

Reagan: more weapons, slash social services

The budget that President Ronald Reagan submitted to Congress on January 5 is a proposal to further cut the living standards of workers and farmers in order to beef up Washington's war machine and fatten the accounts of bankers and industrialists.

No matter what changes the Democrats and Republicans in Congress make, the

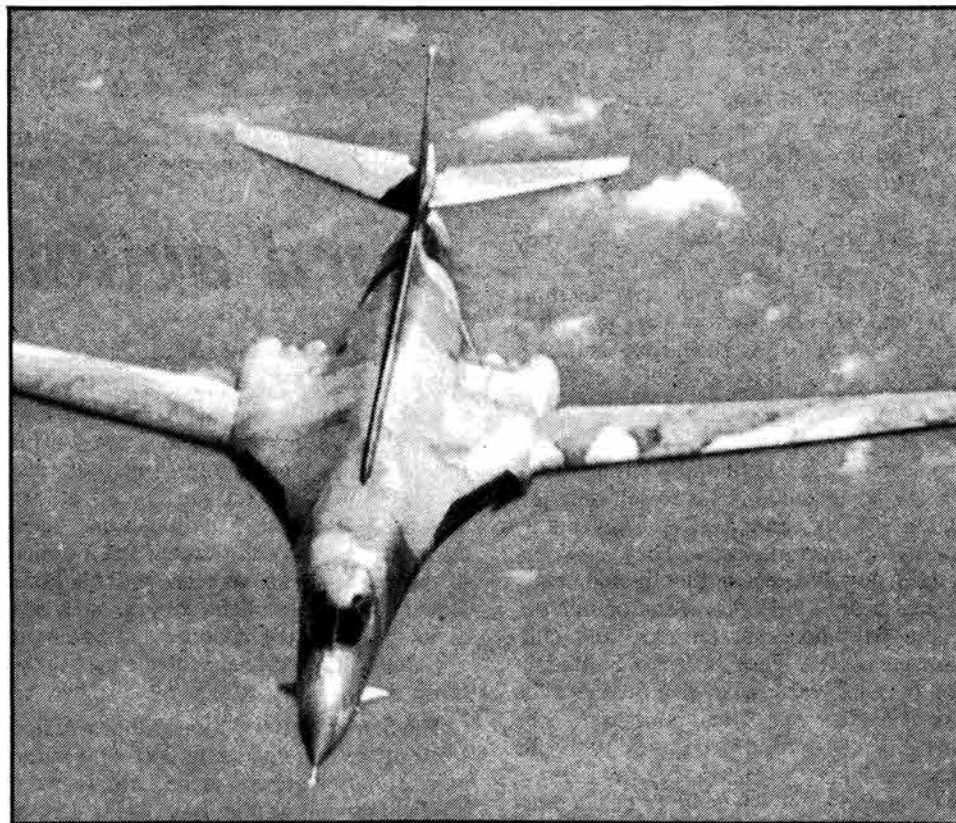
EDITORIAL

basic milk-the-working-people axis of the budget will remain.

Highlights of the White House proposal include:

- A cut of at least \$6 billion in programs that provide some help to impoverished working people.
- But a jump of \$20 billion in the military budget, for a grand total of \$312 billion.
- A 91 percent drop in housing assistance for the elderly and handicapped.
- But a \$3.2-billion increase for "star wars" weaponry.
- About \$4 billion cut from income supports to farmers and a reduction of \$400

Continued on Page 14



B-1 bomber. White House wants \$312 billion for Pentagon, largest military budget in history.

April protests target 'contra' war

BY NORTON SANDLER

As antiwar forces begin to organize for the April 25 demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, the White House is preparing a political offensive designed to maintain congressional backing for the U.S.-organized war against Nicaragua.

The budget Reagan has submitted to Congress for approval in the new session calls for \$100 million in additional funding for the *contra* mercenary army.

"We will not abandon the contras," Office of Management and Budget Director James Miller said in motivating the proposal.

That \$100 million will be on top of the \$40 million scheduled to be handed over to the U.S.-organized *contra* terrorists in February as part of the \$100 million appropriation approved last year with bipartisan

congressional backing.

Congress, however, can vote against releasing that \$40 million.

At the same time, the Pentagon has initiated a new round of joint military maneuvers with the Honduran army. Some 4,500 U.S. troops are scheduled to participate in the maneuvers between now and May. National Guard units from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Puerto Rico are supposed to join in the exercises, named "Big Pine '87." The troops will expand air strips and roads in southern Honduras.

The national antiwar actions on April 25 give working people and students an unprecedented opportunity to register their opposition to Washington's dirty war against Nicaragua.

In Washington, D.C., the April Action Committee has issued a call for the April

25 action. (See page 2.) The committee will soon release a list of initial sponsors of the national action.

Work is also under way to organize a "Western states" march the same day in San Francisco. The demands of the San Francisco action will focus on an "end to U.S. intervention in Central America" and "ending U.S. support to South African apartheid." Other demands include "freeze and reverse the nuclear arms race" and

Continued on Page 2

Wisconsin meat-packers on strike against Cudahy's takeback demands

BY JEANNE PORTER
AND SANDI SHERMAN

CUDAHY, Wis. — Production and maintenance workers at the Patrick Cudahy meat-packing plant here voted to go on strike January 3. The workers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local P40, rejected the company's "final contract offer" by a vote of 636 to 38.

Cudahy is demanding wage cuts ranging from \$1 to \$2.75 an hour. Under the previous contract, most production workers were paid an average of \$9 an hour. The rejected contract proposed paying production workers through a "bracket system," with wages ranging from \$6.45 to \$8.85 an hour.

Hoping to divide the work force, the company offered at the same time to raise wages for maintenance workers by 60 cents an hour. But maintenance workers also

voted overwhelmingly to reject the contract.

Local P40's bargaining committee distributed a leaflet containing a summary of the company's proposal. In addition to the steep wage cuts, Cudahy's wealthy owners are demanding a long list of concessions, including subcontracting out jobs now done by the meat-packers and the introduction of part-time employees. The company also wants to eliminate the guaranteed 36-hour workweek, eliminate plantwide seniority, and halt insurance payments to future retirees.

Local P40's executive board and the UFCW International recommended rejection of the contract, pointing out that Cudahy was given concessions in both 1982 and 1984.

Local P40's President Mark Rosenbaum told the media, "The company is making money. They have no business asking us

Continued on Page 2.

Caribbean leader Don Rojas tours U.S.

The following is an interview with Don Rojas, who represents the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) on the 10-party coordinating committee of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America. This month Rojas, who lives in Havana, Cuba, is conducting a five-city speaking tour in the United States (see article on page 7).

Rojas, a Caribbean-born journalist, was press secretary to Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada at the time of the overthrow of the People's Revolutionary Government and subsequent U.S. invasion of the island in October 1983.

The interview was conducted in New York City by Steve Clark. A concluding section dealing with the fraud of the U.S. government's highly touted Caribbean Basin Initiative, and the alternative road that was charted by the Grenada revolution, will appear in next week's issue.

* * *

Clark: The Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America is a relatively young organization. It is still not well known in the United States, even among those active in the fight against U.S. intervention in the region. What are its origins and goals?

Rojas: It is a grouping of 32 political parties and movements from 21 countries in the English-, French-, Spanish-, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean and Central America. It includes parties that hold quite different political outlooks — organizations that call themselves social democratic, revolutionary democratic, communist, workers' parties.

Despite these diverse origins and outlooks, however, all have united around a common anti-imperialist platform. We have united in opposition to the domination

Continued on Page 8

Decline of U.S. empire spurs growth of presidential power

BY MARGARET JAYKO

The crisis in Washington has turned a spotlight on the growing usurpation of governmental power by the executive branch.

Many liberal commentators have expressed concern about the tendency of the president to bypass Congress in formulating and carrying out policy, especially in the international arena.

Anthony Lewis, in his column in the Dec. 29, 1986, *New York Times*, pointed out, "Over the last 20 years, Presidents of both parties have acted in foreign affairs as if they had — or ought to have — all the rights of kings. They have treated efforts by Congress or the public to control their power as illegitimate."

The Iran arms-*contra* scandal, Lewis continued, "is an acute example of a continuing attempt in this country to get away from the constraints of the Constitution — to let the President rule in foreign affairs as if by divine right."

George McGovern, the Democratic Party's 1972 presidential candidate, wrote in the January 6 *Times* that both Watergate and the current crisis happened because "the demands of the 'national security state' unfolding in secret were allowed to override the Constitution and Federal statutes as well as fundamental American

values and common sense."

And a *Times* reader whose letter appeared in the Dec. 21, 1986, issue wrote, "The country suffers from a kind of constitutional schizophrenia, between the traditional constitutional system and a 20th-century version of elective kingship or constitutional dictatorship."

He traced it back to Franklin Roosevelt, calling him "our first elective king, empowered by economic crisis and personal popularity. . . ."

Comparing U.S. presidents to constitutional monarchs gets at something real. But the trend toward presidents acting on their own, purposely bypassing Congress, is not primarily the result of strong-willed individuals or popular presidents overstepping legal bounds, which is the way most capitalist commentators explain this phenomenon.

Concentrating more power in the presidency at the expense of Congress — the legislative branch of government — is rooted in the needs of a ruling class trying to hang onto its shrinking empire in the face of rebellions by its unwilling subjects abroad, coupled with unprecedented opposition of its subjects at home to being

Continued on Page 13

Text of call for D.C. April march, rally

The following is "An Appeal to the People of the United States" released by the April Action Committee on December 30. It calls for participation in a march and rally "for justice and peace in Central America and southern Africa" to be held in Washington, D.C., Saturday, April 25.

Events are also being planned for April 26, including an Interfaith worship service and training in nonviolence, and for April 27, including a nonviolent civil disobedience action.

Copies of the call can be obtained by writing to April Action Committee, c/o Coalition for a New Foreign Policy, 712 G St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.

Our government's policies in Central America and southern Africa are morally wrong and violate our nation's democratic ideals.

In Central America our government is:

- Escalating its terrorism and war against the people and government of Nicaragua through CIA-directed Contra forces.
- Providing massive economic and military aid to a government in El Salvador that is bombing its own people, repressing the church and human rights workers, and protecting those guilty of gross violations of human rights.
- Transforming impoverished Honduras into a gigantic military base for use by U.S., Contra, and other foreign forces.
- Granting military aid to the Guatemalan army that is responsible for widespread massacres, the use of strategic hamlets for population control, and the highest rate of disappearances in the Western Hemisphere.
- Rejecting opportunities to end the conflicts through political settlements providing security for all.
- Implicating us all in the killing of in-

nocent men, women, and children. In southern Africa, our government is:

- Continuing to support the South African apartheid government through a sanctions policy that contains major loopholes that, among other things, allow U.S. companies to reinvest their profits and make short-term extensions of credit.
- Persisting in intelligence cooperation with South Africa's military and security forces even as those forces repress and torture people, including church, trade union, United Democratic Front, and student leaders.
- Supporting South Africa's economic strangulation of its neighbors by refusing to provide those neighboring countries major economic support, and by cutting off aid to Zimbabwe because of its criticism of U.S. policy.
- Refusing to push South Africa to end its illegal occupation of Namibia.
- Allying itself with South Africa in its war against Angola by providing covert aid to the rebel group UNITA.
- Supporting repression against legitimate representatives of the people of South Africa and Namibia.

These policies are morally wrong. They violate fundamental rights to self-determination, liberty, and justice. They betray our own democratic ideals. They risk deeper U.S. involvement in bloody and costly foreign wars while the needs of our unemployed, homeless, farmers, and children go unmet. They reflect a militarization of our foreign policy that increases the risk of nuclear war. These policies must be changed! But these policies will be changed only if our policy makers in Washington know the depth of our opposition to them.

So we must show them. Nonviolently. Forcefully. With passion. Together. In a united witness by tens of thousands of citizens.

Meat-packers strike against Cudahy

Continued from front page for anything."

Rosenbaum put the Cudahy fight in the context of other packinghouse struggles around the country. He said that if the union lost at Patrick Cudahy, wage rates at other plants will also be pushed back.

Company representatives also recognize the industrywide nature of this fight. They are trying to justify the proposed wage cuts by claiming they are necessary to remain competitive in the fresh pork business.

In interviews, company officials frequently single out Iowa Beef Processing (IBP) as their main competitor. IBP currently has more than 2,000 union meat-

packers locked out at its Dakota City, Nebraska, plant. Many of IBP's plants are nonunion. Cudahy claims that wage cuts will enable them to compete with both union and nonunion operations.

Cecil Cain, an Austin, Minnesota, meat-packer, came to the union meeting at Victory Hall here to express solidarity with Local P40. Cain is one of the more than 800 workers fighting to get their jobs back at the Hormel packing plant in Austin. Local P40 has organized a number of activities in solidarity with the Hormel struggle, and several of its members have gone to Austin to attend events organized by meat-packers there.



Demonstration against U.S. aid to contras held at Southern Air Transport in Miami on December 20. Company is CIA front that aids contras. Militant/Larry Lukehart

April actions target war

Continued from front page

"jobs and justice, not war."

The march is being organized by the Coalition for Peace, Jobs and Justice. The first meeting to begin mobilizing for the action will be held on January 13 at St. Teresa's Church in San Francisco. Peter Sammon, pastor of the church and a leader of the sanctuary movement, and Alameda County Supervisor John George will address the gathering. George and Sammon are among the co-chairs of the mobilization.

The San Francisco action will be a major focus of the regional conference of Nicaragua solidarity groups to be held January 30-February 1 in the Bay Area. David Reed, national convenor of the April Action Committee, will be a featured speaker.

Mike Davis, Northwest coordinator of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, told the *Militant*, "The contragate scandal is increasing the level of overall opposition to the war in Central America."

"At a time when Reagan really wants to escalate the war, he is less in a position to do so. A successful demonstration will create an opening for even bigger opposition to war," Davis said.

"Combined with the growing opposition to U.S. support to South African apartheid, we have the opportunity to mobilize really massive numbers for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War," he added.

Al Lannon, president of International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 6 and a co-chair of the mobilization, told the *Militant*, "From a union point of view, the Reagan administration has been severely eroding the right to strike. . . . This same policy of busting

unions is a policy to bust the government of Nicaragua."

Lannon said the breadth of the forces beginning to mobilize for April 25 was a reflection of the "growing strength of the movement for peace, jobs, and justice."

The Western States Mobilization can be contacted at the ILWU Local 6 office at 259 9th Street in San Francisco or by calling (415) 621-7326.

Protests against the contra war

Chicago area antiwar forces are building a kick-off event for their local April 25 coalition, to be held at Columbia College at 1:30 p.m. on January 24.

Last month, 100 activists participated in a pre-Christmas march from the Illinois National Guard building to a well-known shopping area in the center of the city. Police arrested several demonstrators after they unfurled a banner in a shopping mall protesting the contra war.

Activists held a demonstration at the Southern Air Transport Company headquarters in Miami on December 20. Southern Air is a CIA front that has been supplying weapons to the contras. The Latin American & Caribbean Solidarity Association is planning another demonstration at Southern Air January 10, and several groups are participating in a rally to "stop the arms race, not the human race" at the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Florida, January 17.

On December 19, some 300 people demonstrated in Seattle against the war. Called by the Seattle chapter of the Pledge of Resistance, the action focused attention on the thousands of Nicaraguans who have died in the contra war. Fifty protesters were arrested after they sat down in front of the federal court building.

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The *Militant* is written in the interests of workers and farmers. Every week it tells the truth about the war Washington and the employers are waging against working people at home and abroad. We provide firsthand coverage of important struggles in other countries, such as Angola, Haiti, and the Philippines. In addition, regular on-the-scene reports come from our Nicaragua Bureau.

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Coeditors: MARGARET JAYKO and DOUG JENNESS

Circulation Director: MALIK MIAH

Nicaragua Bureau Director: CINDY JAQUITH

Business Manager: JIM WHITE

Editorial Staff: Susan Apstein, Fred Feldman, Ernest Harsch, Arthur Hughes, Harvey McArthur (Nicaragua), Ruth Nebbia (Nicaragua), Harry Ring, Norton Sandler.

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Unions hit Aquino's proposed constitution

Philippine guerrillas organize openly, demand real social change

BY FRED FELDMAN

Hundreds of Philippine unionists began a sit-in at the Labor Ministry offices in the capital city of Manila January 4 to protest the dismissal of Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez. President Corazon Aquino had dismissed Sanchez the day before.

Sanchez, a former human rights lawyer, had angered businessmen and top military officers by such actions as opposing the use of soldiers as strikebreakers. His dismissal was reportedly demanded by armed forces Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos when Ramos threw his support behind Aquino in the government crisis that led to Juan Ponce Enrile's removal as defense minister on November 23.

Sanchez was replaced by Franklin Drilon, whom the protesting unionists described as "a stooge of big business."

Union federation opposes constitution

The May 1 Movement, the largest union federation in the Philippines, has called for a no vote on the new constitution backed by Aquino. The decision to oppose the charter, which is to be voted on in a February 2 plebiscite, was adopted December 21 by the 350 delegates at a federation congress.

The proposed constitution was drafted by a commission that Aquino appointed last June. The unionists object to the document's guarantee that Washington can keep its giant naval and air bases in the Philippines at least until 1991 and to assurances that foreign investments and private enterprise will receive full protection.

The document gives lip service to the need for land reform, but leaves the matter to a future legislature that is likely to be under the thumb of the landlords and capitalists.

Crispin Beltran, who was elected president of the May 1 Movement at the December meeting, said the constitution "is not reflective of the interests and demands of the workers." Beltran succeeded Rolando Olalia, who was found murdered November 13. The government has yet to arrest those responsible for the assassination.

Some rightist forces have also voiced opposition, particularly to a provision guaranteeing Aquino a six-year term ending in 1992. Ousted defense minister Enrile and supporters of the fallen dictator Ferdinand Marcos are among these.

Conflict between the Aquino government, which was brought to office last February by the popular upsurge that toppled the Marcos dictatorship, and the unions continued to sharpen in the aftermath of the 60-day cease-fire that began December 10 between the government and the New People's Army guerrilla movement.

Cease-fire

Founded in 1969 under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the NPA has won wide support from the land-starved peasants, who are a big majority in the country. The NPA is now reported to have 16,500 troops.

By forcing the government to temporarily halt the 17-year war against the guerrillas and their supporters in the countryside, the cease-fire marked a gain in the struggle for workers and peasants to function legally.

The halt in the fighting was greeted with demonstrations of thousands in villages and barrios in many parts of the Philippines. The celebrations were often led by NPA units.

A group of rebels joined more than 5,000 demonstrators chanting "Long live peace," in Bacolod, a city on the island of Negros.

An armed NPA company was joined by 1,000 townspeople in a celebration of the cease-fire in San Juan, a barrio in the town of Samal. Samal is 30 miles east of Manila and 15 miles from the U.S. naval base at Subic Bay. Nearby towns sported banners welcoming Saturnino Ocampo and other prominent rebel leaders.

"Today's event was meant to prove a point about populated centers," Ocampo said. "There are areas in many parts of the country, particularly Central Luzon (where Manila is located), where the NPA is in the



Wide support for Philippine guerrillas helped force regime to accept cease-fire.

towns, not only the hills."

The Philippine government portrayed the bold action in Samal as a violation of the cease-fire. "Firearms in a populated area, that is taboo," fumed General Ramos.

On December 30, supporters of the guerrilla struggle held a news conference to mark the opening of their first legal public office in Manila.

Chinese students continue protests

BY NORTON SANDLER

In spite of a ban on protests and harsh attacks in the government media on their activities, Chinese students have continued to demonstrate in Beijing. They are demanding increased political rights.

The protests in the capital are a continuation of the demonstrations by tens of thousands of students that have swept China since early December. As workers joined in the actions in some cities, the government announced that it was canceling a scheduled hike in prices for food and other commodities.

On December 26 Beijing city officials issued new rules designed to curtail the demonstrations. Similar rules had earlier been issued in the country's largest city, Shanghai, where protests had been as large as 50,000. Government media threats against the protesters accompanied the new regulations, and workers were arrested in at least two cities.

Ignoring the threats, Beijing students took to the streets December 29. Starting at a teachers college, they marched to several campuses in the early morning hours, trying to rouse sleeping students to join them. Edward Gargan, the *New York Times* correspondent in Beijing, reported that 3,000 students participated.

The protesters were attacked the next day in the Communist Party's newspaper the *People's Daily*, and Beijing party officials said that those putting up wall posters on campus would be violating the law.

At the same time the government made a concession to workers. The New China News Agency announced that prices would remain "basically stable" in 1987. An expected 30 to 40 percent hike in food and textile prices would be postponed.

Protests continue

Political wall posters went up on campuses in spite of the threats. A poster at Beijing University accused the government of failing to live up to promises of democratic reforms. Another said the Communist Party was fundamentally good, but that changes had to be made that ended privileges for some while peasants were treated as subhuman.

The December 31 *Washington Post* reported that since the cease-fire, NPA supporters have invited reporters "on weekly bus trips to visit rebels who have come down from the hills, to attend rebel weddings and birthday parties, and most recently to talk to rebel women about their role in the revolution and observe them singing revolutionary songs and dancing."

Negotiations

Efforts by the rebels to negotiate an end to the civil war have made little headway. The December 11 *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that Aquino's "public pronouncements and privately voiced opinions suggest she wants first to establish the moral 'high ground' before committing the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to renewed warfare."

This stance was reflected in a December television talk by Jaime Sin, the Catholic archbishop of Manila. "You cannot dialogue with the communists," Sin warned. But peace talks are justified, he continued, "because you cannot just kill communists without giving them an opportunity to surrender."

The government has refused to release Rodolfo Salas, a key member of the rebel negotiating team who was seized September 29 by the military police. The regime has sought to divide the NPA by offering amnesty and a \$50-million resettlement program for those who surrender.

Government negotiators initially insisted that the rebels accept the provisions of the proposed constitution as the basis for discussion of any subject in further peace negotiations. According to the December 23 *New York Times*, government spokesman Teodoro Benigno declared that "demands

for an ultimate share of power, the removal of United States bases, a new constitution and a merging of armed forces were all nonnegotiable."

"We find a wide divergence of approach between our two sides as to the achievement of a negotiated political settlement," said Antonio Zumel, a negotiator representing the NPA. "As much as we have tried to harmonize the two approaches, we cannot find a basic common ground."

On January 6, government and rebel negotiators set a general framework for discussions that could take up issues concerning "food and freedom, jobs and justice."

Army in difficulties

Efforts are also under way to clean up the army's image in preparation for resumption of the war in the future. "Everyone knows that the military is not really that close to the people," conceded Defense Minister Rafael Iletto in an interview published in the December 13 *Times*.

Iletto also cited divisions in the officer caste as an obstacle to winning the war against the NPA. "Even in Marcos' time there were divisions in the armed forces. I said then that those cracks would come wide open in a crisis, and they did. It blew wide open."

At the same time the regime is trying to place the onus for violations of the cease-fire on the NPA and its supporters. On December 17, military sources charged the NPA with responsibility for an incident in Cauayan, on Negros island, where five people, including an eight-year-old child and three alleged NPA supporters, were killed. This charge backfired when the mother of the murdered child revealed that it was the army that had opened fire.

munist Party officials, accused the protesters of disrupting the social order and of being "antisocialist" enemies of the state.

Several hundred students responded angrily, burning bundles of the paper. The students also made a plea for Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping to take a public stand in favor of their activity.

In the march to Tian An Men Square some students carried signs supporting Deng and opposing those they termed party "conservatives."

In a round of editorials in newspapers and on national television January 6, party officials moved to quickly dispel any notion that Deng backed the protests. The *Beijing Daily* quoted approvingly from previous speeches by Deng in an editorial on the protests. The *People's Daily* wrote that the demonstrations were the "outcome of bourgeois liberalism spreading unchecked in recent years."



Student protesters defy police during demonstration held New Year's day in Tian An Men Square in China's capital city of Beijing. Their demands include more freedom to discuss and organize.

Canadian meat-packers defeat bosses' drive

Union-busting effort at Gainers blocked by UFCW members

The following article is abridged from an article that will appear in a coming issue of *Socialist Voice*, a biweekly newspaper published in Montreal.

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

EDMONTON, Alberta — "When we started on this strike, Peter Pocklington was out to destroy this union. He did not succeed," explained United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 280P President John Ventura.

Ventura made this statement on December 14 before announcing that workers at the Gainers meat-packing plant had voted 60.8 percent in favor of accepting a new contract. Pocklington is the company's owner.

After six and a half months, the Edmonton meat-packers defeated the bosses' brutal effort to smash their union. The new contract guarantees that all the strikers will be taken back into the plant ahead of any scabs. The workers also succeeded in forcing the company to grant them a new pension plan. Pocklington has agreed to drop all charges against most of the 460 strikers charged with defying court orders against picketing. A small number of workers still have criminal charges pending against them.

The Edmonton meat-packers were forced to accept a starting wage of \$7.50 an hour in the new contract. That's far below the rate of \$9.38 an hour they were demanding to reach parity with other UFCW meat-packers in Canada. While the workers' wages will be frozen for the first two years of the 56-month contract, Gainers failed to impose the more drastic cuts it was seeking. Some strikers felt that more could have been won by staying out longer,



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

Meat-packers picketing Alberta government conference last summer. Widespread solidarity helped strikers defeat union-busting drive.

and more than 39 percent voted against the new pact.

Bosses' union-busting drive

A takeback contract was imposed on the Gainers workers in 1984 that included a two-tier wage system. By 1986 the meat-packers were determined to reverse those concessions.

Pocklington used Alberta's antilabor laws to his advantage in the confrontation with the union. After the workers voted to strike in June, he began to try to bring scabs into the plant. Under Alberta law an employer can cancel a contract and hire new employees 25 hours after a strike or lockout begins.

Hundreds of Edmonton cops were mobilized to aid Pocklington in getting scabs into the plant.

After unionists throughout the city joined in what became known as "the battle of 66th Street," injunctions were issued limiting picketing, and the strikers faced daily assaults by the cops.

Unprecedented solidarity

The UFCW launched a boycott of Gainers and Swift products in mid-June. Around the same time, the Alberta Federation of Labour went on a drive to change the provincial labor laws.

In September, with the backing of the UFCW and the Canadian Labour Congress

(CLC), the Edmonton meat-packers organized a cross-country tour to win solidarity. The touring meat-packers were able to link their struggles to other key fights being waged by the labor movement in both English Canada and in Quebec. Several million dollars was raised for their struggle.

For the first six months of the strike, Pocklington remained intransigent, saying the scabs would remain and that unionists would only be called back to work when and if they were needed. He remained intransigent even after Local 280P dropped its demand for wage parity in November. But the local refused to drop its bottom line demand that all the strikers get their jobs back.

Finally, in the face of the powerful unity and determination of the meat-packers and the depth of solidarity with their fight across the country, the bosses concluded they could not crush the union without provoking a bigger confrontation that they might not win.

On December 5 provincial Premier Donald Getty met with Pocklington to explain that he had no choice but to settle the strike by taking the workers back. That same day woodworkers in British Columbia scored a significant victory in their strike over that province's timber bosses.

On December 12 Pocklington signed a memorandum of agreement with Local 280P's bargaining committee.

Union stronger in next fight

Though Local 280P members were forced to accept a contract that did not give them wage parity with other Canadian packinghouse workers, it was not due to any lack of fighting capacity. They had stood up to the company, the cops, and the government during the battle. Antilabor laws had been used to help keep them from shutting down production.

In the final weeks and days of the strike many workers began to question whether the boycott alone was sufficient to force Pocklington to meet their demands. But they knew that shutting down production would require massive reinforcements of their picket lines by the Alberta labor movement and a cross-country campaign to defend the right to strike, organized by the CLC.

During the strike, conditions were good for building a powerful solidarity movement of this kind. Tens of thousands of other workers were out on strike across the country at the same time.

What was needed was a massive campaign led by the CLC linking these strikes together and bringing the power of the pan-Canadian labor movement to bear in the fight against concessions and union-busting.

The Gainers strikers waged one of the hardest-fought battles in this country in years. They failed to win most of their contract demands. But they won something very important. They succeeded in defeating a vicious union-busting attack, and in the process they built a stronger union than ever before. As strike leader Mike Dalrymple told *Socialist Voice*, "Peter Pocklington will think twice before he takes on this local again."

Solidarity from Austin to Alberta

BY TONY DUTROW

AUSTIN, Minn. — Hormel meat-packer Rod Huinker recently returned from a five-day fact-finding trip to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Huinker went to offer solidarity to workers on strike at the Gainers packing plant in Edmonton and to win support for the struggles by meat-packers in the United States.

He was able to have extended discussions with members of United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 280P who had been on strike at the Gainers plant since June. That union was involved in intense negotiations at the time of the visit, and a settlement of the strike was announced a few days after Huinker's return to Austin. He was also able to talk to letter carriers, postal workers, machinists, and other unionists during his stay.

Huinker worked at the Hormel plant here for 19 years before the August 1985 strike began. He is a charter member of the North American Meat Packers Union.

I asked Huinker how the trip to Canada originated. He explained that there had been talk among the Austin workers about getting up to the Gainers strike for months.

"We read about their struggles on the picket line and that they had quite a few arrests," he said. "The support they were receiving from the rest of the labor movement in Canada was impressive," he added. When resources permitted, Huinker volunteered to make the trip.

Huinker's train was met by Kelly Conroy, a young worker who is a shop steward at the Gainers plant. Conroy reviewed the history of the strike. Like Huinker, he had spent time on the road explaining the issues in their struggle to other working people.

"I asked him if they had a support group, and I explained how ours is set up, and the role of strikers' wives in getting the support group started," Huinker said. Conroy told him they didn't have a functioning support group that works with the union the way the Austin United Support Group does.

"A lot of workers up there had already heard about our struggle. Some had seen the video *We're Not Going to Take It Anymore*," Huinker said.

Even though he was busy in contract negotiations, Local 280P President John Ventura took time out to speak briefly with

Huinker at the strike headquarters. A lively give-and-take discussion between Huinker and seven or eight of the strikers ensued afterward.

Discussion with Gainers strikers

"It was great sitting in the room talking about our situations and the similarities," he said. "I'd say something, and they'd jump up and say, 'Oh yes, that's just like here.'"

The Canadian workers wanted to know why more than 800 Austin meat-packers were kept out of the Hormel plant after the contract was settled in September and who had scabbed. Huinker told them that National Guard troops had been used to get the plant reopened early last year and that Iowa state officials had forced unemployment recipients to put in job applications. He also explained that 500 members of Local P-9 had crossed the picket lines during the course of the struggle.

The Gainers strikers explained that the plant's owner, Peter Pocklington, had banked on new hires crossing their picket lines. "I never could get an exact figure, but the strikers I talked to said you could count the ones that crossed on your hands. At most maybe 30 crossed," Huinker said.

Huinker heard many workers express concern that Canadian employers are trying to step up union-busting as their counterparts have done in the United States. This topic was in the air at a series of public hearings he attended in Edmonton that dealt with Canadian labor laws.

Many of the issues being debated at the hearings surfaced during the Gainers strike, including Pocklington's hiring of strikebreakers, the use of cops to escort scabs in and out of the plant, and the court's ability to issue injunctions limiting picketing and mass demonstrations.

The Alberta Federation of Labour participated in the hearings, and Huinker met many unionists there with whom he was later able to discuss the Hormel struggle.

Widespread support

Huinker was impressed by the widespread support for the Gainers strike in Edmonton. One poll showed 70 percent of the people in the city backing the strike. And major chain stores had taken the com-

pany's products off their shelves as the union movement's Gainers boycott grew. "Signs were all over the city supporting the boycott," he said, "and almost every other house in residential areas had a Gainers boycott sign."

Huinker also noted that UFCW officials in Canada had backed up the strikers. This included establishing a national defense fund to augment strike benefits and hiring a consultant to assist the union in its campaign against the company.

"When I was up there they were talking about their 'adopt-a-striker' fund, similar to what we developed in Austin. They also had an 'adopt-a-child' program for Christmas," Huinker explained that UFCW top officials had opposed similar methods of struggle during the Hormel strike.

"What I saw up there was a little different picture of how the UFCW handled a strike," he said.

Huinker also told them about other meat-packing struggles in the United States, including the recently concluded strike at Swift Independent Packing in Marshalltown, Iowa. In turn, the Gainers strikers told Huinker about other battles in the Canadian meat-packing industry.

Strike settled

Shortly after he returned to Austin, Huinker learned that the Gainers strike had been settled. He called Kelly Conroy to get his assessment of the settlement. Conroy told him that all the strikers had gotten their jobs back and that the scabs Pocklington had hired were put on a preferential recall list. Pocklington had stated at the time the scabs were hired last summer that they would be permanent.

While the Gainers strikers did not win their demand to get wage parity with other Canadian packinghouse workers, the meat-packers believe they beat back the worst of the concessions and emerged with the union in a position to push forward in the future.

Huinker has reported on the trip at two meetings of the Austin United Support Group. Both reports were followed by lively discussions. He also gave a report to a meeting of the North American Meat Packers Union.

Nicaraguan leader reviews 1986 military achievements

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

SOMOTILLO, Nicaragua — The U.S.-organized mercenaries "are in a state of almost total defeat throughout the country," said Nicaraguan Minister of Defense Humberto Ortega December 18.

The military victories won by the Sandinistas in 1986 came as a result of very heavy fighting in which 4,000 mercenaries, or *contras*, were killed. The Nicaraguans paid a high price to accomplish this: 1,019 Sandinista soldiers fell in combat defending their country's sovereignty.

Given the big defeats inflicted on the *contras*, Ortega said the logical thing for Washington to do is end its war. But, he continued, the Nicaraguans are preparing to meet further U.S. aggression.

The Sandinista leader reviewed the 1986 military accomplishments at a press conference here at the conclusion of the Sandinista army's Subtiava '86 maneuvers (see accompanying story).

He reported that the U.S.-backed mercenary forces had attempted two major offensives in the first half of 1986, and two more in November and December. In each case, the Nicaraguan army drove them back to their bases in Honduras with heavy losses.

In addition to the 4,000 mercenaries killed, another 1,500 *contras* deserted in 1986 and returned to Nicaragua under an amnesty program of the Sandinista government. This makes a total of 6,000 *contras* amnestied since the program began in late 1983.

Ortega said that if major clashes continue with the remaining *contras*, "it is only a matter of months until the mercenary forces will be completely broken up."

Because of the blows they are suffering, Washington has since July kept most of the mercenaries in camps in Honduras, Ortega explained. Nicaraguan intelligence estimates the current number of *contras* at around 6,500 men. More than 4,000 of these are outside Nicaragua, mostly in Honduras, with some in Costa Rica.

The mercenaries have attempted to provoke the Nicaraguan army into conflicts with the Honduran army throughout the border area. They have also tried similar moves along the Costa Rican border. He stressed that Nicaraguan soldiers have orders to fight only the mercenaries, and to avoid conflicts with Honduran forces.

Revolution gains in countryside

The blows being dealt the *contras* have allowed the Sandinistas to begin restoring stability to large parts of rural Nicaragua. Prior to 1986 the mercenaries were still able to mount attacks on some small towns. They were repelled each time, suffering heavy losses.

The only attack on a town in 1986 was reported in January. Since then, the *contras* have retreated to attacking remote cooperatives, civilian travelers, and power installations. These assaults continue to take a heavy toll, with 1,100 civilians killed, wounded, or kidnapped in 1986. The casualties are lower than 1985, however.

Today, in many parts of regions I and VI in the north, peasants have been able to return to lands once abandoned because of *contra* attack.

On the Atlantic Coast, many of the Miskito-Indians who took up arms against the Sandinista government are now engaged in a cease-fire and dialogue with the government. Thousands of Indians have returned from Honduras to resettle in the northern Atlantic Coast. The southern part of the Coast region along the Costa Rican border has been completely cleared of *contras*, Ortega said.

Region V is the one area where a sizeable mercenary force remains, though only by keeping to remote mountain and jungle areas. Ortega reported that the army inflicted heavy casualties on these mercenaries in that south-central area in late December.

Political work

The blows dealt the *contras* are not only the result of the stronger, more profes-

sional Nicaraguan army. Political work by the Sandinista National Liberation Front has been key in driving back the mercenaries and stabilizing areas they once threatened.

Ortega stressed that the *contras* were never able to develop a "broad, consistent social base." However, "in the first years of the U.S. mercenary war, in some parts of the country, peasants who had traditionally been isolated were not attended to by the revolution," he explained. It was from this layer that the *contras* recruited fighters and collaborators.

The Sandinistas began to turn this situation around, Ortega continued, "as the revolution reached those sectors, bringing the impact of the popular benefits of the revolution."

Reporters asked Ortega about the implications of the current crisis in the U.S. government over the secret, illegal funding of the *contras*.

"The [U.S.] administration should take a step to get out of this situation by seeking to accept the obvious failure of their mercenary plans and enter into a true coexistence with this revolution," Ortega replied. "The only rational step for the U.S. government," he said, is "to enter into a dialogue that would allow for a political negotiation of the Central American crisis."

Ortega said, however, that he thought the danger existed of "adventurist steps" or even a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua out of "desperation." But he added that a U.S. invasion would be particularly ill-timed.

"A direct Yankee intervention would al-

'We're ready to defend our sovereignty'

SOMOTILLO, Nicaragua — The tank next to us fired without warning, a stunning sheet of flame and smoke bursting from its cannon as it fired on targets on the plains below. From along the ridge to our left and right came the sounds of mortars and field guns, while batteries of heavy artillery boomed far to the rear.

This was Subtiava '86, the biggest maneuvers ever held by the Sandinista People's Army. More than 6,500 troops went through three days of combat exercises December 16-18, mobilizing to defeat a simulated U.S. invasion. The exercise was held in the northwestern province of Chinandega, near the Honduran border.

Nicaragua invited the Honduran army to send observers, but Honduras refused. The Panamanian armed forces did send a team, and the military attachés from the U.S., French, and Venezuelan embassies attended the entire exercise.

The foreign press was invited to the final day, which began with a dawn artillery bombardment, followed by a massive, coordinated assault by helicopter gunships, tanks, and infantry.

The maneuvers ended with a long parade along the main highway south of Somotillo as the thousands of soldiers passed in review before Nicaraguan Defense Minister Humberto Ortega. The parade included nearly 300 vehicles that had participated in the exercise — from T-55 heavy tanks and BM-21 rocket launching trucks to field kitchens and the spare-tire truck.

Ortega told reporters that the maneuvers were "good, satisfying all the requirements that were set forth. . . . Our people have demonstrated a high morale and greater abilities in military art and science."

Army spokespeople stressed that all the troops and equipment came from the provinces of León and Chinandega, just one of Nicaragua's seven military regions. Similar exercises, involving thousands of troops, were recently held near Managua, the capital.

All of the infantry and part of the artillery troops were reservists — workers and farmers from nearby factories, government offices, schools, and farms.

The regular army does not maintain any infantry in this region; its troops are stationed along the borders with Honduras



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Nicaraguan soldiers loading helicopter. During big defeats inflicted on *contras* in 1986, some 1,000 Sandinistas fell in combat. Four thousand mercenaries were killed.

ways be condemned to failure," he explained. "But an intervention in [the current] circumstances would be even more condemned to failure. It would not have any justification, it would not have the best conditions within the United States, and would not have the support of the world. We would be even better able to resist it."

Ortega warned, however, of U.S. government moves to increase terrorism and sabotage.

"They are trying once again to reactivate the piranhas [attack speedboats] and more specialized commando groups to push ahead with terrorism and sabotage, given [the *contras*'] defeat as a significant mili-

tary force," he said.

Ortega also pointed to the espionage mission carried out by the U.S. mercenary Sam Hall, who was captured in December at the Punta Huete military airfield near Managua.

"Hall is a mercenary who comes to pinpoint details for an operation that could be a bombing or a sabotage action to blow up the helicopters that we have there," Ortega said. "From satellites they can observe many things, but they don't know if this box contains a helicopter, or newspaper that was put there to fool them. So they have to come in on the ground, to pinpoint things to blow up."

and Costa Rica and in the mountains of central and eastern Nicaragua to fight the U.S.-backed mercenary bands that infiltrate those areas.

With the army's growing strength and continuing victories against the *contra* mercenaries, Nicaragua launched a campaign to build up the reserves in late 1985. Their goal is to strengthen the defense of the major population centers against the threat of a U.S. invasion.

The *Militant* spoke to some of the reservists as they stood in formation before the final parade. They included a welder, a bank technician, a teacher, an agronomist, and a mechanic. They were tired and grimy after the three-day exercise, but eager to talk.

All were from Subtiava, the Indian neighborhood in the city of León that gave

its name to the exercises. The mechanic, Rigoberto Ramírez, explained that Subtiava has a long history of struggle against the old Somoza dictatorship and has always answered the call to provide fighters against the U.S.-backed mercenaries. Today, he added, "all the Indians are in the reserves."

Mario López said that he is one of the eight teachers from his school that were mobilized that day. He, like the others, said he was satisfied with the exercise because it showed that "we are sufficiently prepared to defend our sovereignty."

While hundreds of other reservists chanted, "They shall not pass" and "Subtiava is here," López urged U.S. working people "to organize more demonstrations, each one bigger and stronger," to stop the war against Nicaragua. — H.M.

Denmark high school students raise money for Nicaragua

BY ÅGE SKOVRIND

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — High school students throughout Denmark recently participated in a successful solidarity action in support of Nicaragua. By contributing one day's work or by other means, the students collected at least 5.1 million kroner (US \$672,000).

Every year, students organize an "Operation Daywork," which is traditionally recognized officially by school authorities. Students are permitted to be absent from school on that day. In 1985 the equivalent of \$725,000 was collected for school projects in Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

The 1986 action, held November 6, involved fewer students than the year before, but was held in more schools. In many schools the action was prepared by public meetings, parties, and film showings.

The action was not only financially successful; it was carried out in spite of an enormous propaganda campaign in the capitalist press against the decision by the two main students organizations to devote it to support for Nicaragua.

The minister of education, Bertel Hår-

der, officially denounced the Daywork action and recommended that all local school authorities not tolerate students staying away from school.

At the same time, the youth organization of the Conservative Party got a lot of press coverage after a delegation it sent to Nicaragua returned with stories about alleged human rights abuses, indoctrination in textbooks, etc.

Generally this campaign failed. In no regions did education officials take notice of the minister's recommendation. Moreover, a member of the education minister's own party, its spokesperson on human rights, remained on the supervisory committee sponsoring Operation Daywork.

The response to the action is just one sign of the wide popular support in Denmark for Nicaragua, especially from the trade unions. This sharply contrasts with the attitude of the Danish government, which last year stopped all aid to Nicaragua, and now only gives loans.

The \$675,000 will be used for school projects in Nicaragua in collaboration with the Danish Church Aid.

Subscription renewal drive kicked off

BY MALIK MIAH

Supporters of the *Militant* in Austin, Minnesota, have not waited for the official January 10 kickoff date of the subscription renewal campaign to start talking to readers of the socialist weekly and its sister Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. Distributors of the publications have already sat down with some 20 new readers of the *Militant* to discuss extending their subscriptions. Not only have they received positive comments about the papers, but 10 people with expiring subscriptions renewed.

According to one supporter, a typical response was: "Of course, I want to renew."

Working people in Austin have been at the center of a major labor battle against the meat-packing bosses over the last two years. But, explains this supporter, there is interest in much of the *Militant*'s weekly coverage. "It's not just the *Militant*'s coverage of struggles in meat-packing. Readers especially like that. But it's the coverage of Nicaragua, South Africa — everything."

Last fall the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* completed a highly successful subscription campaign, winning 11,000 new readers to the publications. These subscriptions run for three months for the *Militant* (12 issues) and five months for *PM* (five issues).

The primary aim of the renewal campaign is to go back and talk to as many new readers — workers, students, farmers — as possible before their subscriptions expire.

The goal is to get as many as possible to extend their subscriptions.

The *Militant* is offering a special incentive to renew. Readers who extend their subscriptions by six months or longer will receive a free copy of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist theory and politics. *PM* subscribers who extend their subscriptions have a choice of eight weeks of the *Militant* or a copy of the Pathfinder Press pamphlet *Sudáfrica: la revolución en camino*, by Jack Barnes.

Most areas are just beginning to map out plans for the renewal effort, which ends February 28. Boston, for example, has es-

tablished a separate "renewal committee" to organize its campaign.

Jerry Freiworth, in Washington, D.C., reports that "every Saturday and once or twice during the week phone calling to subscribers will occur." He noted that an aspect of the calling will be to inform readers of antiwar activities, especially plans for the April antiwar actions and other events in the city.

Another reason for the organized calling, Freiworth added, is "to follow up on friends of the *Militant* who don't have subscriptions." Supporters on the job, he said, will contact new subscribers and cowork-

ers who haven't yet subscribed.

Renewals received by the business office also continue to pour in. One reader wrote on the renewal form informing her she had one issue of the *Militant* left: "Don't worry about my *Militant* sub. I am attending forums regularly at the Denver branch of the Socialist Workers Party and I pick up a copy there. I will be joining the party soon. Thanks!"

Another reader in Seattle wrote, "The sub comes on Friday, and I can't wait that long to read it!"

A Maryland subscriber simply wrote, "Keep up the good work y'all!"

'Militant' indexing needs volunteers

BY DOUG JENNESS

Several readers have inquired recently whether or not the *Militant* is indexed and, if not, whether it can be.

They correctly point out that the usefulness of a publication like the *Militant* is considerably increased if it's possible to easily refer to back issues to check something.

Readers and supporters preparing speeches or articles find this helpful. But it's also handy for those simply wanting to find out how the *Militant* handled a particular event 10, 20, or 50 years ago.

Public and university libraries, as well as those of political organizations, are also more likely to purchase bound volumes or microfilms for their reference sections if an

index is included.

Over the years dozens of volunteers have helped index the paper, but it's far from complete, and most of what has been done is not publicly available.

Where we stand now is that printed indexes are available for the years 1971-76 and can be purchased from our business office. The cost for each year is \$5.

For the majority of years since 1928, when the *Militant* started publication, there's some form of rough index available for staff use. A lot of editorial work is required, however, to get these into shape for publication. And for nearly 14 years there's no index at all.

Our goal is to index every year of the *Militant* and make it available to our current and future readers.

This is a big job, and we recognize that it will take some time. So we've set some priorities.

First is to keep up, that is, publish indexes with each new bound volume as it appears.

Our goal is to put out an index with the July-December 1986 bound volume, which we'll have available in a few months. We've checked with the binder, and it looks as if we'll be able to include the index as part of the bound volume. In addition, we'll have separate copies of the index available for those who want them.

Second, we plan to work backward and index the first six months of 1986 and all of 1985, which have not yet been completed. We're doing this with volunteer help on a computer in order to speed up getting them published.

Third, we aim to index all the remaining years that have not been done or are incomplete. For this, we need the help of more volunteers. We appeal to readers who have some time on their hands and would like to help to write us. Although it is not necessary to have a computer or access to one, if you do, include that information too.

As noted earlier, the *Militant* is available in bound volumes. Our business office has a limited number of copies of the volumes since 1980 in stock. Each volume includes issues for six months, and the cost per volume is \$40. Volumes for 1928-37 (including *New Militant* and *Socialist Appeal*, as the *Militant* was called for a short time in the 1930s) are available from Greenwood Reprint Corp., 88 Post Road West, (P.O. Box 5007), Westport, Conn., 06881.

Back volumes of the *Militant* are available on microfilm. Write to: University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich., 48106 for the years 1972-86. For prior to 1972, write to: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State St., Madison, Wis. 53706.



During last fall's subscription drive, *Militant* and *PM* supporters set up sales tables, such as this one at Northern Illinois University. They are now talking to new readers about renewing their subscriptions.

Ohio meat-packers protest layoffs

BY BILL KALMAN

MASSILLON, Ohio — Meat-packers at the Superior Brand Meats plant and their supporters rallied here December 23 protesting company layoffs.

Neil Genshaft, the company's owner, had given members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union Local 17A slightly more than a day's

notice before implementing a pre-Christmas layoff of 700 workers.

Genshaft owns a chain of packinghouses that includes three Ohio plants. UFCW Local 17A organizes both the plant here and the one in nearby Canton. Genshaft is trying to prevent the union from organizing his Salem, Ohio, plant.

Meat-packers from Massillon and Canton participated in the rally. Signs reading "We were butchered by pink slips" expressed the anger of the workers.

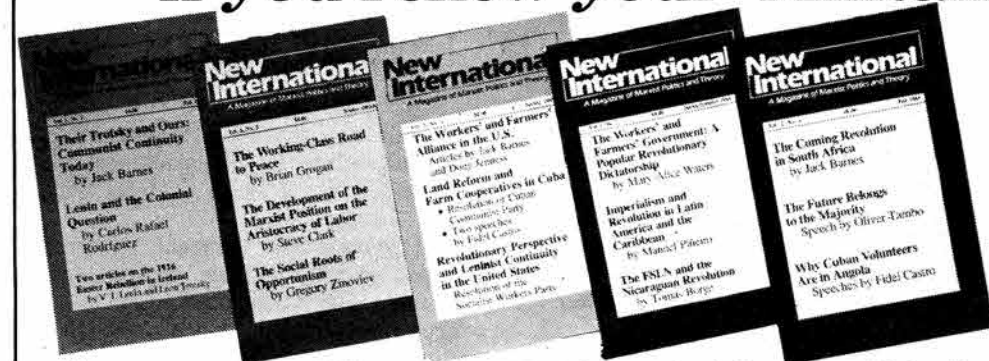
Eric Neff, a laid-off worker with 10 years in the pork-cut department, told the *Militant* that the local had been forced to give up \$1.76 an hour in 1983 along with cuts in benefits. The company then implemented a speed-up that resulted in increased injuries. Workers on one line said that they get through the day by taking aspirin and Coca-Cola to fight the pain that comes from chronic tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome.

Work that used to be done at the unionized plants has been moved to the Salem facility. Management then tries to get the workers at the two unionized plants to compete with one another by threatening to lay off those who don't cooperate. If a worker wants to transfer to the other plant to avoid a layoff, they have to give up all seniority rights and start with a drastic cut in pay because of the two-tier pay scale.

Rally speakers addressed the importance of union solidarity in meeting the employers' attacks. UFCW International Representative Jerry Gordon said the Reagan administration is using the government's resources for war in Central America instead of creating jobs and funding social service programs.

Other speakers included union officials from the Ford plant in Canton and from the Hoover appliance plant. At both factories workers are facing the prospect of plant closings.

Special offer for 'New International' if you renew your 'Militant' subscription



If you renew your *Militant* subscription today, you'll receive free an issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, published in New York.

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The following is a partial listing of the contents of the issues:

- Vol. 1, No. 1 — "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today" by Jack Barnes. "Lenin and the Colonial Question" by Carlos Rafael Rodríguez.
- Vol. 1, No. 2 — "The Working-Class Road to Peace" by Brian Grogan. "The Development of the Marxist

Position on the Aristocracy of Labor" by Steve Clark.

- Vol. 1, No. 3 — "The Workers' and Farmers' Government: A Popular Revolutionary Dictatorship" by Mary-Alice Waters. "The FSLN and the Nicaraguan Revolution" by Tomás Borge.

- Vol. 2, No. 1 — "The Workers' and Farmers' Alliance in the U.S.," articles by Jack Barnes and Doug Jenness. "Land Reform and Cooperatives in Cuba."

- Vol. 2, No. 2 — "The Coming Revolution in South Africa" by Jack Barnes. "The Future Belongs to the Majority," Speech by Oliver Tambo. "Cuba's Internationalist Volunteers in Angola," Speech by Fidel Castro.

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Rojas to speak in five U.S. cities on Caribbean, Central America

BY MALIK MIAH

Don Rojas, a Caribbean-born revolutionary journalist, is conducting a five-city speaking tour of the United States. Rojas represents the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement of Grenada on the 10-party coordinating committee of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America.

Rojas will be speaking on "The Freedom Struggle in the Caribbean and Central America Today." (For more on Rojas and the goals of his tour, see interview on front page.)

Rojas will be speaking in Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York.

Rojas will be in Boston January 9-12. On the evening of January 9 he will speak at the 75th anniversary celebration of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa. The next day he will appear at a meeting organized by the Committee in Solidarity with Haiti to be held in Roxbury, the city's main Black community.

On January 11 a meeting will be held at Roxbury Community College. Sponsors include the Central America Solidarity Association (CASA), NICA (New Institute of Central America), Grenada Solidarity Committee, the Peace and Solidarity Alliance, and All People's Congress.

The Community Church has also invited

Rojas to speak at its regular Sunday morning meeting.

On January 12 Rojas has two engagements at Northeastern University: a Caribbean studies class of 200 students, and a noon meeting sponsored by three campus organizations.

The following weekend, January 16-17, Rojas will be in the San Francisco Bay Area. He will be the featured speaker at a public meeting on January 17, 7 p.m., at the Third Baptist Church in San Francisco. The U.S.-Grenada Friendship Society is holding a reception for Rojas the previous evening.

The January 17 meeting has broad endorsement including Casa Puerto Rico; Bay Area Free South Africa Movement; *Black Scholar* magazine; Yvonne Golden and Barbara Lee, U.S.-Grenada Friendship Society; Geraldine Johnson, president, Northern California Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Nicaragua Information Center; San Francisco Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES); Bay Area Peace Council; Socialist Workers Party; Communist Party of California; Line of March; and Socialist Action.

On January 19 Rojas will be speaking in Chicago at a meeting sponsored by the National Black United Front.

Rojas will be in Washington, D.C., dur-

ing the third week of January. A local tour committee chaired by Carlotta Scott, an aide to California Congressman Ron Dellums, is organizing the tour.

Supporters of the D.C. tour include national leaders of CISPES and the Nicaragua Network, as well as representatives of the National Alliance of Third World Journalists, U.S.-Grenada Friendship Society, and the Nuclear Freeze Campaign.

Rojas will speak at an ANC anniversary meeting in New York on January 8. A public meeting in New York is scheduled for January 24.

More information on the time, place, and sponsors of the Washington, D.C., and New York meetings will be in next week's issue.



Militant/Ernest Harsch
Don Rojas, member of coordinating body of Anti-Imperialist Organizations of Caribbean and Central America, will speak in New York, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Boston.

Former aide to Maurice Bishop gets big welcome in Brooklyn

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

NEW YORK — In what Samori Marksman of the African and Caribbean Resource Center called a "welcome home meeting," more than 100 people gathered at Prospect Heights High School in Brooklyn December 30 to hear Don Rojas. Rojas was press secretary to Grenada's Prime Minister Maurice Bishop at the time of the October 1983 overthrow of the People's Revolutionary Government. Before the 1979 Grenada revolution Rojas had worked and lived in Brooklyn.

Rojas was warmly received by the mostly Black and Caribbean-born audience.

Speaking on "The Killing of Maurice Bishop and the Grenada Revolution," Rojas presented his assessment of the recent conviction of Grenada's former deputy prime minister Bernard Coard and his supporters for their murder of Bishop and other revolutionaries.

N.Y. meeting will hear Rep. Dymally

BY LARRY SEIGLE

NEW YORK — Mervyn Dymally, member of the U.S. House of Representatives and newly elected chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, will speak at a meeting in New York to mark the publication of his book, *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*. The book is an in-depth interview with Cuban President Fidel Castro. It was published by Pathfinder Press, which is sponsoring the meeting.

The event will be Friday, January 23 at 7:30 p.m. at the Martin Luther King Labor Center of Local 1199-Hospital and Health Care Employees Union, 310 West 43rd Street, between 8th and 9th avenues in New York City.

Congressman Dymally, with Dr. Jeffrey Elliot, professor of political science at North Carolina Central University, conducted the interview with the Cuban leader in Havana.

Among the other speakers joining Dymally at the meeting will be Don Rojas, press secretary to assassinated Grenadan Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

The chairperson for the evening will be Sandra Levinson, executive director of the Center for Cuban Studies.

For further information call (212) 226-8445.

Blasting Grenada's puppet regime, Rojas said, "No U.S.-installed government has the moral or political legitimacy to try and render judgement on Coard."

Coard and his gang, Rojas explained, opened the door to the U.S. invasion and occupation of Grenada when they arrested and then murdered Bishop. The revolution, he said, was already dead before the U.S. Marines arrived October 25.

The net result of three years of a U.S.-installed regime, Rojas continued, was that the Grenadian people are "poorer — materially and spiritually." The social programs of the revolutionary government — from education to land reform — have been dismantled, he told the audience. Unemployment is once again high, and drug abuse and prostitution are spreading.

In the aftermath of the overthrow of the revolution, Grenada's revolutionaries formed the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM). Despite government harassment of the party and its members, Rojas explained, the MBPM continues to gain influence in Grenada.

"The most important regional outcome from the tragedy of Grenada," Rojas said, was the formation of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America.

Formed in June 1984, the Anti-Imperialist Organizations represents the unity of all fighters from the Spanish-, English-, French-, and Dutch-speaking countries of the region — thus "cutting across linguistic and cultural divisions."

"The Anti-Imperialist Organizations," Rojas said, "shows that it is possible to turn a setback into an advance."

"In the final analysis," he said in appealing to the audience for solidarity with the freedom struggle not only in Grenada but throughout the region, "it is you, the people in this country, who are the guardians of our region's sovereignty. You have an historic and significant role to play."

After receiving a standing ovation, Rojas answered a number of questions about Grenada today, Coard, and the importance of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations.

Prof. A.W. Singham of Brooklyn College, a scheduled speaker, also saluted Rojas's speech as the meeting closed.

The forum was sponsored by The African and Caribbean Resource Center and the Grenada Foundation.

Author honored in Newark and N.Y. for Castro book

BY ROBERT DEES

NEWARK, N.J. — The Newark Municipal Council passed a resolution December 18 commending Dr. Jeffrey Elliot and Congressman Mervyn Dymally for their new book, based on a 34-hour interview with Cuban President Fidel Castro, *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*. The book was published by Pathfinder Press in 1986.

The resolution was presented by James Brown, principal librarian for Black studies at the Newark Public Library, to Elliot at an open house held at the Pathfinder Bookstore.

Elliot gave an entertaining and informative account of the marathon interview with the Cuban leader.

"He genuinely cares about his people. It's not rhetoric. And on the streets, you can see the enormous affection and love and esteem for him by the people," Elliot noted.

In a lively question-and-answer period, Elliot added that the Cuban leader "is a man of enormous principle. He is not a wealthy man by any means. He could have sold out, he could have softened his criticism, he could have not supported other revolutions," Elliot said. "But he didn't."

"Castro is very interested in a dialogue between Cuba and the United States," Elliot added. "He genuinely would like improved relations with the U.S."

Elliot mentioned that some people had criticized him for not "going for the jugular" in the interview. "But I wanted to present a fair, objective view and let the reader make up his own mind."

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NEW YORK CITY — More than 70 people attended an open house and recep-

tion for Dr. Jeffrey Elliot at the Pathfinder Bookstore here in late December. Fourteen copies of the book were sold at the gathering.

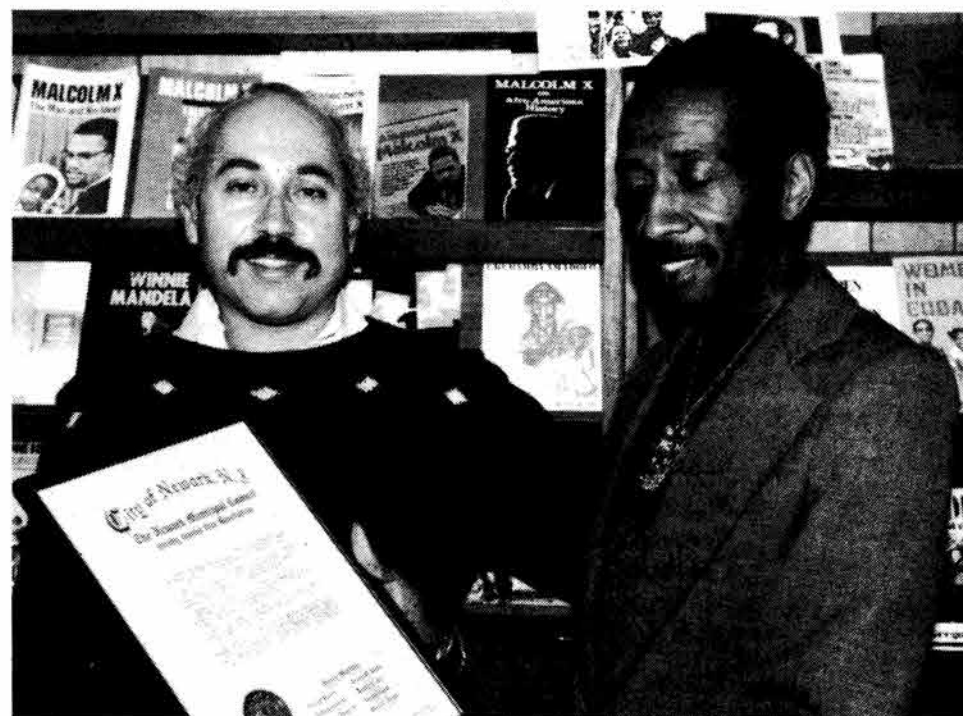
The event capped a highly successful second full year for Pathfinder Books in New York.

The bookstore, formerly known as Socialist Books, is nearing the six-figure mark in yearly sales, making it one of the largest radical bookstores in the country. The name of the store was changed last fall to emphasize its connection with Pathfinder Press, which has published speeches and writings by Fidel Castro, Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X, the Sandinista leaders of the Nicaraguan revolution, and others.

The work of dozens of friends and supporters of the store has contributed greatly to its success. Nearly a quarter of all sales last year took place outside the store — off tables set up in working-class neighborhoods, at demonstrations and political meetings, and to coworkers on the job.

Highlights of the year included sales of more than \$5,000 in literature at the big demonstration against apartheid here June 14, another \$5,000 in sales during the fall drive to obtain new subscribers to the *Militant*, and \$4,000 sold off tables during the campaign to get sufficient signatures to obtain ballot status for the New York candidates of the Socialist Workers Party.

Plans for the year ahead include continued expansion of the titles stocked, particularly in French and Spanish, as well as maintaining the bookstore's reputation of offering the city's largest selection of books and pamphlets on the struggle for freedom in South Africa and Central America.



Militant/Mike Brown
James Brown (right), Black Studies librarian for Newark Public Library, presents Jeffrey Elliot with copy of Municipal Council resolution commending Elliot and Rep. Mervyn Dymally for book *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, their interview with Fidel Castro.

Unity in Central American and Caribbean

Caribbean journalist Don Rojas discusses goals of new anti-imperialist

Continued from front page

and oppression of our region by Wall Street and Washington, and in particular to the U.S. government's aggressive and interventionist foreign and military policies.

This organization came into being in June 1984 at the conclusion of the first Consultative Meeting of Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, which was held in Havana.

This historic meeting was a product of the discussion and debate among progressive organizations in the region in the aftermath of the collapse of the Grenada revolution in October 1983. This debate centered not only around the contributing factors to the collapse of that revolution, but also around the stepped-up aggression by U.S. imperialism in the region — its invasion and occupation of Grenada, its murderous mercenary war against Nicaragua, its support to rightist regimes from El Salvador, to Haiti, to Jamaica.

If you have the time, I think it might be useful to quote a few paragraphs from the communiqué of the founding conference.

Founding communiqué

Clark: Go right ahead.

Rojas: The communiqué described our goals as follows:

"Central America and the Caribbean have been linked since before the discovery of the New World. With the conquest, however, they were chained to different metropolises" — that is, to different colonial powers. It continues:

"Thus, we have long been separated by colonialism, and this separation was reinforced by U.S. imperialism in the last few decades; by the permanent plundering of each people in the region; and by the lack of communication, the political repression and the disinformation imposed throughout the Caribbean and Central America, which only the peoples' struggle has managed to overcome, little by little — the struggle in which we recognize one another and affirm our nationalities, in the defense of our wealth and in the search for a political regime that guarantees our countries' freedom and socioeconomic development.

"Above all, we recognize that we are brothers because we are confronting the same enemy, which oppresses and exploits us.

"Now, faced with U.S. imperialism's aggressive policy, the peoples of the Caribbean and Central America need close unity, diverse means of rapid communication, mutual support, encouragement, and shared criticism in order to survive, struggle, and win.

"We need ongoing exchanges in order to effectively coordinate our own resistance — coordination based on all that unites us and which enables us, as brothers and comrades, to tackle the differences and matters that separate us."

Our organization is thus an attempt to overcome the imperialist-imposed isolation of the peoples of the Caribbean islands from those of Central America, as well as the linguistic and cultural divisions within the Caribbean itself.

Imperialist-perpetuated divisions

Clark: Could you say a little bit more about some of those divisions and their roots?

Rojas: When the colonialists conquered the "New World," they massacred much of the indigenous population and mercilessly oppressed those who survived. They brought in Black slaves from Africa to work their plantations, and also forcibly brought many East Indians to toil for low wages and in horrible conditions. Our nations have been forged out of the descendants of these peoples, as well as immigrants from the colonizing countries themselves.

Since different hunks of our region were grabbed by different colonial powers, we have been divided along language lines — some speaking Spanish, others English, French, or Dutch.

In and of themselves, many of these historical factors have resulted in a rich cultural diversity that can contribute to development and cooperation in our region. But the imperialist powers have used them instead to keep us weak, divided, dependent, and poor.

dent, and poor.

This dependency and oppression continues right down to today, whether or not our nations have achieved formal political independence. Puerto Rico is still under direct U.S. colonial rule, as are the Virgin Islands. France still denies independence to Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Guyane. The Dutch still rule Curaçao and several other islands.

Britain, too, still has several colonies in the Caribbean, although many islands — including Grenada — gained constitutional independence from London in the 1960s and 1970s. But none achieved independence from imperialist domination.

Even those countries in our region that have been formally independent for more than 150 years — most of Central America, and Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean — remain under the heel of imperialist exploiters.

So, there are many artificial barriers — apart from natural and geographic barriers, which we can't do much about! — that keep our peoples apart in the Caribbean and Central America.

Clark: Let's come back to the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America for a moment. Could you tell us a little more about how it is organized and how it functions?

Rojas: The organization has a 10-party coordinating committee, broadly representing the geographical and political admixture of Caribbean and Central American organizations that make it up.

Just listing the current members of this body says a lot about the breadth of our alliance. In addition to my party, the MBPM of Grenada, the coordinating committee includes the Communist Party of Guadeloupe, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador, the February 18th Movement of Trinidad and Tobago, the People's Progressive Party of Guyana, the Progressive Labour Party of St. Lucia, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, the Left Front of the Dominican Republic,

the Socialist People's Party of Curaçao, and the Workers Party of Jamaica.

Clark: Where is the headquarters of the organization?

Rojas: The secretariat at this time is located in Georgetown, Guyana. The People's Progressive Party of Guyana takes responsibility for that, and one of its leaders, Clement Rohee, is coordinating secretary.

The Left Front of the Dominican Republic was elected to the chairmanship of the organization. That function is currently carried out by Rafael (Fafa) Taveras, a leader of the Socialist Bloc, one of the organizations in the Left Front.

The coordinating committee has created a number of action subcommittees. One of these is the propaganda and publicity subcommittee, based in Havana, in which our party plays an active role.

Maurice Bishop's political contribution

Clark: The Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America itself was founded after the October 1983 defeat. In what ways did the Grenada revolution and Maurice Bishop help pave the way for this organization?

Rojas: Grenada was the first thoroughgoing anti-imperialist revolution in an English-speaking country in the Caribbean — in fact, the first anywhere in the English-speaking world. It was also the first such revolution in a Caribbean country with a largely Black population.

Those two features made it unique in the Americas, and, of course, also gave it a special significance to the struggles of Blacks and other working people here in the United States.

Our revolution was looked to in a special way by fighters in the English-, French-, and Dutch-speaking islands. Most of them also have populations predominantly African, or African and East Indian, in origin. The ties of friendship and solidarity that Grenada forged with revolutionary Cuba and Nicaragua built new bridges between all three revolutions and these other political currents throughout the region.

The formation of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America is among the most encouraging conquests of the Grenada revolution. The counterrevolutionary coup and subsequent U.S. invasion of October 1983 marked a historic setback for our region. But the accomplishments and example of the Grenada revolution were strong enough to help make possible this historic advance.

I remember on many occasions when Maurice Bishop spoke to the Grenadian people, he would characterize our revolution as belonging to all the peoples of the Caribbean and of Latin America.

The Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America gives material form to the internationalist vision and course of Maurice Bishop.

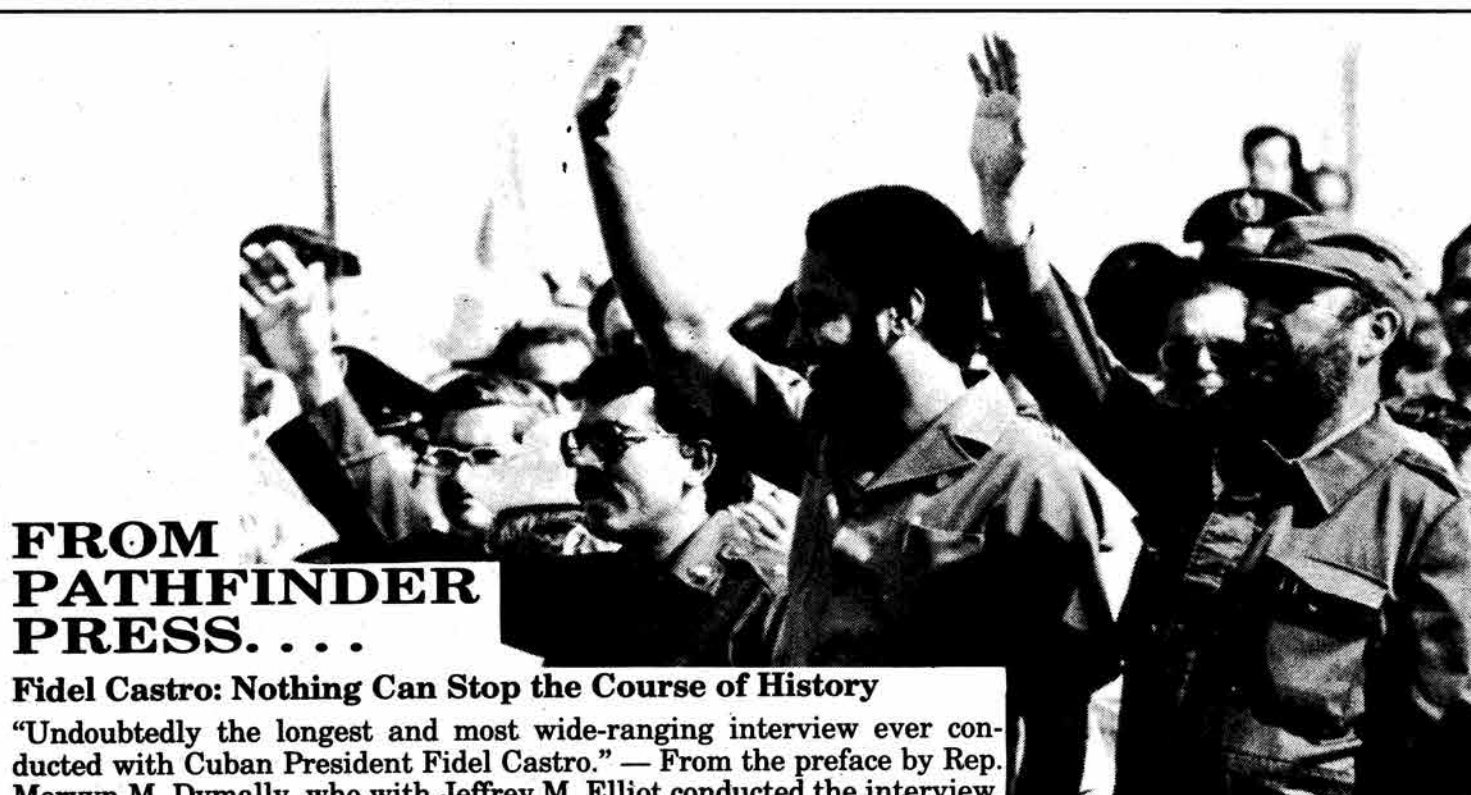
Of course, we can't take credit for being the only source of inspiration for this organization. Clearly the example set by the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions and their leaders has also been decisive.

We can look even further back in history to the efforts of José Martí to forge a continental consciousness throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and to the legacy of Simón Bolívar. In the English-speaking Caribbean, we can look to the efforts of T.A. Marryshow and of Tubal Uriah Butler. The roots go way back.

But it took the victory of the Cuban, Grenada, and Nicaraguan revolutions — what Fidel Castro called the three giants of the Caribbean, rising up on the very doorstep of imperialism — to give this vision a concrete form.

Cuba's internationalism

Clark: What has been the major contribution of the Cuban government and Communist Party to the emergence of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America?



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The leaders of Nicaragua's Sandinista revolution explain what the Nicaraguan workers and peasants have set out to accomplish since their 1979 victory over the U.S.-backed Somoza tyranny. 412 pages, \$8.95.

Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12 or by mail from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.

a struggle st organization

Rojas: Cuba's internationalist foreign policy, in word and deed, is clearly its most important contribution.

Cuba's response to both the Nicaraguan and Grenada revolutions was exemplary — in the tradition of its solidarity with struggling peoples from Vietnam to Angola.

Both the Grenada and Nicaraguan revolutions triumphed on their own accord — not because of the long arm of Havana, as Washington tries to portray it. These revolutions triumphed because of the struggles by the Nicaraguan and Grenadian peoples against the hated tyrannies of Eric Gairy and Anastasio Somoza.

But once we had triumphed — I am speaking of Grenada, but the same holds true for Nicaragua — the Cuban government and party, and their leader Fidel, immediately responded with enthusiasm to our requests, to Maurice Bishop's requests in particular, to develop fraternal relations of cooperation and solidarity.

The Cubans did not come knocking on our door. They responded to our requests for warm relations, both at the state and party level. Those relations developed over four and a half years on the basis of mutual respect and noninterference in the sovereign affairs of all involved.

The Cuban government was generous in its material contribution to our revolution, as well. The single most outstanding example was its help in building an international airport. Cuba also sent doctors to help staff our hospitals and clinics.

The particularly warm political relationship between the Cuban and Grenada revolutions was reflected in the personal closeness between comrades Fidel and Maurice. The majority of the Grenadian people felt great respect, admiration, and affection toward the Cuban internationalist volunteers who lived and worked among us as construction workers and medical personnel.

I can't speak for the Sandinistas, but they have made no secret of their gratitude for the selfless internationalist solidarity and material assistance that the Cubans have extended to them.

Clark: Did the Cuban leadership take any organizational initiatives with regard to the formation of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America?

Rojas: Cuba supported an initiative that had already been launched.

A few months before the June 1984 meeting in Havana, the People's Progressive Party hosted a conference in Georgetown, Guyana. This was a meeting of workers' and communist parties largely from the English-speaking Caribbean, but including the Cuban CP and a few groups from the French- and Dutch-speaking islands.

The Cubans hosted a follow-up meeting a few months later, and it was able to involve a much broader range of organizations not only from the Caribbean, but Central America as well.

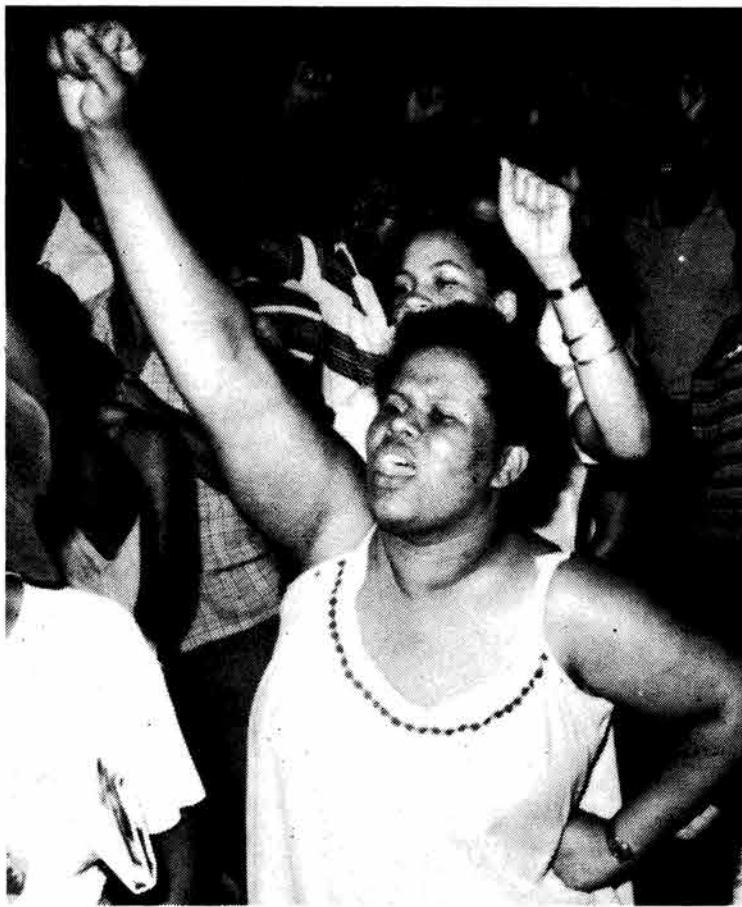
It is a tribute to the stature and moral authority of the Cuban revolution and its leadership that a meeting of such a broad character could be convened in Havana. It involved parties some of whose leaders were not even on speaking terms beforehand.

Yet, in Havana they were seated around the same table to discuss — in an open, frank, and what turned out to be a very fraternal way — problems that were common to our fight against imperialist domination and aggression.

The Sandinistas have subsequently hosted two further meetings in Managua — one in February 1986, and another in November coinciding with the FSLN's [Sandinista National Liberation Front's] 25th anniversary celebration.

Grenada and Nicaragua

Clark: The ties of solidarity between the Grenada and Sandinista revolutions were



Grenada Government Information Service

"Peoples of Central America and Caribbean are brothers confronting the same enemy — U.S. imperialism," explains Don Rojas. Left, Grenadians at March 1983 rally defend their revolution against U.S. government threats. Right, at April 1986 rally in Nicaragua, high school students protest U.S. government bombing of Libya.



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

very strong right from the outset in 1979. Could you tell us a little about this?

Rojas: These ties were being forged even before the victory over Somoza on July 19, 1979. The Grenada revolution had triumphed a few months earlier, on March 13.

Following our victory in Grenada, we expressed our solidarity with the Sandinistas by raising funds from public contributions by patriotic and revolutionary Grenadians. The amount was modest. But it nonetheless came from the hearts of the Grenadian people. And it was sent to the *compañeros* in Nicaragua to assist them in their final victory.

Afterwards, we developed the closest possible links — government to government, party to party, and people to people.

At the first anniversary of our revolution in March 1980, Daniel Ortega was one of our guests of honor. He presented Maurice Bishop with a rifle that had been used in the struggle against Somoza, as a symbol of the fraternal solidarity of the Nicaraguan people.

Daniel Ortega's visit was reciprocated in July 1980, the first anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, when Maurice Bishop spoke at the giant celebration in Managua.

We in Grenada were also able to contribute in a modest way to the Nicaraguan revolution by sending a couple of teachers to participate in the literacy campaign that the Sandinista-led government launched in 1980.

On the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, there are Black, English-speaking communities. So, Grenadians who had been involved in our own literacy campaign were able to help out. They lived among the people of Bluefields, the largest of these communities.

Before 1979 very few people anywhere in the Caribbean even knew of the existence in Nicaragua of a population of African origin, with Caribbean roots, and largely bilingual, speaking both English and Spanish. It took the triumph of the Grenada and Nicaraguan revolutions to make this known to the peoples of the Caribbean.

For the fifth anniversary of the Grenada revolution in March 1984, we had been planning to bring a cultural group from Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast to celebrate our revolution with us. The Grenadian people would have learned first hand that the culture of these Nicaraguans is almost identical to ours — their music, dance, and even their cooking!

Unfortunately, the events of October 1983 denied us that opportunity.

But one of the 1987 projects of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America is a regional tour by an Atlantic Coast cultural group to a number of countries in the Caribbean. So, this is one example of the continuation of

initiatives that were launched during the Grenada revolution.

Clark: Let me ask your evaluation of the U.S. government's highly touted Caribbean Basin Initiative, which it launched in 1982.

Rojas: All right, but before turning to that, I'd like to make a final comment about the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America.

One of the most important purposes of my speaking tour here in the United States is to make this political development known to a broader section of the progressive U.S. public.

This organization is the first attempt in the history of our region to forge such a broad alliance of anti-imperialist forces. It is an unprecedented effort, and one with promising potential to help bridge the historical divisions amongst the peoples of Central America and of the Caribbean.

Halt U.S. military intervention!

For this reason, speaking on behalf of our organization, I will be asking the pro-

gressive U.S. public — those who are involved in the fight for peace, those who are involved in anti-intervention activity with Central America and the Caribbean — to support our organization and help us get out the word about our goals.

This includes encouraging the people of the United States to continue to raise your voices against Washington's plans to deepen its military intervention against the Nicaraguan people.

In doing so, you will be echoing the cries of the people of Central America and the Caribbean, who want nothing more than to live in peace and dignity, who simply want bread and justice.

Our countries and our peoples do not constitute a threat to the welfare of the peoples of the United States. We want friendly relations, cooperation, and mutual respect with the U.S. people.

Through your voices, and through your actions, bring pressure to bear on the Reagan administration and Congress to put a halt once and for all to U.S. military threats and aggression against the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean.

'Curse of colonialism was to divide region'

The following is an excerpt from a speech by Grenada's Prime Minister Maurice Bishop addressed to an overflow audience of 2,500 people at Hunter College in New York City on June 5, 1983. It is reprinted from the Pathfinder book, *Maurice Bishop Speaks*, by permission of the publisher.

One of the greatest curses of colonialism was that they divided the [Caribbean] region according to different metropolitan centers. They taught us different languages. And then they made a great play of the fact that you are Dutch-speaking, you are Spanish-speaking, you are French-speaking, you are English-speaking, and, more recently, you are American-speaking.

And based on this linguistic nonsense, they taught us to hate each other. When we were growing up in school, they used to make us believe that the sun sets only in England. We used to be made to go down to Queen's Park on the queen's birthday and stand up in the hot sun all day. And at the end of the day, we're hot and sweaty and tired, and they give us a bun. And I remember the St. John's Ambulance Brigade stop on the corner in case you faint, they catch you quick.

I know the first time I realized just how deep this foolishness went and the extent to which they were miseducating us and trying to make us into little Black Englishmen is when I arrived in England to study law in 1963. One of my first and greatest experiences — shocking experience, traumatic — was when I went somewhere one day. The national anthem started to play — poor little Black me, I jump up fast. When I look around, me only one standing up. Every Englishman sitting down.

You know like old [calypso singer Mighty] Sparrow. Sparrow is such a great Grenadian, so articulate. Sparrow points out in one of his best songs that the way they were educating us, they were really educating us to make us into fools.

They tell us if you're speaking Dutch, you're the best. If it's English, you're the best, French is the best, Spanish is the best, American is the best. And all of us hating each other.

When in fact we are one people from one Caribbean with one struggle and one destiny. [Applause]

We see it therefore as one of our historic duties and responsibilities to pull down these artificial barriers of colonialism and to develop that oneness and that unity that we nearly lost.

Debate: Should Hasenfus have been pardoned?

"Notes from Nicaragua" is a column prepared by Cindy Jaquith, Harvey McArthur, and Ruth Nebbia of the *Militant's* bureau in Managua.

The Nicaraguan government's pardon of CIA mercenary Eugene Hasenfus initially drew sharp opposition from many Nicaraguan

NOTES FROM NICARAGUA

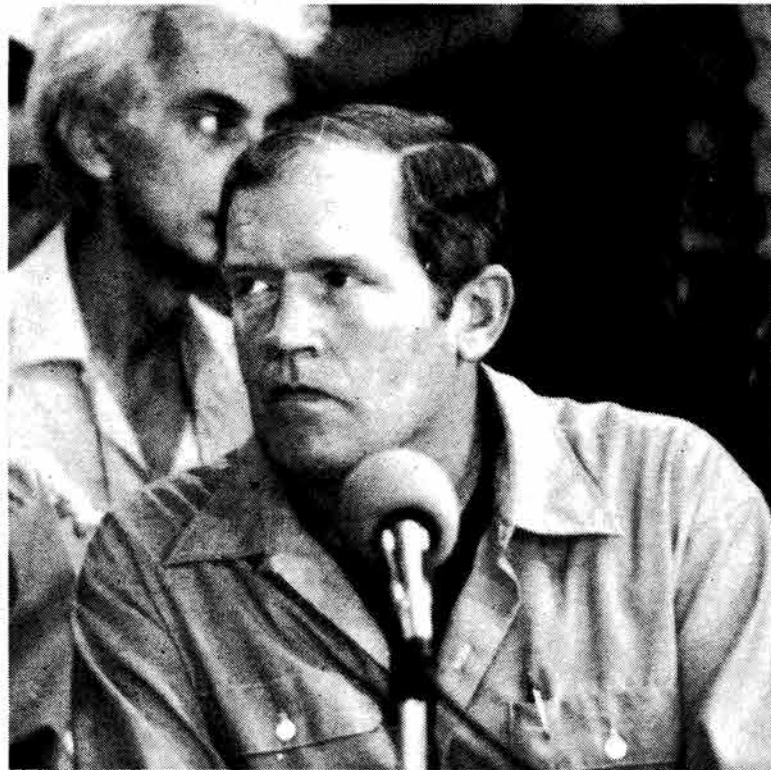
working people. There was such a strong gut reaction against the December 17 pardon that *Barricada*, the daily newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, opened up its editorial page to the debate for three days running.

Barricada featured the opinions of workers, young soldiers, and mothers of youth killed by the U.S.-backed mercenaries.

Roughly half of those quoted opposed the pardon. Some said they feared other mercenaries would see it as a green light to enter Nicaragua for purposes similar to Hasenfus'. Some were concerned that the pardon somehow said Hasenfus was no longer a criminal. Others simply demanded that he serve out his sentence.

In a December 19 editorial accompanying the debate, *Barricada* explained the pardon as a political move designed to place the Reagan administration more on the defensive and to gain a wider hearing from the American people.

"It's necessary to clarify that the pardon does not erase the crime committed by Hasenfus. It doesn't make him any less of a merce-



CIA mercenary Hasenfus during Managua trial

nary," the paper said.

Nor is it a move from weakness, the editorial went on. Hasenfus has been sent back as a "defeated symbol" of the U.S. war policy against Nicaragua. "That is, we are putting something that has boomeranged on the White House in the hands of the friends of the revolution in the United States."

"Every day that passes," the paper continued, "more people in the United States are joining the voices demanding an end to the war of aggression. They are forming a line of solidarity and pressure on the Reagan administration and on the U.S. Congress itself." Pardoning Hasenfus gives these

opponents of the war another political weapon, *Barricada* concluded.

At a "Face the People" meeting in Managua in late 1986, a slaughterhouse worker complained to Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega that she and other workers had been fired from their jobs recently. She said the manager of the state-run plant fired them because they disagreed with new pay rates.

"In this case, it looks like the manager acted arbitrarily," replied Ortega, who promised an investigation.

Ortega told the mainly working-class crowd, however, that there is a serious crisis facing the nation's beef industry. The national herd of cattle has declined from 2.3 million in 1977 to 1.6 million today. This has already led to a sharp drop in export income for Nicaragua, and if the situation is not reversed, agricultural experts fear the entire herd will become extinct.

One of the results is that some of the country's slaughterhouses have been shut down and the workers moved to other industrial jobs. Beef has also been removed from all cafeterias in Nicaraguan factories. It is hoped that chicken and fish can be substituted.

The sharp decline in the cattle herd began when counterrevolutionary landowners moved cattle out of Nicaragua after the 1979 Sandinista revolution. The U.S. mercenary war has also further reduced the herd. But the biggest current problem sabotaging the beef industry is the illegal slaughter of cattle for sale to black marketers within Nicaragua. Ranchers who sell their beef to this illegal market receive prices higher than those offered by the government.

The Sandinistas continue to make progress in countering the international lie campaign about their treatment of Indians on the country's Atlantic Coast.

In November 1986 leaders of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples came to Nicaragua and met with Sandinista leader Tomás Borge, president of the Autonomy Commission for the Atlantic

Coast.

The World Council had earlier broken relations with the Nicaraguan government over charges of Sandinista "genocide" against Miskitos. In early 1986 World Council President Clem Chartier had joined a group of U.S.-financed Miskito mercenaries who entered Nicaragua illegally and were driven out by Sandinista troops.

In their meeting with Borge, the World Council leaders reported that Chartier had now been expelled from their organization. They said that they now want to work to help get out the truth about the Atlantic Coast.

In December a group of U.S. activists, including Indians from five tribes, visited the Atlantic Coast and also met with Borge.

The activists are collecting food and clothing in the United States to be shipped to the Atlantic Coast port of Puerto Cabezas in a "Boat for Peace." In addition, the group will be establishing a headquarters in Puerto Cabezas to receive international visitors to the Coast and assist them with housing and transportation problems.

Bill Means, of the American Indian Movement and International Indian Treaty Council, was one of the leaders of the delegation. At a news conference in Managua, he said that he was struck by the advances on the Coast since he first visited there in 1980. The most important gain, he said, is the emergence of a Miskito leadership inside Nicaragua that is challenging the slanders against the Sandinista revolution from Miskitos who have taken CIA money and left the country.

Demoralized bunch of 'contras' hang out in Miami

BY JON HILLSON

BOSTON — The light shed by the recent revelations about Washington's dirty war against Nicaragua has begun to highlight the dilemmas of the hired hands Ronald Reagan has called "the moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers."

Some of these *contra* terrorists, reeling from military blows dealt them by the Sandinista armed forces, remain pinned in Honduras — those that haven't yet quit. Or haven't taken advantage of the Sandinistas' generous amnesty program.

Or left for Miami.

It was there that *Boston Globe* reporter Pamela Constable, not known in this area for writing articles that honestly convey Nicaraguan society, interviewed several ex-contras, painting a picture of the shattered, mercenary army.

"In a rundown apartment crawling with cockroaches," she reports, two recently departed *contra* "commanders," both now working as security guards, explained their reasons for quitting battle.

"I gave up because there were no leaders I trusted because I realized they were not interested in war, but profit. The soldiers had poor equipment and food, while the chiefs were getting fat in [the Honduran capital of] Tegucigalpa," one ex-*contra* explained.

His pal said he'd wanted "to leave [the contras] sooner, but I had no passport and like the others, I was afraid to complain. Now, we can never go back."

Many ex-contras like these two, Constable reports, demoralized by their military future, unable to penetrate the higher circles of the mercenary army where money flows into foreign nest eggs, split to Miami where they "have blended into the exile community, working at minimum-wage jobs, learning English, and dealing with immigration officials."

Among them are former *contra* battalion commanders.

Bernardino Larios, a colonel in former dictator Anastasio Somoza's hated National Guard, turned anti-Somoza dissident for a brief period and was jailed by his former benefactor.

He was then offered a chance to participate in the Sandinista government after the triumph of the 1979 revolution. He lasted for a few months as the country's first minister of defense, then was arrested and convicted of conspiring to kill the nine members of the directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

He served four years in prison, was released, and "was eager to enlist in the struggle" against the government that had just let him go.

"But I had been tortured by Somoza too," Larios states, "and I soon saw that some of his extorturers were involved" with the *contra* operation.

That is, his former National Guard buddies, such as current *contra* leader and ex-National Guardsman Enrique Bermúdez.

These gentlemen kept Larios at arm's length from the *contra* aid pie. What went down between him and the other thugs as they duked it out for U.S. dollars isn't clear, but the result was Washington "chose leaders they could manipulate."

Now, Larios licks his wounds while working days in a Miami laundromat and nights on his "memoirs."

"It's not much of a living," he says.

While these beaten contras acknowledge they are losing, and losing badly, they attribute this not to the superior morale, patriotism, and military training of the Sandinista forces who are trouncing them, but in character deficiencies of current *contra* leaders.

Alberto Suhr, a self-described *contra* "intelligence officer," complains that top commanders such as Bermúdez "were not interested in winning the war or returning Nicaragua to democracy."

Suhr describes a mutiny aimed at deposing Bermúdez and installing "real fighters," such as himself.

The coup attempt was defeated. Suhr fled. In revenge, he testified in Washington at a congressional hearing, indicting the Bermúdez team for skimming U.S. funds to enrich themselves.

Suhr's now in Miami too, trying to recruit a new *contra* force from those "forced out or grown disillusioned" because people such as he aren't in charge of the mercenaries.

It's not a project with much of a future. Miami laundromats are much safer places these days than the Nicaraguan border with Honduras.

Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

The fight for land in Peru

The January issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* features an article by the well-known Peruvian revolutionary leader Hugo Blanco.

Blanco describes the history of peasant struggles for land in Peru. These battles won the elimination of semifeudal landlordism in the early 1970s. But the government-sponsored land reform created a new layer of rich capitalist landowners at the expense of working farmers.

Peasants today are fighting the unjust land distribution, as well as government repression. Faced with growing social discontent, the Peruvian regime has militarized parts of the countryside and put the capital, Lima, under a state of emergency. Peasant organizations have denounced the torture, disappearances, and massacres carried out by the army.

Perspectiva Mundial is the Spanish-language socialist magazine that every month brings you the truth about the struggles of working people and the oppressed in the U.S. and around the world.



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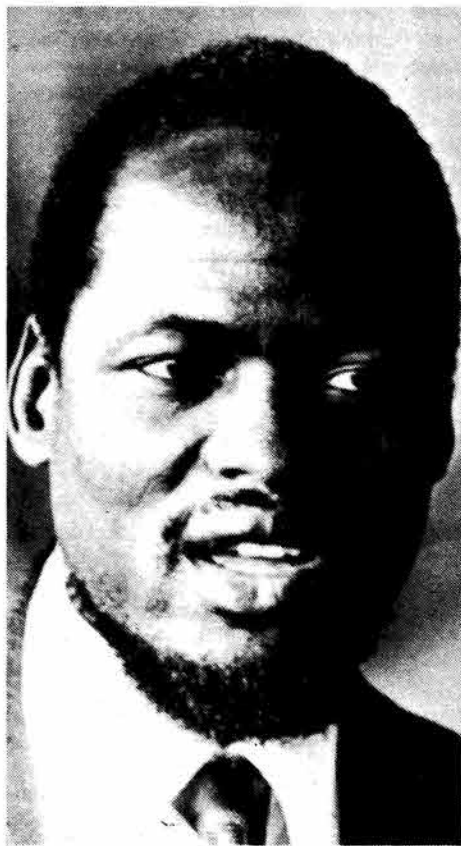
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'South Africa is sabotaging us'

Interview with Mozambique's Joaquim Chissano



Joaquim Chissano, then Mozambique's foreign minister, was named the new president of that southern African country on November 3.

The announcement, by the Central Committee of the governing Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo), came two weeks after the death of the previous president, Samora Machel, who had led Mozambique since its independence from Portuguese colonial rule in 1975.

Machel was killed October 19 in a plane crash just inside neighboring South Africa. Because of the still-unexplained circumstances of the crash and because of the South African regime's active campaign of destabilization against Mozambique, many in the region believe that Pretoria may have had a role in Machel's death.

On October 11 — just a week before Machel's death — Joaquim Chissano gave an interview to *Militant* correspondent August Nimtz, who teaches political science at the University of Minnesota. Chissano was visiting Minneapolis at the time.

"South Africa is constantly sabotaging us, sabotaging our efforts for development," Chissano told Nimtz.

Pretoria's 'contras'

The main form this has taken has been through a mercenary army called the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR, also known as Renamo). The MNR has long received direct military support from South Africa.

These MNR "bandits" — as they are commonly called in Mozambique — burn down schools and health clinics, destroy crops, mine roads, and spread terror through massacres and mutilations. Tens of thousands have been killed in this war, and the Mozambican government estimates the economic damages at more than \$5.5 billion.

The attacks by the MNR gangs have also

worsened the drought and famine conditions that affect parts of the country. According to Chissano, Mozambique has a shortfall of food grains in 1986 of about 300,000 tons.

"This is due to destabilization, mainly," he told Nimtz. "We cannot travel freely to take to the people the goods they need as an incentive for production. Even in the areas where there is an excess of food, we cannot go there and buy the food, to bring it to the areas stricken by drought, or to the towns."

"Some people are also displaced," Chissano continued, "unable to live in their customary areas where they cultivated the land. And there is the destabilization of productive activity. The bandits don't let people work."

Malawi's role

In addition to the backing it gets from the apartheid regime in South Africa, the MNR also enjoys support from the government of Malawi, a country that has an extensive common border with Mozambique.

For a long time, Chissano said, "we knew that the territory of Malawi was being utilized by the armed bandits." This was especially the case after Mozambican government troops, assisted by troops from Zimbabwe, overran the MNR's main base on Gorongosa Mountain, in the central province of Sofala, in August 1985.

"A lot of them fled into Malawi," Chissano said, "where many got reorganized and came back into Mozambique. Now, we know that this reorganization in Malawi was done with the participation of the South Africans."

The Mozambican authorities have also obtained proof of contacts between the MNR bandits and the Malawian government. Discussions have been under way in an effort to persuade the Malawian government to halt its backing to the MNR.

Alongside such direct attacks by the South African-backed MNR, Pretoria has also employed economic pressures against Mozambique. One recent measure was Pretoria's announcement that it would expel the more than 68,000 Mozambican migrant workers employed in South Africa. The wages they had sent back to Mozambique were an important source of foreign exchange for the country.

Chissano commented that this move, like others, was designed "to make us retreat from the political positions which we are taking in support" of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and for the imposition of sanctions against Pretoria.

Chissano reaffirmed, "We think that the South African people deserve support, and we never changed our attitude toward sanctions."

Nkomati accord

The apartheid regime's economic blackmail of Mozambique and its continued support for the MNR gangs come despite the signing of the March 1984 Nkomati accord. Under that treaty, the Mozambican government agreed to expel several hundred members of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa living in Mozambique, while Pretoria

promised to halt its backing to the MNR. The apartheid regime has not lived up to its part of the bargain.

Asked whether the Mozambican government still considered the Nkomati accord operative, given Pretoria's obvious violations of it, Chissano replied:

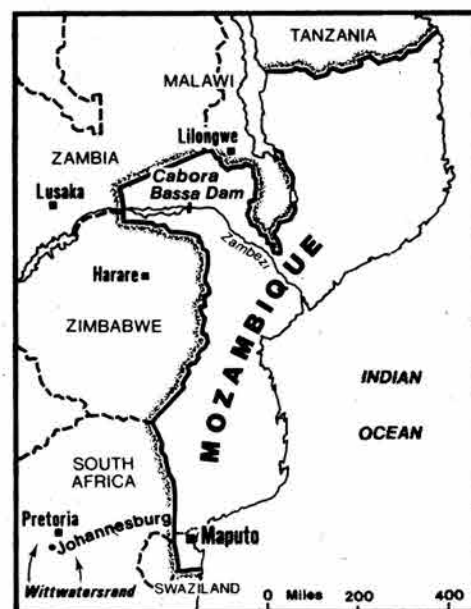
"We feel that it's not yet time [to renounce the accord] unless South Africa persists in such a way that we are led to believe that it is time to renounce or nullify the agreement. We have the support of the whole world in trying to bear on South Africa to change its attitude."

"If we took a decision to renounce the agreement ourselves," Chissano continued, "we are certain that a number of forces which are today with us would change their positions. They would say that it is Mozambique that didn't want the accord and wants to resort to violence against South Africa. . . . Such forces have not always been sympathetic to us, and I am speaking of forces in the United States, Europe, and so on."

Conditions on U.S. economic aid

Asked about the U.S. government's stance toward Mozambique, Chissano termed as "positive" the Reagan administration's public statements that it does not support the MNR, as well as its offers of some economic assistance.

At the same time, Chissano noted, the



MNR has opened an office in Washington and there are "certain individuals and organizations that support the bandits, make propaganda for them, raise funds, and so on." These, he said, include some members of Congress.

Chissano also observed that Washington, in the economic aid that it offers, is "imposing a lot of conditions. They say that they can only support the private sector, not the state sector or the cooperatives." But even for the private sector, Chissano added, "they are not forthcoming with adequate amounts of money."

Chissano concluded with an appeal for solidarity. He said that even if the U.S. government "does not undertake sound measures," it is possible to organize "a national effort in the United States from the people."

—WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

Canadian woodworkers win strike victory

After almost five months on the picket lines, some 20,000 striking members of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) have won a big victory in their battle against the forest bosses of British Columbia, in western Canada. The key issue in the strike was the bosses' efforts to contract out jobs to nonunion employees.

As their struggle mounted, the IWA members won the support of every major union in British Columbia, including pledges for rotating, regional general strikes if necessary.

In face of this show of labor unity, the employers backed down. On December 5 the bosses' bargaining council, the Forest Industrial Relations, agreed to a two-year contract that included protection against union positions being contracted out during the contract's life. It also did not include other concessions that the employers had wanted, such as the introduction of "flexible" shift scheduling.

IWA members voted 82 percent in favor of the contract.

Iran presses claim for funds held in U.S.

U.S. and Iranian negotiators met in the Netherlands December 29 to resume discussions on Iran's demands that more than \$500 million in Iranian funds held in the United States be returned to Iran. The talks broke off two days later, with Iran blaming Washington for the failure to reach agreement.

Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hussein Mousavi warned that if the funds were not returned within a "definite period of time," Iran would take the case to the World Court.

The money was originally deposited in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in 1981 as a result of the accord that led to the release of the U.S. hostages held in Iran following the seizure of the U.S. embassy there. As part of that agreement, Iran deposited \$3.7 billion to cover claims by U.S.-led bank syndicates for the repayment of loans made to Iran before the shah's overthrow in 1979.

The \$500 million represents the unclaimed portion of that amount, plus in-

terest. A special tribunal set up in 1981 to hear claims related to the funds ruled in August 1986 that Iran was entitled to the money.

U.S. arms shipments sent to South Africa

In violation of both U.S. and international laws, several shipments of U.S. arms were recently sent to South Africa, a report in the December 9 London *Independent* revealed. The shipments were said to weigh nearly 60 tons and to include machine-guns and rocket launchers.

It was believed that the arms were intended for the South African-backed terrorists, known as UNITA, who are seeking to overthrow the government of Angola. The Reagan administration has admitted providing covert support to UNITA.

Two of the shipments were made to South Africa via Switzerland and Belgium. A third — which had not yet been completed by the time the British newspaper exposed the operation — was flown from Bradley Fields in Connecticut to Honduras, from where it was to have been sent on to Johannesburg.

Japanese government boosts arms spending

Breaking from a long-standing policy of keeping military spending below 1 percent of Japan's gross national product, the government of Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone decided December 30 to press for adoption of a \$22 billion arms budget, or slightly above the 1 percent threshold. Since Nakasone's Liberal Democratic Party dominates parliament, passage of the budget is considered assured.

The previous arms spending restriction had been a result of widespread antiwar sentiment among the Japanese people. And announcement of the new budget provoked immediate protests. "This is an outrage," declared Takado Doi, president of the Japan Socialist Party, the main opposition party in parliament. "We are angry and are going to demand its retraction."

Washington, which has been pressing the Japanese government to take on a broader military role in the region, hailed the decision, however.



Mozambican troops with arms captured from MNR terrorists

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

Land of the Free — A UN film on the homeless will be shown with U.S. scenes deleted. "They should bring the individual rights element into the film," a nameless



Harry Ring

U.S. spokesperson had complained. "The fact [is] that these are people who in some cases wish to stay on the streets, roaming

around not solely because they have no place to go."

Maybe she used their product — The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission finally decided to back a suit against Ortho Pharmaceutical, a New Jersey contraceptive company that fired a saleswoman who got pregnant after being warned the company faced a busy year.

Obviously — Describing an ideal female hire, Ortho's employment guide states, "She should have the look of someone who might clean her bathroom or kitchen on her hands and knees." A spokesperson says that might sound discriminatory, but it's not really.

America the Beautiful — An ad series by Rockwell International, the armament folk, ties in works of famed photographer Ansel Adams with its war weapons. One of his shots of a mountain and waterfall is captioned: "Like Yosemite National Park, Tactical Weapons Systems are a national resource."

Priorities dep't — As you may have noticed, it's now the John Hancock Sun Bowl and the Mazda Gator Bowl, with more to come. A TV exec said there was concern about viewer backlash to the added commercial intrusion, but the bottom line dictated the change. "Our esthetic [?] worries have been lessened by our eco-

nomie problems," he said.

That's a relief — "DALLAS" — The wealthy Hunt brothers of Texas lost almost \$5 billion in sugar, silver, and oil investments in recent years. . . . Despite the losses, the brothers still have enough wealth to be called multimillionaires." — News item.

But why? It's the name of the game — TV Guide recently reported that on the PBS program, "Wall Street Week," a guest expert predicted a devastating AIDS epidemic and a panelist responded by asking him to recommend some stocks that might go up as a result. Complained TV Guide, "It's enough to give capitalism a bad name."

The truly needy — At year's end, one hapless victim of welfare cutbacks was Edwin Sarsfield who resigned his \$93,000 post as head of San Francisco's welfare department. He had been eating off a fund earmarked to feed the poor. A number of his tabs were from the yacht club where he parked his boat.

The judicial scene — Responding to charges of misconduct, Magistrate George Levans of Iola, Kansas, insisted that (a) he fully believed he had permission when he took some railroad ties belonging to the Santa Fe railroad, and (b) the county attorney and a defense lawyer also wore Halloween masks in court when he did.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Benefit Concert for the African National Congress of South Africa. Celebrate the 75th anniversary of the ANC. Featuring Gil Scott-Heron and trio. Speaker: Neo Mnumzana, chief representative of the ANC observer mission to the UN. Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m. Oakland Tech High School, 42nd and Broadway. Donation: \$10 in advance, \$12 at door. Ausp: ANC 75th Anniversary Committee. For more information call (415) 232-8503.

San Diego

Peabody Coal vs. Indian Rights at Big Mountain. Slideshow and presentation by Arthur Miller, organizer for Survival Network and Big Mountain Food and Supply Runs. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m. 2803 B St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (619) 234-4630.

El Salvador: An Eyewitness Report. Slideshow and presentation on recent In Search of Peace Conference in San Salvador. Speaker: Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party, member International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 482. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m. 2803 B St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (619) 234-4630.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Freedom Struggle in Central America and the Caribbean, 1979-1986. Speaker: Don Rojas. Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m. Roxbury Community College, Room 307K. Kennedy Bldg., corner of Huntington and Longwood Ave. S. Ausp: Don Rojas Tour Committee. For more information call (617) 522-1104.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

A Memorial to Celebrate Janice Dorliae's Life. Sat., Jan. 17, 7 p.m. Zion Baptist Church, 621 Elwood Ave. N. For more information call (612) 529-4191.

St. Paul

1987: Year of the 75th Anniversary of the African National Congress of South Africa. Somasco, video on African National Congress school in Tanzania. Speaker: Suzanne Derby, Socialist Workers Party, anti-apartheid activist. Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

The Coming Revolution in South Africa. A

class series sponsored by the Young Socialist Alliance.

What Is Apartheid? Sun., Jan. 11, 4 p.m. **The Liberation Struggle in South Africa.** In two parts. Sun., Jan. 18, 4 p.m. and Sun., Jan. 25, 4 p.m.

The Anti-apartheid Movement Here and Abroad. What Way Forward? Sun., Feb. 1, 4 p.m.

Classes held at 508 N Snelling Ave. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Book reception for Nothing Can Stop the Course of History. Meet Dr. Jeffrey M. Elliot, who conducted interview with Fidel Castro on which book is based. Slideshow on Cuba today presented by Maggie Perrier. Sat., Jan. 24. Cuban dinner, 6:30 p.m.; reception, 7:30 p.m. Donation: dinner, \$3; reception, \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

How to Solve the U.S. Farm Crisis. A panel discussion. Speakers: Maggie McCraw, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789; others. Sat., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

Stop Racist Attacks: No More Howard Beaches. Speaker: Joe Allor, Socialist Workers Party candidate for St. Louis Board of Aldermen, Ward 8, member United Auto Workers Local 110. Sat., Jan. 17, 7 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Politics of India Today. Speaker: Mihir Desai, a leader of Revolutionary Communist Organization of India. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

Impact of 'Contragate': New Opportunities for United Antiwar Movement. Panel of speakers to be announced. Fri., Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Film: The Global Assembly Line. A

documentary on the lives of working women in the "free trade zones" of developing countries. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Jan. 9. Preforum dinner, 6:30 p.m.; film, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: dinner, \$2; film, \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Stop the Cover-up of the Howard Beach Lynching! Panel of speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. (between Church and Broadway, 5 blocks south of Canal). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Reagan's Secret Aid to the Contras: New Opportunities for Antiwar Protest. Speakers to be announced. Sun., Jan. 18, 5 p.m. 2219 E Market St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

The Impact of 'Contragate': New Opportunities for United Antiwar Movement. Panel discussion. Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m. 402 N Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

Nelson Mandela and the Liberation Struggle in South Africa. Speaker: Dennis Brutus, exiled South African poet and anti-apartheid activist. Sat., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. 402 N Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Dallas

Affordable and Decent Housing Is Everyone's Right. Speakers: Gwain Wooten, vice-president, Committee to Save Public Housing; Janet Brown, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m. 336 W Jefferson. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (214) 943-5195.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

The Fight for Black Rights Today. Speaker: Stuart Crome, Black activist and leader of Young Socialist Alliance. Sun., Jan. 11, 7 p.m.

116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Morgantown

The Case Against Pornography Censorship — Oppose the Morgantown Ordinance. Speakers: Raymond Yackel, attorney opposing Morgantown censorship ordinance; Bruce Kimball, Socialist Workers Party, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

Contragate: Behind the Government Crisis. Speakers: Paul Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Crisis in the Philippines: Workers and Farmers Press Their Demands. Speakers: representative, FACE (Filipino Association for Community Education); representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

Janice Dorliae, Minnesota Black activist, dies

On January 2, Janice Dorliae, 41, a founder of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP), died of injuries suffered when she was hit by a van in an accident.

Active in the civil rights movement in her native Memphis, Tennessee, Dorliae later moved to Minneapolis, where she ran for city council as an NBIPP candidate in 1983. She also led a successful union organizing drive at the racetrack where she worked.

A memorial will be held on Saturday, January 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the Zion Baptist Church, 621 Elwood Avenue North, Minneapolis. For more information, call (612) 529-4191.

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Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. **Dallas:** SWP, YSA, 336 W. Jefferson. Zip: 75208. Tel: (214) 943-5195. **Houston:** SWP, YSA, 4806 Almeda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

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VIRGINIA: Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, 5412 Jefferson Ave. Zip: 23605. Tel: (804) 380-0133.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699, 797-7021.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: SWP, YSA, 5517 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston: SWP, YSA, 116 McFarland St. Zip: 25301. Tel: (304) 345-3040. **Morgantown:** SWP, YSA, 221 Pleasant St. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN: Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

Empire's decline spurs imperial presidency

Continued from front page
used in foreign wars.

Carrying out the international police actions that maintenance of such an empire entails in this day and age requires an emperor; that is, a central executive power that can act — quickly and secretly — without hindrance of debate or knowledge by the people.

Roosevelt expands executive powers

Franklin Roosevelt took some big strides in constructing an imperial presidency.

It was under his administration that a large, centralized, and upgraded domestic political police apparatus was brought under direct White House control.

This was in response to the massive labor battles of the mid-1930s that forged the industrial unions.

This was also part of the preparation for official U.S. government entry into World War II. The labor movement had to be purged of rebels who wouldn't line up behind the imperialist slaughter.

U.S. participation in World War II also marked the beginning of the huge U.S. standing army, a military machine that is today quartered around the world.

The ever-widening influence of this armed might is felt on all levels of government.

Top military officers are consulted daily by the White House on a range of diplomatic problems encompassing all the continents. In times of domestic upheaval, they are part of deciding how to break strikes, put down rebellions in the Black communities, and combat other protest activities.

In 1947 the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was formed out of the Office of Strategic Services, which functioned during World War II. The National Security Council (NSC) was set up the same year. They are both under the direct control of the White House.

The NSC — which organizes many of the illegal, covert foreign military and domestic spy operations carried out by the White House — includes the president, vice-president, secretaries of state and defense, a member of the White House staff who serves as director, and the director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

The NSC staff played the key role in the dealings with Iran and the contras. This was done in order to get around having to inform Congress of the plans.

The Watergate crisis, which broke out

Retired steelworkers in Ohio protest LTV cuts in pensions

BY RAY PARSONS

CANTON, Ohio — Seven hundred retired LTV steelworkers rallied here recently to protest attacks on their pensions.

LTV filed for bankruptcy last July, and company estimates are that up to 7,000 former steelworkers will soon see cuts in their already meager benefits.

The December 17 rally was sponsored by a newly formed organization, Retirees Against Greed and Exploitation (RAGE). Trips to New York and Washington, D.C., to demonstrate at bankruptcy proceedings and congressional hearings have been sponsored by the organization.

Rally speakers included Bill Burga, sub-district director of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) District 26, and an official from the Canton AFL-CIO.

RAGE members stressed that they are fighting to maintain benefits won in Steelworkers contracts with LTV or its predecessors over the decades. They explain that the current battle is over LTV breaking those contracts.

RAGE is being followed closely by other Steelworkers in the Canton area. There are six USWA locals in Stark County.

Bill Stone, a RAGE activist, explained the importance of reaching out to steelworkers in the mills. "They face the same or worse when they retire," Stone said.

RAGE is raising funds for a trip to Washington in mid-January.

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 6825 in Cleveland.



Franklin Roosevelt (right), greatly expanded clout of president during his administration. Under Harry Truman (left), CIA and National Security Council were formed.

while Richard Nixon was president, publicly exposed the degree to which the White House had become an organizing center for carrying out secret and illegal attacks on opponents of U.S. imperialism abroad and foes of the president at home, including his capitalist rivals in the Democratic Party. The scandal gets its name from his staff's wiretapping and burglary of the Democratic National Committee's offices in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C., in 1972.

In the wake of Watergate, some laws were passed with the stated goal of making Congress more informed about covert operations. Laws were approved to prevent the president from denying that he knew about covert actions by making sure they couldn't be undertaken without presidential approval.

But even these minimal oversight measures have been flouted by the Reagan administration in carrying out the contra war against Nicaragua and other reactionary military adventures.

This taking of power by the executive branch has not been carried out, by and large, against the will of Congress, but rather with congressional complicity.

There are tactical disagreements over who should be told about what and when, but on the basics there's a great deal of bipartisan agreement. That's because there's bipartisan accord on the fundamentals of foreign and domestic policy today.

War Powers Act and Lebanon

This was illustrated by Reagan's stationing of U.S. troops in Lebanon in 1983.

Many members of Congress insisted that the War Powers Act should be invoked so that they could put their seal of approval on Reagan's involvement of U.S. forces in the Lebanese civil war.

The law was passed in 1973, supposedly to prevent the country from finding itself deep in a war never declared by Congress. The bill states that the president shall not involve U.S. troops in a "hostile" situation for more than 90 days without congressional consent. Reagan openly violated the law in the case of Lebanon.

A "compromise" was reached that allowed Reagan to keep the marines there for twice as long as the law allowed, and to bomb Lebanon.

Eventually public pressure forced Reagan to remove the troops.

Why did Reagan oppose implementing the War Powers Act?

Because a debate in Congress, even among those who agreed on Washington's right to intervene in Lebanon, can give the people of the United States an inkling of what the government's real designs are and the scope of what they're being dragged into.

That's why the War Powers Act had to be passed over Nixon's veto and why every president since then has opposed it.

This is also why, despite the fact that the Constitution clearly specifies that the right to declare war is restricted exclusively to

— 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 14, 1977

On December 7 the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a court-ordered desegregation plan for Austin, Texas. The plan would have required the busing of nearly 25,000 students.

In the seven-to-two ruling, the court majority laid down a highly restrictive standard of how far lower courts can go in ordering action to overcome segregated education.

The busing plan overturned by the Supreme Court had been ordered by a federal appeals court. That three-judge panel in New Orleans had rejected a partial desegregation plan submitted by the Austin school board as inadequate.

But the Supreme Court's December 7 ruling said the court-ordered substitute plan went too far.

The justices said the court-ordered plan imposes "a view of the constitutional obligations of a school board far exceeding anything required by this Court." It held that "large-scale busing is permissible only where the evidence supports a finding that the extent of integration sought to be achieved by busing would have existed had the school authorities fulfilled their constitutional obligations in the past."

This means busing can only be ordered where it can be proven that school officials intentionally discriminated against minority students. In the past, courts have accepted evidence of segregated schools and discriminatory funding as grounds for ordering busing — regardless of ability to prove the intent of school officials.

The effect of the December 7 ruling is to exempt school districts from responsibility for overcoming segregated school conditions that result from anything but "official acts."

This means that busing could not be ordered to overcome a key cause of educational inequality: segregated housing. Hence, the Supreme Court's ruling provides racist school boards from coast to coast with a convenient excuse for continuing racist discrimination in education.

Congress, that body hasn't declared war since 1941. World War II was the last war that the U.S. government was officially involved in.

Yet the Pentagon has sent U.S. boys into battle many times in the 45 years since then, including in Korea, Indochina, Lebanon, Dominican Republic, and Grenada.

Washington wants to be able to conduct war without public debate and discussion because the wars it wages are unpopular at home, as well as among the vast majority of peoples of the world. Ever since Washington was forced to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, most people in this country have opposed starting any new war that could lead to U.S. GIs being sent into combat.

In this context, congressional votes on war become complicated, cumbersome, and dangerous to the ruling class.

The rulers want to impose the notion that open, public debate — pro and con — on war moves is unacceptable, unpatriotic, and subversive.

So the government ends up on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, the presidency has to have the leeway to use its vast military power to put down rebellions and revolutions in other countries and to clamp down on opponents at home.

Yet, popular opposition to such moves is widespread in the United States, especially among working people whose standard of living and working conditions are under attack.

In an attempt to get around this problem, Washington has been utilizing mercenary armies, but this hasn't proved effective. The fact that the Nicaraguan contras are losing, for example, is what precipitated the current crisis in Washington. And the rulers' dilemma will deepen as their need to use U.S. troops increases.

THE MILITANT

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January 15, 1962

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While the State Department has been doing everything in its power to organize a condemnation of the Cuban revolution at the forthcoming meeting of the Organization of American States, the Cubans have been celebrating the most spectacular victory of their revolution to date — the overcoming of illiteracy.

The completion of the Cuban literacy campaign of 1961 — one of the greatest educational experiments in human history — remains unreported in the daily press in the United States.

Three years ago, when the revolution came to power, Cuba was one of the backward countries of the world in terms of literacy. About one-fourth her adult population could not read and write, and less than 60 percent of her school-age children were enrolled in classes. Today, Cuba ranks among the most advanced countries in these respects, with the illiteracy rate cut to 3.9 percent and virtually all her school-age children in classes.

Over 800,000 adults have been taught to read and write by the revolution, 700,000 of these in less than the single year of 1961 — Cuba's "Year of Education."

This accomplishment was the result of a revolutionary mobilization of the Cuban masses, particularly of the teenage youth. At the end of the campaign, Havana was given over to a week-long festival in honor of these youth, members of the "Alphabet Brigades."

They poured into the capital from all parts of the country, their knapsacks on their backs, after having transformed rural Cuba, and having been themselves transformed.

These 100,000 *brigadistas* were mostly city youth of relatively privileged sectors of the population from which the pre-revolutionary school enrollment was drawn. In the six to eight months they spent in the countryside, they lived with the peasants and workers whom they were teaching. Thus the literacy campaign deepened the revolution in many profound ways.

Antilabor frame-up in San Juan

Even before the smoke had cleared from the New Year's Eve hotel fire in San Juan, Puerto Rico, opponents of the labor movement jumped to pin the blame on the hotel workers' union.

FBI officials, the governor of Puerto Rico, hotel management personnel, and the big-business news media have all tried to implicate Local 901 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in the fire, which killed nearly 100 people.

Without citing any evidence — simply "suspicions" — Gov. Rafael Hernández Colón declared that "one tends to think this matter rises from the labor situation."

This is a blatant frame-up. And it is directed against a group of workers who are resisting a union-busting drive by the hotel's U.S. owners.

In the weeks before the fire, the management of the Dupont Plaza, which is owned by Hotel Systems International of Anaheim, California, had been pushing for contract concessions from the hotel employees. This included a bid to "reclassify" some job categories in order to hire nonunion workers and get rid of at least 90 union jobs.

During the afternoon of December 31, the union held a membership meeting, at which the workers voted to reject management's latest offer and set a midnight strike deadline. Shortly after the meeting ended, the fire began. It is the timing of these two events that has provided the sole "evidence" for the government and management claims that the union was involved in the fire.

Teamsters Local 901 leader José Cádiz called Governor Hernández Colón's charges "an outrage. There is no evidence at all to support this." The union is offering a \$15,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of anyone who set the fire.

One of the union's negotiators, Jorge Farinacci, is no stranger to political frame-ups. A long-time supporter of independence for Puerto Rico, he was one of 14 political activists arrested in August 1985 when FBI agents swooped down on homes and offices in Puerto Rico and the United States. The magazine *Pensamiento Crítico*, for which Farinacci was an editor, was shut down. Along with others, Farinacci was later framed up on charges of being involved in a Wells Fargo robbery in Hartford, Connecticut. He is now free on \$1 million bail.

By seeking to blame the fire on the workers, the Dupont Plaza management hopes to weaken their resistance to its antiunion drive.

Union leader René Rodríguez also cited another possible motivation. "I believe," he said, "the company [wants to] point the finger at somebody else" because victims' families and survivors may sue.

Some already have. And in the process of the investigations, a broad range of lax safety procedures and management negligence is emerging: the hotel had no sprinkler system, fire alarms did not work, and much of the hotel furniture contained highly flammable and toxic materials.

Howard Beach: stench of cover-up

"As this violent and complex case unfolds . . . it is marked by a chilling official pursuit not of the perpetrators but their victims and their attorneys." — Les Payne, Black columnist in *Newsday*.

The Black and Puerto Rican caucus of the New York legislature has demanded that Gov. Mario Cuomo appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the Howard Beach racist attack.

James Bell, president of the New York Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and numerous community figures have also assailed the police cover-up and demanded a special prosecutor.

The demand is more than justified.

The drive to vilify the victims and their lawyers is far from over.

January 7 it was reported that Brooklyn police have reopened a 1982 murder probe in which Howard Beach victim Michael Griffith had been declared a suspect. No one explains what this has to do with how Griffith died.

The same day it was reported that investigators of the Howard Beach attack are trying to determine where Griffith, Cedric Sandiford, and their friends had been before their car broke down near Howard Beach. No one explains what this has to do with the racist attack.

Meanwhile, officials say their case against the assailants is getting weaker by the day.

Victim Sandiford, they insist, hadn't really seen the racists beat Griffith. So it might be hard to prove they really hit him. Maybe all the wounds on Griffith's body were from being hit by the car.

Also, in a sudden burst of concern for due process, the district attorney's office announced that the admission made by Jon Lester, apparent ringleader of the racist gang, was taken before his lawyer got there and may have to be scrapped.

And there is still no explanation of why only three of the nine reported assailants have been booked.

January 5 a police spokesperson announced that the main portion of the investigation was completed in the days immediately following the attack.

"The investigation," she said, "is open . . . but there are no major elements of the case still open." (Emphasis added.)

The stench of this kind of cover-up underlines the urgency of getting the truth out about this case across the country and organizing protests demanding that the murderers of Michael Griffith be brought to justice.

In New York, unions; civil rights and religious groups; student, Black, and Puerto Rican organizations; and all others who support justice and equality should get behind the January 21 Day of Outrage and make it the biggest possible action against the racist attack in Howard Beach.

Reagan's big-business budget

Continued from front page

million in funds available for farm loans.

- But \$2 billion more for interest payments on the national debt to bankers and other loan sharks.

- A \$7-billion cut in Medicare and Medicaid funding.

- But a 78 percent jump to \$1 billion for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, so this cop agency can harass and hunt down more immigrant workers.

- Abolition of federal assistance to mass transit systems in cities with populations of more than 200,000.

- But another \$105 million for the *contra* killers who are attacking Nicaragua.

- No money for new housing construction.

- But \$262 million to build new prisons and expand or fix up old ones.

Ohio Sen. John Glenn described the cuts in Medicare and other social programs as "completely unrealistic." Sen. Robert Byrd, who will become majority leader, said the administration plan was "off the track in some respects."

But the fact is that this budget is on the same track as the ones submitted by Republican and Democratic presidents over the past decade. After various modifications (such as replacing "unrealistic" cuts in funding for human needs with more "realistic" ones), these have been approved by bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress.

Reagan administration officials claim that the annual budget deficit will be held to a mere \$107.8 billion under its plan, just under the limit set for this year by the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill. This legislation, passed in 1985, purports to guarantee a balanced budget by 1991.

But the claimed reduction in the 1988 deficit is a fake.

It was accomplished on paper, primarily by now-you-see-it, now-you-don't accounting tricks and by proposing to sell AMTRAK, oil reserves, and other public property at bargain rates to big business.

The truth is that the budget proposal raises government spending to an unprecedented trillion dollars while escalating the drive to *redistribute* — not *cut* — this spending even more lopsidedly in favor of the industrialists and bankers. They will grow fatter off military contracts, interest payments on loans to finance the deficit and the national debt, and other giveaways.

How will the handouts be financed? More working people will be rendered homeless, more farmers will be driven off their land, more youth will be denied the right to a college education, and the elderly will be denied desperately needed medical care.

And the recently enacted "tax reform" — actually a massive tax cut for the billionaire families — guarantees that even more than in the past, the tax bill will be footed by workers and farmers.

A budget that took as its starting point the needs of the majority of people — the workers and farmers — would be quite a different kettle of fish.

It would junk the military budget, cancel interest payments to the bankers, place the whole tax burden on the rich, and guarantee every working person a job, home, medical care, and education. It would prioritize aid to working farmers and rural areas.

And it would allocate plenty of economic aid — rather than bombs and bullets — to the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, who have been the victims of U.S. imperialism.

This is the kind of alternative that the labor movement, speaking in the name of all the exploited and oppressed, should put forward in the budget debate.

What kind of leadership does the country need?

BY DOUG JENNESS

One of the most remarkable features of the current crisis in Washington is that no leading politician — Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative — has presented a coherent alternative to the Reagan administration. Nor projected a clear road out of the mess the government is in.

No prominent figure, like Sen. Edward Kennedy, an

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

"elder statesman" of the Democratic Party, has gone on national television to lay out proposals for resolving the problem of presidents and their staffs operating outside the law. Nor has he or any of his colleagues said, "Look, let's face up to our defeat in Nicaragua and negotiate a peace with the Sandinista government, as we did in Vietnam. And launch a massive economic aid program in the region to prevent more Nicaraguas."

In fact, it's hard to recall a time, if ever, when bipartisan unity on fundamental policy — both at home and abroad — has so dominated Washington.

That's not to say differences of opinion don't exist or that a lot of bickering and recriminations over the Reagan gang's conduct isn't taking place. But these are like the noises cornered animals make, not the sound of confident leaders with an alternative policy.

These politicians go from one thing to another, attempting to apply first this remedy and then that one, creating the distinct impression that governmental policy is out of control.

A *Washington Post* reporter, in a New Year's Eve commentary, described 1986 as a year "when events seemed out of control. Not since the turbulent '60s, a time of national tragedy and breakdown, had so many things gone so stunningly awry."

In reality, the crisis the U.S. ruling circles face today is deeper than in the 1960s. Their problems go beyond the Reagan administration's illegal antics or even the impending *contra* defeat in Nicaragua, which precipitated the current crisis.

Their quandary is that, as the chief policeman of the capitalist world, the U.S. government faces a growing need to use U.S. combat forces to put down rebellions of oppressed and exploited peoples in other countries.

But the people of the United States, who don't want to go through the pain of another Vietnam War, have placed a big limit on its ability to do this.

And working people are even less willing to send their boys to die in foreign wars now, when the employers — backed to the hilt by both the Democratic and Republican parties — are on a sustained drive to lower their real wages, slash social benefits, and worsen working conditions.

Frustrated by this situation, many commentators argue that the country needs stronger leadership. Typifying this sentiment, Chalmers Roberts, formerly a top correspondent for the *Washington Post*, recently lamented that the nation "is essentially leaderless, and its best attributes have been drowned out in the cacophony of our baser selves."

"Our society needs strong leadership," he pleaded, "with a sense of purpose, willing and able to work within the framework of the Constitution, able to draw to the fore once again our better national instincts."

Roberts' models for such leaders are Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt.

Despite his dubious choices, Roberts actually hits on a point that will ring true to most working people; we need self-confident leadership that can help get us out of the current mire and chart a course toward peace and prosperity.

But the question is: leadership to do what in whose interests? When politicians and pundits like Roberts talk about leading the "nation" or "society," they lump together exploited and exploiting classes as if they had common goals. This masks the interests they are really concerned about: how to best defend the profits of U.S. big business at home and abroad.

But a different kind of leadership — one that identifies working people in other countries as fellow fighters, not as enemies, could easily present an alternative course to what's happening in Washington now.

And a leadership that unequivocally sides with the workers and farmers in this country in their fight against the employers, bankers, and landlords would win broad support.

This leadership can only emerge out of the struggles of working people themselves as they more and more develop the understanding and self-confidence that they must take command and lead the country.

If the current governmental crisis has done nothing else, it has laid bare to millions the moral and political bankruptcy of the capitalist politicians. It has offered a compelling argument for why the labor movement needs to form a labor party, a party that would fight for all working people.

Meat-packer's tour sparks discussion in rail yards

BY KAREN KOPPERUD
AND MINDY BRUDNO

Cecil Cain, a representative of 850 Hormel workers who are fighting for their jobs, spoke to railroad workers

UNION TALK

in the New York-New Jersey area last month.

In addition to speaking to a meeting of Local 60 of the United Transportation Union (UTU), which organizes conductors and trainmen who work for New Jersey Transit, he spoke to about 100 conductors and engineers on two different days at the New York and Hoboken terminals.

These workers have good reason to be interested in what the Hormel workers have to say. Wages and working conditions of railroad workers have deteriorated enormously the last several years.

On several of the passenger railroads, new hires get 70 percent of the full rate for trainmen. Workers at New Jersey Transit lost a strike four years ago. In current negotiations, the company is pushing to introduce part-time help on the trains, which would be a serious setback to the union.

Our unions are also currently involved in a court battle to overturn the existing system of 10 hours' work for 8

hours' pay. Trainmen and engineers are subject to lengthy layovers between trips at terminals that may be far from home, with no comfortable place to rest. Presently, the company does not pay us for two hours of this layover time.

The first place Cain went to in New York was a locker room filled with about 20 trainmen playing cards, doing paperwork, or just hanging out. One of the older workers recognized him from the union meeting and introduced him to the group. The usual chaos gave way to silence as people listened to what he had to say.

Cain described the history of their struggle, beginning with the series of concession contracts, the high injury rate, the tremendous profits being made by Hormel at the workers' expense, and other factors that led them to go out on strike in 1985.

He explained how the Minnesota National Guard was used to escort scabs through their picket lines. And how the state of Iowa, 40 miles away, had ordered recipients of welfare and unemployment compensation to apply for jobs as scabs at Hormel or be cut off from benefits.

"They can't do that, that's illegal," one worker said. "We've learned through experience that there is nothing they can't do, if we can't stop them," Cain replied.

The rail workers had a number of questions. Many had heard that the strikers were betrayed by their own international leadership.

Others were interested in the way the politicians in Minnesota and Iowa had turned against the strike. "They

must be Republican administrations," one worker remarked. Cain pointed out that the governors of both Iowa and Minnesota are Democrats, elected with labor support.

Most workers seemed impressed with the solidarity Hormel workers have won.

A conductor from the Long Island Railroad who heard Cain speak to New Jersey Transit Workers took him to the Long Island crew room to speak to people there. Another conductor introduced him to Amtrak and transit workers in a TV lounge. Around \$200 was raised.

In addition, a conductor on the Metro-North railroad took Cain to speak to 35 unionists at a labor studies class at Cornell University.

In discussions with Cain at the Hoboken terminal, several workers mentioned the air traffic controllers' (PATCO) strike as the first major union-busting attack of the recent period. Others commented on the failure of other unions to come to the aid of the PATCO strikers, which helped make the defeat possible.

An older worker, after hearing Cain, encouraged a couple of us to read a book on the life of Eugene V. Debs, who led a drive to organize one industrial union of all railroad workers in the 1890s — something that has not yet been accomplished.

Karen Kopperud is a member of UTU Local 800. Mindy Brudno is a member of UTU Local 60.

LETTERS

Cafeteria workers

A sign on the cafeteria wall at General Motors Fairfax plant in Kansas City, Kansas, reads, "Thanks Local 31 for your support."

Thirty or so cafeteria workers, organized in United Auto Workers Local 31, recently won a one-day sit-down strike at the plant. Scores of assembly-line workers in the same local joined the strikers in solidarity during their breaks and lunch. The line was shut down for about 13 minutes after second break.

The day-shift cafeteria workers struck to save their jobs. They sat at the cafeteria tables after learning that GM had canceled its contract with Canteen Corp. and was preparing to give the food service operations over to Greyhound Corp.

The workers had just voted down a contract proposal from Canteen, rejecting a big cut in wages and medical benefits. The rumor was that they would be replaced in their current jobs after Thanksgiving.

Company officials tried to intimidate the strikers and even threatened to call the police. Eventually, they agreed to negotiate with union officials.

As a result, Canteen will continue running the food service operations. The cafeteria workers approved a second contract offer, which contained an improved wage and restored medical benefits.

Marcia Gallo
Kansas City, Kansas

Genuine human solidarity

Headlines in the December 5 *New York Daily News* read, "His plight unites foes" and "Poor open hearts so he may walk."

The story of Bobby Weisen speaks volumes about the difference between working-class and capitalist-class values. Young Weisen, the son of Steelworkers union local President Ron Weisen, lost the use of his legs in a 1984 swimming accident. Workers in the Monongahela Valley in Pennsylvania, hard hit by the depression in the steel industry, dug into their pockets and raised thousands of dollars to send Bobby to the Burdenko Institute in Moscow for an operation that may restore his capacity to walk.

Pan Am was talked into donating the flight to Moscow for Bobby and his parents.

Doctors in Moscow will perform the operation for no charge,

as health care is free in the Soviet Union.

This story raises many serious questions. Why is it that in the richest country in the world — where billionaires walk around fattening themselves on a parasitical system of speculation, insider trading, and investments — that it is working people, who created all this wealth in the first place, who are in the forefront in raising the funds to send young Bobby to the Soviet Union, the so-called evil empire where he will be operated on for no charge?

The *Daily News* article presents the story as an example of capitalists and workers putting aside differences and pitching in to help Bobby.

This is false. Selfless sacrifice from striking and unemployed workers and Pan Am's donation are not equal. When the rich donate, it is a tax write-off, a way to ease their consciences, show the world they are humane, while covering up their exploitation of the toiling majority.

The sacrifices of the unemployed workers is genuine human solidarity. This kind of human solidarity and sacrifice smashes to bits the age-old argument of apologists for capitalism that human nature is inherently evil. No, it is capitalism that perverts human nature.

Kevin McGuire
Brooklyn, New York

'Intercontinental Press'

Much though I enjoy reading your newspaper, I must tell you how much I mourn the passing of *Intercontinental Press*.

While the paper obviously gives space to world news and events, it doesn't deal with the political issues in the same depth. *IP* was a valuable addition to any socialist's library, especially mine, with so little access to regular information on world politics.

M.P.
Sevilla, Spain

Disappointed

As a new reader of the *Militant*, I was terribly disappointed by two articles appearing in the December 12 issue: the book review of *Against All Hope* and the article on Bernard Coard's attempted coverup of his role in the assassination of Maurice Bishop.

Armando Valladares' book is, as you claim, "a stench bomb to be utilized to the maximum ... by opponents of the Cuban revolu-

tion," and it should be criticized as such.

But is it then necessary to try to prove that the book is a "hoax," in which Valladares "piles one patent absurdity on top of the other," where "descriptions of alleged abuse and torture are laid on so thick that all but the most biased reader will begin to mutter, 'Now, really?'" In fact, Harry Ring does not give any example of these false contentions that he claims he will take up later.

To deny that gay people were put in concentration camps or that other leftists were imprisoned by Fidel is to engage in fairytale politics. But is there a need to make Cuba and Fidel look like pristine examples of revolutionary politics and leadership? All people make mistakes, and since all revolutionaries are people, it's safe to assume that even revolutionaries will make mistakes.

The same problem plagues the article on Coard. Coard is rightfully condemned for his actions, but must Maurice Bishop then look the perfect leader? When Coard's faction used leverage to keep the party membership small (300), where was Bishop? How could Coard organize "a secret faction with its own discussions, goals, and discipline" without Bishop knowing?

D.M.
Berkeley, California

Editor replies: Harry Ring's three-part review of *Against All Hope* by Armando Valladares appeared in our December 12, 19, and 26 issues. The third article took up several specific examples of Valladares' contentions of alleged abuse and torture in Cuba's prisons.

Fine paper

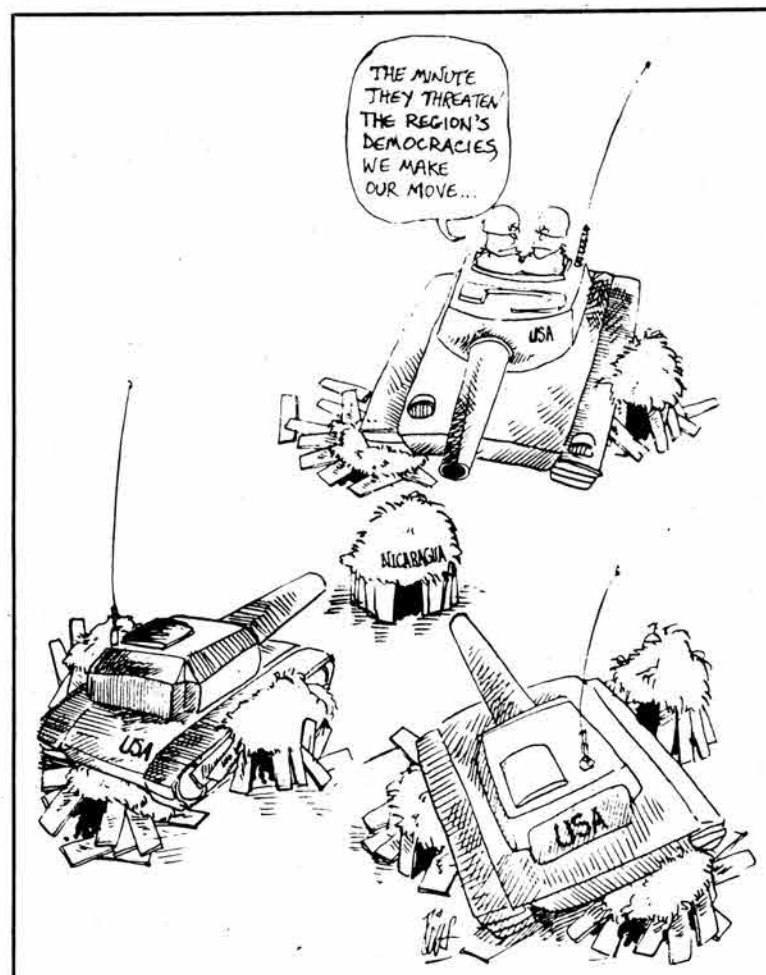
I am writing in regard to subscribing to your fine paper! However, I am currently incarcerated in the Kansas Department of Corrections, and I am not working and don't have funds for the subscription.

So I am asking you to send me copies of your paper. If you could bill me at a later date, it would be appreciated very much.

A prisoner
Hutchinson, Kansas

Eugene Hasenfus

Recently, the *New York Times* has repeatedly referred to Eugene Hasenfus as "the captured air-cargo handler." For his entire adult life, Hasenfus has been a sol-



Barricada/Róger

dier of fortune, operating in the public and private sector on three continents. Eugene Hasenfus is no more an air-cargo handler than the *New York Times* is an honest, objective newspaper.

Martin Boyers
New York, New York

USX lockout

Members of United Steelworkers of America Local 6825 in Cleveland recently donated five turkeys, five hams, two gift certificates, and four boxes of canned goods to locked-out USWA Local 1104 members at USX in nearby Lorain. Although our local had contributed money to the District 28 strike fund before, this was the first solidarity activity in my plant among rank and filers.

The lockout has had a big impact in the Cleveland area. On television we saw our own district officials and Local 1104 members attacked by cops during a November 26 confrontation. We could appreciate the hardships faced by locked-out steelworkers with the Ohio winter under way and Christmas coming up.

The food drive also inspired big discussions about the lockout, why we should help, and the challenges facing the union movement.

When the food was delivered to

Local 1104's hall in Lorain, steelworkers there expressed appreciation. They also received aid from fire fighters and autoworkers in the Lorain area. The USX workers offered to send a locked-out worker to our next union meeting to explain the situation first hand.

Ray Parsons
Cleveland, Ohio

Add my name

Would you please add my name to your mailing list to receive a copy of your publication. I'm presently a confined prisoner who has no funds. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Yours in solidarity,
A prisoner
Alden, New York

Correction

In last week's *Militant* the name of the president of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights was misspelled. Her name is Diana Caballero Pérez.

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.

Victim of attack blasts N.Y. cops

Says investigation of Howard Beach killing is a 'masquerade'

BY HARRY RING

NEW YORK — Cedric Sandiford, who was badly beaten in the Howard Beach lynch attack in which his stepson died, branded the police investigation of the attack "a masquerade." He declared he would settle for nothing less than an independent investigation of the case.

Firmly repudiating the barrage of smear attacks against his attorney, Alton Maddox Jr., Sandiford declared that his refusal to cooperate with the present cop probe was his decision, not Maddox's.

At a January 3 press conference in Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church, Sandiford said he tried to tell the police what had happened in the racist gang-up, but "nobody listened."

"They only wanted to hear part of it," he charged, "and they tried to discredit the other part of it."

On December 20 Sandiford, his stepson Michael Griffith, and a friend, Timothy Grimes, were set upon by a gang of white youths after they stopped in a pizza parlor in the white community of Howard Beach. A car they were riding in had broken down.

Grimes succeeded in escaping, but Griffith

Maddox responded by calling a news conference to explain why his client refused to participate in a "bad-faith investigation." He was joined at the press briefing by C. Vernon Mason, attorney for Timothy Grimes, the third victim in the case.

For the first three days after the attack, Maddox explained, his client had cooperated with the cops. But Sandiford balked when they asked him to view a line-up of potential suspects. In a line-up, actual suspects are included with other, uninvolved people. The cops asked Sandiford to pick his attackers out of the line-up even though he was suffering eye injuries from the beating he had suffered.

"Nobody would ask a blind man to view a line-up," Maddox observed, "unless he was conducting a bad-faith investigation."

The lawyers also pointed to the way Sandiford had been mistreated by the cops and their refusal to give serious consideration to his story. They hammered at the police readiness to absolve Dominick Blum, the man who ran Michael Griffith down.

They also noted that the cops failed to videotape the statements of the three whites who admitted participating in the attack.

The suspicions and distrust expressed by the victims and their lawyer was proven well-founded on December 29 when a Queens County judge dismissed murder, manslaughter, and assault charges against the three attackers — Jon Lester, Scott Kern, and Jason Ladone.

Judge Ernest Bianchi said the admissions by the three youths were sufficient only to sustain a charge of reckless endangerment, an offense punishable by a maximum of seven years in prison.

Judge Bianchi joined in pillorying Sandiford for refusing to testify at the arraignment.



Three thousand attended December 27 action protesting Michael Griffith murder

diford for refusing to testify at the arraignment.

"He's a Negro, a Black man, who did not come to testify," the judge declared from the bench.

At the hearing, detectives had recounted what the three young whites had admitted.

Jon Lester, they said, had summoned friends from a nearby party, saying, "There's some niggers in the pizza parlor — let's go kill them."

Later, one of the cops said Lester asked them to change the word "kill" to "fight" because that's what he had meant to say.

They also told the judge that Jason Ladone told them he watched Griffith run out on the highway, heard a "boom," and

saw the victim's body hurtle 20 feet into the air.

After deciding there was insufficient basis for major charges against the three whites, Judge Bianchi proceeded to his next case — three Black youths accused of beating up a white.

There, he ordered two held for assault even though both denied involvement and one couldn't even be placed at the scene.

Calling them "punks," the judge said to the pair, who have yet to be tried, "What you did was reprehensible."

There is no record that he said anything like that to the three whites charged with leading the murderous Howard Beach attack.

See editorial on page 14.

fifth and Sandiford were pursued by a band of nearly a dozen whites, who beat them with baseball bats and tree limbs. Griffith died when he tried to escape onto the highway and a car ran him down.

Sandiford, who was beaten to the ground, then made his way onto the same highway, where he was finally picked up by the police and brought to where his stepson lay dead.

As Sandiford tried to explain what had happened, one of the cops shoved him against a squad car, spread-eagled him, and frisked him.

Sandiford told the cops he was the victim of a crime, not a criminal, but that apparently cut little ice with them. He was held on the scene for several hours, his wounds untreated.

A police official later acknowledged that during this time, the cops "asked him if he knew anything" about a shooting that had occurred earlier nearby.

Little wonder Sandiford declared to the news conference, "Until Governor Cuomo assigns someone to investigate this case, I won't cooperate."

Victims' attorneys smeared

To lay a smokescreen over the failure of the Queens district attorney and the police to conduct a thorough probe, a smear campaign has been directed against the attorneys for the surviving victims. Leading the pack in this have been Mayor Edward Koch and his police commissioner, Benjamin Ward.

Hammering at Sandiford's refusal to cooperate with a rigged investigation, they are demagogically arguing that this, not police misconduct, is responsible for the investigation going nowhere.

With the mayor standing at his side, Commissioner Ward charged that attorney Maddox had advised Sandiford not to cooperate so that he could later make money from a civil lawsuit in the case. Ward offered not a shred of evidence to bolster this charge.

Koch accused Maddox of "stirring up" people who believe there is a cover-up in the case.

The mayor then asserted that Sandiford's refusal to cooperate with the district attorney's office and the police probe was perhaps worse than the racist attack itself.

Governor Mario Cuomo joined in the mudslinging by having his press secretary assert that Maddox has "zero credibility."

Coalition sets January 21 protest

BY KEN COLLINS
AND MIKE SHUR

NEW YORK — A broad range of anti-racist forces are mapping plans for a "Day of Outrage" January 21 to protest the Howard Beach killing of Michael Griffith.

Griffith was run down on a highway December 20 while fleeing a racist gang pursuing him and two companions with baseball bats and tree limbs.

The New York Civil Rights Coalition, which is initiating the January 21 protest, led a march of more than 3,000 in Howard Beach December 27. Organized in the wake of the Howard Beach attack, the coalition includes a range of civil rights and church groups, unions, and political figures.

In Harlem a meeting of more than 500 was held at the Abyssinian Baptist Church January 3. It was sponsored by the Committee Against Racially Motivated Violence and the National African Youth Student Alliance. This meeting favored a mass march of youth and students January 21.

Following the meeting more than 200 of the participants marched from Harlem to Gracie Mansion, the mayor's residence.

At the meeting, Rev. Calvin Butts, executive pastor of the church, noted its long history as a center in the fight against racist oppression. Many prominent Black leaders had spoken there, he recalled, including Malcolm X and Marcus Garvey.

Butts then proposed that the floor be opened for discussion by youth from age 12 to 19. Many young people recounted their experiences with racist attacks and police brutality in their communities and offered proposals for responding.

The gathering heard a report by Lisa Williamson, a leader of the African Youth Student Alliance and a leading figure in the

anti-apartheid movement at Rutgers University. Slamming the police cover-up in the Howard Beach case, she demanded that the governor appoint a special prosecutor in the case.

The Howard Beach attack and the police failure to take meaningful action has sparked continued meetings in the city. In Brooklyn 200 people attended a church meeting December 30. The same evening another 200 attended a campus meeting initiated by the Black United Front and the Columbia University Students Against Racism and Apartheid. Later, a subcommittee voted to support the January 21 Day of Outrage.

Stun guns used at 106th Precinct

NEW YORK — Two cops were grilling him. "One of them punched me in the eye and rammed my head into the wall. Another one threw me on the table."

One cop pinned him down on the table while the other burned him repeatedly with a stun gun, which can deliver an electrical charge of up to 50,000 volts.

A city medical examiner later found 49 electrical burns on his stomach, back, buttocks, and thighs.

Finally, to stop the torture, Mark Davidson, a Black youth then 17, confessed to a crime he hadn't committed — selling \$10 of marijuana to an undercover precinct narc earlier in the day.

Davidson was acquitted of the charge, and the two cops were convicted of assault and coercion. They got off with terms of two to six years and were released on bail pending appeal.

Meanwhile, as the facts about David-

son's torture became public, three other young Black men came forward and testified they had been subjected to the same stun gun treatment at the same precinct. Three more cops were indicted.

The brutalization of Davidson occurred in April 1985. The revelations about what happened to him and the other young men created a scandal in the city. Local papers dubbed the station house the "torture precinct."

The "torture precinct" was the 106th. It covers several Black communities in New York's borough of Queens.

It also covers Howard Beach, the lily-white community where racist thugs unleashed the lynch attack that ended with the killing of Michael Griffith.

The 106th Precinct is responsible for conducting the investigation of that murderous attack. — H.R.