

# General Strike Victorious in Ecuador

By Joseph Hansen

QUITO, Oct. 5 — In yesterday's nationwide 24-hour general strike the labor movement of Ecuador scored an outstanding victory.

The government of Dr. José María Velasco Ibarra did its best to intimidate the strikers, limit and defeat the stoppage, but the mainstream of the working class, supported by wide sections of the middle class, carried the action through on schedule with a most impressive demonstration of discipline and order in the face of dangerous provocations.

Quito, the country's capital, yesterday resembled a city under siege. Business was at a virtual standstill, plants closed, some of

the main streets virtually deserted, only a few buses running, each guarded by an armed soldier.

At all strategic points soldiers stood on guard, rifles and fixed bayonets ready, tear gas bombs at their belts. Some squads wore battle camouflage. Police jeeps and army trucks ran patrol. In some areas soldiers, divided into groups of three, marched through the streets, bayonets glinting in the equatorial sun.

The cavalry, armed with sabers, was out in force, clattering noisily on the asphalt, and three tanks rumbled from one area to another.

At the Plaza del Teatro, workers and students attempted to hold a street meeting. Soldiers in gas

masks were ordered to move on the crowd with their bayonets. This, plus the liberal use of tear gas, dispersed the gathering. The three tanks roared into the square and wheeled into formation, guns trained on the crowd which was already running. The tear gas, I might add, smelled exactly like that sometimes used in the United States in labor conflicts and was just as blinding.

Throughout the day at the principal square, the Plaza de la Independencia, the cavalry with sabers and tear gas broke up lightning meetings organized by small groups of workers and students who shouted, "Viva el paro!" ("For the strike!")

The government characterized this cry as "subversive" and a number of arrests were made. The entire area reeked with tear gas.

Similar scenes occurred in all the major cities of Ecuador. Severe violence occurred at the border town of Ibarra. A crowd surrounded police headquarters, hurled rocks at the windows, and shouted, "Viva el paro!"

The Ibarra police responded by firing their rifles in the air. One of the shots penetrated the second floor of a building some 200 yards distant and caught a professor in the forehead, killing him instantly.

The police telephoned Quito for help. The first plane sent there

was unable to land when a crowd of 500 occupied the air field and drove cattle onto the landing strip. A jet was sent from Quito. It sprayed the field with bullets. The crowd retreated and enough soldiers were landed to regain control. The President himself then flew in to observe the situation.

In Quito, the headquarters of the Central de Trabajadores de Ecuador (CTE), which called the strike, was raided by a mixed gang of police and "Velasquistas" (followers of Velasco). They smashed in the door but found only a few persons, one of whom

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## THE MILITANT

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## Williams Tells Why He Escaped to Cuba

"I wish first to say *gracias* to the Cuban people and Revolutionary Government for having given me asylum and for having offered it to someone who comes from a country which is not yet civilized, to someone who has had to flee from the barbarians who claim to teach the world about democracy. I am grateful to Cuba, the free territory of America, for offering aid to one who is an exile from his native land which never was home."

These were the opening words of Robert F. Williams, civil rights leader of Monroe, North Carolina, to a press conference in Havana, where he had finally found safety after eluding a month-long manhunt by the FBI, Canadian "Mounties," and Mexican police.

To dozens of rows of correspondents from Latin, Asian, African and European newspapers, Williams proceeded to unfold the story of what had happened in Monroe and how the framed-up kidnap charges against him and four others originated. He excluded, however, correspondents from Associated Press and United Press International, the two main U.S. wire agencies, from the conference.

"For two months in Monroe we Afro-Americans were subjected to a reign of terror — beatings, gunfire, rape, four attempts on my life in the presence of police and newsmen. I constantly appealed to AP and UPI to carry these stories, and pictures that I offered them, so that decent people would know and speak out. The only information carried was such as could be used against us."

Giving the background of events in the Southern city, Williams described the 1958 Kissing Case, in which two Negro boys, eight and nine, were sent to reform school because one had been kissed by a seven-year-old white girl. "We exposed it to the world against the will of AP, UPI and the U.S. government, and world pressure freed them. This is the town from whose justice I am supposed to be a fugitive."

"Three months ago we asked permission to use the Monroe swimming pool, built with federal tax money. Our kids have to go 25 miles to swim. The pool was

closed as a result of our students' picket line. Then great numbers of Ku Klux Klansmen started surrounding the pool. On June 28, with 3,000 racists gathered near the pool, an old car was crashed into mine. It failed to overturn me and the mob screamed: 'Kill the niggers, pour gas on the niggers.'"

"Police who were 50 feet away refused to come to my aid. Some of the mob had guns and the leader approached my car with a baseball bat. They didn't know we were armed too. The police ordered us to surrender our arms and we refused. A councilman, fearing that whites might get hurt, told the police chief to open the highway. . . ."

"A week later some KKKs — one a national guard officer — passed my home, firing guns at it, and the volunteers we had

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## Garza Scores College Ban On Speech by Communist

NEW YORK — Richard Garza, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor, urged all those concerned with academic freedom to protest to Mayor Wagner the cancellation by the president of Queens College of a student invitation to Benjamin J. Davis, Communist party national secretary, to speak at a campus meeting.

"This anti-democratic action is the first fruit of the Supreme Court's reaffirmation of its reactionary decision which in effect outlaws the Communist party," Garza said. "It makes clear that the members and supporters of the Communist party are not the only ones to lose their rights as a result of the ruling. A blow has now been struck at the right of free inquiry for students at Queens College."

In nullifying the invitation, which had been extended by the Marxist Discussion Club, Queens College President Harold Stoke had cited as his reasons, "developments which have taken place" in world affairs and "recent decisions of the Supreme Court which are pertinent to the standing of

## Cuba Charges Washington Is Planning a New Assault

NEW YORK, Oct. 14 — Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa charged in the UN yesterday that the United States government is continuing to train mercenaries for a new attack on his country and that U.S. agents are smuggling arms and explosives into Cuba for use by counter-revolutionary terrorists.

The day previous, Cuba's deputy

in the form of "local issues" — lay behind the two week strike which unexpectedly occurred against General Motors last month after agreement on a wage and fringe benefit package had been agreed to in national negotiations.

In the Ford situation also, the "economic" package was settled before the strike was called. It follows the GM pattern with somewhat better provisions on supplemental unemployment benefits and pensions. But as the strike deadline approached, the Ford workers showed themselves no less intent on fighting the speed-up than the GM workers were. Consequently the international union took the leadership of the fight by

calling a nationwide strike on schedule and promising not to end it until local issues were resolved.

The union's top negotiators also took up, on a national level, several key issues directly connected with speed-up, including relief time, production standards and union representation inside the plant. The company has agreed in theory to allow 24 minutes in an eight-hour shift for personal needs, but has balked at guaranteeing the necessary technical implementation: one relief man for each 14 workers on the assembly line.

"Things have to change," explained one Rouge plant striker, "we're pinned down from whistle to whistle."

The union is demanding more reasonable production quotas and an increase in the number of stewards and committeemen inside the plants so that grievances can be attended to promptly. In recent years, unsettled grievances have tended to pile up for months with the aggrieved workers having to endure the violations in the meantime.

### Mass Picketing

Two Ford locals organized large scale mass picketing Oct. 9 to keep office workers from entering the River Rouge plant and the Lincoln-Mercury division headquarters. Local 600 officers said the action was to protest foremen doing union members' work behind picket lines and to put pressure on the company to settle local issues.

Seniority issues have tied up negotiations at 17 Ford plants. The company has reportedly agreed to a modified form of plant-wide seniority, to be worked out on a plant-by-plant basis.

The union has also been demanding a voice in the location of new plants. The union position on this at Ford has been weakened by the fact that the recently negotiated American Motors Cor-

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foreign minister Carlos Olivares presented detailed charges of such plans to foreign diplomats in Havana.

Olivares said that invasion forces were being trained at Fort Worth, Texas, Fort Bragg, N.C., Norfolk, Va., and in various parts of Florida.

In addition, Dr. Roa declared at the UN "the island of Vieques off Puerto Rico, the plantations of Guatemala, the farms of Nicaragua, the haciendas of the Dominican Republic and the Canal Zone of Panama were before, and are now, training camps and dens for the mercenaries."

### Guantanamo

The foreign minister reaffirmed Cuba's stand that the U.S. must withdraw from Guantanamo Naval Base but reiterated that Cuba would make no move which would afford the U.S. the opportunity to stage a self-attack there as the pretext for an open assault.

Cuba's charges were denied by Adlai Stevenson, chief U.S. delegate to the UN, who at the time of the April invasion of Cuba had blandly declared before the world that the U.S. was in no way involved in the attack.

Stevenson asserted yesterday that any danger to the Cuban government comes "from the Cuban people." Washington has continued to harbor and support discredited Cuban politicians now in an exile and seeking a return to power.

This morning's *New York Times* reported: "Exiles in Florida were generally sceptical that any new large-scale training was under way. But some acknowledged a feeling that something was brewing against the Castro regime."

### New York SWP Slate's Television Schedule

Sun., Oct. 15, 11 a.m.-noon	Channel 4	Richard Garza
Sun., Oct. 15, 2-3 p.m.	Channel 4	Fred Halstead
Mon., Oct. 16, 8:30-10 p.m.	Channel 13	Richard Garza
Sun., Oct. 22, 2-3 p.m.	Channel 4	Sylvia Weinstein
Thur., Oct. 26, 9-10 p.m.	Channel 2	Richard Garza
Sun., Nov. 5, 2-3 p.m.	Channel 4	Richard Garza



# ...Ecuador General Strike

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they beat so severely as to require hospitalization.

The main leaders of the strike had foreseen the possibility of such a raid and were operating from an undisclosed headquarters.

The general stoppage had strictly limited aims. It was scheduled to last from midnight of Oct. 3 to midnight of Oct. 4. Its purpose was to protest some 40 decree measures which have boosted the cost of living in Ecuador 30 per cent. Decree No. 33 in particular was singled out for protest. This decree devalued the sucre from 15 for \$1 to 18 for \$1. The immediate effect of this measure was to boost prices 20 per cent.

Such an abrupt rise in the cost of living cannot easily be absorbed by the working people of Ecuador. The yearly Gross National Product averages out to only \$125 a person. Since the GNP includes profits, rents, interest and taxes as well as salaries and wages, it can be readily seen that the average working-class family necessarily operates on a tight budget.

## Mass Unemployment

Not all Ecuador's workers can be sure of their customary share of the GNP. Estimates of unemployment run as high as 40 per cent. The income of the partially employed is described by one writer as equivalent to what could be gained by begging in the streets. That's not much in view of the competition in this field.

Even President Velasco has had to confess the unpopularity of Decree No. 33. However, he contends, he had no choice in view of Ecuador's poverty and lack of funds.

The Executive Council of the Drivers Union of Pichincha countered this with the proposal that a state monopoly of foreign trade be declared. The union sought to prove with specific figures that the profits from exports and imports, now going to some twelve ruling families in the country, would more than make up for the income wrung through taxes on the poor people.

Despite appeals from sectors that extended even into the Chamber of Commerce and municipal governments, President Velasco refused to reconsider his decrees. The CTE thereupon called a meeting last week in Ambato and voted for the one-day nationwide strike.

Government officials labeled the strike "illegal" and "subversive." President Velasco on Oct. 2 called it a "publicly announced and propagated rebellion." He

labeled its leaders "rebels" and "traitors." He did not go so far as to call them "Communists," since he admitted that even "conservatives" were supporting the strike. He threatened to "smash" the "subversives." This government "will not fall," he said, for it is supported by the police and armed forces.

President Velasco lamented the timing of the strike. It came at a "delicate international moment," he said, involving negotiations for loans. The President's extreme reaction to the strike may thus have been due in part to fear that it might jeopardize a Washington handout under the "Alliance for Progress" program.

## Government Blamed

Today's *El Comercio*, Quito's leading newspaper, declared editorially that the government had displayed "exaggeration" and "nervousness" and by condemning the strike in such unreasoned terms had "contributed indirectly to its development." The "protest against the taxes and the rising cost of living," it continued, "expressed a notorious state of affairs which, with or without a strike, it was the government's responsibility to solve."

The leadership of the CTE went to great pains to explain that the strike was strictly limited in aim, that it was "not political," that it would be a peaceful, orderly demonstration, but that it would be carried through on schedule despite threats and attempts to provoke violence.

The CTE, in fact, sought to give a demonstration of labor's might by having the workers simply fold their arms for a single day.

The government claimed "failure" for the strike before it started and repeated the claim today. The claim, however, scarcely fits the facts. The one-day stoppage, even though it was not everywhere 100 per cent effective, was a massive demonstration of power.

## Victory Statement

CTE President Victor Manuel Zúñiga issued a statement today hailing the strike as an enormous, heartening success, a "victorious day of unity and an expression of militant struggle for an existence free from fear and misery."

He said that the struggle will be continued with the aim of getting a general 30 per cent increase in wages and salaries to meet the increased cost of living.

*La Tierra*, a daily labor paper, said in yesterday's editorial: "The strike is not the work of the 'Com-

munist,' nor is it a question of a few conscienceless agitators. The strike is a demonstration of a whole people rising against misery. The strike is the symbol of the beginning of popular struggle which is taking the revolutionary road in order to give the nation a new political, economic and social structure."

Judging from what happened yesterday in Ecuador, the editor of *La Tierra* was stating a fact not a hope.

BOGOTA, Sept. 30 — The militants who sparked the national strike of bank workers in Colombia, decided last night to return to work Monday.

The government's all-out campaign to break the strike, including the use of armed force, proved successful.

Other more powerful unions failed to rally to the beleaguered strikers and a back-to-work movement gained momentum.

The strikers are now faced with many victimizations besides the shattering of their leadership.

Anibal de Castro, who led the bank workers through two previous strikes which won some gains, resigned, possibly as part of an effort to decrease the number of reprisals by the banks.

A new leadership was elected and charged with the task of getting the best possible conditions for the return to work, including an end to the decree outlawing the union.

# ...Ford Strikers

(Continued from Page 1)

poration contract specifically prohibits the union from raising any such demand. The AMC contract also insures the company against any demand by the union to "open the books." This, in spite of the fact that the wage rates at AMC will depend to some extent upon what the company declares to be its profits.

In another development, UAW members of local 72 at American Motors' Kenosha, Wis., plant — the company's largest — voted down the profit-sharing contract Oct. 8 by a narrow margin. Objections to sections of the contract which cut down wash-up time and weakened union control inside the plant were a major factor in the rejection. A new vote may be arranged on the theory that only 3,000 of the local's 12,000 members cast ballots.

## Automation

While the current round of negotiations in the auto industry have not grappled with the key problem of automation unemployment, both the GM and Ford developments indicate a renewal of rank-and-file militancy and a reversal of a ten-year trend toward the weakening of the union inside the plants. A favorable factor in the timing of the strikes is the report of a 1962 model sales boom. Showroom sales are now at the highest rate since the record year of 1955.

## Special Offer To New Readers

A four-month trial subscription to *The Militant* for only 50 cents. Send this coupon with payment to: *The Militant*, 116 University Place, New York 3, N.Y.

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# "Hypocrisy and Abortion"

By Melba Baker

An editorial entitled "Hypocrisy and Abortion" in the Aug. 23 *Vancouver Sun* underscores one of the social problems and social crimes of our times.

It is rare indeed for a daily commercial newspaper, or any mass communication medium, to treat such a problem as abortion as a social problem. Serious treatment of this subject is generally taboo, and when it does get into the newspapers at all it is usually treated as the crime of an individual against society rather than a crime of society against the individual.

The magnitude of the problem is greatly underestimated but best available statistics state that in the U.S. 18 per cent of pregnancies in married women and 89 per cent in unmarried women end with induced abortions.

## Exposes Law

The *Vancouver Sun* editorial exposes Canadian laws on abortion as hypocritical, unjust and dangerous. The laws in the United States on abortion are equally hypocritical, unjust and dangerous — possibly more so in some of the 50 states.

The following is a list of the laws' evils enumerated by the Canadian editor:

1) The heavy financial toll exacted from frightened and helpless women by illegal operators.

2) The ferocious penalties imposed upon the few unlucky victims of an essentially unenforced and unenforceable law.

3) The social injustice which makes safe and easy abortion available to the wealthy while denying it to the poor; and

4) The danger resulting from unqualified, insanitary and often extortionate abortionists operating on the same footing as careful, skilled and reasonable medical practitioners.

It would seem reasonable that in addition to the demand for legalization of abortion there should also be included the demand for making scientific birth-control information freely available to all who desire it.

## Archaic

The hypocrisy surrounding the whole subject points up the archaic laws under which we live. Here is a society attempting to put men on the moon at the same time relegating one half the population — the feminine half — to the dark ages which preceded scientific medicine and to the mercilessness of religious superstition.

Surely woman has the right to be a person and, as a conscious being, to decide when and how many children she will bring into the world. But laws made by man attempt to force her into an animal-like existence, to make her body a biological trap, involving her in a process as something without will or intelligence. A decision to have a child should be consciously arrived at. For regardless of all other considerations, it is a decision that many times affects her health and even her life.

The other side of the problem is the child's right. Each child has a right to be wanted — to come into the world with a place waiting for him or her. It is a poor omen for a child's future as a human being, if he comes to his parents as an unwanted burden or even as a punishment.

# "From Each According to His Ability"

Dear Reader,

I would like to talk to each of you personally to tell you why it is so necessary that *The Militant Fund* be collected in full by the end of this month. Since that is not possible I am using this letter to make an appeal to all of you.

Early in the campaign our Denver friends wrote: "... we will stress the concept of 'from each according to his ability' ... or in other words, no amount is too great or too small ..."

It seems very logical that the concept which was popularized by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels should serve their present-day representatives. As a matter of fact, it is in keeping entirely with the way this paper has always been supported — on the pennies, dimes, and dollars (sometimes fives and tens) of its readers. We have no "angels" who slip us a

couple of thousand now and again. Nor do we carry any large commercial ads to finance the publication. The very low subscription rates cannot possibly cover the actual cost of bringing out the paper.

Each of you who reads *The Militant* gets something for your money. You get news which does not appear anywhere else; you get a working-class interpretation of world events; and you get the truth about those world and national events which do make today's headlines.

Isn't all that worth a "Truth Dollar" or two? Send your contributions to *The Militant Fund*, 116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y. We thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Marvel Scholl,  
Fund Director

# ... Why Williams Escaped to Cuba

(Continued from Page 1)

posted there fired back. When I reported this the police said I was lying. Then Willie Strand, an Afro-American, was dragged from his car and beaten up in the woods. I reported it to the FBI and they said it wasn't a federal matter."

On Aug. 26 there were attacks on Negroes and Freedom Riders who had come to Monroe on Williams' invitation. "So I phoned the U.S. Justice Department and asked for Attorney General Kennedy. He was 'busy' so I filed a complaint with the FBI, who again said it was a 'local matter.' I called the state Governor; his assistant came on the phone and said: 'Do you mean you're not dead yet? You're getting just what you deserve.'"

Williams told how a crowd in his neighborhood had stopped the Stegall's, a white couple. "People wanted to kill them, I said no. The woman wanted me to lead them through the crowd. I wouldn't but when I started into my house, she and her husband followed, hoping for protection." The detaining of the white couple in the Negro neighborhood for several hours serves as the basis of the kidnap frame-up.

Williams also said that it had been he who shot a white policeman in the leg on Aug. 27. The cop, he said, was threatening to fire into a crowd of colored girls. In Monroe Albert Rorie, a Negro youth, faces frame-up charges for this shooting.

## Weekly Calendar

### DETROIT

Can the UN Be Made to Work? — A talk by Alan Shelley. Fri., Oct. 20, 8 p.m. at the Friday Night Socialist Forum, 3737 Woodward.

### NEW YORK

Evelyn Reed, Marxist anthropologist and lecturer, discusses *Changes in Sexlove, Marriage and the Family*. Fri., Oct. 20, 8:30 p.m. 116 University Place. Contrib. 50 cents. Ausp. Militant Labor Forum.

Election Rally — Hear the Socialist Workers candidates and guest speakers Julio Medina and Dr. Annette T. Rubinstein. Fri., Oct. 27, 8 p.m. Hotel Albert, University Pl. and 11th St.

## Fund Scoreboard

City	Quota	Paid	Percent
St. Louis	\$ 95.00	\$ 95.00	100
Boston	600.00	523.00	87
Denver	100.00	83.00	83
Twin Cities	1,300.00	992.00	76
Newark	160.00	114.00	71
Detroit	665.00	465.00	70
Connecticut	160.00	100.00	63
San Francisco	600.00	357.00	60
San Diego	300.00	178.00	59
Chicago	900.00	525.00	58
Seattle	530.00	277.00	50
Philadelphia	320.00	153.00	48
Cleveland	530.00	254.00	48
New York	4,700.00	1,837.00	39
Los Angeles	5,300.00	1,977.00	37
Berkeley-Oakland	530.00	180.00	34
Allentown	130.00	41.00	30
Milwaukee	320.00	70.00	22
General		64.00	
TOTALS	\$17,240.00	\$8,285.00	48
through Oct. 9			



# THE MILITANT

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Monday, October 16, 1961

## Defend the Communist Party

The Oct. 9 refusal of the Supreme Court to review its ruling that the Communist Party must register its members with the government under the terms of the 1950 Internal Security Act makes definitive a new stage in the crippling of the Bill of Rights.

Attorney General Robert Kennedy declares he will now proceed to compel the Communist Party to meet the act's harsh requirements. These include disclosure of membership lists, filing of financial reports and an inventory of printing equipment owned by the party, etc.

The act further requires that published material bear the stamp, "Communist propaganda." Party members are denied the right to federal or defense plant employment. Alien members are subject to deportation and any member may be prosecuted for even applying for a passport.

The leaders of the Communist Party have justifiably declared that they will not expose their members to persecution by turning over their names. They have taken this stand in the face of a proviso of the law imposing fines of \$10,000 for each day of non-compliance. Party leaders are also subject to imprisonment for defying the order.

The Communist Party should have the full and unqualified support of every partisan of the Bill of Rights in this crucial fight. Aggression or disagreement with the party's political views is irrelevant to this key issue. At stake are not only the democratic rights of the Communist Party — rights to which they are as much entitled as any other political tendency — but also, ultimately, the democratic rights of the entire American people.

## Help Save Preston Cobb, Jr.

If sufficient people speak up loudly and quickly enough, Preston Cobb, Jr., a 15-year-old Negro, can be saved from death in a Georgia electric chair.

Young Cobb was doomed by an all-white jury after 45 minutes of "deliberation" on a charge that he had killed the white man on whose farm he and his family worked. Despite a "confession" by Cobb, even whites in the area have voiced doubt about his guilt.

In his original trial he was represented by a court-appointed white attorney who failed to ask the jury to recommend clemency if it found him guilty (Georgia law makes the death sentence mandatory in the absence of such a recommendation). And contrary to established Georgia court procedure, he did not request a new trial or appeal the verdict. He explained that he would not "attack the judgement of this fine jury of representative Jasper County citizens by filing a motion for a new trial."

Cobb is now represented by an NAACP attorney and a Sept. 22 execution date has been postponed pending appeal. Meanwhile protests against the execution of a teen-ager have come to the governor of Georgia from every part of the world. A Dutch jurist who came to observe the case has brought with him a petition signed by 2,000,000 people.

On Oct. 9 the governor announced that the state legislature is now considering revising the law which allows execution of children from the age of 14.

Write to Gov. Ernest Vandiver, Atlanta, Ga., demanding that Preston Cobb, Jr., be spared and that Georgia's medieval capital punishment law be revised.

## The Morning After

One of the nauseating aspects of the Kennedy administration is its bandying about of such words as "truth," "justice" and "morality," while carrying through crooked, reactionary policies. This fakery has already brought disillusionment to many who believed the "new frontier" was going to bring something new and better.

The morning-after feeling among the once hopefuls is assessed by James Reston in the Oct. 8 *New York Times*. He reports: "President Kennedy's liberal intellectual supporters are beginning to sound a little sad and disillusioned about the new administration." One such, he said, referred to it as "the third Eisenhower administration."

"There are a number of reasons for this feeling," Reston explains, "beginning, of course, with Cuba."

The shocking Cuban invasion episode was certainly the awakening for many! And for those still under the spell of "new frontier" rhetoric, more shocks are due.

For example, the Soviet resumption of nuclear tests was denounced by Kennedy in the loftiest moral tones. Four days later he ordered resumption of tests here. "We have no other choice," he solemnly declared.

The Oct. 8 *New York Herald Tribune* discloses quite a different reason: "... the best White House estimate was that the Russians might suddenly stop after their current series of tests. If the United States did not resume its tests quickly while the Soviet Union was testing ... Washington might find it politically difficult to start once the Russians had stopped."

What price "morality"?

## The Monroe Story

# "Meet Violence With Violence"

By George Lavan

From the moment of its rebirth in the armed defense of Dr. A. E. Perry's home against the Ku Klux Klan, the Union County chapter of the NAACP was constantly under attack. Its position was similar to that of a militant union local which has managed to gain a foothold in an open-shop area and is thereafter constantly embattled.

True, the KKK members now had second thoughts about night-riding. The lure of flogging people and shooting up the colored neighborhood diminished considerably as Klansmen realized that they might get killed in the process. Moreover the example of Williams' defense guards seemed to be spreading. Several months later the KKK received a celebrated second drubbing at the hands of the Lumbee Indians in nearby Robeson County.

Prior to the ill-fated KKK cavalcade of Oct. 4, 1957 in Monroe, a number of Negro civic leaders had asked city authorities to take some action against such racist terrorizing of the Negro community. The city fathers refused on the grounds that they could not infringe on anyone's civil liberties. After the ignominious KKK defeat of Oct. 4, and William's demands to Washington for an investigation of the presence of city police cars in the motorcade, Monroe's city council quickly passed a new ordinance requiring permits for motor parades.

While the Klan dropped plans for further direct armed attacks on Perry's home, it did not give up the battle. Monroe is said to be the southeastern headquarters of the Klan, and it is indisputable that there is considerable Klan influence in city and county politics. Thus it was not unexpected when the attack on the local NAACP leaders switched to the legal field.

The Kissing Case was but the most sensational of a number of cases which now hit the Negro community of Union County. Locally the sending of the two young boys to reform school was regarded as an act of retaliation and warning to the Negroes. People saw more than coincidence in the fact that children involved were the approximate ages of Williams' two sons, on whose behalf he had requested transfers to the city's lily-white public schools.

The most flagrant legal attack was directed against Dr. Perry, vice-president of the NAACP branch, and target of the frustrated KKK nightriders.

A charge of committing an abortion on a white woman was brought against him. The date of the alleged crime was fixed, either by coincidence or by cynical official humor, as Oct. 4, the day of the attack on his home. The white woman's unsupported testimony was the sole evidence against Perry.

The young Negro physician, who was also the county's leading Catholic laymen (an additional factor in the KKK hatred for him), was able to produce witnesses from the hospital showing that he had refused to participate in legal sterilizations out of religious scruples. Nonetheless the trial boiled down to his word against that of a white woman. She swore that she had gone to his office three times to persuade him to do an abortion; that twice he had refused but on the third occasion consented. He swore that he had refused all three times, becoming quite impatient with her the last time.

Perry was convicted. He succeeded in having the verdict thrown out on an appeal. A second trial was held and he was again convicted. On this occasion the state's leading Negro newspaper, the *Carolina Times* of Durham (Dec. 6, 1958), editorialized as follows:

"The second trial and conviction of Dr. Albert E. Perry, vice



Dr. A. E. Perry

president of the Union County branch of the NAACP, reminds us of the high cost of justice in the South and the price one must pay if he takes the leading role in trying to advance the cause of his oppressed people. If Dr. Perry were a pauper he would have no alternative but to serve the term in prison to which he has been twice sentenced. That he has taken an appeal to the North Carolina Supreme Court only goes to show how expensive it is to get a fair trial even in certain sections of North Carolina.

"We will not attempt to argue here whether Dr. Perry is innocent or guilty of performing an abortion. The trial of such cases is the function of a court and not that of a newspaper. We do think, however, that the mere fact the jury in the recent trial deliberated for more than four hours lends weight to the doubt that Dr. Perry is guilty. Any Negro or white person who has lived in the South is satisfied that no jury of 12 white men would take four hours to deliberate over the case of a Negro physician performing an abortion on a white woman if there were not some doubt in their mind as to his guilt."

But on Oct. 13, 1959 the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear Dr. Perry's final appeal thus exhausting all legal recourse, and he had to begin a three-year-sentence.

When he was first released with time off for good behavior he was not only forbidden to practice medicine but even to enter Union County — where his home and family are. Now he has been readmitted to practice in Charlotte (Mecklenburg County) but he still cannot practice in Union County.

Along with the Kissing Case and Dr. Perry's case, Williams and his supporters were engaged in other court battles. North Carolina law permits privately retained attorneys for plaintiffs to appear as prosecutors. Conrad Lynn, counsel of the Committee to Combat Racial Injustice, which Williams had founded, now went into court on behalf of Mrs. Mary Reed,

and Mrs. Georgia White, two colored women of the county.

Mrs. Reed, a tenant farmer's wife, well along in pregnancy, had been assaulted in her home by a white who tried to rape her. He beat her badly as he pursued her across the fields. He also struck her little son who tried to defend her. A white woman neighbor had summoned the police. North Carolina law has a death penalty for rape and severe penalties for attempted rape. But, as throughout the South, these are reserved for Negroes. Rape and attempted rape of Negro women by white men are rarely prosecuted as such — the charge usually being either dropped or reduced to a misdemeanor.

Mrs. Georgia White was a chambermaid in a Monroe hotel. An irate white guest, claiming she had disturbed his sleep, beat her in the corridor and kicked her down a flight of stairs into the lobby.

Perseveringly, Williams and the CCRI sought over many months to bring both these cases to trial. In both instances the white men went free. In the rape case the defense attorney's main argument was to present the assailant's wife to the jury and ask if any reasonable person could believe that a man with such a "white flower" for a wife could possibly have designs on a "nigra" woman.

The grand jury simply refused to hear testimony against the assailant of Mrs. White. At the same time a mentally retarded Negro man was on trial for attempted rape. In an argument with a white woman over a purchase, he had allegedly seized her by the wrist. Fortunately the CCRI lawyer was able to force reduction of the charge on a technicality (North Carolina statutes require allegation of some act or words denoting sexual intent). However, he was automatically given the maximum sentence on the lesser assault charge.

These three examples of Union County's Jim Crow justice came on May 5, 1959 in the midst of the national horror over the brutal and unpunished lynching of Mack Charles Parker in Poplarville, Mississippi. Williams came out of the Union County courthouse seething with anger and he spoke his mind to the press.

Negroes must defend themselves by "meeting violence with violence if that is the only way we can obtain justice," he declared. They should be "willing to die and even to kill, if necessary," to protect themselves. "We cannot rely on the law. We can get no justice under the present system. ... Since the federal government will not bring a halt to lynching in the South, and since the so-called courts lynch our people legally, if it's necessary to stop lynching with lynching, then we must be willing to resort to that method."

Williams' angry outburst created a sensation. Newspapers throughout the country featured it on page one. He was quoted on radio and TV news programs.

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## BOOK REVIEW

## Cuba As Herbert Matthews Sees It

THE CUBAN STORY. By Herbert L. Matthews. 318 pp. New York: Braziller, 1961. \$4.50.

The author, an editor and correspondent of the *New York Times*, supports United States capitalism against the Cuban Revolution but, unlike most writers for the commercial press, he has some grasp of social revolutionary processes and is reluctant to prostitute his craft.

On Cuba, Matthews did a skilled and trustworthy job of reporting—in his famous scoop on Castro in the Sierra Maestra in February, 1957, during the insurrection, and in the early part of the revolutionary regime. For this he has been subjected to severe attack by those who feel that putting the truth about an American social revolution in print is a dangerous, if not downright subversive, business.

One of the three themes that interlace this book is Matthews' defense against that attack. Another is an appeal for a slicker policy by Washington toward the Revolution and the new situation in Latin America which it has precipitated. The third—and most interesting—is his own story: what he personally saw of the revolution and its leaders, and how it has affected and still affects him, as a human being of some historical insight and human sensitivity.

Matthews views the Cuban scene the way a farsighted English bourgeois might have viewed the Great French Revolution. (The analogy is his.) He is attracted by the drama and historic importance of the events and proud to have had some part in them. He knows the revolution is uprooting an old system of injustice and stagnation in Latin America that cannot, and should not, endure.

At the same time he is repelled by the danger which the revolution holds for capitalism in the U.S. He is repelled by what he calls "totalitarian socialist" methods, by Cuban ties to the Soviet bloc, by the suppression of the counter-revolutionaries. Yet he admits the necessity of these moves if the social revolution is to continue in the face of direct U.S. attack.

He rejects as pure propaganda, unsupported by objective evidence or his own close personal associa-



One of the earliest photos of Fidel Castro and the initial cadres of his Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains.

tion with the Cuban leaders, the contention that the Castro regime is dominated by "communists" (whom he defines narrowly as followers of the Kremlin). "In any event," he says, "its communistic connections and coloration do not constitute the chief danger to the United States. Fidelismo is what should frighten the powers that be in Washington, not communism."

Matthews' solution for the U.S. and Latin American ruling classes is to "provide social reforms, or the hope of them, and thus forestall any more revolutions, or at least any serious ones." In this respect, he says, fear of the Cuban Revolution is the prod for forcing the Latin American oligarchies to grant serious reforms. The alternative course—which led to the April invasion—is the attempt to clamp the lid on all Latin America, rely on reactionary dictatorships, and restore a Batista-type regime in Cuba by direct U.S. military force.

He sees endless guerilla warfare and hemispheric disaster for the U.S. along this road. He minces no words, saying: "Thank the Lord for the United States and for Cuba that the invasion of April 17, 1961 failed!"

Matthews considers U.S. capitalism in its democratic phase as the highest point of civilization. He simply dodges the fact that the misery of the Latin American masses is as much a part of U.S. capitalism as U.S. upper and middle-class affluence, and that the stability of U.S. capitalism would be impossible without the semi-colonial exploitation of Latin America. These hard realities, and not "stupidity" (as Matthews would have it) give rise to the hysterical opposition on the part of U.S. rulers to any real change in Latin American social relations. And this constant and violent opposition to such change is what makes revolution necessary.

The book ends on the following note: "The only monument I want to leave on earth is for some student years from now to consult the files of *The New York Times* for information about the Spanish Civil War, the Cuban Revolution, or other events or places, and find my by-line, and know that he can trust it."

Since the editorials on Cuba in the *Times*, which Matthews says he still writes, carry no by-line, he may yet have that monument.

Fred Halstead

## Letters from Our Readers

## Equity Acts on Jim Crow

New York, N. Y.

Invariably, when we think of the trade-union movement images of hard-muscled "workers" come to mind. How ironic that one of the most significant spearheads in recent American union history should be made by a relatively small (approximately 25,000 members) professional, "white collar" organization of artists. I am referring to Actors' Equity Association and their decision not to perform in any theater in the United States or Canada "where discrimination is practiced against the actor or patron of the theater by reason of race, color or creed."

Beginning June 1, 1962, it was announced at Equity's membership meeting last week, this official rule will come into effect. Such a rule has been in effect since 1948, but applied only to performances in Washington, D. C.

Last week's membership meeting also unanimously adopted a resolution asking American performers to boycott the totally segregated theaters of the Union of South Africa.

To my recollection, this is the first time a union has applied a nation-wide ban on segregation, saying in effect, "We won't work (or in this instance 'play') where the employer or manager discriminates or segregates."

This action by the actors calls for Hallelujahs and dancing in the streets. It should also give pause for careful self-examination by all Negroes, working people and those involved in the struggle for freedom of the Afro-Americans. If the actors' union can do it, if a band of artists can force their employers and managers to integrate or go out of business (which is the alternative posed by Equity's ruling) why can't all the unions do the same?

I hope in the near future *The Militant* will run a more detailed story on the actors' ban on segregation.

Yours in the struggle for a New World for all men.

Adam Kingsley

## Canadian View of Mexico

Milnes Landing, Canada

Enclosed is a money order for a yearly renewal to *The Militant* and *International Socialist Review*. Apply balance to Militant Fund.

We—the wife and I—took a four-month trip to Mexico. We found that people were eager to talk to us when we were just stopping on the way. We saw enough in Mexico to convince us that a showdown is in the making there.

The New Party [Canada's recently founded labor party.] conference got good publicity over the air waves and in the press. It was a pleasure to hear one commentator say that the rank-and-file trade unionist is far to the left of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

B.P.J.

## Spread the Message

Chicago, Ill.

"Mal-emphasis" is what one finds in your letters column of Sept. 27.

One writer suggested letters to the State Department and White House demanding serious and realistic negotiations on Berlin. This would by-pass the American people. Simultaneous with such letters there should be an outpouring of similar letters, properly couched, to the letters columns of the large-circulation newspapers.

In the same issue of *The Militant*, another writer addresses herself to Dr. Teller's statement

about radiation being "not so dangerous." Such letters should also be sent in proper form to the large newspapers. In that manner millions of our fellow citizens can be enlightened.

I have been able to reach literally millions of people with letters to papers with a combined circulation of more than a quarter of a billion. Readers interested in illustrated material on effective letter-writing techniques may write to me at 913 W. 69th St., Chicago 21.

Albert Bofman

## Favorite Reading

Iowa City, Iowa

One of my favorite articles in *The Militant* is the department entitled, *It Was Reported in the Press*. The process of letting the capitalist press parody itself, without comment, is, I think, a stroke of genius.

D.C.

[Along with his laudatory comments, D.C. enclosed something that pleased us even more, an item from the Iowa City press suitable for *It Was Reported in the Press*. We hope that other readers who enjoy the column will follow suit. Editor.]

## Agrees With George Payne

Springfield, Mass.

George Payne has written a cogent letter to the editor recently [Sept. 4 & 11 issue.] He is right when he says that socialists should send their letters of general protest to the capitalist press. Our letters in *The Militant* should serve the purpose of clarifying theoretical and tactical questions.

Our paper must serve the purpose of coordinating the many socialist militants who are scattered around the country, just as the *Young Socialist* serves the need of youth and the *International Socialist Review* meets the need of disciplined theoretical study and discussion.

We are fighting a battle for the minds of the masses who need to see their problems in their total, stark reality. The masses will not read *The Militant*, because they cannot or will not read such a paper unless an agitator first does a good deal of spadework. Reaching the masses must be done orally for the most part, at this juncture, by committed cadres.

Both at home and abroad the U.S. is moving toward a dead end. When the ruling class fully realizes this we will be in for trouble and for opportunity. If we have vigorously followed the Leninist slogan of "patiently explain," we will be prepared for victory. The masses will rally to us and not the fascists because we will have built our position firmly. We will have earned and won their allegiance.

A.S.

## Disagrees

New York, N.Y.

I agree with George Payne that there is much value in socialists spreading their views on issues of the day by writing letters to the regular press. But I disagree with him when he says that "generalized criticism" of the status quo should not be sent to the letters column of *The Militant* whose readers, he seems to assume, are all convinced socialists.

*The Militant* should not only inform and deepen the understanding of convinced socialists but should also make every effort to reach and to convince non-socialists. I think many of the letters in *The Militant* help in this and sometimes do it more effectively than the regular articles.

H.C.

## Thought for the Week

"Civil Defense authorities are worried that the sudden demand for the unfamiliar products [fallout shelters] has brought a number of 'fast buck artists' into the field . . . Misrepresentations is a common complaint. 'Well, what's the difference. They won't be coming around to complain if it doesn't work,' one salesman responds."—From an Oct. 5 *Wall Street Journal* article on the boom in fallout shelters.

## It Was Reported in the Press

**Mississippi Youth Action** — A group of 114 Negro high school students in McCombs, Miss., marched on City Hall, Oct. 4, to protest discrimination. All of them were arrested after two of their leaders were attacked. Bob Zellner, a field secretary for the Student Non-Violent Committee, was choked by a white man on the City Hall steps and Bob Moses, a co-worker, was knocked down by a cop and beaten by a white man. A local police judge said demonstrators over 18 would probably be charged with "disturbing the peace" and that those under 18 would be paroled in the custody of their parents.

**Unionists Plan Cuba Trip** — The International Longshoremen's Union has announced that union president Harry Bridges and executive board member William Ward will attend a Cuban Confederation of Labor meeting in Havana Nov. 11-13. The State Department, which does not permit travel to Cuba except by government authorization, declined to say if it would okay the visit.

**Hypocrisy in High Places** — Administration press agents were very vocal when Attorney General Robert Kennedy resigned from the Jim-Crow Metropolitan Club. But, as of this writing, there was no comment on the fact that Mc-

George Bundy, president Kennedy's special assistant for national security, subsequently joined the club.

**Second Thoughts** — A Brooklyn real estate company changed its mind and leased an apartment to Mrs. Marget Chapman after the Congress of Racial Equality, of which Mrs. Chapman is a member, staged a 25-hour sit-in strike in the company's office.

**Nothing Sacred?** — Ned North of the Los Angeles police department had \$2,000 stolen from him while attending a Montreal convention of 1,800 police chiefs from North and South America, Europe and Asia.

**And Vice Versa** — President Kennedy was reported greatly pleased when his new foreign aid minister, Fowler Hamilton, assured him that in giving aid to underdeveloped countries he would be guided by the maxim, "God helps those who help themselves." If a spokesman for the rising anti-imperialist movement had been present he might well have rejoined, "And God help those who get caught helping themselves."

**Natch** — Testifying before the Federal Communications Commission, a spokesman for S. C. Johnson & Son said the company did not require advance scripts of TV

shows it sponsors. But, he added, "If they were going to put on some person we thought was going to overthrow the government of the United States, we would yell pretty hard."

**They'd Have Lost Anyway** — Red-baiting Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Michael Musmanno urged the Cincinnati baseball team to drop the name "Reds."

**Our Sane Society** — There is one murder on the average of every 58 minutes in the U.S.

**'New Frontier' in Action** — Kennedy's highly touted program of federal aid to depressed areas was approved by Congress five months ago. So far, two projects have been approved — a water system in Gassville, Ark. and a sewer system in Cambridge, Md. Not a single project has been approved yet for the depressed coal-mining regions in the Appalachians which, according to pre-election promises, were to be revived by the program. Chronic unemployment in these areas run as high as 20 per cent of the labor force.

**Practical Scientist** — Commenting on the fall-out shelter program, Jay Orear, a Cornell University physicist, suggested that the best way to beat the bomb is to get out of the country before it drops.