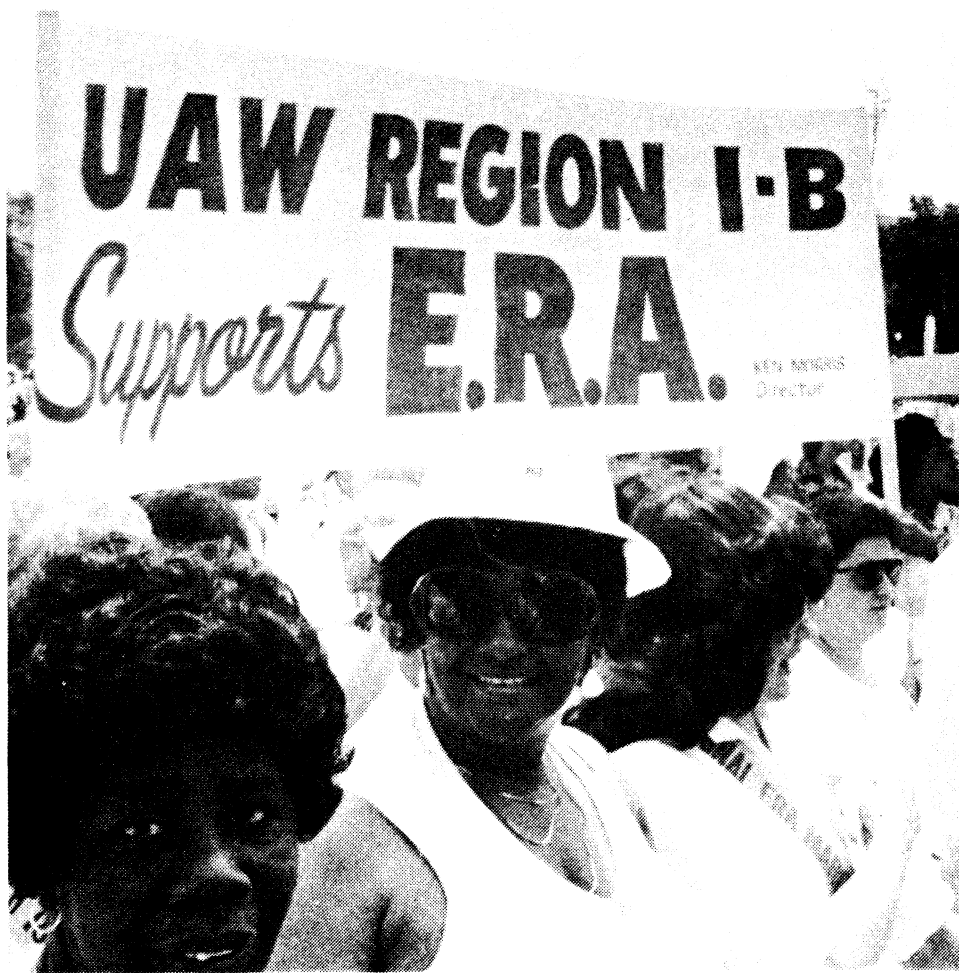
"Unity means guaranteeing that there are no second-class citizens in the work force. When any group of workers is deprived of rights, the labor movement as a whole suffers the consequences."

The opponents of equal rights for women also oppose everything labor stands for. They favor such antilabor legislation as the "right to work" laws, which deny working people their basic right to defend themselves through unions.

They oppose the higher minimum wage, improved social security, national health care, increased unemployment benefits, and child care.

The Virginia labor movement, moreover, knows full well that a blow for the ERA is a blow against the "right to work" laws and union busters. If the ERA wins, it will help take the fight to organize southern workers a step forward.

The Newport News, Virginia, shipyard workers of United Steelworkers Local 8888 can speak to this.



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

July 9, 1978, march on Washington called by NOW. Women's movement and trade unions can create powerful political force to fight for ERA.

In the heat of their battle to win union recognition they have demonstrated the importance of uniting Black and white, male and female, against the boss and the bosses' cops, court, "lawmakers," and mass media. These are the same forces arrayed against equal rights for women in Virginia today.

Local 8888 members have been participating in building the LERN conference, and this conference in turn will be an inspiration for the Steelworkers' fight in Newport News.

The conference will be an opportunity to discuss and determine which

way forward for labor and women's rights organizations in the struggle for ratification.

The ERA has met with a string of defeats this year at the hands of Democratic and Republican politicians. It has failed to pass in several state legislatures, including Virginia. States have passed motions rescinding their earlier ratifications.

They've challenged extension of the deadline for winning the needed three more states despite extension having been approved overwhelmingly by Congress.

If the labor and women's movements have learned anything from hard, cruel experience, it is that we cannot trust the "friends of labor" and "friends of women" in the Democratic and Republican parties.

We have seen what they have done to us from wage guidelines to anti-abortion laws to the gasoline shortage.

They have shown that they are not our friends but the friends of big business. These two parties are out to defend the union busters and the employers' right to pay women and Blacks low wages—not to fight for us.

And we have seen how these two-faced politicians, elected into office on the promise to vote for ERA, have turned around time and time again and voted against it.

But supporters of equal rights do have powerful examples to look to. We have behind us the experience of the July 9, 1978, march on Washington of 100,000 women and men that was called by the National Organization for Women (NOW). It is that historic action and meetings such as the August 12 conference—an action in and of itself—that point the way forward

for us.

The July 9 demonstration was a major step toward building an alliance, a fighting, winning alliance of women and the labor movement.

And it helped win the first round of the battle by forcing Congress to pass a three-year extension for ERA ratification.

Since the march in Washington, women's committees in unions and trade-union women's conferences have sprung up around the country. These have involved women postal workers, coal miners, steelworkers, government workers, electrical workers, and auto workers.

These developments reflect the ferment among working women on the shop floor, on the assembly line, in the offices, in the locker rooms—all over the country.

The ERA is one of the main issues bringing women together. But they are discussing everything from health and safety questions, to unequal pay, to discriminatory layoffs, pregnancy benefits, sexual harassment from foremen, abortion rights, and child care. Furthermore, the women are winning the support of male co-workers, who also have a stake in women's rights.

In addition, civil rights committees in the unions are beginning to throw their weight behind the fight for women's rights and the ERA. The recent United Steelworkers national civil rights conference—the first for that union—is just one example.

These activities all point to the potential power of an alliance between the trade unions and organizations in the women's movement, such as the National Organization for Women, as well as civil rights groups—an alliance that can defeat the antiwoman and antilabor forces and win the ERA.

The LERN conference is a powerful example of what can be done. This conference can take the ERA forward, through education, explanation, and mobilization.

We can generate political power through this conference. Not only in Virginia, but in Illinois, in Missouri, in Florida, in Nevada, in the national fight for the ERA.

This conference opens the door for many common activities for ERA fighters. It can be a model for similar conferences in other states that have not ratified the ERA.

The pamphlet "Labor's Case for the ERA" can become an educational and organizing tool for unionists, NOW members, and others around the country to use to combat the lies about the ERA.

Special union meetings and meetings of women's committees and civil rights committees can be held to discuss the ERA and build support for its passage. Unionists can invite members of NOW to speak to them and in turn participate in programs organized by women's groups.

The unions can join together with women's organizations on picket lines, at rallies, speak-outs, and demonstrations like last year's LERN march of 3,200 in Richmond and the July 9 march on Washington.

The words of the LERN pamphlet can be the watchword coming out of this conference:

"PASS THE ERA NOW!"

"If we unite and mobilize our members, we can win!"

"Join us!"

### Steel & auto workers coming

Trade unionists are continuing their building activities for the August 12 Virginia ERA Conference.

In Chicago, United Steelworkers Local 65 at U.S. Steel South Works voted to send a delegation to Richmond. It will include the three co-chairs of the local's Women's Committee, a representative of the Civil Rights Committee, and the co-editor of the local's newspaper, 65 News.

At the Ford Metuchen plant in New Jersey, ERA supporter Vivian Sahner reports an exciting development. After posters were placed around the women's locker room to build the Virginia conference, many women began discussing the event.

Not knowing how to reach all those interested, ERA supporters placed signs in the locker room

announcing that a meeting on the conference would be held there on Wednesday afternoon at 4:45 p.m.

Sure enough seven women showed up.

Several of the women were Black, recently hired, and just off probation.

They listened eagerly, nodding their heads, as Mary Jo Vogel, a member of the UAW Local 980 Women's Committee, talked about why women and all trade unionists need the ERA.

Several women definitely wanted to go to the conference. They were excited at the possibility of coming back to Metuchen to report to the union brothers and sisters on the ERA and how it related to problems the women face on the job. —S.H.