

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'To assure the revolutionary power of the workers'

— THESES FOR CTC CONGRESS, PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 60 NO. 11 MARCH 18, 1996

Tel Aviv slaps 'collective punishment' on Palestinians

BY CANDACE WAGNER

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The government of Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres has launched a campaign of collective punishment against Palestinians following four suicide bombing attacks carried out by supporters of the Palestinian group Hamas. A total of 59 people died in the explosions in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Peres declared "a war in every sense of the word."

On March 4, the day of the fourth bombing, Israeli troops carried out a raid on the Al Fawwar refugee camp near Hebron on the West Bank, confining 7,000 people to their homes in a 24-hour curfew. Palestinian men were rounded up, blindfolded, and questioned. Soldiers sealed the homes of accused bombers and threatened to arrest family members.

The following day, troops barricaded 465 West Bank communities. Some 1.2 million residents were confined to their villages.

The previous week Israeli authorities blocked Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza from traveling to Israel, preventing thousands from reaching their jobs.

The bombings ended a six month suspension of violent attacks against Israel by Hamas, a bourgeois nationalist organization that opposes the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organization agreements, which grants some autonomy to Palestinian areas in the West Bank. Hamas abstained from the January 20 Palestinian elections.

The group did not actively impose a boycott, however, and allowed members to enter the race as independent candidates.

Two weeks before the election, on Jan-
Continued on Page 12

'End censorship,' Curtis supporters demand from prison officials

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa—"Since December, Mark Curtis, an inmate at your institution, has written three articles for publication in our newspaper and posted them to be mailed to us. None of the three articles has made it out of the prison mail system. There can be no justification for these repeated violations of freedom of speech and freedom of the press guaranteed in the U.S. constitution," *Militant* editor Steve Clark wrote in a letter to Gerardo Acevedo, warden at the Iowa State Penitentiary in Ft. Madison. "We demand the immediate release of these articles and the end to any further such actions."

Curtis was framed-up and convicted on charges of attempted rape and burglary and has served seven and half years in prison. At the time of his arrest, Curtis, a socialist and trade unionist was involved in a struggle in defense of immigrant coworkers at the Swift (now Monfort) meatpacking plant in Des Moines.

Iowa authorities granted Curtis parole to Illinois on November 21—three and a half months ago. Illinois officials, however, denied his parole application claim-

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Cuban foreign minister blasts U.S. aggression

At the UN, Robaina defends shutdown of intruder planes

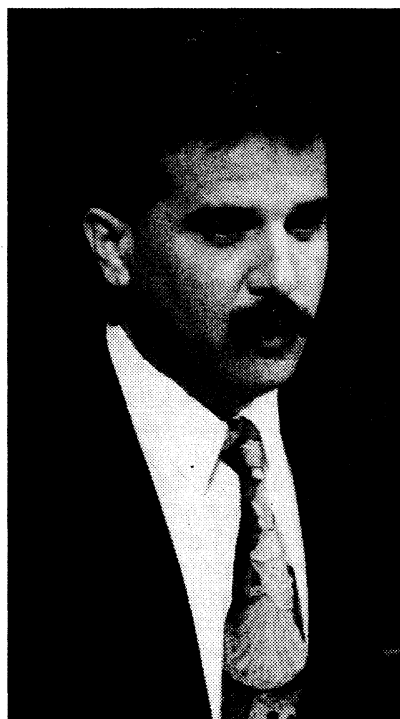
BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND LAURA GARZA

UNITED NATIONS — "The government of Cuba takes full responsibility for the patriotic action that was carried out in legitimate defense of the country's sovereignty and security," stated Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina, addressing a March 6 session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Robaina was referring to the events of February 24, when Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces shot down two Cessna aircraft from Opa-locka, Florida, that, defying explicit warnings from Cuban air controllers, were violating the Caribbean nation's airspace. The planes, flown by members of Brothers to the Rescue, a Miami-based group led by Cuban-American counterrevolutionaries, were on a hostile mission headed toward the Havana area.

Robaina placed the blame for these provocations squarely on Washington.

"Many people, including our own friends in the United States, ask us: 'Why did you shoot down those planes right at this time?' That is, 'Why does this occur at such a delicate and dangerous moment during the nasty and unscrupulous electoral fights in the United States, on the eve of the November elections?'"



Cuba's foreign minister Roberto Robaina at the United Nations (left). Picket line in front of federal building in Manhattan on March 2 (right).

Robaina said.

"This incident was not the consequence of a deliberate act by Cuba," the Cuban foreign minister stated. "It was not we

who could prevent these violations from continuing. The U.S. government, from whose territory the acts of aggression were

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Youth and workers haunt Buchanan; ultrarightist loses ground in campaign

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Two hundred high school students and others drowned out parts of Patrick Buchanan's campaign speech in Lexington, Massachusetts. Some in the audience jeered and booed at his rally in Columbus, Georgia. Almost everywhere the Republican presidential candidate goes, workers, youth, and others are turning out — some places in ones and twos, other places in a more organized way — to make it plain that Buchanan does not speak for them. The ultrarightist demagogue failed to win any of the eight primaries held March 5.

Buchanan has put a special focus on campaigning in the South.

But statements like, "My friends, if there is room in America for the fighting song of the civil rights movement, 'We Shall Overcome,' there has got to be room for 'Dixie' as well," and his defense of the Confederate battle flag get an angry reaction from many. "Dixie" was the anthem of the slave-holding states during the Civil War.

Protests against the candidate have hit on his stance on immigrants, women's rights, gay rights, and his racism and anti-Semitism. Some 2,000 mostly Mexican protesters took to the streets in Chicago on March 1 after a prominent columnist

Continued on Page 3



Above: Well over 1,000 demonstrated March 1 against pro-Buchanan anti-Mexican column in *Chicago Tribune*. Right: Angry protesters tear up copies of newspaper.



Dismissed officer exposes role of U.S. military in Haiti — page 13



IN BRIEF

Labor party loses in Australia

John Howard, leader of a coalition of the Liberal and National parties defeated Prime Minister Paul Keating in Australian elections March 2. Howard will lead the new administration, ending 13 years of the social-democratic Labor Party regime. Rising unemployment, more than 15 percent in some rural towns, and cuts in federal assistance programs after four years of drought were among the reasons for widespread dissatisfaction among working people, many of whom voted for what they thought of as a lesser evil — the coalition of major parties not in office.

U.S. to pay kin of Iranians killed

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns announced February 22 that Washington will compensate the families of 248 Iranians slaughtered when a U.S. warship shot down an Iranian Airbus plane July 3, 1988. Missiles fired from the *USS Vincennes* destroyed the plane over Iranian waters killing all 290 people aboard. The Iran Air flight was a regularly scheduled civilian shuttle from the Iranian coastal city of Bandar Abbas to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates across the Persian Gulf.

According to the *New York Times*, Burns said \$300,000 would be paid for each wage-earning person killed and \$150,000 for each non-wage earning victim. Former U.S. president Ronald Reagan made the offer while in office.

Gorbachev eyes presidency

Mikhail Gorbachev, a longtime rival of Russian president Boris Yeltsin, announced at a news conference March 1 that he may run for president in that country's June 16 elections. "In my heart, I am prepared," he said.

"A scenario of the choice of the lesser evil is being imposed on the public," said Gorbachev, presenting himself as a democratic alternative to Yeltsin and Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov, the front runner in the race. Gorbachev was the last president of the Soviet Union before it was formally dissolved in 1991.

Chauvinist Serb general indicted

The so-called international war crimes

tribunal indicted Gen. Djordje Djukic March 1, making him the second indicted suspect being held at The Hague. Djukic, captured in January and extradited to the Netherlands in February, commanded logistics for the Belgrade-backed Serb forces in Bosnia. He was a close aide to Bosnian Serb chauvinist leader Gen. Ratko Mladic, who has also been indicted. Only two of the 53 people indicted by the imperialist crafted tribunal have been apprehended.

Turkish parties agree to form coalition government

Turkey's prime minister Tansu Ciller, leader of the True Path Party that ran the government until the December 24 elec-

tions, and her conservative rival Mesut Yilmaz agreed March 3 to form a coalition government. Yilmaz, a leader of the Motherland Party, will head the new minority government for the remainder of the year. The move served to block the Welfare Party from heading the government.

The Welfare Party, which has heavy support among Muslims, came in first in the country's parliamentary elections with 21.4 percent of the votes. It will now become the main opposition party in the 550-member Parliament with 158 seats.

Gonzalez loses Spain elections

Felipe Gonzalez, the social democratic president of Spain, lost the March 3 election to José María Aznar, the candidate of the conservative People's Party. Over a dozen top officials in Gonzalez's Socialist Party administration were charged with corruption, including the head of the Civil Guard and the chief of the Bank of Spain. Other damages to Gonzalez's integrity were allegations that his regime ran a secret campaign organizing death squads against the Basque movement fighting for independence.

Colombia fails U.S. certification

U.S. president Bill Clinton announced March 1 that the government of Colombia failed to stanch narcotic trafficking. A U.S. law requires the president to report each year which countries supposedly

linked to illegal drug trade are combating drug trafficking and which are not. Colombian president Ernesto Samper is resisting allegations that his 1994 election campaign knowingly received more than \$6 million from drug cartel figures.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry asserted that the decertification of Colombia could affect \$750 million to \$1 billion in Export-Import Bank commitments and \$50 million in loans. Washington would also vote against requests by Bogotá for any loans from the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other development banks.

Washington's move has caused outrage among many in Latin America, including some bourgeois politicians and commentators. "Who certifies the United States?" asked one columnist in *El Diario*, a Spanish-language New York daily.

Affirmative action tour planned

Angel Cervantes, a student at the University of California at Irvine, announced that students who oppose the decision by the Board of Regents to abolish affirmative action programs will organize a three-month walking tour around California to build support for affirmative action. "We will march through various communities, touching various people," and encourage voter registration Cervantes said at a February 26 news conference and rally in Sacramento.

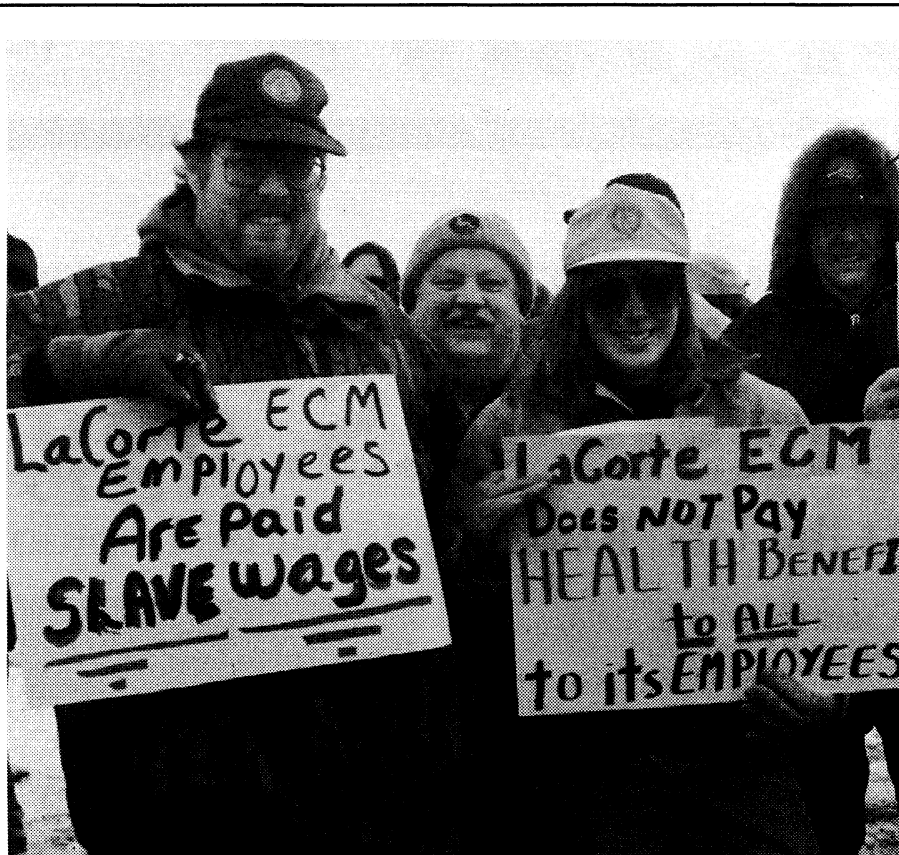
Earlier in the day students rallied in front of the business office of Sacramento businessman Ward Connerly, the Regent heading the campaign against affirmative action. Several dozen university students picketed Connerly's lawn chanting, "Hey, hey, ho ho, Ward Connerly has got to go!" California Gov. Pete Wilson and Connerly announced February 21 that they and other supporters collected almost 1.1 million signatures supporting a referendum on abolishing affirmative action programs in state government.

Abortion clinic eviction halted

Four appellate justices of the New York Supreme Court overturned a lower court decision and ruled February 20 that a landlord cannot evict the Long Island Gynecological Services, which had been the target of antiabortion violence. The landlord, Ronald Morey, pursued the eviction, arguing that performing abortions attracted violent protesters who threatened tenants and damaged his building.

Morey tried to impose a so-called safety rule in January 1995 to prohibit abortions in his building after a right-wing thug murdered two people at a clinic in Brookline, Massachusetts. "Abortion providers have the same rights as other tenants," said Donna Lieberman, an attorney with the New York Civil Liberties Union, who represented the clinic. Lieberman hailed the ruling as a "victory for all women."

— MAURICE WILLIAMS



Mark Schrodt

February 19 mass picket against General Motors plant being built by nonunion labor in Scanton, New York. The rally was the second of a series called by the New York state AFL-CIO, the Capital District Building Trades Council, and United Steelworkers, United Auto Workers, and other unions.

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Buchanan protested

Continued from front page

picked up on Buchanan's anti-immigrant stand and wrote an extremely derogatory column against Mexicans.

In Georgia, where Buchanan concentrated his campaigning, he came in 12 percentage points behind Sen. Robert Dole, who won every contest that day. In most other states, Buchanan lost by an even wider margin. Buchanan came in second in seven of the races. In Connecticut he was third behind millionaire Steve Forbes; in Rhode Island he wasn't on the ballot. A few days earlier he lost to Dole in South Carolina. This stands in contrast to Buchanan's unexpected wins in the Alaska straw poll, Louisiana caucuses, and New Hampshire primary, and his strong showing in second place in the Iowa caucuses just a few weeks earlier.

Following Dole's March 5 win, Lamar Alexander and Richard Lugar announced their withdrawal from the race. Buchanan said he will stay in. On the March 3 television show "Meet the Press," Tim Russert asked Buchanan, "If you lose in Georgia, your run's pretty much over."

Buchanan replied, "No, I don't think so. We're going to take a Dixie express or a Buchanan express," and described his plan to keep campaigning until the Republican convention in San Diego. He intends to go to the convention with a chunk of delegates. The ultrarightist candidate told Russert, "There's not only the Mr. Republican chair that is open, and not only the presidency, but the chair for leader of the American conservative movement in the post-Cold War era."

Conceding that Dole will most likely get the nomination, Buchanan called the front-runner's campaign "hollow, an empty vessel. We think we can fill that vessel up with our ideas if he is the nominee." Buchanan won't say whether he will endorse Dole if the Senate majority leader receives the presidential nomination.

Forbes is also staying in the race for now. The publisher has spent millions of his own dollars on the campaign so far, and won the primaries in Arizona and Delaware. He has mostly campaigned around a reactionary flat-tax scheme.

Dole and Forbes are the only candidates who made it on the ballot throughout New York state in the March 7 primary. High petitioning requirements make it hard for anyone except the candidate endorsed by the state Republican Party to get on the ballot. Forbes went to court to get an order securing his spot. Buchanan won ballot status in some districts.

Another Republican candidate, Alan Keyes, was arrested in Atlanta when he tried to get himself included in a television debate with Alexander, Buchanan, and Forbes March 3. Keyes, a radio talk show host who is Black, said Buchanan, Dole, and the other candidates "sound like a bunch of socialists."

Buchanan paid several visits to factories and textile mills in the last week, presenting himself as a defender of jobs for "American" workers. In the "Meet the Press" interview, he pointed to falling wages for meatpackers, while the executives' salaries increase. "That is a depression," he said. "If that's what capitalism means, I can't defend it any more." But many don't buy his fake concern for workers. Below are articles on several protests over the last week.



BY STEVE CRAINE

LEXINGTON, Massachusetts — Patrick Buchanan chose the Minuteman statue on the green here as the site for his last appearance in Massachusetts before the March 5 primary. "Minutemen" was the name taken by the revolutionary militia who fought British colonialism. But his attempt to claim the heritage of the anti-colonial revolution of 1775 was foiled by a boisterous crowd of anti-Buchanan minute men and women who had mobilized on short notice to oppose his reactionary program.

Buchanan and about 200 of his supporters were surrounded by an equal number of protesters — overwhelmingly young — and a forest of hand-lettered signs, including: "The Minutemen were sons of immigrants," "Buchanan's dirty laundry — white sheets and brown shirts," and "Lexington High School students against Buchanan." Through most of the fascist-

minded politician's 20-minute appearance his words were drowned out by the spirited chanting of the anti-Buchanan crowd. Buchanan was clearly rattled by the protest, which, according to the *New York Times*, was the largest he has met so far.

Key to organizing this strong response was the work of students at Lexington High School. The day before Buchanan's visit, some 200 students met after school and decided that the demagogue should not go unchallenged. "I heard he was coming during my first class," one of the demonstrators said, "and by the end of the day, I'd told everyone I knew about the meeting."

In his brief address, the candidate added a response to the protesters to his regular package of rhetoric. He tried to portray himself as the defender of free speech whose rights were being trampled by the noisy demonstrators, whom he denigrated for their youth. "Come on, children, stop it or I'll take away your Pell [educational] grants," he shouted over their chants.

As part of his cynical claim to speak for working people, Buchanan alluded to the fact that Lexington is a mainly well-to-do town. "The establishment is terrified. Look! We have here the revolt of the over privileged." In an appeal to Jew hatred he added, "How did the Brandeis football team do last year?" Brandeis is a nearby private university that was established to admit Jewish young people facing discrimination in college admissions.

Demonstrators also engaged in debates with Buchanan supporters. By the time Buchanan was bundled back onto his campaign bus and left the area, most protesters felt that they had scored a political victory.



BY JAMES HARRIS

LA GRANGE, Georgia — Patrick Buchanan campaigned in Georgia the day before the Republican primary. He came to Milliken Mills here at the request of Roger Milliken, one of his largest campaign contributors. The textile boss has given at least \$1.8 million to Buchanan's campaign through American Cause, a nonprofit organization set up by Buchanan to support his bid. Buchanan appeared in the parking lot of the almost completely rebuilt carpet plant, which had been destroyed in a fire about a year earlier.

Milliken attempted to warm up the crowd of 300, in its majority office workers from the plant and construction workers doing the rebuilding, along with



Protesters equaled the supporters who showed up for Buchanan rally in Lexington

Buchanan activists. The production workers were not invited to the rally.

Buchanan's speech focused on "jobs for American workers." He pointed to Milliken as the kind of manufacturer America needs, because when the factory burned he didn't move it to Mexico. The majority of the crowd was polite but not overly enthusiastic. When Buchanan supporters made several attempts to get a "Go Pat, Go" chant going, it fell flat.

One worker openly wondered why Buchanan was with Milliken, a notorious opponent of unions. There is no union at the mill. A group of construction workers from Mexico wanted to make sure this *Militant* reporter knew that Buchanan was an enemy of the people of Mexico.

Buchanan also spoke at a rally of 700 at Columbus College in southwestern Georgia the same day. The meeting was not built on campus, and few students attended. Most of the people who came for the rally supported Buchanan, but there was scattered opposition in the crowd.

A socialist campaign table was on the campus before the rally. Several students stopped to discuss with the socialists why they opposed Buchanan. One woman said a few of her friends were going, but only to heckle Buchanan.

Derek Bracey contributed to this article.



BY CLAUDIA HOMMEL

CHICAGO — Well over 1,000 people filled the plaza beside the Tribune Tower March 1 protesting an anti-Mexican column written by Mike Royko and pub-

lished by the *Chicago Tribune* in its February 27 issue. The protest was made up overwhelmingly of Mexican workers and students. A teacher from Cesar Chavez Elementary School said in an interview that her students initiated their participation by demanding that they be brought to the protest.

"I've decided that for the moment I am a Buchanan supporter," Royko wrote in his column. In defense of Buchanan's vicious anti-immigrant rhetoric, Royko said, "In truth, Mexico, while it has nice beaches and other tourist attractions, is not a very nice neighbor. Besides doing nothing to prevent its surplus citizens from sneaking into this country, it is a corrupt narco-state that pumps tons of drugs into this country. Its police and politicians — a really sleazy crowd — are owned by the drug bosses." The rest of the column continued in a similar vein.

The massive outpouring — estimated as 1,000 protesters by the *Chicago Tribune* and as 3,500 by the Spanish-language press — was spirited and grew during the afternoon even as the weather became bitterly cold. Along with Mexican flags and an occasional U.S. flag, handmade picket signs and banners linked Royko's racism to the politics of Buchanan and California governor Pete Wilson, who pushed anti-immigrant Proposition 187. Demonstrators also demanded the *Tribune* fire Royko. Some signs proclaimed "I'm proud to be Mexican," "Enough, enough, no more insults," and "We didn't cross your border, you crossed ours."

—YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD—

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists, an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS, write P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009. Tel: (212) 475-6482, Fax: (212) 388-1659.

BY RYAN KELLY AND JOSÉ ARAVENA

LEXINGTON, Massachusetts — The Young Socialists turned out in full force to confront the Buchanan campaign with 200 other yelling protesters, outnumbering the Buchanans through most of the mobilization until two busloads of his supporters arrived. The front lines of protest were taken by students from Lexington High School.

The students carried homemade placards with phrases such as "Lexington isn't spelled with three 'K's", and "Buchanan, racist bigot." The protesters chanted "Racist, Sexist, Anti-Gay, Pat Buchanan Go Away!" drowning out Buchanan's entire speech.

Elaine Lowe, a senior at Concord Carlisle High School who attended a street picket protesting Washington's war moves against Cuba March 1, joined the protest against Buchanan the next day on Saturday. "I decided to go to both because I wanted to show the government what I want," she said. "You have to fight or they'll take your rights away." She stated that the group at the anti-Buchanan rally, "heartened me so much to see so many young people protesting for what they believe, because young people so often get overlooked."

There were also several pro-Buchanan

students at the rally. Four youths wearing bomber jackets and similar military-style haircuts discussed their support for Buchanan with one of the Young Socialists. One stated, "I think that I'm a national socialist."

Jerrard Freedman, an opponent of Buchanan and a student at Commonwealth High School in Boston, agreed with the characterization of Buchanan as a national socialist. "He is an obvious parallel to other fascist leaders," Freedman commented.

After the protest the Young Socialists and nine students from Lexington High School gathered at a local restaurant. Two of the students pooled their money to buy the *Militant* newspaper, and invited supporters of the *Militant* to speak with other students interested in discussing politics. The Young Socialists in Boston gained confidence in reaching out with a real international socialist alternative to Buchanan's program, which heads in the direction of fascism and war.



BY JOELLYN MANVILLE AND JASON WEAVER

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — More than 1,500 people, mostly high school students, marched to the state capitol here March 2 to protest city school board's decision to ban all extracurricular school clubs, an attempt to stop students from forming gay rights clubs.

One of the speakers at the rally

was Jason Weaver of the Young Socialists. Later, the YS chapter here hosted an open house attended by 13 students and others. Many were interested in the YS's defense of the Cuban revolution. A woman who is a founder of the Cottonwood High School Gay-Straight Alliance asked to join the Young Socialists at the end of the discussion.

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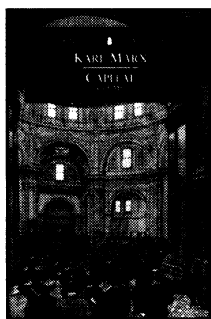
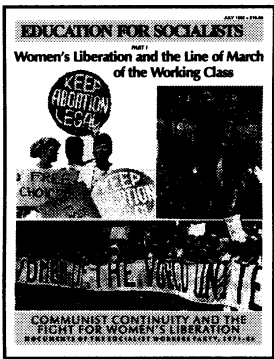
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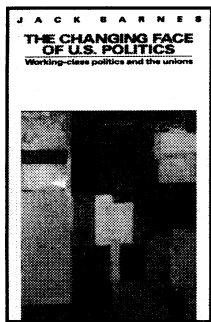


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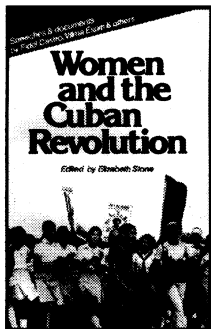
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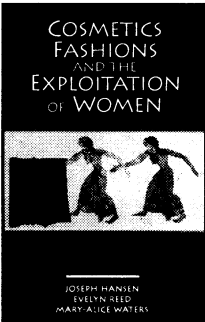
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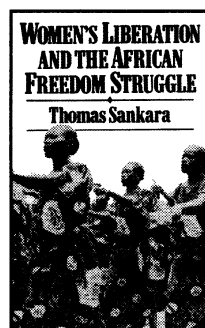
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Sexism and Science

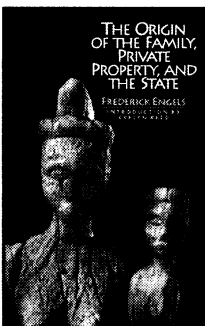
Evelyn Reed

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Employers reinforce sex discrimination

As part of our coverage for Women's History Month we are reprinting below an excerpt from "The capitalist ideological offensive against women today," Mary-Alice Waters's 1985 introduction to the Pathfinder title *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. Copyright © Pathfinder Press, reprinted with permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

When the bosses go on a stepped-up offensive to shift the relationship of forces in their favor, they play every card in the deck — war and the threat of military aggression abroad; more naked use of the cops and courts at home (whether against Blacks, immigrant workers, farmers, or strikers); massive cuts in social services; tax hikes; union busting and concession contracts. At the same time, they wage a political campaign to justify their course as being in the interests of "all of us." They talk about "equality of sacrifice," the "national interest," "labor-management cooperation," and "common cultural values."

Within this framework, the rulers single out special targets as part of their broad frontal assault. One of these is always the progressive changes taking place in women's social status. The employers are aiming at the advances of working-class women especially, but the barrage is necessarily directed against all women. The second sex must be taught to know its place.

The attack on women's rights is fundamental to the success of the capitalist offensive. Discrimination against women is one of the most important ways in which the rulers work to deepen divisions within the working class. Its acceptance helps the bosses keep the labor movement shackled to a narrow trade union perspective, instead of thinking in broader social terms and acting politically to advance the interests of the oppressed and exploited. The perpetuation of women's subordinate status is one more obstacle along the road to independent working-class political action.

The employers aim to undermine working-class women's consciousness of themselves as workers, as part of the working class, and instead to heighten their consciousness of themselves as women — not in the feminist sense, but in all the retrograde ways that are drummed into women from childhood. The employing class seeks to reinforce the prejudices about women's proper place and domestic role. It seeks to convince women that they want to be dependent on a man, with the second class status that entails.

Such prejudices, and the ways women internalize them, go back millennia. But the rise and development of capitalism progressively undermines them, as it forces women out of the home and off the farm and pushes them as individuals into the labor market — with all the brutality inherent in the capitalist mode of production.

Bosses seek to drive down wages

The capitalists' offensive against women's rights is not aimed at driving women out of the work force. That is historically precluded. The percentage of wage and salaried workers who are female has been rising, from one plateau to another, ever

since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Instead, the aim is to make women more vulnerable to increased exploitation. The goal is not to push women out of the labor market but to push them down — to jobs at lower wages, more piece work, less safety, shorter lunch breaks, less union protection, fewer paid holidays.

Women have always made up an important component of the pool of unemployed workers that Marx called the industrial reserve army of labor. This reserve army never disappears under capitalism, even in the best of times. But in a period of capitalist stagnation such as we have lived through over the last decade, the owners of capital need to expand this army of the unemployed in order to intensify competition among workers and thus drive down wages. Hundreds of thousands of women workers were temporarily forced into its ranks during the 1980-82 recession, eroding some of the employment gains they had previously won.

The bosses' ideological campaign seeks to reinforce the idea among both sexes that women are "natural" recruits to this reserve army. They are "normally" only marginal workers, temporary workers, part-time workers, home workers. Women are only a "second" wage earner in the family. In periods of rising joblessness, there are always assertions by ruling-class "opinion molders" that unemployment statistics are artificially high, since women should not really be counted as unemployed in the same way as men, who are considered the main breadwinners. This propaganda is aimed at convincing women to acquiesce, with less resistance and resentment, to temporary unemployment, or to new jobs at lower wages. All this is true despite the increase in female heads of household, a trend that will continue as the evolution of capitalism continues to disintegrate the family.

Want women to blame themselves

The capitalists want women to blame themselves, not the social relations of production, for the economic and social problems they confront every day. The goal is to make women feel guilty that their children are being permanently damaged by "abandonment" in child-care facilities (if they exist), or are being turned into lonely latch-key delinquents. Rather than demanding — as a right — both child-care facilities and equal access to high-paying jobs previously barred to them, women are pushed toward being grateful for any job, at any wage.

Part of the rulers' strategy is also to deepen race divisions. They seek to break down solidarity and intensify competition between women workers who are fighting their way into nontraditional jobs and Black workers, who constitute a large proportion of the politically more conscious, vanguard layers of the working class. Since women are getting jobs that men "ought" to have, they are alleged to be responsible for the high rate of unemployment of Black males. The employers also attempt to pit white women and Black women against each other along similar lines.

Even the notion that backward, prejudiced men are the source of women's problems is accorded a favored niche in the employment propaganda arsenal as an alternative to the truth that the capitalist system is responsible for perpetuating the oppression of women.

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Lessons from Chicano liberation struggle

The Politics of Chicano Liberation, Pathfinder Press, First Edition 1977; Second printing, 1995. Edited by Olga Rodríguez. 186 pages, photos and index; \$15.95.

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND GREG McCARTAN

From a people considered the silent or forgotten minority to the rise of a powerful movement by Chicanos that dealt blows to entrenched oppression and divisions

IN REVIEW

within the working class based on language and national origin — that is the history told in the reissued *Politics of Chicano Liberation*.

This book contains reports and documents of the Socialist Workers Party on the fight for Chicano freedom. The selection grows out of the direct participation of party members in the Chicano struggle in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The documents are remarkable in their factual presentation and Marxist analysis of the roots of Chicano oppression. The book explains why national liberation is a central question in the struggle for socialism.

Editor Olga Rodríguez, a participant in many of the events recounted in the book, provides a preface updating her 1977 introduction. An airline worker and member of the International Association of Machinists, she remains a political activist in New Jersey, where she resides today. The book contains an index and a number of pictures from the 1960s and 1970s.

Included in the reports and documents is a rich accounting of the struggles to organize the mainly-Chicano and Mexicano agricultural workers in the giant "factories in fields" in the Southwest; against the U.S. slaughter in Vietnam; for bilingual and bicultural education, affirmative action and Chicano studies programs; and for equal rights of undocumented immigrant workers.

Several sections take up the formation of the Raza Unida Party in different areas — independent political formations that sought to challenge the control by the Democratic and Republican parties of the Chicano communities.

Forging an oppressed nationality

The Politics of Chicano Liberation explains how Chicanos were forged into a distinct oppressed nationality in the wake of the expansionist drive of U.S. capital in the 19th century, in which over two-thirds of what was then Mexico's national territory was forcibly incorporated into the United States.

With the taking of this huge land mass, the original inhabitants were "set apart by race, language, culture, [and] not assimilated as full and equal citizens," explains the 1971 SWP resolution "The Struggle for Chicano Liberation." Instead, "they were systematically discriminated against as a people, and forged by expanding American capitalism into a distinct oppressed nationality."

"For many years the Chicano people were considered the silent or forgotten minority," the resolution states. But with the end of World War II, colonial revolutions swept Asia, Africa, and the Mideast. Anti-imperialist struggles exploded in Latin America, including the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959. The opening of the first socialist revolution in the Americas had an especially important impact on young fighters in the vanguard of the Chicano struggle.

These developments, together with the victory over Jim Crow segregation in the South and the blows dealt to discrimination in the fight for Black rights, led the situation of the "silent minority" to "change dramatically in the mid- and late-1960s as an independent movement developed in response to the specific oppression of the Chicano people, which had a dynamic and revolutionary logic of its own," the document adds.

Developments in the Chicano liberation struggle are carefully detailed in these documents, from debates within the movement to state-by-state efforts to form independent political organizations. Several sections explain the perspectives ad-



Militant/Ros Sotelo

Thirty thousand marched Aug. 29, 1970, in National Chicano Moratorium against the War in Vietnam, held in East Los Angeles. Cops assaulted the demonstration, killing three and sparking further struggles and marches in the Chicano community.

vanced by other political currents within the movement, such as the Stalinist Communist Party, ultraleft organizations, and liberals.

The SWP sought above all to advance the struggle along a road of independent political action, rejecting reliance on the Democratic Party, toward actions that would increase the self-confidence and mobilization of the Chicano people themselves, and for building organizations on the basis of the mobilized power of the oppressed nationality.

"One necessary step in the construction of a mass independent Chicano party is the elaboration of a program of democratic and transitional demands capable of mobilizing the masses of La Raza in struggle," the 1971 resolution states.

Self-determination

The SWP resolution places "as a contribution to the formulation of a transitional program for Chicano liberation" several key demands, including, "The Right of Self-Determination." Since the "Chicano people are oppressed as a nationality, they have the right to fully and unconditionally determine their own destiny, including the right to establish a separate state if they so decide collectively."

"The most immediate and compelling struggles to determine the destiny of the Chicano people are those aiming at Chicano control of the Chicano community," it states.

Demands on control of education, for the right of Chicano workers to unionize and for a minimum wage, equal rights for Raza women, democratic election laws and the 18-year-old vote, "against mass-media stereotypes," for ending the draft of Chicano youth and support to liberation struggles of oppressed peoples, for "land to those who work it," and the formation of a Chicano political party are included in this section.

The 1976 resolution, "The Crisis of American Capitalism and the Struggle for Chicano Liberation," points out that the "Chicano movement has gained valuable experience that will help guide future battles. But the movement today faces new challenges stemming from the changed international and national context in which its struggles are unfolding."

"In keeping with a centuries-old policy of divide and rule, the American ruling class will make every effort to shift a disproportionate burden of this economic crisis onto the Chicano population."

The first wave of the struggle "won important concessions," the resolution notes. But with the onset of the world capitalist economic crisis and the initial assaults on the working class, "Today even those gains are under attack."

Most recently this can be seen in the efforts of the California legislature and in other states to reverse affirmative action programs and to eliminate Black, women, and Chicano studies departments in the colleges; the chauvinist English-only movements from New York to Florida; and the continuing drive to scapegoat immigrant workers.

The fight that gained international prominence was that of students and workers in the colleges, high schools and work places in California against passage of the anti-immigrant Proposition 187.

Approved in a 1994 statewide vote, the law seeks to deny access to education and health-care service to undocumented workers and their children. Implementation of much of the law was blocked by a temporary restraining order issued shortly after it was passed. Similar legislation has been introduced by politicians of the Democratic and Republican parties across the nation. These laws are designed first and foremost to intimidate large sections of the working class who don't have the "right" documents and to ratchet up chauvinist pressures, which Chicanos and Mexicanos have been the target of for decades.

The government also hopes to drive a wedge in the working class, with the goal of increasing competition among workers in order to increase the length of the working day, enforce speed-up on the job, and implement cuts in the social wage.

Defense of immigrant rights

The harassment and deportation of immigrant workers is not new. Mexicano workers have been the victims of massive deportations organized by the U.S. government going back decades, and the defense of immigrant workers continues to be a centerpiece of the struggle for Chicano liberation today.

"A mass antideportation movement that could organize actions in defense of Mexicanos and other immigrants without visas has the potential of drawing in not only Chicanos, other workers, civil libertarians, and students, but of mobilizing workers without papers in defense of their rights," stated the 1976 SWP resolution.

This is something that did develop in the fight against Proposition 187. The high school strikes and protests among college students, involving tens of thousands of youth, included children of immigrant workers who often led the protest activities in Los Angeles.

An important and new component in the demonstrations against Proposition 187 were the organized contingents of immigrant workers — from truck drivers and garment workers, to farm workers, construction workers, and maintenance workers — who swelled the ranks of the protests.

Working-class battles

The Politics of Chicano Liberation explains how the drive by Mexicano, Chicano, and Filipino agricultural workers in California was one of the events that launched the new movement of Chicanos in the 1960s. Their uncompromising struggle for equality, a decent wage, and a union inspired thousands of Chicano youth to take up the banner for equality and justice.

The UFW's success in the California fields in winning some basic rights for what had been an unprotected, super-exploited layer of workers in the United

States, was based in part on the fact that the union took up the broader social questions facing the oppressed and exploited.

Like the farm workers, other Mexicano and Latino immigrant workers have organized themselves to fight against entrenched racism, for decent wages and conditions, and, in the process, to organize into trade unions.

Their successes have been contingent on reaching into the Chicano and Mexicano communities, and to the working class as a whole, for solidarity. This was true with the 1993 strike by drywall construction workers in California, and in the battle for Justice for Janitors in Los Angeles in 1990, the majority of whom were Mexicano and other Latino immigrants.

These battles deserve to be studied and provide valuable lessons for workers resisting the rulers' offensive today, and can help combat chauvinist appeals to "America First" being made by Democrats and Republicans. They point to an internationalist course against that of the labor officials whose only

answer to unemployment and wage cuts has been calls for legislation to protect "American jobs."

At a time when Washington, together with imperialist partners in NATO, is mounting a war drive against Yugoslavia, the lessons of the militant antiwar mobilizations by Chicanos against the U.S. war in Vietnam, contained in *The Politics of Chicano Liberation*, will be of interest to those who want to fight against imperialism's war preparations today.

The Politics of Chicano Liberation provides an explanation and concrete example of the combined character of the coming American revolution. It shows how the fight for national liberation gives a mighty boost to the class struggle and provides a basis for unifying the working class in the fight to wrest power from the most brutal capitalist ruling class in the world.

The book is convincing in its case that Chicano fighters should become part of the worldwide struggle for socialism.

"The SWP recognizes that the struggle of Chicanos against their oppression takes place on two intertwined fronts — a fight against the oppression they face as a people, and a struggle against their exploitation as part of the working class," states a 1976 resolution.

"Only the coming American socialist revolution," the resolution states, "a proletarian revolution that also completes the unfulfilled democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution by assuring equality and self-determination to the oppressed national minorities in the United States — can bring about the total liberation of Chicanos."

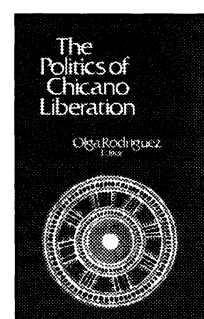
The capitalist rulers try to convince us we are up against insurmountable odds if we embark on the road of struggle. That was rejected and proven wrong by the farm workers who fought for a union and whose battle cry was "¡Sí, se puede!" ("Yes, it can be done!").

This became the slogan of the youthful Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The lesson of this book is that it can become the slogan of today's generations as well.

The Politics of Chicano Liberation

Edited by
Olga Rodríguez

The rise of the Chicano movement in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s: from the United Farm Workers organizing drive and the Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War to the emergence of La Raza Unida Party and the fight against deportations. \$13.95



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'Suicide Squad': example of revolutionary morale

Pathfinder Press has recently released a new edition of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War — 1956-58*.

To promote this book the *Militant* is running "Pages from Cuba's Revolutionary History." This series features articles by and about combatants of the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army, which led the revolutionary war that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the socialist revolution in the Americas.

This week's installment — the eighth — focuses on the "Suicide Squad" of Column no. 8 of the Rebel Army, commanded by Che Guevara, and on the unit's leader Roberto Rodríguez, also known by his nickname "Vaquerito."

The squad was made up of volunteers who took on the most dangerous assignments in the order of battle. As Guevara explains in *Episodes*, "The Suicide Squad was an example of revolutionary morale, and only selected volunteers joined it. But whenever a man died — and that happened in every battle — when the new candidate was named, those not chosen would be grief-stricken and even cry. How curious to see those seasoned and noble warriors showing their youth by their tears of despair, because they did not have the honor of being in the front line of combat and death."

Vaquerito, the platoon's leader, was killed during the battle of Santa Clara on Dec. 30, 1958, two days before the triumph of the revolution.

Below are excerpts from articles by three members of Guevara's column published in *Verde Olivo*, the magazine of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) of Cuba.

Rogelio Acevedo joined the Rebel Army in July 1957 at age 15 and is currently a division general in the FAR. In an article published Dec. 10, 1981, he relates events from the battle of La Federal on Sept. 9, 1958.

Jesús Parra, a founding member of Column no. 8, which carried out the Rebel Army campaign from the Sierra Maestra to Las Villas province in central Cuba, discusses events following the battle of Güinfa de Miranda, which took place Oct. 26-27, 1958. His article was published Oct. 29, 1987.

The third excerpt is by Leonardo Tamayo, a peasant from the Sierra Maestra who joined the Rebel Army in 1957, and later became second in command of the Suicide Squad. In 1966 he accompanied Guevara to Bolivia, under the *nom-de-guerre* "Urbano," and was one of the three Cuban survivors of the guerrilla unit. He later served on internationalist missions in Nicaragua and Angola, and is currently a retired colonel in Cuba's Ministry of the Interior. His article was published Jan. 5, 1964.

Translation and subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY ROGELIO ACEVEDO

Three comrades, Capt. Angel Frías, Lt. Roberto Rodríguez, and combatant Enrique Acevedo decided to take the house by assault, arriving at its door after a dangerous sprint.

Enrique surrounded the mansion from the



Members of 'Suicide Squad' of Guevara's Column 8. Second from left is Capt. Roberto Rodríguez (El Vaquerito). Third from left is Lt. Leonardo Tamayo (Urbano).
Institute of Cuban History

back, and got inside to open the main door for Vaquerito and Angel Frías, who went inside and searched the basement without finding anything. Later they decided to go up to the top floor, where two bedrooms were located: one was to the right of the stairs, with its door closed; the other at the end of a wide hallway without railings.

Vaquerito remained in the hallway, while Angel Frías and Enrique penetrated into the bedroom at the extreme left, killing the corporal of the tyranny's army after a quick exchange of shots. At the same instant, Vaquerito tried to enter the second bedroom, and was greeted by a hail of fire from the dictatorship's soldiers. He was saved thanks to his small size and his agility.

Together with his other comrades, in the hallway now, Roberto Rodríguez was able to shoot his way inside the bedroom occupied by the enemy. In the course of the exchange of fire, Angel Frías fell from the second floor, breaking an ankle.

Enrique, who had also run through the hallway toward Vaquerito's position, assisted him in firing at the guards. Vaquerito's shouts of "Surrender, or come out and fight!" in addition to the rain of fire from his rifle, shattered the morale of the tyranny's soldiers.

At that precise moment, a bullet wounded Enrique in both arms, while Vaquerito continued firing his Garand until a bullet got lodged in the rifle butt, putting it out of action.

Without losing his composure, Vaquerito picked up Enrique's weapon and continued firing at the guards, at the same time calling on them to surrender, although at that moment the enemy's superiority was evident.

Realizing the serious condition of his wounded comrade, Roberto Rodríguez stationed himself in the center of the doorway, five meters from the guards, and continued firing away, enabling the wounded comrade to withdraw; and not giving a thought to the fact that he remained there fighting all alone.

Moments later, the three enemy survivors surrendered. Three soldiers of the tyranny had been killed in the action.

As always, in this action at La Federal, Vaquerito demonstrated his stature as a revolutionary and a hero, fulfilling the assigned mission by any means possible, despite having to confront all alone an enemy superior in number.

This was one of the numerous heroic acts that earned Roberto Rodríguez — "Vaquerito" — his reputation as one of the most valiant combatants of the Rebel Army.

BY JESÚS PARRA

After the battle, the attackers proceeded to bury their dead.

Later one part headed to Sopimpa and the other to Gavilanes. At the latter place there was discussion on why the bazooka had not worked. Lieutenant Roberto Rodríguez, "Vaquerito," and José Figueredo, among others, raised with Che the idea of creating a squad armed with automatic weapons that would guarantee the taking of enemy positions.

The guerrilla leader liked the idea and asked for volunteers who wished to be part of it.

A squad was created consisting at first of six invasion veterans and five combatants from the remaining forces, but very soon the number rose to 35. The unit received the name "Suicide Squad." It was headed by Vaquerito, and its second in command was Leonardo Tamayo. Its missions included entering garrisons by surprise, once they were surrounded, and achieving their surrender.

BY LEONARDO TAMAYO

I think we had been in Las Villas for a month. Che sent Emérito Meriño, Vaquerito, and me on a scouting mission. It was at night. We were 30 or 40 meters from the Caracusey garrison, carrying out the mission, when Vaquerito, seeing the tranquil state of the guardposts, said to me, "What would you think about asking Che if he'd let us assault the garrison, once it's surrounded, and take it by surprise?"

Shortly afterward we spoke with Che. "The Argentine" approved the idea and gave us the necessary orders. A few comrades were chosen and he asked them if they wanted to form a new platoon. Che would name it the "Suicide Squad."

The platoon was quickly formed. Its members were Emérito Meriño; Antonio [García], who had been in charge of our bazooka during the invasion; Juanito; Hugo del Río; Orlando; "El Mexicano"; Juan Alberto Castellanos Villamar; Zacarías; Alfredo, who would be killed during the taking of the Cabaiguán garrison; Pancho; and "Patriot." The head of the platoon was, logically enough, Roberto Rodríguez, "Vaquerito." I was second in command.

I had met Vaquerito in Las Vegas de Jibacoa, back in the Sierra Maestra. He was then working with Celia. He was a happy and likable young man, always joking. At first I did not have much dealing with him. Later he came as part of the Invasion Column, as a member of Angelito Frías's platoon. Throughout the entire day, he always

kept his cheerful personality, was a good companion, and when necessary he displayed courage. Other comrades had already talked about his conduct at Cuatro Compañeros and La Federal.

First task of 'suicide squad'

After the Suicide Squad was formed, its first attack, I recall, was at the garrison at Fomento. There an event occurred that tells us something about Vaquerito. He told me he had a plan. In the event that the garrison did not surrender after gunfire, he wanted to utilize a turbine to siphon gasoline from a tank, carry it in tubes right up to the garrison, and set it ablaze. The plan was not carried out, of course. At the time, I thought it was a good idea. Today I believe, and tell myself, that it was crazy. But that's how Vaquerito was. Those who knew him have no doubt he would have carried it out....

Later we attacked the Cabaiguán garrison. The attack began at five in the morning. I was exhausted after so many days of fighting, and was resting in the portal of a house for a few minutes. As I left, I was surprised by an M-1 shot fired at me. I went to look for Vaquerito. He said, "Let's go find some of those soldiers." He positioned some comrades, and then he and I headed out. There were six soldiers and they surrendered without firing another shot. We seized three M-1s, a Thompson, a San Cristóbal, and two Springfields. By now the population of the town was engulfing us, and one of the prisoners escaped. But at that moment, the weapons were more important than the prisoners.

We told Che everything. Later, after we had been fighting for about three hours at the garrison. Vaquerito received orders to go reinforce the comrades who were fighting at the short-wave post. This point was attacked by Silva's platoon. Che had pulled Silva out with half his platoon, and Acevedo remained behind with the other group. We went to reinforce this group. When we arrived there, we found that [Silverio] Blanco had been wounded. This comrade had come with us on the invasion. He died two days later.

Vaquerito despaired whenever any of our comrades were killed or wounded. He told us we would either die or take prisoners. And he decided to shoot out the short-wave post so that the soldiers would have no communication.

He ordered us to concentrate our fire for five or ten minutes. After five minutes we called out to the guards to surrender. A soldier came out and said that one of us should go in and discuss their surrender. Vaquerito shouted back that all of us would go in, and that they should lay down their arms. The guards wanted to discuss this. Vaquerito announced that combat would resume. We advanced, and they all surrendered. I don't recall how many prisoners and how many weapons were captured, but there were quite a few.

We continued fighting in the garrison, which surrendered at dawn after a battle lasting from eight o'clock the night before. I was wounded and was in the Cabaiguán workers' hospital....

Oscar [Fernández Mell] got me from the hospital and brought me to Remedios. There I was reunited with Che. The battle was already in its final moments. I fired only one shot and the garrison surrendered. Later I joked a lot with the comrades, and sometimes I still repeat the joke with them. It was a coincidence that just as I fired one shot, the garrison surrendered.

Last battle in Santa Clara

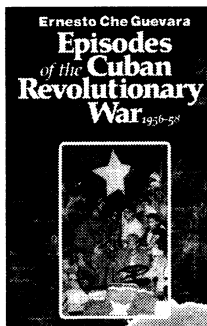
Our last battle was in Santa Clara. On Cápiro Hill — and this will be told when all the comrades get together and relate the history of this battle — we were fighting against approximately 500 soldiers. At the front was Alfonso Zayas, today a commander.

The Suicide Squad was the first to enter the city. Because of Vaquerito's courage and bravery, the platoon was able to get inside. Later Che gave him the mission of attacking the main police station. We got right up to the house in front of it, moving against the walls of the other houses. Positioned in a flat-roof house were Vaquerito, Hugo del Río, another comrade, and me. Vaquerito was a young man who did not watch out for

Continued on Page 7

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Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War is a firsthand account of the military battles and political campaigns that culminated in the January 1959 mass armed insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.

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Sell the books workers of the world need

BY GREG McCARTAN

This week the *Militant* begins a regular column, "Selling the Books the Workers of the World Need Now!" Socialist workers, members of the Young Socialists, and supporters of the communist movement in the United States have taken on ambitious

goals to sell Pathfinder books: 1,800 books and pamphlets a month through local Pathfinder bookstores, and 1,400 to retail outlets, libraries, college bookstores, and other commercial stores.

As part of this overall goal, socialist workers who are members of industrial

unions have taken a goal of selling 400 Pathfinder titles a month to co-workers on the job. The accompanying chart shows initial results of this effort.

In addition to the campaign to sell 1,550 copies of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* (see column below), socialists are also organizing to win a total of 1,200 members of the Pathfinder Readers Club by May 1.

Weekly results of sales, showing totals for the month, are to be received at the *Militant* by 8:00 a.m. each Monday to be recorded in the chart.

At recent leadership meetings of socialists active in the industrial unions and of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, a consistent theme of the reports and discussion was that effective communist work can only be carried out in the mass movement if it is done hand-in-hand with selling revolutionary literature. Many who had begun to do this reported on the interest in getting hold of Pathfinder titles, and on how it can transform the political striking power and functioning of union fractions and local branches of the communist movement.

Melissa Harris from Seattle writes that a team at Western Washington University sold \$100 worth of books. Selling from a literature table with large signs calling for an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba, team members were approached by students "for discussion about Cuba and the politics of Patrick Buchanan all day long," she reports. The most frequently question

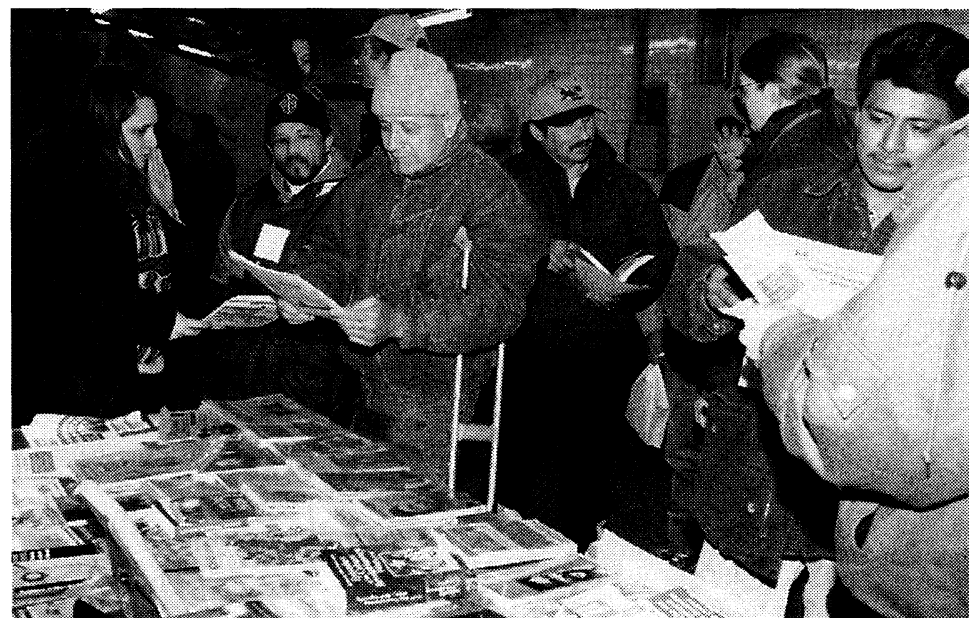
asked was, "Why do you think the U.S. embargo against Cuba should be ended?" A team member also visited the campus library for a meeting to introduce Pathfinder titles to the book buyer there.

A rapidly developing trend is for socialists to take a bag of books into work and show them around. Being able to see the books and look through them makes it more likely someone will decide to buy one than seeing a Pathfinder catalog alone.

Brad Downs, a member of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union at the General Motors plant in Baltimore had a good week of sales this way, and sent in another note "to follow up on yesterday's report. When I went back to work on Friday a co-worker who joined the Readers Club bought a copy of *Racism, Revolution, Reaction: 1861-1877*. A third co-worker bought *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*. I could have sold more of Malcolm's books if I had brought more stock with me."

Bookstore	Monthly goal for sales from Pathfinder bookstore	Sold in February	Monthly goal for sales to commercial distributors	Sold in February	Goal for members of Readers Club by May 1	Readers Club members to date
Atlanta	48		32		31	27
Birmingham	65		50		45	18
Boston	65		50		43	30
Brooklyn	165		130		110	44
Chicago	77		60		52	30
Cleveland	50		40		34	19
Des Moines	45		35		31	21
Detroit	77		60		52	20
Greensboro	41		36		28	17
Houston	50		39		34	17
Los Angeles	120		95		80	43
Manhattan	171		175		115	49
Miami	55		42		36	24
Morgantown	32		25		21	11
Newark	180		140		120	61
Peoria	36		28		25	12
Philadelphia	63		49		43	25
Pittsburgh	63		49		43	20
Salt Lake City	63		49		54	26
San Francisco	95		74		64	40
Seattle	80		60		60	41
Twin Cities	86	74	67	19	60	36
Washington, D.C.	54		42		37	19
Total	1781		1427		1218	650
Goal	1800		1400		1200	

IAM				4
OCAW	38	41		34
UAW	100	113		50
UFCW	12			11
UMWA	5			4
UNITE	22			14
USWA	56	22		56
UTU				8
Total	235	135		160
Goal	400			400



Socialists selling Pathfinder books inside New York City subway March 3, 1996.

Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Socialists reach hundreds with truth about Cuba

BY GREG McCARTAN

At picket lines, protests, and emergency Militant Labor Forums, socialists and supporters of Pathfinder have introduced hundreds of people to revolutionary books and literature as part of defending Cuba against Washington's latest aggressive actions. At plant gates; on the job in mines, mills, and factories; and among striking workers such as the Ontario public employees, communist workers got out the truth about Cuba and imperialism's military threats.

With four weeks to go, we are now past the half-way point in the campaign to sell 1,550 copies of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58*, by Ernesto Che Guevara. This week an additional 96 copies were sold, bringing the total to 826, or 53 percent, slightly ahead of schedule.

This past week supporters also focused on sales of *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End*, speeches by Cuban president Fidel Castro and Guevara before various bodies of the United Nations. While no figures are available for this week's

sales of the latter title, Pathfinder in New York reports an increase in orders for the book of speeches by the two revolutionary leaders.

Two reviews in London papers

Two major papers in London, *The Times* and the *Sunday Observer*, ran reviews of *Episodes*. "Taking Havana," is the title of the review in *The Observer*, which says "Che Guevara's account of fighting with Castro seems the ultimate insider's guide to revolution."

Rachel Campbell-Johnston, writing in *The Times*, explains Guevara describes the "landing on Cuban shores of Castro and his 81 revolutionaries...[and] traces the ensuing skirmishes and struggles which tempered a ragged group of idealistic rebels into a proficient guerrilla force."

"He charts the political evolution of Castro's July 26 Movement," Campbell-Johnston explains, "from the establishment of the first free territory high in the Sierra Maestra, through the emergence of its new social structures centering on land reform, its developing legal system and industries, to its overthrow of President Batista's brutal dictatorship on January 1, 1959."

Pathfinder supporters are working to get other reviews in local papers and college press, as well as planning meetings to celebrate the book's publication.

Sales at Militant Labor Forums

In Miami, three copies of the book were purchased by activists attending a Militant Labor Forum demanding "U.S. Hands Off Cuba!" The forum was attended by 40-50 people, reports Seth Galinsky, and was covered on the nightly news by several local TV stations. "Two workers at the United Airlines flight kitchen here at the Miami airport have also purchased copies," he said.

Another three copies were sold the week before at a forum featuring Galinsky, who gave a report back from the Havana book fair, where he was part of a reporting team for the *Militant*.

A similar protest forum was held in Boston, where 45 people came, including several high school students who invited those attending to join an action the next

day against Patrick Buchanan, reports Andrea Morell. A member of the International Association of Machinists who works at the Boston airport purchased a copy of the book, as well as a young person interested in joining the Young Socialists.

"We've sold seven more copies of the new book since last week," John Hawkins said in a phone interview from Birmingham. "A member of the United Auto Workers union who works at a war plant here bought a copy, and a young Black worker who identifies with the Cuban revolution decided to get one too. He is a member of the United Steelworkers of America."

As dozens of socialists returned to the New York Pathfinder bookstore early Sunday evening after a day of campaigning, Ruth Robinett reported that day she had sold her eighth copy of *Episodes* on the job, along with *Teamster Rebellion*, by Farrell Dobbs, and a membership in the Pathfinder Readers Club. Robinett is a member of the United Transportation Union who works at Amtrak. Six copies were sold by socialists over the weekend in Brooklyn.

Joan Paltrineri, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees who works at a Kmart distribution center in Greensboro, North Carolina, writes that socialists on the job "sold seven books and a Pathfinder Readers Club membership in the month of February. With Cuba in the headlines the last week there is a lot of discussion and interest in Cuba. This has been reflected in the fact that we sold two copies of the *Episodes* book, *Cuba for Beginners*, and two Spanish-language books on Cuba by Pathfinder."

"One co-worker who bought *Episodes* said during a lunch discussion that the Cuban govern-

ment had shown a lot of patience with these flights by opponents of the Cuban revolution. He noted that the U.S. government had been told many times of the illegal flights and did nothing. He said the Cubans had a perfect right to shoot down the planes."

Los Angeles	100	71	71%
Twin Cities	80	56	70%
Greensboro	45	31	69%
San Francisco	95	60	63%
Des Moines	45	27	60%
Atlanta, GA	45	27	60%
Miami	50	30	60%
Boston	60	36	60%
Seattle	80	47	59%
Newark	133	77	58%
Cleveland	45	26	58%
Peoria, IL	30	16	53%
Salt Lake City	60	32	53%
New York	140	72	51%
Brooklyn	130	56	43%
Philadelphia	60	24	40%
Chicago	60	24	40%
Birmingham, AL	60	24	40%
Detroit	60	22	37%
Washington, D.C.	75	27	36%
Houston	39	14	36%
Morgantown	27	9	33%
Pittsburgh	55	18	33%
TOTAL	1574	826	53%
SHOULD BE	1550	775	50%

UMWA	7	3	43%
UTU	80	31	39%
OCAW	61	22	36%
UAW	110	31	28%
UNITE	42	7	17%
USWA	60	8	13%
IAM	90	7	8%
UFCW	12	1	8%
TOTAL	461	102	22%
SHOULD BE	500	250	50%

IAM—International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; UAW— United Auto Workers; UFCW— United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE— Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union.

Suicide squad

Continued from page 6

himself. He never crawled; he always went on two feet. He was never afraid to fulfill any mission he was assigned. Standing up, in the middle of the house, he fired at the police station. I shouted to him: "Hit the ground or they'll kill you!"

A few minutes later I looked at him. He was on the ground. Not realizing the situation, I said, "Why aren't you shooting?" Approaching him, I saw that blood was streaming from his mouth. An M-1 bullet had gone through his head.

We carried him to the command post, where he was attended by doctors De la O and Fernández Mell and another doctor whose name I don't remember. Vaquerito had spoken his last words. Within 30 minutes he was dead.

Che looked at the body, and I'll never forget his words:

"They've just killed a hundred of our men."

'To assure the revolutionary power of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers discusses theses in preparation for

Beginning with this issue, the *Militant* is publishing portions of the Theses for the 17th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). This document is being discussed at thousands of factory assemblies and other workplace meetings throughout Cuba in preparation for the congress of the country's nationwide trade union federation. The workers assemblies to discuss this document began January 15 and will last through March 15. The congress is scheduled for April 25-30 in Havana.

The CTC leadership has issued a call to trade unionists and other workers from around the world to attend the congress (for travel from the United States see ad below).

CTC leaders, including the organization's general secretary, Pedro Ross, will also travel to Montreal for a March 15-16 conference in solidarity with Cuba sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress. This event will help build international participation from North America to the CTC gathering (see ad below).

The theses, prepared by the organization's National Committee after a round of CTC conferences organized in every municipality in Cuba last year, consist of 11 sections. The *Militant* will publish major portions of the document over the next several weeks. The first installment, printed below, consists of the preamble and the first three sections.

The theses were published as a special supplement to the Nov. 20, 1995, issue of *Trabajadores*, the CTC's weekly newspaper. Translation from Spanish and footnotes are by the *Militant*.



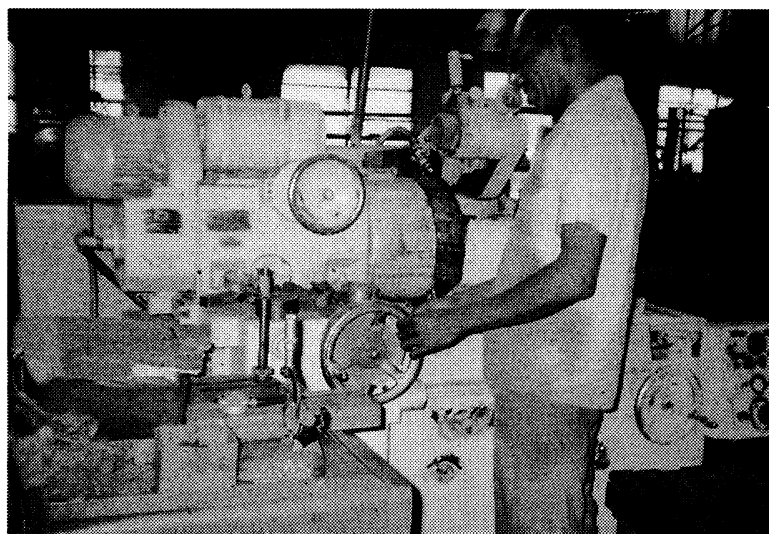
1. The central focus of the 17th Congress, as expressed in the call from our National Committee, will be to:

2. Decide how workers and the trade union movement should take responsibility for the present and future transformation of our country, and for perspectives for its development.

3. Assess how to preserve, in these new conditions, the unity that has been and remains the indispensable condition for our strength.

4. Determine what we — together with our people, their organizations, and their institutions — should do to assure, under whatever circumstances, the revolutionary power of the workers, by the workers, and for the workers.

5. These theses seek, from the standpoint of the Cuban trade union movement, to help



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Right: Workers assembly at Miguel Saavedra machine shop in Havana discussing CTC theses, February 1996. Above: Worker operating machine at the same shop.

us find a way forward to these objectives, and to chart a course of action for the years ahead.

I. The world, the workers, and the situation in Cuba

6. In a world that has long been marked by a deep economic and social crisis, injustice, and violence, the disappearance of the USSR and of socialism in the countries of Eastern Europe signaled a sharpening of all these problems, an unprecedented recession, and a worsening of the catastrophic situation of the underdeveloped countries — conditions that now hit with growing force the workers in the highly industrialized countries as well.

7. These events, occurring completely independent of the situation in Cuba, nonetheless struck a harsh blow against our country. We found ourselves suddenly deprived of 70 percent of our imports. The mutually advantageous relationships we had developed with the Soviet Union and other countries were terminated.¹ And the U.S. government seized the opportunity to tighten the blockade, convinced that Cuba could not survive under such adverse circumstances.²

8. Our people remained faithful to their glorious history, to the genuine character of their revolution, and to the firmness of their leaders. They did not hesitate a second to step forward to defend at any price our national independence, the extraordinary social gains we have won over the years, the correctness of our ideas, and the unquestionable right to decide for ourselves our future with dignity in a homeland that is free.

9. The years since the previous 16th Congress have seen the most critical moments of these challenges.³ Perhaps only in the fight for independence in the last century can one find a comparable example on a mass scale of stoicism, spirit of sacrifice, and determination to fight in face of enormous adversities.

10. As Fidel said last July 26, "it is an historically unprecedented feat that even under these circumstances, not a single school, hospital, senior citizens' home, or day-care center has been closed."⁴

11. Our people, our workers, our heroic working class, have not only been able to resist but have even begun, step by step, to gain ground again.

12. We still have enormous problems ahead of us. No one can now doubt, however, that the course we have chosen is the only one possible — faced, as we were, with a perspective of returning to slavery, of ceasing to exist as a nation, and of being incorporated as a bottom-ranked country into a so-called new world order (in reality nothing more than an empire made up of a handful of powerful countries, in which the United States seeks to become the single pole of domination).

13. The road will not be easy, but we continue being masters of our own destiny in a world of sharpening unemployment, decline in the purchasing power of wages, exploitation of child labor, deterioration in the situation of working women, brutal attacks and acts of neofascist xenophobia against eth-

nic minorities, discrimination of all kinds, and worsening health, illiteracy, and living conditions for workers and the peoples as a whole.

14. We continue to confront great difficulties, but Cuba stands today in Latin America as an alternative to the merciless neoliberal policies, to the weakening and destruction of the trade union movement they pursue, and to the enormous social

"Catastrophic conditions of underdeveloped countries now hit workers in industrialized world"

costs and suffering that they bring on. We also stand as proof that our ideals of independence, solidarity, and justice remain in full force in spite of everything.

II. Our strategy does not lead to capitalism

15. The economic strategy charted by the revolution is aimed at confronting the harsh consequences of the disappearance of European socialism, and enabling us to resist and to emerge from the crisis. At the same time we do not renounce a perspective of development, even amid an intensified U.S. blockade.

16. In the brief period of two years, this strategy has involved a number of measures. These include, among others: broadening the possibilities for foreign investment, creating the Basic Units of Cooperative Production in the countryside,⁵ legalizing the circulation of foreign currency, instituting measures of financial reorganization, recasting the tax system and finances in general, creating markets for agricultural and industrial goods, decentralizing foreign trade, expanding self-employment, and reorganizing the state and the administrative apparatus to promote greater efficiency.

17. Any country that aspires to a sound economy — especially in a situation like ours — would need to reorganize its internal finances, balance the state budget to avoid spending more than is taken in, reduce inflationary pressure, restructure employment, and encourage the investment of capital in sectors that can give an impetus to the rest of the economy.

18. The radical difference lies in the objectives we pursue and the methods we utilize to attain them.

"Our heroic working class has not only been able to resist but has begun, step by step, to gain ground again"



Militant/Seth Galinsky

19. In other countries the type of economic readjustments Cuba requires are imposed through neoliberal and antipopular policies of cutting public spending, above all in health care, education, and social security; massive unemployment, privatization, and the loss of workers' benefits and social benefits achieved over decades of organized struggle. At the same time, the foreign debt increases, the national patrimony shrinks, and governments become more dependent.

20. The trade union movement fully supports our government's policy of leading this process in a directed, ordered, and gradual way, without sudden lurches, and in every step relying on the active and real participation of the workers and their union representatives, so that all opinions can be taken into account.

21. As a result of the changes forced on us, the structure and relative balance of the different sectors of the economy have been modified.

22. The fundamental weight will continue to lie in the state sector, the essential base of our power, consisting of state enterprises that are the property of the entire people; and in the cooperatives, the collective property of all its members. This corresponds to the will of the workers and has our most determined support.

Printed below are the contents of the CTC theses by section.

I. The world, the workers, and the situation in Cuba

II. Our strategy does not lead to capitalism

III. Fighting for an efficient and competitive economy

IV. The decisive effort to increase sugar production

V. The problem of employment and reorganization of the labor force

VI. Workers' wages

VII. Union action regarding collective contract agreements and labor legislation

VIII. Working for the consolidation and triumph of the UBPCs

IX. Unions are by and for the workers

X. Defending the revolution means guaranteeing our power

XI. Maintaining unity in the ranks of the workers

International Solidarity Conference on Cuba

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workers'

union convention

23. The state sector will at the same time be required to coexist with mixed enterprises and different forms of operation of foreign capital, with a private property sector, and with self-employment, which will grow even more in the coming years. These factors will increase the role of the market in our domestic economy.

24. Like the other forces of the revolution, the CTC and the unions do not want an alienating market that imposes its blind laws on society. Rather we aim for a market subordinated to our system, that functions within certain limits, and that is an instrument contributing to revitalizing the economy and reestablishing the value of work.

25. What distinguishes our economic transformations is that they are being carried out under the sponsorship and control of the state, and their highest objectives are to safeguard the interests of the revolution and the workers. This includes the aspiration of resuming the construction of socialism when the conditions for doing so are created.

26. Another fundamental characteris-

“We aspire to resume the construction of socialism when the conditions for doing so are created”

tic — and guarantee of our course — is that nothing we are doing implies concessions on any basic political principles, or weakening the leading role of our vanguard party¹. Neither are we renouncing our historic values, national identity, culture, morale, or the dignity of our people.

27. The class and patriotic consciousness of the workers and their unions are measured today, in large part, by their understanding of our country's need to introduce elements of capitalism, of the inequalities these inevitably breed, and of our duty to continue defending the revolution's values and principles in this new context.

28. Our country cannot aspire to a degree of justice, well-being, and equality greater than is permitted by its own level of development and its daily efforts. Cuba has done much in matters of social policy and fairness for all citizens. In past years we even went beyond our real economic capacities and often fell into well-intentioned but erroneous practices of egalitarianism.

29. Our union movement will fight to make all its affiliates conscious of the central importance of defending our people's right to universal and free health care; our children's right to equal opportunities in education; workers' rights to social security benefits; the right of families who need it to the state's economic protection; the right of citizens of working age to equal access to honorable employment generated in the country; and the right of all Cubans to equality before the law, without discrimination due to skin color, sex, creed, or any other



Militant / Seth Galinsky
Agriculture market in Havana, 1995. Fresh vegetables and other food items have become more available throughout the country, improving conditions for workers.

reason, as well as the full exercise of their freedom and democratic rights.

30. The union movement similarly reaffirms that the essential basis of equality in our country must be applying the principle of remuneration to each person according to the results of the work they contribute to society.

31. Under the country's new conditions, however, certain inequalities have necessarily arisen, and others have appeared deriving from the conditions of

work and incentives, from the possibility of receiving greater income through participating in a market ruled by supply and demand, and from access to freely convertible currency⁷.

32. Even before the special period, a decision had been adopted to attract foreign investment to obtain capital, technology, and markets not available from the socialist countries, with the aim of developing specific branches of the economy. What constituted an additional but not decisive resource in the 1980s becomes today an imperative necessity to complement the functioning and development of the economy.

33. The alternative to broadening the role of foreign capital would have been to cross our arms, let industry remain paralyzed, and leave the country without production or employment.

34. In accepting these investments, Cuba does not sell land to foreign interests or give up its fundamental resources. What it is agreeing to are business arrangements for a specific period of time, and a sharing of income in exchange for the benefits the country receives. Foreign investments, moreover, must be completely subordinated to Cuban law, including labor legislation.

35. In face of these changes and approaches taking shape in the country, the union movement's stance must be to resolutely support the revolution under all circumstances, so that the measures that increasingly mold our economy serve to maintain its predominantly socialist character, and become translated in practice into a

greater increase in production and efficiency.

36. We must help the state to realize the potential of these measures to benefit society and we must oversee the proper management of resources. In particular we must demand that in the functioning of the system of taxes, audits, inspections, and other measures of state regulation, workers are protected from irregularities and arbitrary acts.

37. Finally, the union movement must energetically oppose tendencies that under these circumstances can undermine honesty, a sense of dignity, and moral values, both among those who manage resources and among workers. In this way an increase in indiscipline and improper behavior, eco-

economy is a basic condition for ensuring the vitality of the country, and also for becoming stronger and more efficient in politics, in ideas, in culture, and in defense.

40. We are obligated to find the road to that efficiency, because we now have to base everything on our own efforts, and we must make our way in a world dominated by the laws of the market and competition.

41. To reach this objective, our activity should lead, systematically, to the struggle of each economic unit to generate income in excess of its expenses, to the resulting lowering of costs, and to a rising awareness of the need for an accounting system that guarantees objective decision making and an exact accounting of resources and their use.

42. The trade union movement should intensify the struggle with the goal of generalizing a culture of work, based on efficiency, whose essence is not only discipline in work, but order and discipline in the use of technology, in administration, and in finances as well.

43. In this battle, it is fundamental for the unions to strengthen their role in the fight to save fuel and all energy resources, for optimal use of raw materials, and for the highest quality in the products they create and the services they provide.

44. We must challenge ourselves to elevate the place of emulation⁸, free it of swagger and formalism, and constantly perfect it and adapt it to differing workplace conditions and types of work. Today more than ever we must make emulation a vital weapon in the struggle for economic efficiency.

45. Prior to the special period the union movement possessed an enormous mass of

“The interests of the workers are not reduced simply to their jobs. We are socialist owners of the economy; the stability of the revolution and quality of our lives depend upon the success of our enterprises and units”

conomic crime, and corruption can be prevented.

III. Fighting for an efficient and competitive economy

38. The future of the country is closely linked to scientific and technological development, to the growth of traditional sectors and new branches of industry, to the multiplication of international commercial and financial ties and, above all, to the effect of the current transformations and measures on consolidating greater economic effectiveness.

39. An efficient and competitive

resources to reward vanguard workers. At present we have only a fraction of that, although we still distribute a lot this way. At the same time, other means and initiatives have arisen to provide incentives to workers. Our position is that all available types of material incentives, together with moral recognition — which continues to be fundamental — should be integrated in the system of emulation in each area and jointly awarded by the union and enterprise.

46. The Efficiency Assemblies will continue to be an essential tool to encourage the direct participation by workers in orienting and overseeing the management of

Continued on Page 14

NOTES

¹ Beginning in 1989, the collapse of aid and trade at preferential prices with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries—which used to account for 85 percent of Cuba's trade—triggered acute shortages of fuel, food, and other basic necessities. Cubans refer to these straitened conditions, and the measures they have been compelled to take in face of them, as “the special period.”

² In 1992 the U.S. Congress enacted the “Cuban Democracy Act,” sponsored by Rep. Robert Torricelli. The law tightened the U.S. embargo by barring foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies from trading with Cuba and refusing merchant ships that docked in Cuban ports the right to enter U.S. harbors for six months.

³ The CTC's 16th Congress was held Jan. 24-28, 1990. In his closing speech to that gathering, Cuban president Fidel Castro laid out a perspective and initial measures to confront the unfolding “special period in peacetime.”

⁴ From the speech by Fidel Castro at the main ceremony marking the 42nd anniversary of the attack on the Moncada garrison. This celebration of the opening battle of the Cuban revolution was held at Guantánamo's Mariana Grajales Revolution Square on

July 26, 1995. The entire transcript of Castro's address was published in the Aug. 9, 1995, issue of the Cuban weekly Granma International and the Aug. 28, 1995, issue of the Militant.

⁵ The Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPCs) are new agricultural cooperatives that have replaced most state farms since the end of 1993, in an effort to revive food production. Members of the UBPCs—mostly workers who were formerly employed at state farms—own and sell what they produce, but the land itself remains nationalized.

⁶ The Communist Party of Cuba.

⁷ In Cuba today, self-employed workers, especially those with special skills, often earn many times the salary of most factory workers. Individuals who receive money in hard currency from relatives abroad, or from special bonuses in some industries, are able to purchase scarce essential items like soap and oil that many Cubans are unable to obtain.

⁸ Emulation, as opposed to the cutthroat competition inherent in all social relations under capitalism, refers to the organized effort to increase productivity and efficiency and improve on what other production units are already doing.

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Available from bookstores listed on page 12, or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. If ordering by mail please include \$3.00 to cover shipping and handling.

Cuban foreign minister speaks at UN

Continued from front page

launched, was the only one that had this opportunity in its hands." He documented the years-long pattern of violations of Cuban territorial waters and airspace as well as terrorist attacks by U.S.-based counterrevolutionaries.

The Cuban foreign minister also denounced Washington's recent moves to tighten the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba, particularly what he termed the "criminal Helms-Burton bill," which was being passed at that time by the U.S. House of Representatives, a day after its approval by the Senate.

U.S. president Bill Clinton has vowed to sign the measure. Reiterating his opposition to Cuba's revolutionary government, he said the sanctions will "send Cuba a powerful message that the United States will not tolerate further loss of American life."

A few days earlier, on March 2, the Clinton administration mobilized U.S. Coast Guard and Navy ships, along with fighter jets, in a show of force directed against Cuba. This armada accompanied a few dozen Cuban-American counterrevolutionaries who staged a boat flotilla in the Florida Straits, provocatively approaching Cuba's territorial waters.

The Cuban government issued a firm warning that it would defend the country against any violation of its airspace and waters. The rightists turned back well before their intended destination, stating that bad weather and seasickness made them cut the operation short.

Pattern of U.S. provocations, attacks

In his UN speech, Robaina explained, "The history of aggression against Cuba and violations of its sovereignty and territorial integrity did not begin February 24, but rather 37 years ago. On Oct. 21, 1959, one of the first violent actions against the Cuban revolution was launched, just as today, from southern Florida, when pirate planes dropped subversive propaganda and bombed the country's capital, an attack that cost our people valuable lives."

"The Opa-locka base itself, under the cover of a civilian agency, was used to train and prepare part of the air force that took part in the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961," the Cuban official said.

"Since 1990, 14 infiltrations and armed pirate attacks have been carried out against our country by vessels from the southern United States, and dozens of terrorist plans have been aborted by us." Robaina added that Brothers to the Rescue had carried out 25 incursions into Cuban airspace in the past year and a half, including two in January.

"The Cuban population reacted with indignation and concern at such flagrant violations of our airspace," the foreign minister reported. The downing of the two invading planes has been highly popular among Cuban working people. Rallies



Militant/Heidi Rose

March 2 protest in Toronto, Ontario, opposing Washington's moves against Cuba.

protesting the U.S. plane provocations and hailing the shutdown have been held in factories, farms, and other workplaces throughout the island.

Brothers to the Rescue leaders portray themselves as a humanitarian group founded in 1991 to spot people leaving Cuba by raft and deliver them to safety. Despite their professed charitable goals, they have charged Cuban-Americans between \$2,000 and \$4,000 to "rescue" family members, according to Juan Pablo Roque. A former Cuban air force pilot, Roque went to Miami in 1992, where he joined Brothers to the Rescue. He returned to Cuba in mid-February.

The organization's stated cause has become harder to sustain as the number of rafters has dwindled since the signing of a U.S.-Cuba immigration agreement in September 1994. Since then, its "actions turned more provocative," according to an article in the February 25 *Miami Herald*.

The claims by leaders of Brothers to the Rescue of being "nonviolent" are belied by their records. Robaina noted that "Cuba is very familiar with the main leader of the organization, José Basulto. Recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency, he received training in Panama and Guatemala, and was surreptitiously sent into Cuba before and after the Playa Girón [Bay of Pigs] invasion. In 1963 he was sent in again as a radio operator for a terrorist commando. And in 1966 he worked for the CIA in Brazil."

On February 24 Basulto piloted a third Cessna plane that was out of Cuban airspace at the time the other two were intercepted and shot down.

Armando Alejandro, one of the four Brothers to the Rescue members aboard the two planes shot down over Cuban waters, had been arrested in Washington, D.C., in February 1994 for trying to jump the fence at the Cuban Interests Section. Last October, Alejandro, a volunteer Viet-

nam War veteran who stood six feet, seven inches tall, smashed the glass front door to the San Carlos Institute, a historic landmark in Key West, in another right-wing assault.

When Cuban air force pilots downed the aircraft flown by Brothers to the Rescue, Washington and the capitalist media launched an intense propaganda campaign against Cuba, claiming "civilian" planes had been shot down in international waters. Authorities in Havana have maintained from the beginning that the planes had penetrated the country's airspace and had been warned, a notice the intruders explicitly defied.

On March 3, Cuban television displayed several objects from the plane debris that Cuban helicopters and coast guard vessels had recovered 9.3 miles north of Cuba's coast — inside the country's 12-mile territorial limit — the day after the shooting. These were a black satchel with the letters "Solidex Performance Video" printed on it, navigation charts, and a plug-in battery charger.

The Noticiero Nacional de Televisión program also provided a detailed chronology of the February 24 events, quoting the exchanges between the air traffic controllers and the U.S. pilots.

As Washington launched a new round of hostile measures against Cuba, U.S. State Department officials met with Basulto for three hours on the night of February 26. The following day he announced, together with representatives of other Cuban-American right-wing groups, plans to send planes and a boat flotilla to the place — 21 miles from Cuban shores — where they said the Brothers to the Rescue aircraft had been shot down, and to drop flowers and wreaths there.

"America will protect its citizens in international waters and international skies," declared Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, to justify the military move.

U.S. military moves

The Cuban government responded that it would "act with the utmost restraint to avoid new incidents," Robaina stated. "If they go to international waters, really there will be no provocation," he said. But "provocations of Cuba will not remain without a response."

A U.S. State Department spokesperson asserted that Washington had previously repeatedly "warned" Brothers to the Rescue about entering Cuban territory. When the flotilla was announced, the Clinton administration organized a military escort for it, asserting that its purpose was to prevent any boats or planes from "straying" inside Cuba's 12-mile limit.

Clinton declared a national emergency in south Florida, authorizing the U.S. Coast Guard to board or seize any vessel in U.S. waters. He justified this move by charging Havana with "reckless willingness to use excessive force, including deadly force, in the ostensible enforcement of its sovereignty."

The U.S. Coast guard deployed 11 cutters armed with machine guns, 6 helicopters, and 8 planes. The Air Force sent a squadron of F15 and F16 fighter jets into the region. In addition, the Navy sent the guided-missile cruiser *Ticonderoga* toward the Florida Straits to join the U.S.

missile cruiser *Mississippi* and the missile frigate *John Hall*.

On March 2, a 35-boat flotilla left Key West along with 14 small planes led by Basulto, heading in the direction of Cuba. Choppy waters, however, proved stronger than the counterrevolutionaries' stomachs and convictions. Most of the boats turned back early. The remaining 14 vessels ventured about 43 miles north of Havana, where they dropped their wreaths and returned home. The planes flew over the announced site, dropped some flowers, and sped back to Florida.

"The counterrevolutionary show was a failure," declared Cuba's Radio Rebelde. "The show did not achieve its objectives."

Meanwhile, opponents of the Cuban revolution organized a rally and memorial service in Miami for the four pilots shot down over Cuban waters. Some 60,000 people, mostly Cuban-Americans, attended the event, held at the Orange Bowl.

Albright, the featured speaker, hailed the four counterrevolutionaries as "martyrs." As demonstrators chanted her name repeatedly, she declared, "We will tighten sanctions against the government of Cuba." Jorge Mas Canosa, head of the rightist Cuban American National Foundation, stated the White House moves against Cuba marked "a new reconciliation...a turning point between the exile community and the Clinton administration."

New U.S. measures against Cuba

A few days earlier Clinton announced a series of new attacks on Cuba, including further restrictions on travel by Cuban diplomats in the United States, the indefinite suspension of all charter flights to the island, and the expansion of Washington's Radio Martí propaganda station.

The U.S. president also said he would sign the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, known as the Helms-Burton bill after its sponsors, Sen. Jesse Helms and Rep. Dan Burton. The measure would codify as law the current executive orders imposing economic sanctions against Cuba, meaning the U.S. trade embargo could not be eased without Congressional approval.

The Helms-Burton bill would restrict entry to the United States for non-U.S. residents who "traffic" in Cuban property that was expropriated from U.S. capitalists in the early 1960s. It would also allow U.S. citizens to sue companies based outside the United States that invest in such nationalized property.

The bill tightens the ban on sugar products of Cuban origin. Another provision, which the Russian government has particularly objected to, links U.S. aid to cutting off trade and military ties to the Cuban government.

Both houses of Congress had passed the measure in late 1995, but the White House had opposed the provision allowing lawsuits against foreign companies. On February 28, however, Clinton dropped his veto threat. The Senate and House then passed a compromise version of the bill, modifying the disputed clause. Clinton is expected to sign the measure rapidly.

The governments of Canada, the European Union, Mexico, and the Caribbean Community have all vigorously objected to features of the Helms-Burton bill that affect their trade. In a statement, the European Union said the measure constituted "an extraterritorial application of U.S. jurisdiction." Ottawa, like other U.S. imperialist rivals, has vocally expressed its opposition to the Cuban revolution, and joined the chorus denouncing the Cuban government's recent downing of the U.S. planes.

"If the intent is to try to pressure or threaten Cuba with statements of condemnation or sanctions, it is worth confirming here too that we have never given in to pressures or threats," stated Robaina at the United Nations. "We did not do so even when our people faced the concrete threat of nuclear annihilation during the October 1962 [missile] crisis. We will not do so now."

CNN reporters interviewed people in Havana the day the House passed the Helms-Burton bill. "It's a criminal law," commented one man. "They want to scare us, but they won't," said a woman on the street.

Record of illegal flights over Cuba

The following is a chronology of violations of Cuba's airspace in 1994-96, based on information issued by the Cuban foreign ministry.

1994

May 15. Five aircraft from Florida violate Cuban airspace off coast between Cárdenas, Matanzas province, and El Mariel, Havana province.

May 17. Two Cessna-337 planes from Florida, registration numbers N-58BB and N-108LS, violate Cuban airspace off coast between Cárdenas, Matanzas province, and El Mariel, Havana province.

May 25 and May 29. Five aircraft from Florida violate Cuban airspace off coast between Cárdenas, Matanzas province, and El Mariel, Havana province.

July 10. Aircraft from the United States, registration number N-2506, violates Cuban airspace north of Guanabo, outside Havana, and north of city of Havana.

July 21. Cuban authorities send Diplomatic Note 908 to U.S. Interests Section protesting these violations.

November 10. Two C-337 planes from Guantánamo Naval Base violate Cuban airspace, flying over Punta Maisí light-

house and dropping 200 antigovernment leaflets. Cuban government sends Diplomatic Note 1443 on November 15 in protest to U.S. Interests Section.

1995

April 4. C-337 plane violates Cuban airspace north of area between Santa Fe and Guanabo, outside province. Diplomatic Note 694 is sent May 25 in protest to U.S. Interests Section.

July 13. Four aircraft from the United States, registration numbers N-108LS, N-2506, N-5485S, and N-312MX, enter Cuban territorial waters north of Havana, penetrating prohibited zone MU-P1 and flying over the city of Havana at a low altitude.

Diplomatic Note 1100, with a copy of a letter to the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, is sent August 21 in protest to the U.S. Interests Section.

1996

January 9 and January 13. Two light planes from Opa-locka, Florida, airport fly over Havana province and drop antigovernment propaganda. Diplomatic Note 45 is sent January 15 in protest to U.S. Interests Section.

Pickets demand: 'Hands off Cuba'

BY LAURA GARZA

Marching in picket lines, holding press conferences, appearing on radio and TV shows in dozens of cities throughout the United States and in other countries — opponents of U.S. government attacks on Cuba made their voices heard as Washington stepped up its campaign of lies and aggression against the Caribbean island nation.

Judy Asman, a journalism student at American University, joined 50 people in an emergency picket line on March 1 in front of the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C., to protest new sanctions on Cuba decreed by President Bill Clinton. The downing of two aircraft flown by members of the right-wing group Brothers to the Rescue after repeated violations of Cuban airspace has been used by Washington to impose harsher sanctions against the Cuban people. "I am against this inhumane version of an embargo," said Asman. The ABC TV affiliate from Miami covered the event, as did the local NBC news station.

"Brothers to the Rescue, know your place! Respect Cuban airspace!" chanted 50 people picketing the downtown federal building in Los Angeles February 28. A front-page article in the Spanish-language daily *La Opinión* reported on the event the next day.

In Houston about 25 protested at the federal building, getting prominent coverage in the news.

The next day in New York 200 joined a picket line to call for an end to the U.S. embargo, freedom to travel, and to defend Cuba's sovereignty. Xiomara Reyes, a student from Borough of Manhattan Community College, learned about the event that day at a Young Socialists literature table and joined the crowd in front of the

Cuban mission to the United Nations.

Pickets were also held at federal buildings in Manhattan and in downtown Brooklyn in subsequent days, drawing discussions from passersby and media coverage. The picket lines in Brooklyn were covered by TV channels 9 and 5 on March 2 and 4.

A San Francisco protest drew a lively crowd of 200 on March 1, including about two dozen youth from local high schools and colleges, many participating in their first protest.

Two dozen joined an informational picket line and press conference in downtown Pittsburgh at the federal building the same day. A wide array of media attended the event. The previous night two members of the Pittsburgh Cuba Coalition spoke out against the Clinton administration measures on the "Cullen/Devlin Show" on WQEX TV.

About 15 demonstrators in Minneapolis appeared outside a Democratic Party fund raising event featuring Hillary Clinton to protest the latest moves against Cuba made by the current administration.

The Iowa Network on Cuba held a February 26 press conference at the federal building in Des Moines, Iowa, to denounce Washington's threats against Cuba. Channel 5 news featured the press conference as one of its lead stories that evening.

One participant, John Torgerson, a professor from Drake University, is organizing 18 of his students to travel to Cuba later this year and had already been interviewed by several local television and radio shows due to his notoriety on the subject. A picket line of about a dozen was also held at the federal building in downtown Des Moines on March 3.

A successful Militant Labor Forum ti-



Militant/Janet Post

Andrés Gómez, leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, speaks at March 1 Militant Labor Forum in Miami in support of the Cuban revolution.

tled "U.S. Hands Off Cuba! End the Embargo" was held in Miami March 1, drawing more than 40 people, despite efforts to have it called off. It was covered on three TV stations and on Cuban television.

"The U.S. government has said that the Brothers to the Rescue planes were downed over international waters," said Andrés Gómez, director of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Miami-based organization of Cubans who support the Cuban revolution. "But how many times have they lied before? Do you remember the Gulf of Tonkin resolution? In fact, it was put out by the United States to win acceptance for the war in Vietnam — to get Senate approval and to fool U.S. public opinion." Gómez blasted the current attempt to pass the Helms-Burton bill enacting further sanctions against Cuba.

Seth Galinsky, a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the United Transportation Union, also spoke. Iván Rosero, a Young Socialists member, encouraged people to help publicize the upcoming U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange, a project sponsored by the National Network on Cuba through which young people will be traveling to the Caribbean island in July.

Miami police tried to convince organizers to cancel the event, claiming they would not provide security after threats by right-wing Cubans to disrupt it. In at least two cases, the cops tried to convince leaders in the Haitian community to speak out publicly against the forum and related activities, without success.

Since forum organizers refused to back down or be intimidated by harassing phone calls and anonymous threats, the city ended up stationing motorcycle cops, squad cars, and even a helicopter flying overhead shining its spotlight on the Pathfinder Bookstore in the Little Haiti neighborhood where the event was held.

Three anti-Castro protesters — with a dozen police watching nearby — stood quietly across the street from the forum. Several Haitian workers helped forum volunteers keep an eye on things outside the bookstore to make sure there would be no attempt to disrupt the meeting.

Forum in Washington, D.C.

"We have to defend our sovereignty, and that's for sure! We warned them very clearly that they should not get into our airspace — that they would be shot down. But they were looking for trouble," said José Ponce, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. Ponce was addressing an emergency forum entitled "Hands Off Cuba — Stop the Provocations" in Washington March 1.

About 80 people jammed a meeting room in the Washington Peace Center to hear the Cuban official, who was introduced by Brian Adams of the D.C. Hands Off Cuba Coalition.

"Most of the aggression against us has come from the United States in the form of planes and vessels that were supposed to be civilian — dropping leaflets, arms, and infiltrators" to attack the revolution, he said. "These are the same people who have dropped explosives in Cuba. The very same people in the very same planes."

Following Ponce's brief speech, there was an extensive question and answer period.

"What other options were explored?"

asked one person, skeptical of the Cuban actions.

Ponce responded that he had heard a lot of talk about "options," including whether the Cuban planes should have "tilted" at the interlopers. "We did more than that," he explained. "We told them they could not come into our airspace and they came anyway! In plain Spanish we told them. If you come here you have to face the consequences."

"Over 36 years the situation has been the same," added Rafael Noriega of the Cuban Interests Section, who accompanied Ponce. "During the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the U.S. government first claimed 'we are not involved.' But we realize that in the same way, they are involved today, directly or indirectly."

"The very first violation of Cuban airspace was on Feb. 2, 1959," Ponce pointed out, just one month after the revolution that toppled U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Actions were also held in New Haven, Connecticut; Chicago; Morgantown, West Virginia; Greensboro, North Carolina; Newark, New Jersey; and Atlanta. In dozens of cities activists planned further actions in front of federal buildings on March 6 to protest the U.S. embargo, the Helms-Burton bill, and to call for the release of some 400 computers confiscated by the U.S. government from Pastors for Peace. Members of Pastors for Peace are on a fast to protest the government action in blocking material destined for hospitals in Cuba.

Protests around the world

Response to Washington's hostile actions was worldwide. In Toronto 100 people demonstrated in front of the U.S. consulate to condemn the stepped-up campaign of economic and military threats against the Cuban revolution. There was also a picket line in front of the U.S. embassy in Ottawa on March 2.

In Montreal 60 people demonstrated March 2 in front of the U.S. consulate. A second protest was set March 6 in front of offices of the International Civil Aviation Organization. The United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution asking the ICAO, whose headquarters are in Montreal, to investigate the incident around the downing of the two planes by Cuba's air force and report back to the Security Council.

In Vancouver, a Militant Labor Forum held March 1 became an organizing meeting for a protest on Wednesday, March 6, in front of the U.S. consulate.

In Sydney, Australia, a protest was also planned in front of the U.S. consulate for March 6. The Cuba Friendship Society in Auckland, New Zealand, held an emergency picket March 2 near the offices of the U.S. consulate with 30 people. The picket was reported on one of the national television channels, TV3.

Brian Williams and Greg Rosenberg in Washington, D.C.; John Evenhuis in Los Angeles; Aaron Ruby in Houston; Abby Tilsner in New York; Joe Swanson in San Francisco; Cecelia Moriarity in Pittsburgh; Jon Hillson in Minneapolis; Shirley Peña in Des Moines, Iowa; Seth Galinsky and Ernie Mailhot in Miami; and Patricia O'Beirne in Montreal contributed to this article.

Ottawa objects to Helms-Burton

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

VANCOUVER — The Canadian government is leading the international chorus of objections to the Helms-Burton bill among imperialist rivals of Washington. The measure would tighten the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

The U.S. Congress approved the bill in early March, and President Bill Clinton promised to sign it. This move was part of Washington's step-up of hostilities against Cuba after two planes piloted by members of a right-wing Cuban-American group were shot down February 24 while on a belligerent mission over Cuba's territorial waters.

Ottawa's opposition to the bill has nothing to do with sympathy for the Cuban government or respect for its sovereignty. In a February 27 letter to U.S. Congress, Raymond Chrétien, Canadian ambassador to the United States, says, "Canada shares the United States' outrage over the Cuban government's shooting down of two unarmed civilian aircraft. Canada has condemned Cuba's actions as an excessive and illegal use of force which violated internationally accepted rules for the interception of civilian aircraft."

The Canadian government opposes the "extraterritorial" aspects of the Helms-Burton bill, which would penalize non-U.S. companies that invest in Cuban property that was expropriated from U.S. businessmen in the early 1960s.

Non-U.S. citizens associated with such companies could be barred from entering the United States along with their immediate families. The bill would also allow Cuban-Americans to sue companies for damages in some cases.

Art Eggleton, Canada's International Trade Minister, visited Washington March 4 to lobby for changes in the bill. He met with U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor. The March 1 *Toronto Globe and Mail* reported that Eggleton warned the Helms-Burton bill "violates the North America Free Trade Agreement and could trigger a trade fight with Canada and other countries that trade with Cuba." He told reporters, "It's a dangerous precedent when one country can say, 'If you trade

with someone else, you can't trade with us.'"

"The most important first step is to see if we can avoid any major dispute by having the parts of the bill that apply to Canada exempted," suggested Canada's foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, on March 1.

Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien sought to rally opposition to Helms-Burton at a meeting in early March of members of the Caribbean Community, held in Grenada. Caricom governments criticized the U.S. measure.

In one sign of the growing inter-imperialist rivalries and tensions, Marc Thiessen, a spokesperson for the Senate foreign-relations committee in Washington, declared, "Any Canadian business that is benefiting from, profiting from or trafficking in expropriated American property, that is, property stolen by the Cuban government from American citizens, is going to be in a heap of trouble.... They better call their lawyers because if they keep on doing it they are going to wind up in court. We want to create an investment minefield in Cuba."

More than 30 Canadian companies have investments of U.S.\$200 million in Cuba. Some 25 Canadian companies have offices in Cuba. The companies represent a variety of industries including coal exploration, agribusiness and computer software.

The Helms-Burton bill could affect businesses with even remote links to Cuba including banks, telephone companies, airlines and travel agencies. One of those affected would be Sherritt International Corp., which has acquired a 50 percent share of the Moa nickel plant in eastern Cuba, previously owned by a U.S. corporation until it was expropriated by Cuban workers.

An article entitled "Canadian firms edgy over Cuba legislation" in the March 2 *Globe and Mail* explains that Canadian companies like Montreal-based National Bank and Toronto-based Delta Hotels and Resorts are vulnerable because they have operations in both Cuba and the United States. Delta manages six resorts in Cuba.

Curtis parole

Continued from front page

ing Curtis does not have sufficient "family ties" to the state. Curtis and his companion of more than a decade Kate Kaku who lives in Chicago are organizing to formalize their marriage and Curtis is planning to reapply for parole to that state.

In the meantime, Iowa prison officials have withheld from the mail three articles Curtis wrote for the *Militant*. Since his incarceration in 1988 Curtis has been a frequent contributor to the paper and beginning in 1995 he has written a regular column, "From Behind Prison Walls."

The first of the articles suppressed by prison authorities, which Curtis mailed in late December, reported on the positive reaction Curtis received from other inmates to his winning parole.

The second, sent in early January, commented on the explosion in the hiring of prison guards across the United States and on an assembly of inmates in the exercise yard at the Fort Madison penitentiary in response to the Iowa Department of Corrections abruptly imposing a "no smoking" ban in the cellhouses.

In early February, Curtis sent a third column, this time a compilation of excerpts from the numerous letters he receives in prison. He is now preparing a fourth column on discussions with fellow inmates on the U.S. government's decision to tighten its economic embargo of Cuba, following the downing of two aircraft that had invaded that country's air space by the Cuban air force.

Curtis's attorney, William Kutmus, contacted prison officials on March 1 requesting information on why his articles were being detained. He was told by a deputy warden that there was no censorship order or policy concerning Curtis.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee (MCDC) is urging supporters to write the warden protesting the prison's unprecedented attempt to prevent Curtis's voice from being heard. Protest letters can be addressed to: Gerardo Acevedo, Warden, ISP, Box 316, Ft. Madison, IA 52627. Fax (319) 372-6967.

The defense committee urges that copies of such letters be sent to its international center at P.O. Box 477419, Chicago, Illinois, 60647-7419.

Supporters of the Curtis defense committee in Illinois are also organizing to get messages to state officials there protesting the denial of Curtis's parole application.

Curtis supporters are stepping up activities in defense of the imprisoned trade unionist. Defense committee leader Hazel Zimmerman attended a March 1-2 conference of the Association in Defense of the Wrongly Convicted in Toronto. She reported in a phone interview that there was interest among numerous participants in Curtis's fight. Among those Zimmerman spoke with was Larry Marshall, the lead attorney for Rolando Cruz who was recently acquitted in a third trial after cops admitted they had lied in his previous trials. Cruz spent 12 years on death row in Illinois.

"The focus of the meeting was on those convicted and facing the death penalty," Zimmerman explained. "The thing that struck me that is connected to Mark's case is how the dice in criminal cases are loaded against the accused. The public and juries are inclined to believe that if someone is arrested and brought to trial they must be guilty. Prosecutor's careers don't depend on achieving justice, they depend on a high rate of convictions," emphasized Zimmerman.

Curtis reports that the volume of letters he receives daily has increased. The defense committee is urging supporters to write to him: Mark Curtis 80533, Box 316, Ft. Madison, IA 52627.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A celebration of the newly published *Pathfinder book Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara. Speakers: Participant in 1996 Havana Book Fair; Eugene Hawkins, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union; Paula Solomon, Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba. Sun., March 17, Reception at 3:00 p.m., Program at 4:00 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (two blocks west of Vermont) Cost: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Miami

Buchananism: What It Is and How to Fight It. Speaker: Representative Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The Fight against Racism and Anti-migrant Attacks: From Royko to Buchanan. Panel discussion. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 342-1780.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

What Next in the Struggle for a Free and Independent Ireland. Speaker: Representative of Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Working Women's Fight for Equality. Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, member Socialist Workers Party, United Steelworkers of America. Fri., March 15, 7:00 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

French Unionists and Youth Set the Example of Struggle against Government Attacks: Reports from the Scene. Speakers: Megan Arney, member United Steelworkers of America and Young Socialists delegate to recent meetings in France of Union of Young Communists and World Federation of Democratic Youth; Jeff Jones, member International Association of Machinists and Socialist Workers Party; Doug Nelson, Minneapolis Community College student and member Young Socialists. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. (Route 280 exit. Bus #16.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Buchananism: What It Is and How to Fight It. Panel discussion. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

One Year After the Peso Collapse — An Eyewitness Account and Slide Show. Speaker: Jim Munro, chair of Philosophy Department at Edinboro Univ. of Pa. who visited

Mexico recently. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St., Southside. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Utah High School Students Fight for Democratic Rights. Presentation and slide show of March 5 protest by Joellyn Manville, leader Salt Lake City Young Socialists, member East High Gay-Straight Alliance. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$4. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

CANADA

Vancouver

Eyewitness Report: The Fightback in Ontario. Speaker: Mary-Ellen Marus, laid off steelworker from Toronto, member Communist League. Fri., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24th Aves.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Irish Peace Process Today. Speaker: Lars Ericson, Communist League. Fri., March 15, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Tel Aviv declares war on Palestinians

Continued from front page

uary 4, Hamas leader Yahya Ayyash was assassinated in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli security force was universally held responsible. Ayyash was accused by the Israeli government of being the architect of suicide bombings in Israel. More than 100,000 Palestinians attended Ayyash's funeral in protest of the assassination.

The Israeli government continues to appropriate Palestinian land for Zionist settlements, roads, and military installations. Residents of the Palestinian town of Tulkarem recently accused Tel Aviv of illegally taking 400 acres of land to build a fence around the city.

Land for agriculture is a life and death question for Palestinians now. Only 20,000 are given permits allowing them to work inside Israel. With some foreign investment a few factories have been established inside the borders of Gaza and the West Bank, providing some low-paid jobs.

Scarcity of water for the Palestinians, caused by Israeli control of water supplies

in the West Bank, was not alleviated by the Israeli-PLO agreement.

More than 4,000 Palestinian prisoners remain in Israeli jails, including hundreds who were detained in West Bank towns just prior to the Israeli troop withdrawal stipulated by the accord. "Weeks, and in some cases, days before Israeli troops withdrew from Palestinian urban centers, we began to see a startling pattern of arrests of Palestinian opposition leaders, intellectuals and influential community activists," said Linda Brayer, director of the Jerusalem-based Society of St. Yves. Most of these are being held under six-month administrative detention, not charged with any offense.

The accords do not allow for the return of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees abroad. In Lebanon, home to half a million, government officials have clearly stated that the Palestinians are not welcome to remain there permanently. On the day of the Palestinian elections, Lebanese army troops surrounded and sealed the Ein el-Hilwa refugee camp,

home to 75,000.

"I am not alone to say that I no longer trust the PLO to address our basic needs as a people without a state," says Akram Muhamed in Tyre, Lebanon. "Our own leaders have sacrificed our right of return for autonomy. We feel forgotten and abandoned."

The military wing of Hamas issued a statement March 5 calling on all military sections to halt attacks against Israel until July — unless Tel Aviv retaliates against Hamas for the recent bombings. The statement also asked Yassir Arafat's Palestinian Authority to "prepare for serious contacts and negotiations" with Israel on Hamas' behalf.

Arafat said he would outlaw the military wings of Hamas and of several other organizations. Palestinian police say they have arrested Mohammed Abu Wardeh, the suspected mastermind behind three of the last four bombings.

Candace Wagner is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27.

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ALABAMA: Birmingham: 111 21st St. South. Mailing address: Suite 252, 267 West Valley Avenue Zip 35209. Tel: (205) 323-3079. Compuserve: 103402,1231

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460, 380-9640. Compuserve: 74642,326 **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 285-5323. Compuserve: 75604,556

CONNECTICUT: New Haven: Mailing address: P.O. Box 16751, Baybrook Station, West Haven. Zip: 06516.

FLORIDA: Miami: 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Compuserve: 103171,1674

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versity Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55114. Tel: (612) 644-6325. Compuserve: 103014,3261

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

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Straight inside scoop — "When I take off this uniform and I'm not visibly the assistant chief of police, I know I am a candidate to be just another nigger beat up by police." — San Francisco as-



Harry Ring

sistant police chief Earl Sanders.

'A few bad apples' dep't — The University of the Virgin Islands basketball team plans to sue the Puerto Rican police. During a tournament, the players ate at a

restaurant and then tried to hail a cab. Cops forced them to lay on the sidewalk face down and spread eagled. The police later explained that they looked "suspicious."

'Sue me' — A UN commission found "inhuman and degrading" treatment in various U.S. prisons. It pointed to the Texas state prison where guards stomped an inmate to death after he spit on one of them. Also, the Oklahoma state pen where death row inmates are held in windowless, sealed cells. The government responded that "cruel and unusual" practices are barred by law and victims are free to take legal recourse.

Don't ask, don't tell, just go — Two years ago, Clinton

adopted a policy that would assertedly offer homosexuals protection against victimization in the military. Now more gay service members are being kicked out than before. In fiscal 1995, 722 GLs were discharged, compared to 597 in 1994 and 682 in 1993.

But no stereotypes, mind you — Three actresses have been nominated for Academy awards this year for their roles as prostitutes. Comments Wesleyan film studies chair Jeanine Basinger: "Actually there are three kinds of classic parts for women to get nominated: nuns or prostitutes or deaf women."

'Take a hike' — Thousands of nonunion AT&T managerial employees are being given resumes

to fill out. Those that are accepted will have a job. Explains a company spokesperson: "The idea is that everybody has been asked to step outside into a parking lot."

Sturdy as a dollar bill — Those sports/utility vehicles do look rugged on the TV screen. But in "crash" tests at five miles per hour, they suffered heavy duty repair bills. Only one of six could be driven away after the simulated fender-bender. The '96 Isuzu Rodeo was the front-runner. Four of them averaged \$8,000 repairs.

Hook and crook — We reported that McDonnell Douglas billed the government \$8,842 apiece for transport planes spare door hooks which had previously been made by a subcontractor for

\$389. McD also got into making spare hinges for \$2,187. Earlier, some low-life subcontractor was turning them out for \$31 each.

Small episode in ongoing war — Cashing in on the name of the famed revolutionary, a British entrepreneur was peddling "Che" beer in trendy London pubs. Production stopped after some protest.

'For your convenience' — We liked the gag about the guy who was rushed into the emergency room and hooked up directly to an ATM machine. The figures aren't that funny. A recent study estimated the machines will lop off 450,000 jobs in the next five years. In a decade, half of all U.S. bank branches will be shut down.

Dismissed officer exposes role of U.S. army in Haiti

BY JANET POST

MIAMI — On February 8, U.S. Army Capt. Lawrence Rockwood spoke at a forum here at the TAP TAP Haitian restaurant, exposing the role of the U.S. military in Haiti.

Rockwood was dismissed as an army officer in a May 1995 court-martial verdict that he is presently appealing in the army, and then in civilian courts if necessary. Rockwood was given the boot by the military brass after his widely publicized attempt to inspect human rights abuses in the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince — without permission from his superior officers — during the 1994 U.S. invasion of Haiti.

In early January of this year Rockwood moved to La Belle, Florida. Soon afterwards, on January 19, his house was destroyed by arson. Rockwood said that Florida state investigative agencies believe the blaze began with a fire bomb. Inside the house was the manuscript for a book on his experiences in Haiti and on his court-martial, as well as planning materials for a trip he is organizing March 16 to My Lai, Vietnam.

Rockwood plans to mark the 28th anniversary of the March 16, 1968 My Lai massacre with Hugh Thompson, a former U.S. Army helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War who ordered his own gunner to fire at U.S. soldiers to try and thwart the My Lai murders.

My Lai was a hamlet in the village of Son My where hundreds of unarmed Vietnamese were killed as U.S. soldiers fired directly at them with automatic rifles. Only Lt. William Calley was convicted following the atrocity while commanders and other officers were absolved.

Thompson testified in support of Rockwood at his court-martial hearing, recounting his own experience in Vietnam, reported *Haiti Progrès*.

At the February 8 forum, Rockwood pointed out that Republican presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan tried to convince Richard Nixon, then president, "to let off the guys at My Lai." Rockwood said he is the first active duty officer to attend a commemoration of My Lai.

The 37-year-old Rockwood has two years after the court-martial verdict to appeal his dismissal, which is equivalent to a dishonorable discharge for rank-and-file soldiers. He said the army has lifted its gag order on him. Both Rockwood and his attorney, former attorney general Ramsey Clark, are responding to inquiries about the case.

Rockwood explained what led him to the National Penitentiary, Haiti's largest prison, ending in his arrest.

Shocked at complicity of military brass

Rockwood was a counterintelligence officer with the 10th Mountain Division from Ft. Drum, N.Y., the main force deployed to Haiti in September 1994. His job included receiving reports on the beatings, abductions, rapes, and murders of Haitian working people and pro-Aristide forces by the Haitian military and paramilitary groups — including human rights abuses at five penitentiaries.

Rockwood said he and other soldiers were shocked at the atrocities going on right in front of them on the streets of

Haitian cities while they were under orders not to intervene. At the time, scenes of abuses were being broadcast on news around the world while former dictator Raoul Cedras was still in power. "What amazed me was the lack of concern of American officers and officials who were not inclined to lift one little finger to help those suffering."

"They were acting in agreement," Rockwood stated, "with the words of Sen. Bob Dole who said that 'All the Haitians in Haiti are not worth one single American life.'"

"I was very troubled," said Rockwood in a *Haiti Progrès* interview, "that the command was indifferent to the lives of the Haitian poor, and concerned about the lives of the Haitian rich."

On Sept. 30, 1994, Rockwood filed a complaint to the Army's Inspector General for refusing to prevent deaths in the prisons and went on his own to investigate the situation at the National Penitentiary. The captain was detained by Haitian military officers, turned over to U.S. military command, and shipped to New York.

Haiti Progrès reported that Rockwood "charged immediate commanders with criminal negligence for allowing gross human rights violations, including murder, to continue unabated in the city. 'For an officer in my position to levy a complaint against his own command was pretty much a career ending move,' Rockwood later recalled."

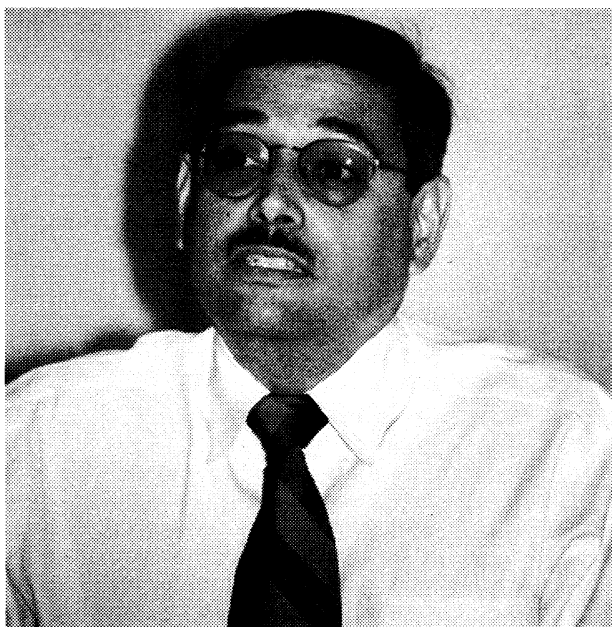
"We must make an example of him," said lead prosecutor Capt. Charles Pede at the court-martial hearing. "Soldiers in the field must follow orders."

Rockwood was found guilty of four of five charges, including "disrespect" for telling his superior officer, "I am an American officer, not a Nazi officer" following his arrest. The other charges he is appealing are failing to report for duty, abandoning a position, and disobeying a superior officer. The charge of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman was dropped.

At the forum Rockwood said he had interpreted President William Clinton's speechmaking to " 'Stop the reign of terror and violence' " as "orders for their mission in Haiti" and even filed a formal complaint charging his commanders with subversion for failing to carry that out.

He also expressed the view that it was no coincidence that after being removed from duty in Haiti the reports from his army department on street violence no longer referred to "anti-Aristide violence" but instead "Haitian-on-Haitian" violence.

Rockwood said that he has more support from rank-and-file soldiers than from other officers, but that some do back him up. In his presentations he also tells stories about Army training. For example, in talking about the war in Yugoslavia: "In a war in Central Europe there are civilians killed and refugees. In training when we asked, 'How do we take care of the refugees?,'



U.S. Army Capt. Lawrence Rockwood spoke on role of U.S. military in Haiti at February 8 forum in Miami.

the answer was 'Where do you want to bury them?'

"Their attitude toward civilians became clear in the Gulf War when [Gen.] Colin

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
March 19, 1971 Price 10¢

NEW YORK — A March 6-7 women's liberation conference, sponsored by the New York Women's Strike Coalition and hosted by Barnard and Columbia Women's Liberation, drew 1,200 women from high schools and colleges throughout New York State and new England. It was the largest women's liberation conference yet held in New York, and all who participated considered it a tremendous success.

The opening session featured the 87-year-old suffragist Florence Luscomb. Luscomb spoke of the other women's conferences she had attended seventy, eighty years ago — the first being one she went to as a child of five with her mother.

The best-attended workshops were on lesbianism, on living with a man, and on alternatives to the family, indicative of the radical questioning that has characterized feminism. In abortion workshops, women made plans to bring women from their campuses to the March 27 demonstration in Albany. Women will be fighting attempts to cut back on gains won a year ago in New York that strengthened women's right to abortion.

Third World women announced plans for a March 20 speak-out at Harlem Hospital, demanding better abortion, gynecological and child- facilities at the hospital. High School sisters circulated a petition demanding birth control and abortion counseling in the schools. And women discussed ways of using the

Powell said that 'Civilian casualties is not a number that I am particularly interested in.' Rockwood added that he is campaigning for an international moratorium on anti-personnel mines whose "casualties are 78 percent civilian."

Debate on U.S. military

During the forum a debate took place on the goals of the U.S. armed services. Some said the army is in place to safeguard and advance U.S. imperialist domination and exploitation around the globe.

Others, including Rockwood — who is a fourth generation soldier and son of a World War II veteran who participated in taking over the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau from the German army — said they hoped the army could be reformed to concentrate on "peacekeeping" missions and limiting human rights abuses.

Pointing to Dachau, Rockwood said, "Show me a human rights organization that has liberated a concentration camp. They have too many limitations on them to do what they're supposed to do."

While waiting his appeal hearing, Rockwood is still an active duty officer who goes to work but receives no wages. He is fighting to be reinstated with back pay.

United Women's Contingents to mobilize women to march against the war April 24 in Washington.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

March 16 1946

Nation-wide protest by labor, Negro and civil rights organizations against the savage Jim-Crow atrocities and bloody warfare unleashed by state troops on February 25 upon the entire segregated Negro section of Columbia, Tennessee, have borne fruit. The last 13 of 101 Negroes arrested and held incommunicado were released March 8 upon payment of \$46,000 bail. The cash was put up in the Sheriff's office by the national Association for the Advancement of Colored People and by local Negro citizens.

Two of the arrested victims, William Gordon and James W. Johnson, were lynched inside Maury County jail, shot down in cold blood by the guards. Instead of being taken to the nearby City Hospital, the wounded men were driven to a segregated hospital in Nashville, 43 miles away. Both men died before they could reach the hospital.

Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP, charged on March 1 that the Jim-Crow atrocities were "closer to the action of the German storm troopers than any recent police action in this country, the South not excepted." He declared that the "wanton double murder" of the two Negroes in jail was a "further example of lawlessness on the part of Tennessee law enforcement officers" and that "no Negro in that area has the semblance of constitutional rights."

Fearless before imperialism

Malcolm X used to say that struggle is the only language the oppressors will listen to. Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina reminded friends and enemies alike of the correctness of this stance in his March 6 speech to the United Nations General Assembly.

Washington, Robaina pointed out, is to blame for the repeated incursions and terrorist acts by U.S.-based counterrevolutionaries in Cuban territory over the years. By shooting down two belligerent U.S. planes that invaded its airspace, Cuba not only defended its sovereignty but strengthened the hand of working people everywhere. Fighters in Cuba showed that the lords of Washington and Wall Street cannot act with impunity. By standing up to imperialism, they helped counter the U.S. rulers' preparations for war in the Caribbean.

The U.S. government's latest measures against Cuba, including passage of the embargo-tightening Helms-Burton bill, are taken from weakness, not strength. Robaina noted that reactionary forces today "are raging in frustration at the efforts and the results Cuba is achieving in its economic recovery, in the strengthening of its democratic institutions and dignity, in the consolidation of the socialism its people chose for the present and the future." Workers and farmers there have weathered the past six years of economic crisis and have emerged more steeled and self-confident.

What the adoption of the Helms-Burton bill and the threatening U.S. military moves do show is the bipartisan nature of Washington's 37-year-long war against Cuba. The Clinton administration declares that it disapproves of the provocations by Cuban-American rightists warns it may revoke the licenses of Brothers to the Res-

cue pilots who violated Cuban airspace. But instead, it responds by mobilizing a naval armada off Cuban shores. It is prominent Democrats like Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and Madeleine Albright who are spearheading the anti-Cuba campaign.

The Clinton administration's policies are not set by a handful of right-wing Cuban-American businessmen in Miami, nor are these policies primarily a product of electoral maneuvers. They are set by the ruling class of billionaire families. The Cuban revolution has been a mortal political threat to *their* class interests from the moment Cuban workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed tyranny, armed themselves, nationalized the land, uprooted racist discrimination, expanded women's rights, and expropriated the factories and mines from local and foreign exploiters.

Working-class fighters in Cuba are defending their trench well. Those in the United States and around the world can follow their lead by attacking Washington's criminal policies. We must keep up the demonstrations at federal buildings, public forums, and other activities to protest the U.S. provocations. At the same time, patriots of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* should get these papers into the hands of as many people as possible, along with selling Pathfinder books, with a special push on *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* and *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End*.

Through these combined efforts, more workers in the United States and other countries can be drawn to emulate the Cuban revolution by joining the fight for a socialist world.

Read and distribute CTC theses

Most *Militant* readers will undoubtedly share our enthusiasm for the Theses for the 17th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), which we publish beginning with this issue. This document will be of particular interest to those readers who are working in industry and are members of trade unions — especially those who are active defenders of the Cuban revolution on the job, at the plant gates, and on the picket lines.

At this moment — as the Clinton administration continues its latest campaign of threats, provocations, and economic warfare against the Caribbean nation — this document sheds light on one of the main reasons why Washington's "cold war" against Cuba doesn't end.

The proletarian revolution in Cuba is alive and well because the working class in that country is confident in itself and its communist leadership and, in its majority, it remains capable and determined to defend the revolution's socialist course and its government.

It is gratifying to read a document — discussed and debated by nearly 3 million union members as they elect delegates to their congress — that begins by placing the struggle of workers and peasants in Cuba in the framework of world politics and the international crisis

of the capitalist system.

It is a pleasure to see graphically described the role of revolutionary trade union leadership in defending the state power of the working class; in laying out the steps to ensure that working people remain the masters of their own destiny; and in providing an example to be emulated by toilers in the Americas and throughout the world.

The CTC theses, and the process through which they are being discussed, provide quite a stark antithesis to the business unionism and class collaborationism that is rampant in the high echelons of the AFL-CIO and trade unions throughout the capitalist world.

And they are the best example of why Clinton, Dole, and company hate and fear the Cuban people and their revolutionary leadership and why working people and youth around the world should defend Cuba and its socialist revolution.

We urge all our readers to read the theses and help sell as widely as possible the issues of the *Militant* that serialize them, especially among co-workers, and in the process help build broad delegations of trade unionists to the April congress of the CTC.

Israel: no justice, no peace

Workers around the world should take a stand against the Israeli government's brutal crackdown against Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. We should reject the attempts by Tel Aviv and big-business officials and media internationally to paint the Palestinian people, especially supporters of Hamas, as terrorists and peace-breakers.

The reason there is no peace in the Middle East lies squarely with the Zionist state in Israel. There won't be peace as long as Tel Aviv continues to deny the Palestinian people their right to national self-determination — to a democratic, secular Palestine.

Israel was founded as a colonial settler state, based on the uprooting of the Arab population. The big majority of Palestinians were forced to leave the country or live in the West Bank and Gaza, areas militarily occupied by Tel Aviv since 1967.

Palestinian farmers have been driven off the land in massive numbers, and into the status of cheap laborers for Israeli capitalists. Between 1967 and 1981 alone, one-third of Palestinian-held land in the West Bank was seized by the Israeli military administration. This process still continues today, even after the signing of the Israeli-PLO accord last year, which granted some measure of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.

Under the accord, Tel Aviv's forces withdrew from most of the Palestinian areas in the occupied territories, and 90 percent of the Arab population came under the control of the Palestinian Authority. But 70 percent of the land area remains under Israeli control, as does most of the water supply and other resources needed for any meaningful development. Israeli authorities retained the

"right" to enter any Palestinian village for "security" reasons.

The scope of Tel Aviv's acts of collective punishment in response to four recent bombings in Israel is staggering. Not only did the Israeli government decide to confine 1.2 million Arabs to their villages, Israeli soldiers welded shut and prepared to bulldoze the homes of families of alleged Hamas fighters. Tens of thousands of Palestinians are being cut off from their jobs inside the Israeli border — often the only jobs available.

Working people in Palestine have a proud history of resistance to their dispossession and the abuses by the Israeli regime, including the several-year-long *intifada* (uprising) in the late 1980s, where thousands of youth and workers took to the streets, often armed only with rocks, against the Israeli military occupation. The turnout of 100,000 Palestinians at the funeral of a Hamas leader assassinated by the Israeli police in January was a reminder that this resistance has not been broken.

The Palestinian struggle for self-determination deserves the support of workers and fighters for democratic rights around the world. Ending the colonial oppression of the Arab population is the only basis on which working people in the region, including workers in Israel of all nationalities and religions, can forge unity and advance their common interests.

We should demand that Tel Aviv immediately withdraw its troops from the entire West Bank and Gaza, release all Palestinian political prisoners, end the detentions of Palestinian activists, and open the borders. And we should oppose every move by Washington or any other imperialist power to give military aid or other backing to the Zionist regime in Tel Aviv.

May Stark: 56 years of communist work

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — May Stark, a member of the Socialist Workers Party for 56 years, died here of a heart attack February 29, a week before her 80th birthday.

Earlier that day she came to the Pathfinder bookstore to help get out a special mailing announcing an emergency meeting for a Militant Labor Forum March 3 with a panel of speakers titled "Hands off Cuba!"

Born in New York City, Stark joined the Socialist Workers Party there in 1939. Her parents operated a restaurant and she was able to attend Hunter College, graduating in 1938 with degrees in physics and chemistry. But she could not get a job in these fields and became a welfare worker. A year later she joined the SWP. In 1941, May Stark and her companion Sam moved to Los Angeles. That's where she enlisted in a trade school and learned to operate a drill press. For several years she worked as a drill press operator in a tool-making plant and then got a job at Douglas Aircraft. She later became a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and worked in the garment industry for more than 20 years.

After retirement, Stark played a valuable role in keeping the local Pathfinder bookstore open. Until health difficulties increased, she volunteered in the store a minimum of one afternoon a week.

A public meeting is being organized to celebrate her life and political contributions. The event, sponsored by the Los Angeles SWP branch, will take place on Friday, March 15, with a reception at 7 p.m. and program at 8 p.m. It will be at the Pathfinder bookstore (see directory on page 12). Messages to the meeting can be sent to the Los Angeles SWP, fax number (213) 380-1268.

Theses of Cuban CTC

Continued from Page 9

their workplace.

47. We propose to defend this method, watch over the quality and effectiveness of its implementation, focus it on the aims it was conceived for, and work simultaneously to eliminate all deficiencies that have already been found. This includes, above all, shortcomings dealing with administrative and union training, with strict compliance with agreements, and with providing adequate information to the workers at every step of the process.

48. Cuban trade unionism has to pose the problem of economic efficiency in all its dimension, not simply from the angle of work and working conditions. The interest of workers is not reduced simply to their jobs. We are socialist owners of the economy and the stability of the revolution and the quality of our lives today and tomorrow depend upon the success of our enterprises and units.

49. For this reason, we cannot overlook the efforts being studied or undertaken today to utilize the factories, or a part of them, at a level that allows the best use of resources; to replace backward technologies or those using high levels of energy and raw materials with more efficient ones; and in other cases to concentrate production in those workplaces that can produce more economically.

50. We in the unions are called upon to participate in this reorganization of production with a broad perspective, looking to the future. We must be alert to its consequences for labor, society, technology, politics, and the nation's territory.

51. It is particularly important to be sure that narrow criteria are not followed, applicable only to the moment we are living in. We must take into account the need to fully restore the productive capacity created here, even expanding it where possible, to solve the accumulated economic and social problems.

52. The National Association of Innovators and Rationalizers (ANIR) should take its place in the vanguard of the struggle for economic efficiency and strengthen even more its activity in the workplaces.

53. ANIR, with its impressive numeric and qualitative strength, is called upon to closely coordinate its work with the rank and file of the unions and the Youth Technical Brigades, take action on a daily basis to solve problems that arise, and, in terms of the economy, project itself systematically in three main directions: the development of technology and methods of administration, the struggle for productivity, and encouragement of disciplined use of technology. Giving increased support to the movement of the Technical and Scientific Forum should be the reflection of this daily and decisive battle.

⁹ Economic efficiency assemblies are meetings in the factories and countryside where workers discuss and make decisions on concrete measures affecting productivity in the plants and on the farms (see series of three articles in the Jan. 30, Feb. 6, and April 10, 1995, *Militant*).

The CTC initiated the workers' assemblies in January 1994, following the December 1993 meeting of Cuba's National Assembly. During that session of the National Assembly, deputies discussed but deferred decisions on a series of proposed fiscal and other measures aimed at reviving industrial and agricultural production. Since the measures under debate by the National Assembly would have an impact on the cost of living of Cuban workers, the deputies decided to first organize discussion of the country's economic crisis in every factory and solicit opinions from the workers on the measures being considered (see three articles in the April 4, 11, and 18 issues of the *Militant* in 1994 and the article "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's socialist revolution" by Mary-Alice Waters in the magazine *New International* no. 10.)

Oakland teachers strike to win better contract

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your

are appalling. Teachers bring their own soap and toilet tissue. Many spend literally hundreds of dollars out of their own pockets on badly needed supplies and books not furnished by the school district, and the administration is proposing to cut a meager allowance paid to teachers for these purchases.

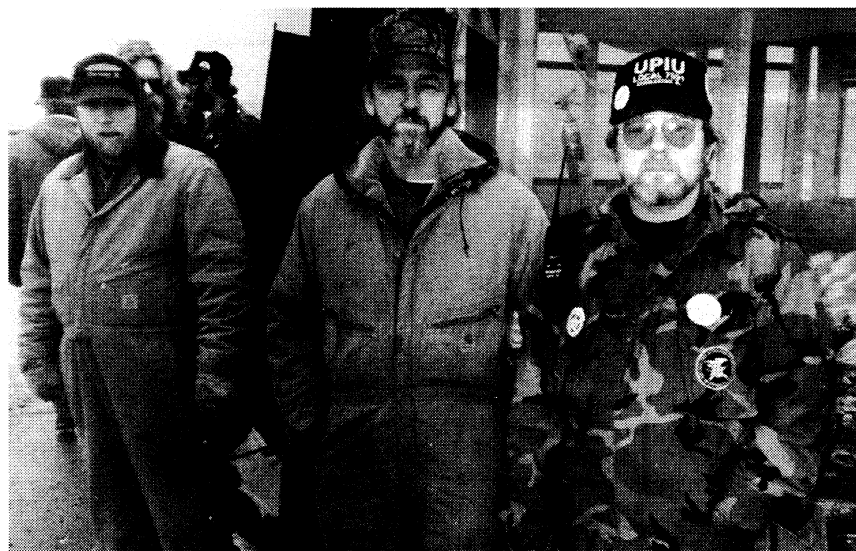
Most school buildings include a number of decrepit "portables",

director of the Oakland NAACP.

Reeves, accusing the teachers of committing "educational treason," charged that the teachers were telling students to stay away from school and were only interested in picking up a paycheck.

Smith chimed in, claiming that the teachers' contract fight had nothing to do with the concerns of Oakland families, particularly the Black and Latino residents of the working-class "flatlands" areas of Oakland. Although he gave no evidence, Smith said that "the Oakland Unified School District may have African American administrators, but the majority of teachers are white persons who live outside of Oakland but will come to work tomorrow to get their paychecks. They are being influenced by white politicians." News media reports have promoted the views of Black parents who oppose the strike.

Union officials, teachers, and students have stepped up efforts to counter the anti-union charges. An attempt to hold an anti-union news conference at the administration building February 14 fizzled when 200 teachers, youth,



Militant/Frankie Travis

Trailmobile, Inc. workers walk picket line in Charleston, Illinois. More than 600 United Paperworkers International Union members and supporters organized a demonstration February 19 to protest the company's replacement workers in the plant. The 1,200 unionists locked out since January 22 have received strong support from other workers in the area.

ON THE PICKET LINE

union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

OAKLAND, California—Hundreds of teachers set up picket lines at schools throughout the city February 15, beginning a third strike in their months-long fight to win a new contract.

The teachers, members of the Oakland Education Association, had been working without a contract for nearly a year and a half. They are demanding that class sizes, currently among the largest in California, be reduced; and that teacher salaries be increased. Oakland teachers have not had a raise in five years.

The school district has refused to meet teachers' demands, claiming there is no money available. District officials have come up with a class size reduction scheme that would take many years to put in place.

Conditions in Oakland schools

wooden temporary classrooms that have stood for decades. Last fall, parents at Lazear Elementary held their children out of class for weeks to demand a new school.

About 55 percent of Oakland students and 32 percent of teachers are Black, while 20 percent of students and 6 percent of teachers are Latino. The superintendent and top administrators, as well as many of the school board members, are Black. Attacks on affirmative action programs and budget cuts at California universities threaten to erode even these modest gains.

The administration and its supporters opened up a vicious public campaign aimed at undercutting the broad support the teachers had won.

A news conference at McClymonds High School, in West Oakland, a predominantly Black part of the city, featured Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., head of the Baptist Ministers Union, and Shannon Reeves, newly elected executive

and union supporters staged a news conference and rally of their own at the same place. The teachers then filled the auditorium where the school board was to meet, while those who could not get in staged a noisy demonstration in the hallway outside, chanting "We want a contract!" and pounding on the walls.

The race-baiting attack seemed incredulous to many. "How can they do this?" one parent picketing at Longfellow Elementary asked this reporter.

Jimisha Thompson, a student at McClymonds High, said the

clergy and the NAACP were ignoring the plight of Oakland teachers and students. "It's not about race anymore. It's about money and how much you have to spend on your schools," she told the *Oakland Tribune*.

Jim Altenberg, member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in San Francisco; Amy Belvin, member of the Oakland Education Association at Alameda Elementary School in Oakland; and Johanna Ryan and Meg Novak in Peoria, Illinois, contributed to this column.

LETTERS

No Quebec independence

I am writing regarding the article in the February 5 *Militant* "Why 'Militant' supports Quebec independence." I emigrated to Montreal from New York for two years and I speak French fluently. When I first arrived there I was very sympathetic toward the French. By March of last year I had become totally disillusioned with Quebec and I left. Now I can say unequivocally that independence is wrong for Quebec and the *Militant* is wrong in supporting their independence movement.

I was not accepted by the Quebecois nor were other immigrants that I met, in spite of the fact that we spoke French fluently. They could always identify us by our accents and the fact that it is almost impossible for an immigrant to learn their slang. No one who was not born in Quebec is ever really accepted.

As Robert Sheehy said in his letter to you, it is truly a racist state which they wish to establish. Many of the French are good people, many have voted against independence but an independent ethnic state would give expression to the most abhorrent elements within their culture, including those who supported Hitler during World War II. Furthermore the socialists are a very small minority within the separatist movement.

The Canadian government may not be perfect but it is far more pro-socialist than the U.S. government. For many years while the U.S. has blockaded Cuba, Canada has maintained normal relations with Castro and every year many Canadians go there on vacation. Education is much more accessible in Canada because the Canadian government subsidizes their universities much more than the U.S. does. Also Canadian society is more democratic, with fewer extremes of wealth and poverty than in the U.S.

Independence has been demo-

cratically rejected twice by the voters of Quebec in referendums, conducted by pro-independence provincial governments. Other socialist parties in Canada and around the world support a united Canada and in the interests of socialist unity the SWP should also, or at the very least remain neutral.

Susan Berman writes that if a mass movement organized the referendum, they "would ensure that only Quebecois could vote." This is racist and wrong! In his recent autobiography, Nelson Mandela states on page 150 that "the country belongs to all those who have made it their home." The Indians and the English minority living in Quebec have as much right to vote as the French do. Why doesn't Ms. Berman say that only Indians should be allowed to vote, since they were there first?

A breakup of Canada would reduce socialism there and bring it much closer to the U.S. government, which is the greatest enemy of socialism in the world. The independentists are competing with English Canada to see who can be more pro-U.S. because they want the U.S. government to support their cause. A breakup of Canada would probably result in several western provinces joining the U.S. as states, thus making the already too large American empire even larger.

Richard Terence Jeroloman
South Nyack, New York

Yugoslavia

Thank you for the exchange with reader Steve Craine on what has and has not changed in Yugoslavia. I hope that a subsequent article will amplify one point.

Argiris Malapanis wrote, "It is these social relations... that have not been destroyed. That's why it's not useful to use Craine's yardstick."

While the term "social relations" appears with some frequency in the *Militant's* coverage



of the important developments in Yugoslavia (and in other workers states) it is infrequently explained. My own experience in discussing this with fellow workers on the job and elsewhere is that what is meant by this term is not well understood. I hope you will return to it with some of the concreteness that Malapanis used to buttress other points in his recent article.

Geoff Mirelowitz
Seattle, Washington

Death camps came later

In the otherwise excellent article in the February 19 *Militant*, "Don't give NATO what it hasn't taken," I think there is an incorrect statement: "The Nazis won popular support for their openly stated aims of exterminating Jews and non-Aryans based on the smashing of the labor movement."

The exterminating of Jews and "non-Aryans" (a term for the Nazis' ideal rather than a scientific term) was begun in the latter years of World War II. The exterminations were a culmination of the anti-Semitic policies initiated after the crushing of the German labor movement in 1933.

The Nazis did not "win" popular support for the death camps. The camps were not openly proclaimed. (The first reports of the

camps were thought to be war propaganda.)

A statement that sounds like the extermination of the Jews was done with "popular support" in Germany only reinforces the collective guilt garbage that has been drilled into every generation since World War II.

Rick Young
Chicago, Illinois

Kurdish national rights

In an article on Turkey ["Turkey: elections signal instability" in January 15 *Militant*] I omitted an important aspect of the December 24 elections in that country.

The unyielding struggle of the oppressed Kurdish people for their national rights is also a major factor contributing to the current political instability that gives severe ulcers to the vulnerable fat stomachs of the imperialists of Bonn, Washington, and Tokyo, and Turkey's capitalist rulers.

The People's Democratic Party (HADEP) ran in the elections and received 4.17 percent of the national vote. HADEP campaigned against the war waged by Turkey's rulers on Kurds and called for recognition of the Kurdish people's national and cultural rights. In cities in the southeastern

part of Turkey, such as Diyarbakir, where many of the Kurds live, the elections took place in a continued state of terror imposed by Turkey's armed forces. Despite this, HADEP won the majority of votes in that region. But due to undemocratic election laws, HADEP will not be represented in parliament.

Meanwhile, on January 8, as the newly elected members of parliament were sworn in, hundreds of prisoners in 23 jails across the country were taking part in protests and hunger strikes demanding better conditions and respect for their human rights.

The revolt began in late December in Istanbul's Unraniye jails where the police cracked down on protesting political prisoners, killing three and wounding over 30. Thousands of working people and youth in Istanbul participated in a demonstration on January 8 in solidarity with the prisoners' revolt. Organizations taking part in the demonstration included the Turkish Human Rights Association, HADEP, and the DISK labor federation. The police attacked the protest and arrested hundreds. One of those arrested, Metin Goktepe, a journalist, was brutally murdered by the cops. Over 10,000 supporters of democratic rights gathered at his funeral on January 11 in Istanbul protesting cop brutality.

By mid-January most of the protesting inmates returned to their cells after the prison authorities were forced to an agreement to improve the inhuman conditions in Turkey's jails.

Bobbis Misailides
Athens, Greece

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.

Cuban doctors volunteer in S. Africa

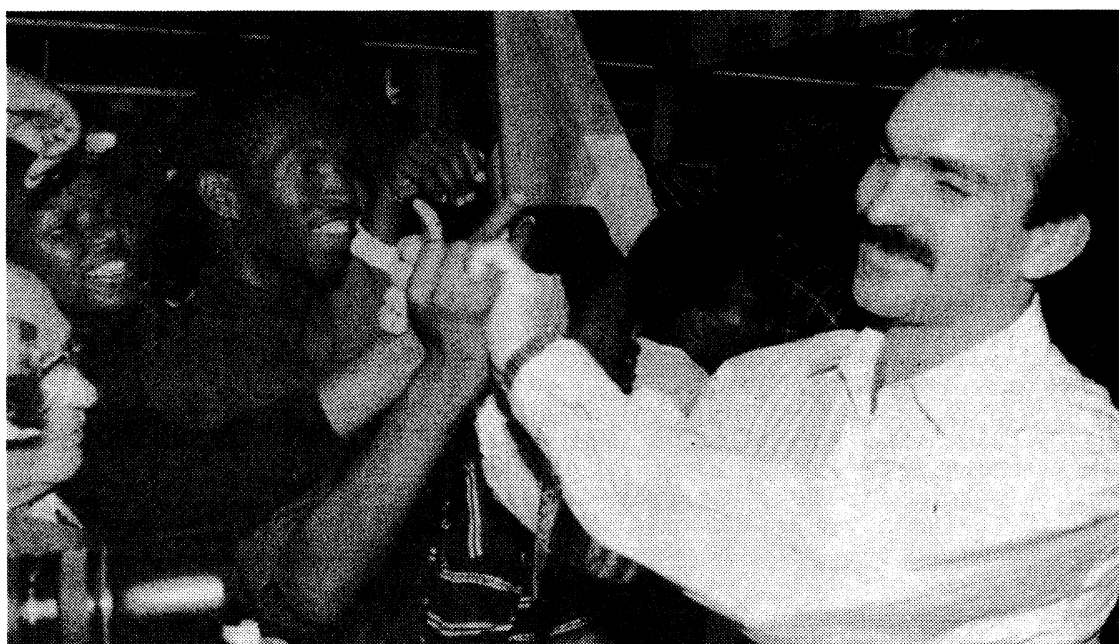
BY GREG ROSENBERG

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Nearly 100 Cuban doctors arrived in South Africa February 27 to serve for a three-year stint in some of the country's worst-off rural areas that lack physicians. They are the first of potentially hundreds of Cuban doctors who have volunteered to go to South Africa as part of an agreement between the African National Congress-led government and Havana.

Cuban deputy health minister Jorge Antelo Pérez, who had served as a volunteer with the Cuban forces in Angola in the 1970s, was among the group. "We like South Africans and we have close relations with many of them," said Pérez.

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans served on internationalist missions in Angola between the mid-1970s and late 1980s. Cuban volunteer troops — fighting alongside the Angolan army and Namibian volunteers — helped defeat successive invasions of that country by South Africa's apartheid regime, which was determined to block the Angolan people from realizing their independence from Portugal.

The apartheid army was dealt a decisive military defeat at Cuito Cuanavale in early 1988 and was driven out of Angola. This victory paved the way for the independence of Namibia. By puncturing once and for all the myth of the white supremacists' invincibility, the outcome at Cuito Cuanavale gave another impulse to the battle against apartheid inside South Africa. In February 1990, the regime of F.W. de Klerk announced the unbanning of the ANC. That same month, Nelson Mandela walked out triumphantly from Victor Verster prison in Cape Town, free for the first time in 27 years. Four years



Cuban doctor, among group of 100, is welcomed on arrival at Johannesburg airport February 27.

later, the ANC won a big majority in the first-ever nonracial nationwide elections.

"There are many people here who have no medicine. I have come to give all I have," Cuban surgeon García Sarria, 53, told the Associated Press.

South African health minister Nkosana Zuma, who was among those at the Johannesburg airport to welcome the doctors, said their arrival was an extension of the aid given to the ANC by revolutionary Cuba. She also criticized London and other governments for luring away South African doctors with salary offers the ANC-led government cannot match.

"We are not pleased with what Britain is doing here and we are having discussions with them," Zuma said. "Obviously they do not feel compassionate towards us if they are willing to take the few doctors

we have, having trained them at great expense, and leave our people without doctors." In earlier statements Zuma had announced that the Cubans will receive the same pay as South African government doctors and will be sent to rural areas, about 600 of which are considered urgently in need of them. There are only 22,000 doctors for a population of 43 million people. The majority of these physicians are in urban areas, but most South African Blacks live in rural regions.

"We are the beggars and not the Cubans," Zuma said. "They did mention it... that it is only because they were part of the struggle [against apartheid] in South Africa that they wanted to be part of the transformation."

There are 2,000 unfilled government medical posts in South Africa. Surveys

show that up to half the English-speaking medical graduates leave the country shortly after they get out of school for jobs with more lucrative pay abroad.

During the February 27 welcoming ceremony, Zuma reiterated statements by South African president Nelson Mandela that his government would not allow Washington to dictate who its friends should be. "I invited Fidel Castro. He was supposed to come in August last year, but he asked for a postponement," Mandela said in a television interview February 11, marking the sixth anniversary of his release from prison. "I am determined to have him in this country." Mandela also stated he will invite Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi to South Africa.

"Those are our friends who were with us when we were all alone.... I'm not going to take advice as to who my friends should be... The enemies of the West are not my enemies and I'm not prepared to be dictated to at all by anybody."

The big-business press in South Africa and capitalist politicians reacted with discomfort and continued to encourage Mandela to distance himself and the South African government from Cuba.

"It's sad to say it, but President Mandela has no feel for foreign policy," said a February 13 editorial in the Johannesburg *Citizen*, a daily historically aligned with de Klerk's National Party. "Mandela makes a great mistake in confusing the interests of the African National Congress and the interests of South Africa.... Castro is regarded as a dictator and his country has a bad record of human rights violations.... Why should South Africa anger the United States, in particular, by putting out the red carpet before them?"

"With this invitation," complained National Party foreign affairs spokesperson Boy Geldenhuys, "investor confidence in South Africa is being sabotaged." He provided no evidence for his claim, however.

The U.S. embassy initially refused comment. The State Department followed up by stating that "our positions on Libya and Cuba are well known.... We hope that South Africa will take the opportunity to press [U.S.] concerns during any exchanges it may have with Libya or Cuba."

Mandela responded to the press, "Both our enemies here and our friends in the West said to me, 'if you want to be acceptable to the world get rid of Cuba, get rid of Muammar Qaddafi.' But, he added, "We will never renounce our friends, no matter how unpopular they may be with you."

During a recent visit to Washington, Tokyo Sexwale, premier of South Africa's Gauteng province, was telephoned by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Republican from Florida and chair of the House Subcommittee on Africa. Ros-Lehtinen, a virulent opponent of the Cuban revolution, urged Sexwale to cancel a planned trip to Cuba. Sexwale declined.

Mandela tells Farrakhan about ANC principles of nonracialism, nonsexism

BY GREG ROSENBERG

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, visited South Africa in late January as part of a tour of Africa and the Middle East.

Farrakhan had a 30-minute meeting January 28 with South African president Nelson Mandela, who is also president of the African National Congress. At a press conference following the meeting, Mandela explained that he had "briefed" Farrakhan at length on central positions held by the ANC — nonracialism, nonsexism, and freedom to practice all religions.

"In the 1950s, one of the principles we established was nonracialism," Mandela said. "We have defended that policy without fear, and have now triumphed and are building a nonracial society in this country."

"Our basic objectives are to address the demands of the black majority, which have been disadvantaged...but in carrying out this mandate, we will make sure we do not do anything which could be seen as reverse racism." *Chicago Tribune* staff reporter Liz Sly wrote that Mandela's remarks "came across as a lecture."

The South African president's decision to meet with Farrakhan drew sharp criticism from Jewish organizations in South Africa and rightist outfits such as the Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

Mandela said he hadn't hesitated to meet with the Nation of Islam leader. "In the course of my career I have accommodated a wide range of views," the ANC president said. "I have seen not only the people with whom I agree but also with people whose views are diametrically opposed to mine. I saw no reason to make an exception here."

The ANC Department of Information and Publicity released a statement a week prior to Farrakhan's visit, in which it said

the trip "must be viewed in the context of the readmission of South Africa into the international community of nations.... South Africa is now a democracy, with constitutionally guaranteed fundamental human rights like freedom of speech, movement and association."

"Nonetheless, the ANC expresses its hope that Louis Farrakhan's visit and exchange of views with various leaders our country will help him understand why the majority of our people, previously oppressed and exploited, are so passionately opposed to religious intolerance and the oppression of women," the statement said.

"In this regard, the history of our struggle against apartheid has taught our people the imperatives of all of us to set the tone and to promote religious tolerance and the rejection of any form of discrimination on

the basis of race, color, sex or belief."

During this trip Farrakhan felt obliged to modify somewhat his usual oratory. At a press conference, Farrakhan claimed that "the equality of women is something that we in the Nation of Islam agree with and will work toward."

The Nation of Islam leader also held a closed door meeting with Winnie Mandela and met KwaZulu-Natal premier Frank Mdlalose, a member of the Inkatha Freedom Party headed by Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

While his visit and the controversy surrounding it stirred up much interest, Farrakhan didn't draw much public support. His trip was organized by the Pan-Africanist Congress, whose views are rejected by the overwhelming majority of South Africans.

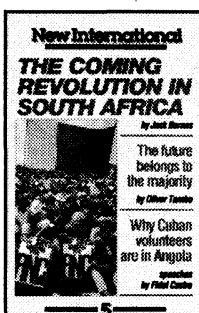
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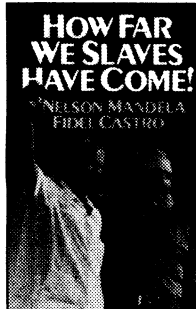
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