

U.S. blocks Central American talks

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The U.S. government has succeeded in preventing a scheduled June 25-26 meeting of the presidents of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala. Washington broke up the meeting after failing to unite the latter four presidents behind its contra war policy in Nicaragua.

The background to the planned meeting begins last fall, when the Sandinistas' defeat of the contras accelerated and the U.S. government crisis exploded in Washington. After months of silence, the Contadora Group, made up of the governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela, decided to reopen negotiations for an end to the military conflicts in Central America.

In January 1987 representatives of the Contadora Group and representatives of the governments of Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, the United Nations, and the Organization of American States toured all five Central American nations to discuss the possibility of such negotiations.

The Nicaraguan government welcomed the tour and urged immediate steps to begin talks.

But the governments of El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica said negotiations were not possible. Their stance was in line with Washington's continued opposition to a negotiated solution to the contra war and its determination to find a way to militarily overthrow Nicaragua's revolutionary government.

Following the Contadora tour, Oscar Arias, president of Costa Rica, announced that he had a new "peace plan." The Sandinistas initially had a negative assessment of the plan, whose exact contents were not known. The Sandinista daily *Barricada*, for example, wrote February 14 that

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S. Korean people demand: 'Down with dictatorship!'

BY ERNEST HARSCH

After nearly two weeks of continual street mobilizations against South Korea's dictatorship, President Chun Doo Hwan met June 24 with the leader of the main parliamentary opposition party, Kim Young Sam, in an effort to diffuse the protests.

But that had little immediate impact. Tens of thousands of people continued to turn out for rallies and demonstrations in Seoul and other cities. Some 20,000 students from campuses across the capital met at Seoul's Yonsei University to lay plans for a "grand march for peace" on June 26.

Meanwhile, Washington's assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, Gaston Sigur, arrived in Seoul with the express purpose of bringing an end to the street protests. With that aim, U.S. officials have been urging talks between the regime and parliamentary opposition figures.

So far, South Korean officials have indicated that they are considering freeing the hundreds of demonstrators arrested since the first big protests on June 10. A house arrest order against Kim Dae Jung, another leading opposition politician, was lifted.

But these concessions fall far short of the protesters' main demands for an end to dictatorial rule and the holding of direct presidential elections. Currently, the president is chosen by a 5,000-member electoral college that is weighted heavily in favor of the ruling Democratic Justice Party, a formation set up by Chun and other military officers.

"The Korean people want a president who is elected by the Korean people," a student activist at Seoul National University summed up the protesters' aim.

If the talks between Chun and Kim Young Sam do not move in such a direction, one of Kim's aides predicted, "The people will get very angry, and demonstrations will increase."

These protests for democratic rights have already been among the largest in South Korean history.

As in many previous upsurges, they



Part of mass sit-in in Seoul to demand democratic rights

have been spearheaded by university students. The national police headquarters estimated that some 90,000 students from 59 campuses participated in such protests.

But very quickly, the demonstrations drew in much broader layers of South Korean society — workers, housewives, professionals, vendors, taxi drivers, and many others fed up by decades of dictatorial rule.

On June 20, Buddhist monks joined pro-

testing students behind banners that declared, "We shall not be deceived," and, "Let's end military dictatorship." Like other protesters, the monks too were beaten by riot police.

Demonstrations have frequently grown into the tens of thousands. Authorities in the southern port city of Pusan estimated that one march there reached 80,000.

Although most foreign news coverage has concentrated on Seoul, demonstrations have also taken place in at least 32 other cities.

The initial demonstrations in Seoul were called by the National Coalition for a Democratic Constitution, which includes political parties, student organizations, labor leaders, religious figures, and human-rights groups.

Although it has not actively built the street demonstrations, one of the key forces in the coalition is Kim Young Sam's

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Trinidad unionists protest attacks

BY SAM MANUEL
AND ART YOUNG

FYZABAD, Trinidad — Singing "We Shall Overcome" and "Let Those Who Labor Hold the Reins of Power," a throng of 7,000, mostly trade unionists, joined in a June 19 Labor Day march here. The march and rally were organized by the two national trade union federations of this two-island country in the Caribbean: the Trinidad and Tobago Labour Congress and the Council of Progressive Trade Unions.

"All roads lead to Fyzabad," exclaimed banners and posters throughout the capital city of Port of Spain. We headed there with a lively busload of members of the Oilfield Workers' Trade Union caravan. Other union buses and cars, their banners and red flags waving in the wind, could be seen converging on Fyzabad.

This year's march and rally commemorated the 50th anniversary of the 1937 strike wave that swept through the West Indies and gave birth to the industrial unions in the region. It was the first major blow struck for independence against British colonialism in the Caribbean.

In Trinidad, the strikes were centered in this southern oil town, where striking oilfield workers fought the colonial police and two shiploads of British troops for several weeks. Their struggle led to the formation of nine national trade unions by the end of

1937.

This year's Labor Day march and rally took place in the midst of stepped-up attacks on the unions by the new Trinidad and Tobago government. In the 1986 legislative elections, the capitalist People's National Movement — which has ruled the country for the last 30 years — was defeated by a coalition of opposition parties, the National Alliance for Reconstruction.

Many workers hoped an NAR government would make some needed changes. The first six months of the NAR government, however, has shown that its policies are basically the same as the PNM.

Unemployment in the country continued to soar, now officially standing at 20 percent. The Oilfield Workers' Trade Union estimates that some 25,000 workers have lost their jobs in the past five years. Real wages have been reduced by 23 percent.

Government-backed legislation has taken away cost-of-living adjustments for public workers. Increasing numbers of unionists are simply being locked out by the employers.

The government has also begun selling state-owned companies to private buyers. The result has been to increase the number of unemployed workers.

As we talked with unionists in the various contingents, many told the *Militant* that they had come to show the bosses and

government their resolve to fight these attacks. An All-Trinidad Sugar and General Workers Union banner proclaimed, "We won't yield to lockouts."

A young woman explained that she was one of 160 sugar workers locked out at her mill. "I am here to show them that they

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Women miners tour Britain

BY NORTON SANDLER

BARNESLEY, England — During a week-long tour of mining villages, a delegation of women coal miners and other union activists from the United States got a firsthand look at how members of Britain's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) are resisting attacks on their union.

Touring the coalfields were women miners Kipp Dawson from Pennsylvania, Alyson Kennedy and Bobbie Blaylock from Alabama, Libby Lindsay and Kathy Mickells from West Virginia, and Gene Byrge from Utah. They are members of the United Mineworkers of America (UMWA), except for Byrge, who works in a nonunion mine. All are active in the Coal Employment Project (CEP), an organization that helps women get and maintain coal mining jobs.

Also part of the delegation were Mike Karaba, a UMWA member who works at the same mine as Dawson; Nebraska railworker Joe Swanson; and Pat Nixon, a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in Los Angeles. A three-person video crew from Kentucky headed by Jean Donahue filmed the tour.

The delegation was hosted by activists from the Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC). Miners' wives and other supporters of the NUM formed the WAPC during the 1984-85 NUM strike.

WAPC activists Betty Cook, Gwenn White, Betty Heathfield, and Ann Scargill attended last year's CEP conference in Paintsville, Kentucky, and extended the invitation for miners from the United States to come to Britain.

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British unionists back suit against FBI

BY JOE SWANSON

BARNSELEY, England — Important new international support has been won in the fight against illegal activity by the U.S. government spy agencies.

During a recent trip to Britain, union activists who are supporters of the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF) talked to dozens of people about the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance lawsuit against Attorney General Edwin Meese, the FBI, and other government spy agencies.

British rail workers, coal miners, and activists in Women Against Pit Closures are now among the new sponsors of the PRDF.

As the discussions unfolded, many British activists noted the similarity of attacks against working people in the two countries. They often explained that their government is trying to return nationalized industries to private hands. They also talked about how the British government tries to maintain as much secrecy as possible about its dealings, including its collaboration with the CIA and other U.S. spy agencies.

Most people had never heard of the SWP and YSA lawsuit, let alone the victory in the case last August, when a federal judge found the government guilty of illegal activity and ordered it to pay damages. But almost everyone we talked to was interested in learning about that victory and saw it as a step forward for all working people in the United States in our continuous battle to maintain democratic rights.

Miners sign up

A highlight of the PRDF work took place on the last afternoon of the trip. As the 100th annual Yorkshire-area National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) gala here in Barnsley was winding down, I began a discussion with Peter Harrison, a retired coal miner from Nottingham.

I had first seen Peter two days earlier at a reception organized for our tour, in Chesterfield. Mal Finch, a well-known entertainer, was leading a packed room of Women Against Pit Closures activists and U.S. unionists in singing political songs. A handful of men were also in the room. I noticed this older man enjoying himself and singing as enthusiastically as anyone there. That was Peter.

Though retired from the coal mines, Peter is not retired as an NUM leader. A former local elected official in the coal union, Peter now devotes a good deal of his time to discussions with younger NUM members.

After I explained to him what the case was about and what the court victory

means for trade unionists, antiwar fighters, and socialists in the United States, Peter quickly signed a PRDF sponsor card.

He then began calling his "young lads" over. Peter explained to a group of miners in their early 20s what the case was about.

"This is an American socialist who needs your support, sign this card," he said.

After they looked at the literature for about 10 minutes, eight miners signed up as sponsors. The group had to leave quickly to catch their bus for the return trip to Nottingham, but they took additional PRDF literature and endorser cards with them.

Another new PRDF sponsor is Roy Butlin, chairman of the Coalville Branch of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR). I first met Butlin on a trip to Britain toward the end of the 1984-85 coal strike. He was active at that time in organizing support for the miners among rail workers. This included trying to prevent coal from being shipped by rail.

At the annual Guards and Shunters (brakemen-conductors and switchmen)

Conference in Blackpool, June 12-13, Butlin and I had a chance to talk about the PRDF case. He signed a sponsor card, bought a copy of *A Fight for Political Rights*, the booklet that contains the judge's decision in the PRDF case, and took material to distribute in the area where he works and lives.

A couple of rail workers were also signed up as sponsors at a meeting of a London branch of NUR where I was given an opportunity to make a brief presentation on the case.

A total of 26 new sponsors for the PRDF were signed up during the trip. They include David Hopper, general secretary of the Durham-area NUM; Tyrone O'Sullivan, branch secretary of the Tower NUM; and Women Against Pit Closures activists Kim Young, Lynn Dennett, and Anne Suddick. Much follow-up work is needed for the dozens of other activists we had initial discussions with.

The trip showed the potential for winning considerable international backing for the fight against U.S. government spy agencies.



Joe Swanson

Militant/Holbrook Mahn

Trinidad unionists protest attack

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can't break us," she said.

A member of the Public Services Association said, "This union came to protest the cuts in public services." He added, "Our union also faces a special problem in that many of our members are women workers. They have been the hardest hit. The bosses say women should be in the home or that they can take less pay."

A member of the Communications and Transport Workers union felt that the biggest problem was that the companies were simply refusing to bargain and that the government was backing them.

One banner carried by members of the oil workers' union said, "Fight Apartheid from South Africa to Trinidad and Tobago." As one member of their contingent, who had worked in the oil fields for 15 years, explained, "Our union has been directly involved in the struggle against apartheid. It is an international struggle."

Small farmers

Members of the National Federation of Farmers Associations also participated in the march. NFOFA represents small farmers who have one acre or less of land. Since the beginning of the year the government has been trying to evict 150 farmers and their families in the northern part of the country. The farmers have staged a 24-hour vigil outside the Ministry of Agriculture for the last 85 days.

Many workers carried placards calling for the merger of the two trade union federations. Members of the Aviation, Communications and Allied Workers Union

said they had come to show their support for unity and solidarity in the union movement.

One of them said, "The bosses are united and the workers are divided. Without unity we cannot win."

At the rally leaders of the Council of Progressive Trade Unions pressed publicly for the merger. On the other hand, leaders of the Trinidad and Tobago Labour Congress (TTLCC) and its affiliated unions expressed doubt that a merger would be achieved any time soon.

The rally assembled at the very junction in Fyzabad where 50 years ago colonial police attempted to arrest Tubal Uriah Butler, founder and leader of the Oilfield Workers' Trade Union, while he spoke to strikers. With a statue of Butler behind him, George Weekes, the outgoing president general of the OWTU addressed the rally.

"Fifty years ago," Weekes said, "when the police attempted to arrest Butler at this very junction, he asked the workers, 'Would you let them take me?' The workers answered, 'No!'" Weekes continued, "Today it is not the individual Butler who is threatened. They want to arrest our struggle for dignity and true economic independence. I ask you today, would you let them take the spirit of Butler." The workers shouted back, "No!"

'Death to apartheid'

The crowd cheered and chanted, "Death to apartheid," as Fred Dube of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, was introduced. Dube declared, to the applause of the unionists, "We are very

happy to be here with you in Trinidad today. We in the ANC have long held the view that no people's struggle can be successful unless it is led by the workers. The labor movement is the vanguard of any people's struggle."

Other speakers included Errol McLeod, who will replace Weekes as president general of the OWTU; Vernon Glean, president general of the TTLCC; and Basdeo Pandey, former head of the sugar workers' union and now a minister in the NAR government.

In addition to leaders of Trinidad and Tobago unions, the march included delegations representing unions from throughout the Caribbean. They will be attending an international trade union conference to be held here June 22-24.

By the time of the rally, delegations had arrived from Martinique and Guadeloupe, Barbados, Antigua, Suriname, Guyana, and Cuba. Others are expected from Jamaica, Dominica, Nicaragua, Curaçao, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Aruba. In addition to the Caribbean region, trade unionists are also here from West Africa, the United States, and Britain.

Theme of conference

The theme of the conference will be the international debt crisis and its devastating effects on working people in the region. Two important forums will be presented parallel with the conference. The first will feature Fred Dube of the ANC on the trade union movement and the fight against apartheid. The second will be a panel discussion on the situation in the Caribbean since the 1983 invasion of Grenada.

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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 first-hand coverage of events in other countries, such as Cuba, Burkina Faso, and the Philippines. In addition, regular on-the-scene reports come from our Nicaragua Bureau.

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Political-rights fighters rally in N.Y. to support suit against FBI spying

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

NEW YORK — Trade unionists, fighters for Black and Puerto Rican rights, opponents of the U.S.-backed war in Nicaragua, and activists against apartheid rallied here June 20 in defense of political rights.

The rally was sponsored by the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF) to build support for the historic suit by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance against government harassment.

The speakers reflected the broad support the suit has won. They included Angela Sanbrano, national coordinator of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador; Daniel Perez, Connecticut director of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and a leader of the victorious strike at Uretek in New Haven; and Nubar Hovsepian, national coordinator of the Committee for Justice to Stop McCarran Act Political Deportations.

Leonard Boudin, a long-time defender of political rights and the attorney for the SWP explained that the federal court in its August 1986 decision in the suit "held that the government could not use material secured through clearly illegal activities" such as break-ins and the use of informers. The fight today, he concluded, is to force the government to seal off hundreds of thousands of illegally obtained files.

Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican-born leader of the Socialist Workers Party, who recently won a work permit and Social Security card after a 10-year fight against government attempts to deport him, represented the PRDF.

The victory in this case, Marroquín explained, comes as the governmental crisis arising from the U.S.-backed war in Nicaragua is deepening. This crisis, like the victory in the suit, helps give working people political space to fight against government policies at home and abroad.

Greetings were read to the rally from Gil Green, a longtime national committee member of the Communist Party. Green was one of the first CP victims jailed under the notorious Smith gag act. He apologized for not being present due to illness in his family.

The aim of government agencies such as the FBI, Green explained, "is to use their unlawfully gathered millions of pages of files against individuals and organizations — in order to frame up individuals, as did happen, and to disrupt organizations. I therefore join with all others to block the efforts of Edwin Meese, the FBI, and the CIA from using their illegally gotten files and from continuing their nefarious practices."

Green concluded, "I therefore strongly support the proposed injunction initiated by the SWP to bar use of FBI files."

Elombe Brath, a long-time fighter for Black rights and a leader of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition, hailed the decision in this suit as a victory for all political activists. After reviewing the role of the political police in disrupting the Black movement, he called for solidarity with the SWP and YSA. A positive resolution in this case, Brath concluded, will enable all people to function more freely in the political arena.

Jim Phelan, general chairman of the United Transportation Union at Metro North, also spoke. An outspoken opponent of mandatory drug testing, Phelan told the rally that "opposition to drug testing is not support for drug use on the job." The unions, he explained, support the development of programs to help workers overcome problems with drugs and alcohol. The companies, he said, are not drug testing "for humanitarian reasons." Their drug testing is part of a drive to change and worsen working conditions.

The final speaker was Rafael Anglada López, one of the attorneys for the 16 Puerto Rican independence activists facing frame-up charges in Hartford, Connecticut.

Anglada outlined some of the government's violations of these activists' basic rights. Preventive detention was used against all of the defendants. Nine of the 15

were in jail for 16 months before winning bail. Two others, he reminded the audience, are still being held without bail — almost two years after their arrest.

Although all but two of the defendants were arrested in Puerto Rico, the federal government insists they be tried in Connecticut. This, Anglada explained, is because Washington knows no Puerto Rican jury will convict these patriots.

Anglada called on supporters of political rights to participate in the August 30 demonstration in Hartford, Connecticut, to commemorate the second anniversary of the arrests.

The rally also heard greetings from Fred Dube, a member of the African National Congress of South Africa, fighting for tenure at the State University of New York at



Militant photos by Michael Baumann
Left to right, Rafael Anglada López, Nubar Hovsepian, and Angela Sanbrano spoke at event.

Stony Brook.

Greetings were also received from Leslie Cagan, national coordinator of the Mobilization for Survival; George Harrison, long-time fighter for Irish freedom; Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; Lois Galgay Reckitt, executive vice-president of the National Organization for Women; Rev.

Ben Chavis; and Edith Tiger, director of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee.

More than \$3,000 was pledged at the rally, which, together with other pledges received beforehand, brought the total raised in New York for the PRDF to more than \$8,900.

Suit fund aims for 4,000 sponsors, \$90,000

BY JOHN STUDER

Over the last two months the Political Rights Defense Fund has been conducting a national drive to win 4,000 new sponsors and to raise \$90,000 to help cover legal expenses and the costs of publicizing and winning support for its work.

This campaign is at the heart of the PRDF's current efforts to build support around its two major cases. One is the historic decision by federal Judge Thomas Griesa finding the FBI's decades-long spying and disruption operation against the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance unconstitutional. The other is the fight of Mexican-born socialist Héctor Marroquín to win permanent residence, free from government victimization.

As a central focus for this campaign, the PRDF is organizing broad public rallies in more than 35 cities across the country. Some of these rallies have already occurred, while the majority will be taking place between now and July 19.

With one month still to go in the drive, impressive results have already been obtained. The committee has so far won 3,107 new endorsers out of its overall goal of 4,000.

One aim of the combined sponsor and fundraising drive is to bring the PRDF's cases into the labor movement.

A letter the committee recently received from a supporter provides an example of the kind of support being won: Fred White is a member of Local 6144 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in Atlanta. In addition to his own sponsor card, White sent in 17 others from members of his local.

He explained that the local has four chapters, including city employees, workers at Grady Hospital, and non-teaching employees of the school board.

"Three of the chapter chairpersons have endorsed," White wrote. "The secretary-treasurer and recording secretary of the local endorsed." He reports having won the support of "the chair of the Political Action Committee of AFSCME; the editor of *Union Power*, the local's monthly newspaper; and James Howard, a former City Council member who is employed by national AFSCME as the local's legislative director."

White concludes, "At the executive board meeting on June 3 the local voted to endorse PRDF and donate \$50. James McKinney, president of Local 1644, has agreed to speak at the upcoming PRDF rally."

In April the PRDF received a letter from Richard Sawyer, business manager of the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County, in California, announcing that the council had voted to endorse the PRDF at its last meeting.

Other union bodies that have voted to endorse in the last couple months include AFSCME Local 470 in Boston, the chapters of the Coalition of Labor Union Women in Seattle and Portland, the Pacific

Northwest Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1105 and International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 37, both in Seattle.

Dozens of union officials and hundreds of rank-and-file unionists have become sponsors of the committee. Some unionists have circulated sponsor cards like petitions among their coworkers, either during breaks at work or at union functions.

Thousands of dollars have been raised from supporters in the labor movement. The hundreds of dollars contributed by union locals; donations by local officials, such as the \$200 contributed by Edgar Romney, manager-secretary of Local 23-25 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in New York; and the \$1 and \$5 donations from union members are all important new sources of funds for the committee.

In addition to new sponsors in the labor movement, hundreds of supporters have been found among farmers; members of the movement in solidarity with struggles in Central America; Black, Puerto Rican, and

women's rights fighters; sanctuary and immigrants' rights activists; and other political figures.

These were new sponsors, along with those who have been supporters of the PRDF before Judge Griesa's decision was handed down last fall, have been the backbone of the \$90,000 fund drive.

The fund has received only a handful of large contributions so far — one of \$5,000 and four of \$1,000. Still, over \$30,000, more than one-third of the overall goal, has already been received, and the PRDF has pledges from supporters around the country promising tens of thousands more.

In some cities, unionized workers have pledged as much as a week's wages to the fund. Others have determined to give whatever they can. Every contribution, from \$1 to \$1,000, is a step toward getting the truth out about these important political rights fights, and, no matter how small, deals a blow to the efforts of the FBI and other government spy outfits to harass and disrupt union organizing and political activity.

John Studer is the executive director of the PRDF.

Rallies to defend democratic rights against government spying

Atlanta

Sat., June 27, 7 p.m.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, 450 Auburn Ave. NE.

Translation to Spanish. Donation requested. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

Baltimore

Sat., June 27, 7 p.m.

Centennial Caroline Street United Methodist Church, 1029 E. Monument.

For more information call (301) 235-0013.

Charleston, W. Va.

Sun., June 28, 7 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church, 1105 Quarrier.

For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Los Angeles

Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m.

675 Park View.

For more information call (213) 380-9460.

Newark, N.J.

Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m.

(reception at 6:30 p.m.)

Metropolitan Ecumenical Ministry, 404 University St.

All events sponsored by the Political Rights Defense Fund.

Translation to Spanish. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

Philadelphia

Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m.

SEIU Hall, 1313 Vine St.

Translation to Spanish. Donation: \$3. For more information call (215) 225-0213.

Portland, Ore.

Sun., June 28, 6 p.m.

(reception at 5 p.m.)

2205 Lombard.

Translation to Spanish. Donation: \$3. For more information call (503) 233-5905.

San Francisco

Sun., June 28, 4 p.m.

(reception at 3 p.m.)

ILWU Local 6 Hall, 255 9th St.

Translation to Spanish. Donation: reception and rally, \$5; rally only, \$2. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

San Jose, Calif.

Sat., July 11, 7 p.m.

(reception at 6 p.m.)

2102 Old Almaden Rd.

Translation to Spanish. Donation: \$3. For more information call (408) 988-4007.

Kwangju: a symbol for Korean struggle

BY ERNEST HARSCH

As in other parts of South Korea, the residents of the southwestern city of Kwangju have repeatedly come out into the streets to demand an end to the U.S.-backed dictatorship.

During one action on the evening of June 20, a march two miles long developed along the avenue leading to city hall. Police attacked, and young demonstrators defended themselves with stones and gasoline bombs. Older residents cheered them on.

Although these protests closely mirror those in other cities, Kwangju holds a special significance for the South Korean struggle for democratic rights.

It was there, a little more than seven years ago, that the people were briefly victorious in throwing off the controls of the repressive regime in Seoul. In addition, the suppression of the Kwangju uprising became a symbol of the brutality of the military dictatorship — and of the direct and decisive role of Washington in upholding that dictatorship.

1980 rebellion

The Kwangju insurrection took place in May 1980, in the midst of a broader, countrywide upsurge for democratic rights. Just a few days earlier, the regime of Gen. Chun Doo Hwan had extended martial law to all of South Korea.

In Kwangju itself, police and troops had already killed about 100 people. Unable to demonstrate peacefully, the residents of the city rose up May 21. Some 200,000 surged through the streets, and many armed themselves. The police and military were forced out of the city, which fell under the control of the demonstrators.

Popular committees of residents and students organized mass meetings at which demands for Chun's ouster predominated. With Kwangju as its center, the revolt quickly spread to other cities and towns in the region.

Fearing for the survival of his regime, General Chun ordered his troops to retake Kwangju. And he did so with the direct backing of Washington.

Washington's green light

U.S. Gen. John Wickham, the head of the joint U.S.-South Korean military command, released some 8,000 South Korean troops from their regular duties to help put down the rebellion.

Koreans in Los Angeles rally in solidarity with S. Korean upsurge

BY LISA AHLBERG

LOS ANGELES — Echoing the demands of student demonstrators in the streets of South Korea, about 1,000 Korean-Americans demonstrated here in L.A.'s Korea Town June 22 to press for democratic reforms, including free elections and an end to the military dictatorship there.

Signs and banners, mainly in Korean, demanded, "Down with dictatorship," "No tear gas," and "Stop supporting the murderous regime in Seoul."

Members of the Korean Students Association at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) carried a banner pointing to U.S. complicity with the regime. It said, "Stop U.S. intervention in South Korea."

The demonstration was called by the Korean Federation of Los Angeles, which includes 22 organizations based in the Korean community. More than 400,000 Korean-Americans and immigrants live in Los Angeles, the largest concentration in the United States. The federation was supportive of the South Korean government until last year, when it broke with the Chun regime.

Won Koo Chang, a student activist from UCLA, told the rally that U.S. policies in South Korea, Central America, and South Africa "are all related."

More than 100 police converged on demonstrators as rally participants attempted to hold a candlelight vigil. They lined up in front of the demonstrators and prevented it from taking place.



Kwangju residents slain by troops in crushing of 1980 revolt

They did so with extreme brutality. On May 27, South Korean paratroopers and infantrymen, using tanks, helicopters, machine guns, and assault weapons, stormed Kwangju. They massacred hundreds.

The regime itself admits that 200 were killed. Unofficial estimates put the figure as high as 2,000.

Though the uprising was crushed, bitter opposition to the dictatorship remains deep in Kwangju. During a series of countrywide demonstrations in 1986 demanding direct elections, more than 50,000 residents again filled the downtown plaza that has been known as "Democracy Square" since the 1980 rebellion.

Interest in the experience and lessons of

S. Korean protests hit dictatorship

Continued from front page

Reunification Democratic Party (RDP). A capitalist party, the RDP looks to Washington to put pressure on the Chun regime to make some reforms. Many student activists, however, have raised demands against Washington, in particular protesting the presence of 40,000 U.S. troops in South Korea.

After Chun agreed to meet with Kim Young Sam, the RDP leader appealed to activists to postpone the mass march set for June 26. He was ignored.

Police 'restraint'?

Much of the coverage of the South Korean protests in the big-business press has praised the Chun regime's "restraint."

But the fact that the police have not yet used gunfire against demonstrators has more to do with Chun's desire to avoid an international outcry than any reluctance to use armed force. It was the very same regime that massacred hundreds of protesters in the southern city of Kwangju in 1980 (see accompanying article).

But now, with the 1988 Olympics scheduled to take place in Seoul, the Chun regime is being more cautious. Many countries have already discussed boycotting those games, and a bloody crackdown on dissent could scuttle them entirely.

Nevertheless, the riot police have shown considerable brutality in dealing with the current protests. Arrested demonstrators are often routinely beaten and kicked. Entire city areas have been blanketed with a potent tear gas known as pepper gas, affecting protesters and bystanders alike.

One 20-year-old student was hit in the head by a tear-gas canister. He is brain-dead, but the authorities are keeping him on a life-support machine, at least as long as the protests continue.

Government officials have threatened harsher measures. On June 19, Prime Minister Lee Han Key said that if the unrest did not end, the government would make an "extraordinary decision" to prevent "social chaos."

Washington has so far counseled its South Korean ally not to proclaim martial law. "We do not want to see the military involved," Sigur stated before his departure for Seoul.

Although U.S. officials are making a show of favoring "dialogue" and "compromise," their concern is not for the democratic rights of South Koreans. For example, U.S. Ambassador James Lilley (a former CIA official) has stated publicly that the South Korean regime's military security is more important than democratic reforms.

What the White House and Pentagon fear is that a precipitous crackdown could simply end up generating more popular opposition, not only against Chun, but also against his U.S. backers.



Demonstrator in Seoul confronts police

Minn. Indians protest four murders

BY RAMONA OLSON
AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

MINNEAPOLIS — A series of rallies and meetings in the Indian community here have protested the rapes and murders of four Indian women and the refusal of the police to carry out a top-priority investigation.

Three of the victims were Kathleen Bullman, murdered July 29, 1986; Angeline Whitebird-Sweet, murdered on April 12 of this year; and Angela Green, who was murdered on April 29. The Minneapolis police say that these are serial killings, the work of a single murderer.

According to Pat Sheppo of the Indian Youth and Elders Education Project, Fayann Erickson — who was murdered June 14, 1986, in the same manner as the others — should also be included among the victims. So far, the police have not done so.

Eugene Robinson, an employee of the American Indian Center, reported at the April 30 community meeting that the center had received an anonymous letter February 14. The author vowed to "kill every Indian woman I see." Police have ignored the letter.

Instead the police have blamed the victims. "Any woman who drinks all night in a bar and then staggers out onto the streets and takes a ride from a stranger is an idiot," was a typical comment by Minneapolis

Kwangju is common throughout South Korea. For example, in Pusan, the second-largest city, a recent exhibition of photographs of the Kwangju rebellion drew huge crowds, which police sought to disperse with tear gas.

Besides providing a symbol of resistance, Kwangju has also been a factor in recent years in the increasingly open opposition to U.S. military and economic domination over South Korea.

Foreign journalists covering the current demonstrations report that many student activists — and other citizens — hold Washington responsible for the Kwangju massacre.

This has led many South Koreans to oppose, or at least question, the ongoing presence in the country of 40,000 U.S. troops. The phony claim that the U.S. forces are there to "protect" the country from a possible attack from North Korea no longer goes very far.

Reflecting the growing anti-imperialist sentiment among South Koreans, demonstrators have burned effigies of President Reagan. The chants, "Yankee go home!" and "Drive out the Americans!" have been heard repeatedly.

Police Chief Tony Bouza.

More than 35 percent of the victims of unsolved murders here are Indians, who make up 2 percent of the population. Far from protecting the community, the Minneapolis police harass it. Last summer, for instance, the police attacked a wedding party in an Indian neighborhood, arresting and injuring a number of guests.

The community meetings protesting the killings have been organized by Women of Nations, Indian Youth and Elders Education Project, the Indigenous Women's Network, and others. Individuals from the surrounding community have also attended the events.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) Patrol, originally founded in 1967 and reactivated last November after a series of violent attacks on Indians, is also participating in the protests. Dozens of young men and women have joined the patrol in the aftermath of the murders.

The patrol seeks to help people in the community, offering rides and other services. It also keeps pressure on the cops to find the killer or killers.

A Teamsters' local here has donated three walkie-talkies to the AIM Patrol.

An Honor the Women Survivors Fund has been established to help the families of the murder victims with burial expenses, legal fees, and care of children.

'It's unusual to meet women who know about mining'

BY NORTON SANDLER

CASTLEFORD, England — "It's unusual for me to be talking to women who are so knowledgeable about mining."

Colin McDonald was enjoying the June 17 visit by a group of women miners and other union activists from the United States to the Kellingley mine here. McDonald is an officer of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) local at Kellingley.

The mines in this country are owned by the government and operated by the British Coal Board. Kellingley is a large mine employing more than 1,800 NUM members. No women work in Britain's mines.

After an early breakfast in Kellingley's canteen, a coal board official took the U.S. delegation and Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) activists Barbara Smith, Dot Whitworth, Ann Scargill, and Dot Ryan upstairs to a conference room.

Standing in front of a large diagram of the mine, the official described the mining methods used at Kellingley.

The women miners started asking questions. Their knowledge of mining technique, equipment, and safety requirements underground impressed everyone in the room, including the WAPC members and several NUM members who had joined the meeting.

"I've got even more respect for them now, they really handled themselves well," WAPC activist Barbara Smith said.

At one point, the mine manager walked into the room. He explained that he had recently toured coalfields in Maryland, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

He was asked which mines he had visited. One had been U.S. Steel's Cumberland mine, in Kirby, Pennsylvania, which he described as "really impressive."

When Kathy Mickells, who is laid off from Cumberland, explained that the mine had been burning out of control for two weeks, the NUM miners in the room had a good laugh at the manager's expense.

We learned later that the coal board official has been using examples of his visit to the United States to try to push through changes at Kellingley that he claims will increase productivity. The story of the exchange between Mickells and the mine manager was circulated by area NUM members for a few days afterward.

Trip underground

The U.S. delegation, the WAPC activists, several union members, and a few coal board officials then changed clothes for a visit into the mine.

During the hour and a half the tour was underground, the U.S. miners carried on animated discussions with NUM members and among themselves about how the coal was being mined. Of particular concern was the different ways coal mines are ventilated in the two countries.

Here, too, there was much curiosity about the U.S. women. A few catcalls were heard, but most of the miners were glad to stop working and chat a few minutes. This was particularly true at the mine face, where everyone had a good look at the longwall equipment being used.

As we were leaving the mine, several hundred men, many in their early 20s, were waiting for the elevator to go down for the second shift. Earlier, Colin McDonald had explained to a few of us that since the end of the 1984-85 strike, many older union members, faced with the prospect of a number of mines being shut down, had been forced to take early retirement pay. Other, younger workers had transferred to Kellingley. The average age of Kellingley workers is now 31. At 33, McDonald is one of the youngest NUM local presidents.

Women miners accepted?

The group showered and reassembled for lunch. A coal board official asked how male miners in the United States accepted women miners.

"Once they saw I could do the work, I

didn't have much trouble," Utah miner Jean Byrge responded.

"We help each other," she continued, "if you scratch one of us, you scratch us all. The men on my crew expect me to do the work of a person my size, and my age. They don't expect me to do the work of someone 20 years younger and a foot taller."

A woman asked U.S. rail worker Joe Swanson what he thought of the trip underground. "Mining is a dangerous, dirty job," Swanson said. "I learned today that I could do the work, but I'd never want to go down there without being a member of a strong union."

U.S. women miners tour Britain

Continued from front page

Britain's mines are government-owned. The British Coal Board has closed over 40 mines since the end of the strike.

The first stop was a June 13 memorial meeting in Kent for Jack Collins, an NUM leader who recently died. Speakers at the event made many references to Margaret Thatcher's election two days earlier to a third term as Britain's prime minister. They also talked about the recent coal board announcement that one of Kent's few remaining mines would be closed.

On June 14 a reception was hosted in London by the Southwark Trade Union Council. WAPC activist Betty Heathfield made a presentation on the 1984-85 strike.

The next morning the tour split into two, with some heading for the Durham coalfields and the rest going to Wales.

WAPC activists met the group in Durham and arranged a visit to the NUM's offices. They also visited the Bemish Village mining museum.

Since 1908, NUM members have refused to allow coal to be mined more than five days a week. The board says it will open the large new Margam mine in Wales if the union will agree to a major overhaul in its work rules, including accepting the six-day week and a nine-hour day.

Tyrone O'Sullivan, secretary of the Tower Colliery NUM in Wales, is opposed to the changes. He told the tour that many mines in Wales have been closed since the end of the strike and that half of the 28,000 jobs in the area have been lost.

"The coal board promises jobs to miners, but I have no doubt they'll close other pits if Margam is opened," O'Sullivan said.

O'Sullivan had hoped to take the group on a tour of the Tower mine but the board wouldn't allow it. He thinks management was afraid the U.S. miners would tell British miners the truth about the conditions where they work. The board is touting U.S. mining methods as a way of increasing productivity in British mines.

North Yorkshire

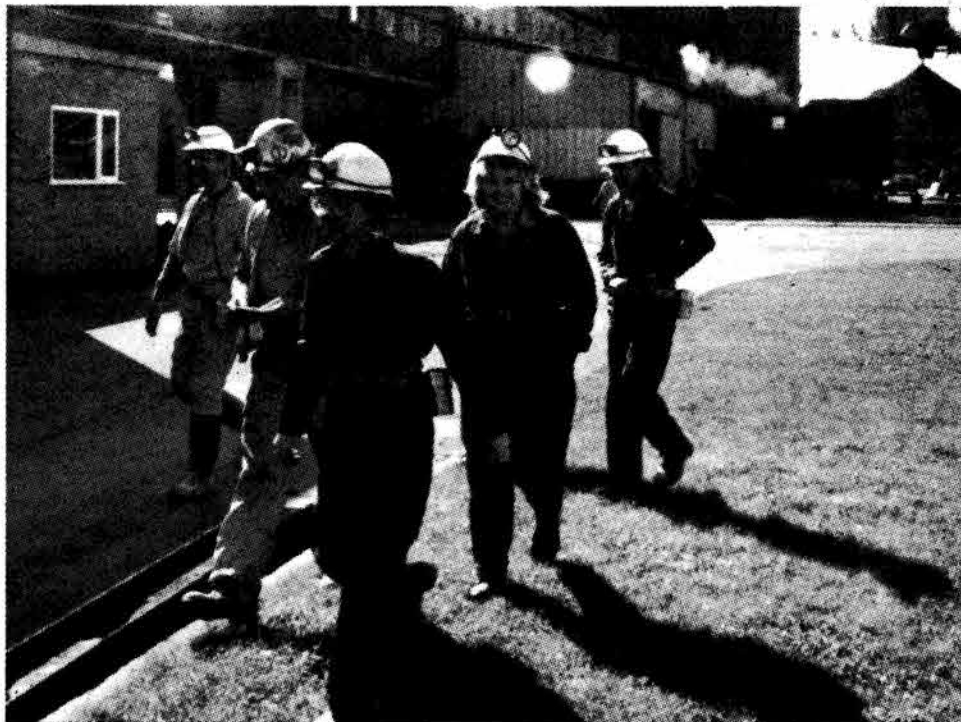
The tour came back together in North Yorkshire, where the group was hosted by activists from the Castleford Women's Centre.

The center arranged for everyone to get to the Kellingley mine early the next morning for a trip underground.

That evening the delegation attended a fundraiser for victimized miners. Three hundred NUM members are still fighting to get their jobs back after being dismissed at the end of the strike. A persistent effort by the NUM and the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign has led to several hundred being reinstated over the last two years.

The next stop was Chesterfield where NUM official John Burrows welcomed everyone to the union offices. He explained that they had just been notified that the board intends to close three of the six remaining mines in the Derbyshire area.

"We intend to fight this," Burrows said. "First through the review procedure, but I don't have a lot of faith in that working.



Militant/Norton Sandler

Mike Karaba (far left); Alyson Kennedy (in front); Ann Scargill of Women Against Pit Closures; and Libby Lindsay getting ready for trip into underground mine.

My hope is that the men who are under the threat and the men who are not immediately under threat will decide to fight it by other means. And I make no secret of it, I hope it is by industrial action."

Burrows added that he is "a political animal and the problems of industry can only be solved by political activity."

Many area NUM members are active in the Labour Party and had supported local Labour Party candidates Dennis Skinner and Tony Benn in the general election. Skinner and Benn, who were both reelected, are members of the left-wing Campaign Group of members of Parliament. The Chesterfield Labour Party Club is across the street from the NUM offices.

Asked what could be done internationally to aid the NUM's struggle, Burrows said, "You can aid in stopping the exporting of fuels from any country into this country. The biggest problem we are facing today is the import of foreign fuels at the expense of our own production and our own members' jobs."

Activists from several WAPC chapters got together that evening for a program at the Chesterfield Labour Party Club.

A singing group headed by Mal Finch provided the entertainment. Finch wrote the song, "Here we go for the women of the Working Class" to capture the fighting spirit British women displayed during the strike. Eight women from the North Staffs Miners' Wives Group also sang.

The tour attended a class of mostly women at the Chesterfield College of Technology and Arts. The women miners and oil worker Nixon described the process they had gone through to get jobs in basic industry. One student said, "If I'd thought I could get a job in the mines, I'd have gone down there years ago."

Several media interviews took place in Chesterfield. Members of the delegation were featured twice on British Broadcasting Corp. radio programs and BBC television did an interview with WAPC leader Betty Heathfield during lunch at the college.

NUM national headquarters

NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield spent nearly two hours talking to the delegation at the NUM's national headquarters in Sheffield.

A group of miners, many of whom had refused to participate in the strike, formed an organization called the Union of Democratic Miners (UDM). Heathfield explained that the UDM is "a breakaway sponsored by the coal board."

The UDM is mainly centered in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. "Their intention was not to have a regional breakaway but to establish an alternative national union. They attracted two or three thousand miners from other coalfields," Heathfield said. "They boasted that by the end of 1985 they would have 60,000 members. In affidavits at the end of 1986, they acknowledged that they had 27,000 members. Since that time we have had some return to the NUM fold."

"They will be around as an organization for awhile, but we are absolutely con-

vinced that in the remaining months of this year more and more UDM members will rejoin the NUM," he added.

Yorkshire Gala

The trip concluded at the 100th Yorkshire Gala in Barnsley June 20.

Miners and their families lined up behind colorful banners from area NUM locals for a march through town. Many had marching bands as part of their contingents. Banners from WAPC chapters were also prominent in the crowd.

Thousands of miners wore stickers that said, "Six days, no thanks."

The procession was led by NUM President Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire NUM President Jack Taylor, and Labour Party head Neil Kinnock. The route was packed with bystanders who waved to the procession as it climbed Barnsley's streets before arriving in the park where the rally was held.

About 2,000 crammed into a tent to listen to the talks. Thousands more milled around outside or visited the many tables and displays set up in the park.

NUM President Scargill said, "I am speaking today in the wake of what has to be acknowledged was a devastating defeat for the Labour Party. It's a fact that we suffered a setback. It's a setback that is going to be felt by millions of people throughout the length and breadth of Britain."

"We should say that while we will do everything we can in Parliament," Scargill said, "it will take the kind of extra-parliamentary activity that we sustained in the 1970s to oppose Tory government policies."

Urging NUM members to fight against the six-day workweek, Scargill said the board is readying plans to "close another 25 pits and axe another 25,000 jobs."

He also blasted the new code of conduct the government is trying to implement in the mines. Under this code miners can be disciplined for getting into an argument in a tavern or a park. He reported that the NUM's executive committee had unanimously voted to recommend that the union's July conference authorize job actions against the code.

Scargill noted the presence in the audience of Alain Simon, general secretary of the International Miners Organization. The NUM has been instrumental in setting up the IMO, which is made up of unions from Western and Eastern Europe and from several countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

"Nearly 5 million miners and energy workers belong to our organization [IMO]," Scargill said. "It has been criticized from one end of the globe to another by the capitalist media because it is bringing together miners everywhere, including those amazing women American miners who are in this audience today." Dawson, Lindsay, and Mickells attended last year's IMO conference as observers.

Labour Party leader Kinnock and Yorkshire NUM President Taylor also spoke. A message was read from Michael Srebnny, head of the miners union in the Soviet Union.

Midwest team reports good sales to meat-packers

BY RONI LeROUGE

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Two very important labor struggles are now taking place in meat-packing at the Iowa Beef Processors (IBP) plant in Dakota City, Nebraska,

between beckoning to scabs not to cross the picket line, the strikers told us about the deep cuts in pay and benefits IBP has wrung from the union in the past few years. They talked about the increasing

hired during the last strike are now supporting the union after experiencing the bad conditions in the plant.

While we were in Sioux City, an Interfaith Prayer Walk was held in which church leaders promoted reconciliation between the company and the union. Community activists spoke out against corporate greed and injustice. About 200 people participated, behind a banner that read, "If you want peace, fight for justice," in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

A team member who had recently participated in a coffee-picking brigade in Nicaragua showed slides on the trip at a Black woman's home in Sioux City. Her brother had been on a brigade last year. One person who attended was already a *Militant* subscriber.

Workers at a GM plant bought 10 copies. A woman worker, who had previously subscribed, decided to renew. She also helped convince a coworker to subscribe.

At a Levi plant, one *Militant* subscription and nine singles were sold, including one to the union president.

The 2,500 members of UFCW Local 304A at the John Morrell plant in Sioux Falls are out on a sympathy strike, honoring the pickets from the Sioux City plant. Since picket lines were small due to court injunctions, we decided to reach workers through community sales. We sold 60 *Militants* and several subscriptions at supermarkets.

Workers at Litton Microwave Cookware in Sioux Falls bought 11 *Militants*.

The team traveled to two other



Militant/Dean Denton

Sales at Dakota Pork plant in Huron, South Dakota.

packinghouses in South Dakota. At the Dakota Pork Industries plant, in Huron, three subscriptions and 14 copies were sold. One worker told us that Dakota Pork had just bought the plant. It was previously owned by Swift Independent, and before that by Armour.

At the time of the buy-out, workers took up to a \$2.25 per hour wage cut and now must pay their own health insurance. One

worker said the majority are UFCW members, but that they are currently working without a contract.

As we were leaving, a group of workers called us over to ask how the sale went. Two had bought the *Militant* and wanted to know why we chose to come to this area. We had a good discussion about the importance of a newspaper that takes the side of workers and farmers in struggle. They agreed.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

and at two John Morrell plants — one in Sioux City, Iowa, and the other in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The workers at these plants are fighting the employers' drive to boost their profits through speedup and cuts in wages and benefits. All three plants are organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union.

I recently participated in a team of *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* supporters to get firsthand information about these struggles and help win new readers to the socialist publications.

The three-person team sold a total of 27 *Militant* and *PM* subscriptions, as well as 211 copies of the *Militant*. Of these, 61 *Militants* and two subscriptions were sold at one afternoon shift change at the Swift Independent plant in Worthington, Minnesota.

Many of the papers and subscriptions were sold to working people at supermarkets, plant gates, picket lines, union halls, and by selling door-to-door at workers' homes. Of the 126 *Militants* sold at plant gates, 91 were to meat-packers.

Our first stop was the UFCW Local 222 picket line at the IBP plant in Dakota City, Nebraska. In

rate of injuries, which forced strikes in 1982 and 1984, and again in December 1986.

We visited Local 222's strike center. After looking through *Perspectiva Mundial* and noting the coverage of the victorious Watsonville, California, cannery workers' strike, a Hispanic woman bought a subscription to the Spanish-language monthly.

Two other strikers at the center bought subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Some of the workers we talked with on the picket lines were interested in discussing what it would take to win current battles and defend the future of their unions.

We noticed many out-of-state license plates on scabs' cars. One striker told us this reflects the difficulty the company is having getting people from the local community to scab.

"IBP is not telling people about the labor dispute when they recruit for employment. They're not telling them about the \$6-an-hour wages. These poor families are coming in from all over without a way to return once they see what the real situation is," he said.

The strikers noted that many workers who had either crossed the picket line earlier or who were

Puerto Rico: cops plead guilty in murder case

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Six former police officers have pleaded guilty to murder and perjury charges in connection with the 1978 killings of two independence activists at Cerro Maravilla. Two more remain on trial.

All eight were to stand trial on charges of first degree murder and perjury. The six agreed to a plea-bargaining arrangement where they pleaded guilty to second degree murder and perjury. Seven of the eight defendants in the case are already serving time in federal prison on perjury charges.

In 1978 the two *independentistas*, Carlos Soto Arrivi, 18, and Arnaldo Darío Rosado, 24, were ambushed by the police on the remote mountain top of Cerro Maravilla.

The third person with them, Alejandro González Malavé, was in fact a police agent who had infiltrated the independence movement and lured them to the mountain. Testimony in preliminary hearings has established that the police discussed killing the two *independentistas* before they arrived at Cerro Maravilla, which is the site of a TV relay station.

The two were killed at close range after they had thrown down their weapons, surrendered and were on their knees. The police originally claimed that the two youths were killed in a shoot-out. An elaborate cover-up was organized by the police.

Thorough investigations are rare here in cases of police brutality, but this case was different. A popular outcry demanding the truth forced government officials to finally pursue the case. At first Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló of the New Progressive Party (PNP) did nothing to investigate the murders, which he called a "triumph for law and order."

Then under mounting pressure the liberal opposition, the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), focused its 1980 election campaign on government corruption, with Cerro Maravilla at the center. "Cerro Maravilla was a major aid to their campaign," Charles Hey Maestre of the Puerto Rican Institute of Civil Rights told the *Militant*. "It brought down Governor Romero."

The new PPD administration then launched an investigation.

The police lies survived several rounds of hearings. Eventually a civilian technician who was working at the relay station at the time of the assassinations came forward. He requested and received immunity from charges of perjury, which he had already committed. He testified that he had heard not one but two rounds of shooting and that the police had coached his previous testimony.

After this broke the case open, the cops involved in the murders and the cover-up began changing their stories to save their own skins.

The exact terms of the plea-bargaining agreement are secret. At present it does not appear that the ex-cops involved will be forced to tell everything they know about the case. This has led to resentment among the families of the victims.

The *San Juan Star* quoted Pedro Juan Soto, the father of Carlos Soto, as saying, "The question from the beginning was would they talk? I don't like the alternative of letting them plead guilty without telling

who else was involved. I think that many of them know a lot. Now they will not talk."

After the current trial, the central remaining question is who in the police department and the Romero administration was involved in the cover-up. Special Independent Prosecutor Alejandro Salgado Rivera has said that his office will continue the investigation of the murder and the cover-up.

Summer subscription renewal drive is off to a good beginning

BY JIM WHITE

In the few days since we closed the scoreboard for the spring subscription campaign, the *Militant* business office has received 43 subscription renewals. This fact bodes well for the summer renewal drive.

This drive, like the one last winter, is important to winning long-term readers and supporters. The vast majority of the more than 6,000 people who bought subscriptions during the spring campaign have just been introduced to the *Militant*. A 12-week subscription affords a good introduction to the paper, but personal discussion can also give an additional boost to winning long-term readers.

The results of the spring drive bear this out. Of the 6,343 *Militant* subscriptions, 841 were renewals. Well over half came in on subscription blanks distributed by *Militant* supporters, rather than the forms sent out by the business office.

If supporters of the *Militant* in every city organize renewal teams at least once a week this summer, we will take another step in winning supporters and partisans of the paper.

Right now is the time to get in touch with those readers who subscribed early in the spring. Two hundred subscriptions expired this week; by Labor Day another 4,000 are scheduled to end, followed by 1,500 more in September. Timely phone calls and fol-

low-up helped us win more than 1,000 renewals last winter.

Every subscriber will receive six notices with the paper as the subscription winds down. With this issue, 2,693 of these letters, in six different colors, are going out. Next week more than 3,100 will be mailed, and we will maintain that level through August. (If you are a subscriber and do not want to be bothered with all the notices, they are easy to avoid: renew early.)

For *Militant* renewals of six months or longer, there is a special offer on *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. Anyone who gets one of these long-term renewals is entitled to a free copy of one of the five issues of *New International*. The subscriber just designates which issue on the renewal form.

The articles in each book-length issue of *New International* address many of the most important political questions facing working people, the same issues that win readers to the *Militant*. The *Militant* renewal form also gives readers a chance to subscribe to *New International* and get the upcoming issue featuring the article, "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop," by Steve Clark.

We will report on the progress of the drive over the summer. If you are a reader of the *Militant* and would like to get involved, see the directory on page 16 for the city nearest you.

By Malcolm X



By Any Means Necessary	\$5.95
Malcolm X on Afro-American History	\$2.95
Malcolm X Talks to Young People	\$0.75
Two Speeches by Malcolm X	\$0.75
Malcolm X Speaks	\$5.95
Autobiography of Malcolm X	\$3.50

Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 16 or by mail from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Include 75 cents for postage and handling.

How 'Baby M' case relates to the working-class struggle

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The "Baby M" case has sparked a discussion among working people about society's responsibilities to children, what attitude to take toward surrogate-mother contracts, who has rights in custody cases, and how to end discrimination against women.

In the "Baby M" case, Mary Beth Whitehead signed a contract agreeing — for a \$10,000 fee — to be artificially inseminated with William Stern's sperm, carry the pregnancy to term, and turn her newborn infant over to Stern and his wife Elizabeth.

After giving birth, Whitehead decided she wanted to keep the child and raise her. She named her Sara. The Sterns got a court order to take Sara away from Whitehead. On March 31 a judge ruled that the surrogacy contract Whitehead had signed was valid. He awarded Sara to the Sterns.

In articles in the April 24 and May 1 *Militant*, I argued that the judge's decision was a blow to gains the working class has won over a century and a half. My starting point was where the "Baby M" case fits into the struggle of the working class to rid society of exploitation and oppression, particularly its effects on children; and our struggle to deepen human solidarity.

'Guardian' draws opposite conclusions

The *Guardian*, a radical weekly published in New York, has approached the issues in this case from an entirely different standpoint. Its view was expressed in a March 25 "Opinion & Analysis" piece by staff writer Elayne Rapping.

Rapping draws opposite conclusions to those of the *Militant* on every key point raised by this case.

The *Militant* starts from the interests of the modern working class, whose struggle against the capitalist exploiters aims to make advances in labor productivity benefit all of humanity. Gains for the working-class struggle create the best conditions for children and society's future generations.

Rapping tips her hat to what she says are the "class issues" in the case, but rapidly moves on to the "serious moral questions" raised.

From the vantage point of "morals" she demonstrates not only a failure to defend children and working people as a whole, but a betrayal of the struggle for women's rights itself, which cannot be separated

from the struggle of workers and farmers to end class exploitation and all forms of oppression.

Rapping concludes that surrogacy (like prostitution), while "odious," offers "economic opportunity" to women.

She argues against Whitehead's right to raise her child, because, she says, "I am always leery of appeals to maternal instinct and 'natural law' based on biology."

And in the Whitehead case, she adds, "I am particularly so. Whitehead is a woman born [!] and bred — through sex and class conditioning — to be a wife and mother and nothing more. Her identity and sense of well-being seem to depend solely upon that traditional role."

Finally, Rapping strongly sympathizes with William Stern's "right" to Whitehead's child, arguing, "Biological fatherhood, also at issue in this case, must be given its due, I think, if feminists are serious about sharing traditional female burdens as well as male privileges."

Rapping is wrong on every count. Let's review the issues in the "Baby M" case to see why.

A typical court case

Although the "Baby M" case is frequently presented as unusual, atypical, or highly complicated, at bottom it revolves around one simple question: do the courts have the right to take away the child a woman bears when there is no evidence that woman is abusing the child?

Judge Harvey Sorkow ruled yes, and backed up his decision with every antiworker and antiwoman prejudice he could scrape up — and with little regard for the protection of the child.

Sorkow's ruling revolved around two points: whether surrogacy contracts are valid and whether Whitehead is an "unfit" mother. Let's examine the latter question first.

When Whitehead initially told the Sterns she was keeping Sara, they pounced on her doorstep with five cops and a court order from Judge Sorkow. When Whitehead then fled with Sara to Florida, the Sterns hired private detectives to chase Whitehead down and seize Sara.

William Stern argued in court that he had a "right" to the baby since he and Whitehead had signed a contract to that effect. Moreover, since his sperm (he as-

sumed) had gone into producing the child, he was the rightful father. His lawyers argued that he deserved the infant because he needs to continue his "bloodline," since most of his relatives were murdered by the Nazis.

Even though this was not a custody case, the arguments raised by the Sterns were ones typical of ones in custody battles.

Suburbs vs. blue-collar towns

An article in the February 17 *New York Times* captured the anti-working-class and antiwoman prejudices marshaled against Whitehead in the courtroom.

"Mr. Stern," wrote the *Times*, "has appeared shy and sensitive, a biochemist who collects miniature trains and trolleys. . . ."

"Years ago, he and his wife had placed their education and careers before marriage and children. The Sterns dated five years before marrying, in July 1974. Both were in their late 20s, and both had doctorates, he in biochemistry and she in human genetics."

By the time of the "Baby M" case, the article continued, William Stern was making \$43,500 a year, and Elizabeth Stern, \$48,000. They live in a "three-bedroom colonial home in Tenafly, a suburb of upper-middle-class professionals."

While the Sterns were getting PhDs, the *Times* reporter stressed, "the Whitehead's were embarking into the rocky early years of their 13-year marriage in blue-collar towns on the Jersey Shore."

A part-time waitress who dropped out of high school, Mary Beth Whitehead had married Richard Whitehead at age 16. Her husband, the *Times* noted, was merely "a high school graduate, [who] became a truck driver for construction and sanitation companies, after having served 13 months on combat duty in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam."

"In late 1978," the *Times* went on, "Mr. Whitehead fell asleep at the wheel after drinking and hit three poles. He lost his drivers' license and his truck-driving job and entered Alcoholics Anonymous for a year. To help support the family, Mrs. Whitehead took a job as a dancer and bartender in her sister Beverly's bar for a few months."

Double standard

The double standard employed against Mary Beth Whitehead due to her class background and sex is crystal clear. She drops out of high school, marries a Vietnam vet with a drinking problem, and winds up dancing in a bar. Even though none of these facts about her personal life bear the slightest relevance to her ability to raise children, they became the centerpiece of the Sterns' case. The goal, of course, was to paint her as a "slut" and "stupid" — "lower class," as they might say in Tenafly.

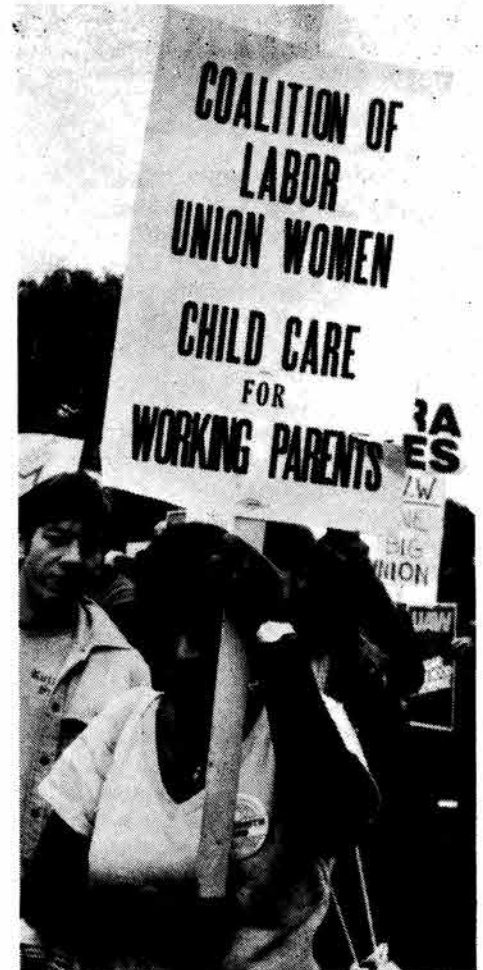
By contrast, William Stern was never asked anything in court about his personal life. Does he go to bars? Does he know any barroom dancers? Does his wife have a drinking problem?

What happened to Whitehead is common in custody cases, where the man seeks to disprove his ex-wife by charging her with extramarital sex relations or a lifestyle "unfitting" for a woman, behavior which is above question for a man. Most men in custody cases, in fact, already have a new female companion.

The Sterns' case also reeked of the anti-working-class prejudice that it's better for children to grow up in a "three-bedroom colonial home in Tenafly" than in "blue-collar towns on the Jersey Shore." Better to be raised by adults with PhDs than those who wait tables or drive trucks for a living.

Will William Stern raise the child?

Rapping makes no more than a passing reference to the anti-working-class and antiwoman prejudices invoked in the courtroom. In a tone of thinly veiled contempt, she writes, "It is almost reflexive for progressive people to sympathize with the plight of Whitehead, the obvious sex and class underdog." Then she assures her readers that she, for one, will not fall prey to such "reflexes."



Militant/Lou Howort
Participant in Solidarity Day march and rally in Washington, D.C., in 1981. Women with children need working-class movement that fights for rights of women, needs of children.

"[A]s feminists, we began by decrying the sole burdens of child care foisted upon us by men," she writes. "Yet, now that some men are asking to take on that burden, some of us are indignant. . . . Biological fatherhood, also at issue in this case, must be given its due, I think, if feminists are serious about sharing traditional female burdens as well as male privileges."

But is Rapping really so naive? Does she actually believe that William Stern will assume the major responsibility for raising Whitehead's daughter?

Certainly everyone in the courtroom was quite aware that Elizabeth Stern will be responsible for the child's care, not her husband. The comparisons made by the press and the Sterns' lawyers made that clear. Mary Beth Whitehead, the high-school dropout/go-go dancer, vs. the well-heeled Elizabeth Stern, always referred to as "Dr. Stern" — who, after all, is more "fit" to be a mother?

In disputes between a man and woman over child custody, the issue is rarely whether he or she will raise the child better. The fight is really over which of two women — the former wife or the man's future wife, relative, or babysitter — will take care of the child. It's rare indeed when a man provides the sole care for a young child for any extended period of time.

But for the child and for working people it is better that the child remain with the woman who gave birth to it rather than establishing a pattern of the capitalist courts reaching in and making a decision in each case based on class and sex criteria.

It is precisely on this issue — women's right and responsibility to make the decisions about raising the children they bear — that Rapping's view is most sharply at odds with that of the *Militant*.

Rapping's utopian model

There is something wrong with women like Whitehead who want to give birth and raise children, according to Rapping. They don't fit her utopian vision of how the world should be.

"In the socialist, feminist world we envision and work for," she says, "all men and women would have the opportunity to participate in the socialized raising of new generations, in any number of ways."

Perhaps in the society Rapping fantasizes they would. But in the society we live in and in which children grow up, they don't!

Mary Beth Whitehead, presumably, should wait until Rapping's "world" comes into being and then she can help raise children together with men in some unspecified "socialized" manner.

In the meantime, Whitehead should let the capitalist courts take her daughter away from her, because that's the "feminist"

Continued on next page

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women



riding hood red
MAX Factor's
lipstick
a
Pathfinder
book

By Joseph Hansen
and Evelyn Reed
with an introduction by
Mary-Alice Waters

How do the wealthy owners of the cosmetics industry play on women's insecurities to sell products and rake in profits?

How are the standards of beauty determined in capitalist society?

How has the growing participation of women in the labor force changed their view of themselves and their potential?

These are some of the questions that emerge from this new collection. It contains a lively 1954 debate over the relation of the marketing of cosmetics and fashions to the exploitation of women.

144 pp., \$4.95. Available at Pathfinder bookstores (directory on page 16), or order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., NY, NY 10014. Please include 75 cents for handling.



McDonnell Douglas fires union activists

BY DEAN DENNO

LONG BEACH, Calif. — The McDonnell Douglas Corp. here suspended 350 members of United Auto Workers Local 148 on June 9, and later fired 17, including local President Bob Berghoff, officers, and stewards.

Most of those suspended had walked off the job at lunchtime the day before to protest company interference in the May 12-13 election for local union officers. The company assisted candidates opposing the incumbent leadership.

The company began suspending workers shortly before the lunch break. Their instruction sheet to supervisors ended with the statement that any worker who requested union representation when faced with charges should be immediately suspended.

Informational picketing of the plant by those suspended was begun two days later.

A week after the initial suspensions, McDonnell Douglas sent telegrams stating that most of those suspended would be allowed to return to work after a two-week "disciplinary layoff." But the 17 were terminated.

In addition to intimidating all workers, the company wants to remove many of the local officers and stewards from the plant, and block them from running for reelection.

Fight over takebacks

Since October 1986 Local 148 has been resisting the company's demands for a takeback contract.

The old contract was terminated unilaterally by the company in December. McDonnell Douglas then implemented weekly deductions for medical coverage and imposed new work rules, including working out of job classification at the bosses' discretion. The company also refused pay raises to about 1,000 new hires, while granting 3 percent increases to all other workers.

The local responded with a work-to-rule and work-to-specification campaign that has slowed production.

UAW Secretary-Treasurer and Aerospace Director Ray Majerus and Region 6 Director Bruce Lee opposed this and favored accepting takebacks.

The UAW officials' clash with Local 148 dates back to the 17-week strike the local conducted in 1983-84. The UAW International Executive Board withdrew support from the strike and threatened to place the local in receivership, and the company subsequently succeeded in forcing a takeback contract on Local 148.

In the May union election, Doug Griffith, former chairperson of the bargaining committee, ran against the incumbent Bob Berghoff for local president. Griffith echoed company arguments that the slowdown will lead to layoffs when dissatisfied airlines go elsewhere to purchase planes.

The UAW International officials strongly backed Griffith. Four days before the vote, Bruce Lee sent a mailing containing denunciations of Berghoff to the 10,000 members of the local, as well as to several thousand retirees, who are entitled to vote.

Company interference

At the last minute, the UAW International demanded and got an additional polling place on company property. The company provided paid time off for workers who voted there, and supervisors or-

ganized workers to get on chartered buses to be taken to the in-plant voting location.

UAW International President Owen Bieber sent in 36 representatives to "monitor" the election and vote count. They prevented the local election committee and poll watchers from monitoring parts of the vote-counting procedure. Many workers involved in the early stages of the count said that Berghoff was receiving a clear majority.

The final tally, compiled under control of the UAW International's representatives, gave Berghoff a plurality of 49 percent to 35 percent for Griffith and 16 percent for a third candidate. The lack of a majority blocked Berghoff from election on the first ballot.

The election committee ordered a recount after it found that more ballots had been counted than the number of workers who had voted. At that point the representatives of the UAW top officialdom walked out. The election committee decided to hold a new vote.

Majerus and Lee then brought charges against the election committee and the local leadership, and on May 27 the international executive board voted to remove the local officers and appoint Lee as administrator over the local.

'Blow to unionism'

Although the administrator was supposed to take charge the next day, he did not come to the union hall that afternoon and the regular monthly membership meeting took place as usual. The meeting voted to condemn the UAW International officials' action as a "blow to unionism and the labor movement." Another resolution called for a new election using paper bal-



Solidarity/Bob Gumpert

Aerospace workers in the United Auto Workers are under increasing fire from takeback-hungry corporations. Workers at McDonnell Douglas are fighting company's unilateral junking of contract, imposition of payments for medical coverage, and new work rules.

lots, and asked that the American Arbitration Association be hired to conduct it.

When the workers walked out June 8 to protest the company's illegal intervention in the voting, many also picketed outside the federal courthouse in Los Angeles to support Berghoff's request that the court remove the administrator imposed by the international executive board. Workers also picketed at the Region 6 office.

At the hearing, federal Judge Wallace Tashima said it appeared that local officials

had not been treated fairly by the UAW International officials. He ordered them not to conduct a new election until he ruled on the request for an end to the administratorship.

Since then, local officers and the UAW International officials have agreed that the U.S. Department of Labor should conduct a new election to be held within 60 days.

Meanwhile, however, the company massively escalated the attack on the union by the suspensions and firings.

Issues in debate on 'Baby M' case

Continued from previous page
thing to do.

"Seen in this context," Rapping continues, "Whitehead's apparently obsessive need to own and raise this infant appears in its true political light, as an expression of desperation on the part of a woman whose only self-esteem comes from her emotional involvement with her own biological offspring."

To fight for her right to raise her child is "obsessive," a sign of "desperation" on Whitehead's part, while William and Elizabeth Stern, who use cops and private detectives to get "their" child, apparently show no signs of "desperation," nor is William Stern's pursuit of his bloodline "obsessive."

There's no mistaking Rapping's tone. She considers Whitehead to be not only inferior to women who don't want to raise children, but inferior "morally" to middle-class and upper-class women who do. Rapping, who starts with the "serious moral questions," is no more able than anyone else is to successfully place morals outside of social classes and politics. She gets rid of working-class politics and derives her values from the worst of middle-class politics and bourgeois prejudices.

Is Elizabeth Stern superior to Whitehead because she put off having children so she could become a high-paid doctor?

And what if Whitehead's "only self-es-

teem" comes from raising her child? Does this justify the state taking her child away? Does it mean Whitehead will never develop greater self-confidence and independence and understanding of working-class politics? Does it mean that she is incapable of being changed by big new developments in the working-class movement?

Rapping seems to believe so. Whitehead, to her, is "a wife and mother and nothing more" — exactly the stereotype of working-class women the opponents of women's liberation try to convince us is true!

Babies not source of oppression

Beneath the anti-working-class prejudice against Whitehead, Rapping also reveals contempt for children. There appears to be nothing more degrading, unfeminist, and oppressive than providing care to children. But Rapping totally loses sight of the fact that it is the capitalist ruling class that exploits and oppresses women, not babies.

And reading further, we discover that it's only *certain* women who shouldn't be raising children.

"It is interesting," says Rapping, "to compare Whitehead's emotional plight with that of the countless pregnant teens who are choosing to keep their babies because — like her — they see no other meaningful role, no other source of self-esteem, no other productive future."

"Feminists rightly deplore this trend and hope to dissuade these young women from motherhood."

But contrary to Rapping, not all feminists hold this view. Some take the correct working-class approach of helping young women who have children by fighting for child care, jobs, etc. and for a world where decisions about having children are not warped by the pressures and desperation used by capitalist oppressors and exploiters.

Whitehead's situation, Rapping continues, "is much the same. She married at 16 against her family's wishes [heaven forbid!] and began to mother. Her life's course — and its financial and emotional difficulties and traumas — were determined by that adolescent decision. Why

wish her further entrenchment in that emotional and material trap?"

Too many babies?

But were either Whitehead's supposed "financial" or "emotional difficulties" (how delicately and objectively put by sister Rapping) determined by the fact that she gave birth while still in her teens? Is the reason that "pregnant teens" — a code word for young working-class women — are poor because they have children?

Rapping comes dangerously close here to the argument of the population-control advocates — those who tell us the poor are poor because they have too many babies. That *they* are responsible for the "financial and emotional difficulties — and traumas" of capitalist society!

The argument is a false one from start to finish. It is the standard reactionary lecture used to cover up the fact that it is capitalism, not too many babies, that is responsible for the poverty, overcrowded housing, malnutrition, and disease suffered by the great majority of the world's people. It is used to conceal the need — and real possibility — to change this by overthrowing capitalism.

Teenage women with children don't need social workers like Rapping to "deplore" their situation and "dissuade them from motherhood." They need a working-class movement that fights for the social resources necessary to give their children the best possible health care, education, and benefits. They need the right to complete their education and enter the work force with no discrimination based on the fact that they have children. They need the right to sex education, birth control, and abortion so that they — not the government or population controllers — can freely determine for themselves when and if to have children.

Women who reach reproductive age, whether or not they have children, need to become part of a living movement with a broader social purpose. They need to become part of the revolutionary communist movement and develop an understanding of their class interests. The last thing they need is a visionary middle-class sisterhood, whose members stick their noses so far up in the air when they talk about working-class women that you can hardly make out their words.

Miami rally hits 'Radio Martí'

MIAMI — "Down with Radio Martí! For the unification of families! Continue the dialogue!" These were slogans chanted May 23 in the latest of several protests here demanding the shutdown of Radio Martí, a U.S. government radio station that broadcasts propaganda to Cuba.

About 60 Cubans took part in the protest, which was held at the federal courthouse here.

The central demands were that Washington move toward normalizing relations with Cuba and stop harassing Cubans in this country who visit Cuba or support establishing a dialogue with their homeland.

The launching of Radio Martí in 1985

was a deliberate provocation by Washington. The people of Cuba were particularly outraged by the misuse of the name of the country's national hero, who led Cuba's struggle for independence at the end of the 19th century.

The Cuban government responded by suspending the December 1984 agreement on immigration from Cuba, which had allowed for reunification of families with members in both countries, as well as other steps.

The demonstration was organized by the Workers Alliance of the Community and the Association of Cuban Mothers.

International Socialist Review

Supplement to the Militant July 1987

'Socialism cannot be built without a communist party'

Fidel Castro discusses challenges Cuba faces today

The following interview with Cuban President Fidel Castro appeared in the May 25, 1987, issue of *L'Humanité*, the daily newspaper of the French Communist Party. The footnotes are the *Militant's*. The translation from French is by the *Militant*.

It was 9:05 p.m. the other evening in Havana. Fidel Castro received Roland Leroy, a member of the French Communist Party political bureau and editor of *L'Humanité*, in his office at the Council of State.

The Cuban head of state and first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party had just finished meeting with his associates. His hair was disheveled, and he was desperately looking for a comb, which he could not find. Fidel Castro and Roland Leroy joked about the editor of *L'Humanité's* abundant head of hair before taking their places around the work table. Fidel, surrounded by two associates and a translator, faced Roland Leroy, who was accompanied by José Fort, "International Life" columnist, and by Maité Pinero, *L'Humanité's* permanent correspondent in Havana.

Fidel Castro began the interview by explaining that he prefers "a conversation, a real dialogue," rather than a traditional interview. He asked Roland Leroy about *L'Humanité*. "How much does it cost? How many pages are there? How much advertising? How is the newsprint obtained. Does it have to be imported?" Fidel knows what he's talking about. He has always cared about ink, paper, and journalists.

The interview lasted seven hours, with only a 20-minute break. The Cuban head of state answered all the questions with his usual enthusiasm: the revolution "surpassed" his dreams; the difficulties with the Cuban economy; the dissolution of the free peasant market; the big choices in economic development; the "rectification" campaign; human rights and the Valladares and Bofill "affairs"; the Third World debt; the United States' aggressive policy in Central America; Gorbachev's next visit to Latin America; French-Cuban relations, etc.

At 4:30 a.m., the discussion ended. Fidel Castro accompanied us to the elevator, still going strong. One last question: "Why did you stop smoking?" His answer: "This is the latest sacrifice I made for the revolution and on behalf of Cuba's public health. I stopped smoking on Aug. 25, 1984." The Cuban state could never have carried out an antismoking campaign if the head of the Cuban government was still sporting big cigars.

At 5:00 a.m., dawn was breaking over Havana. We were told that Fidel Castro still hadn't gone to bed.

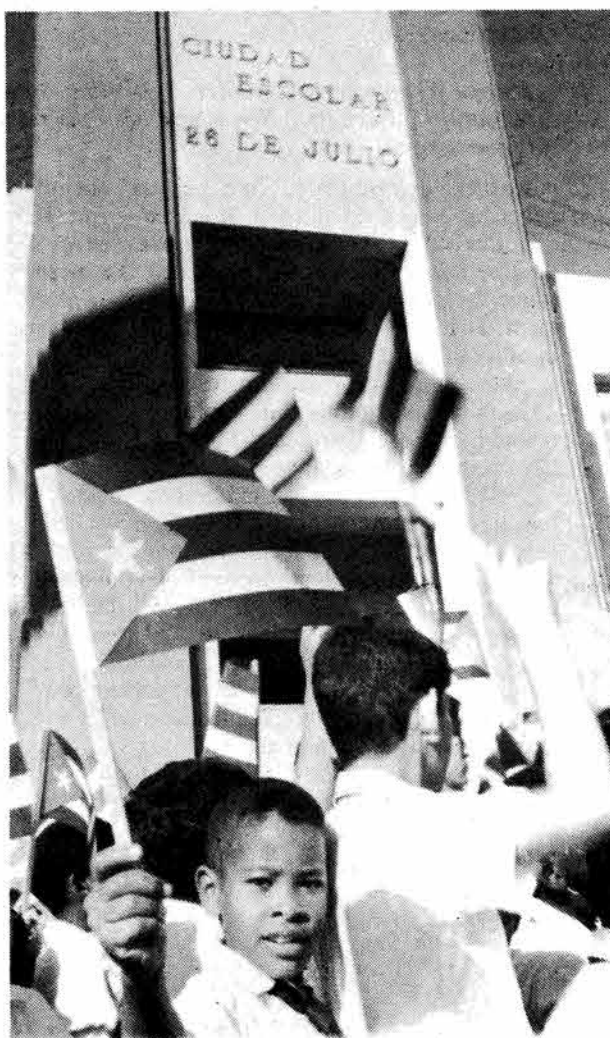
Leroy. In your famous defense speech, "History Will Absolve Me,"¹ you said that time would be the judge. It has been 28 years since the revolution has been in power. Do you believe your youthful ideas have been accomplished? Is the combatant of the Sierra Maestra still within the head of state?

Castro. Reality has surpassed our dreams. At the time of Moncada — July 26, 1953 — we had an ambitious, radical program. That's what we thought could be accomplished then.²

1. Printed as an appendix to Marta Harnecker, *Fidel Castro's Political Strategy, From Moncada to Victory* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1987).

2. On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro led a group of 200 students and workers in an attack on the Moncada military barracks. The attack was defeated, and half the assailants were killed in battle or executed. Castro was captured several days later and imprisoned.

At his trial he delivered an indictment of the Batista tyranny and a program of opposition to it called "History Will Absolve Me." Castro was freed in 1955 as a result of a general amnesty.



National Institute of Agrarian Reform
The July 26 Public School, formerly the Moncada military barracks that were the scene of historic July 26, 1953, attack by Fidel Castro and group of workers and students. In an indictment of Batista dictatorship delivered by Castro at his trial for the attack, he said, "The army deserves not a cent of the republic's money, and Camp Columbia should be converted into a school."

The Moncada program was not socialist, even though I, myself, had socialist convictions. It could be defined as a program for national liberation that in turn created the necessary conditions for the eventual development of socialism. It laid the bases of the Cuban revolution. The Moncada program asserted that the country's development could not depend on the laws of supply and demand, nor be the result of spontaneity, but had to be the revolutionary objective. I was already questioning the key principles of free enterprise as a road for development.

The Moncada program did not yet call for nationalizations but did foresee agrarian reform and already contained the idea of cooperatives in the countryside. The program foresaw economic development and big programs for education, health, jobs, and housing. It analyzed the composition of our population and set as its goal uniting the workers, peasants, teachers, and middle classes. This was my appeal to the people. We didn't have to make any promises, but rather said: here, take this program and struggle with all your might to defend it.

I said that reality has surpassed our dreams. Here are a few examples. At the time of Moncada we wanted to eliminate illiteracy and give each child the right to

schooling. We were a long way from even imagining the kind of school system we have today in our country. We could not have foreseen that we would have university facilities available in the country's 14 provinces or a teachers' program allowing all primary school teachers to earn a diploma in higher education. At the time this wasn't even a dream. In health, could we have even imagined the medical schools in every region, the family doctors in most neighborhoods? Could we have imagined that Cuba would be among the top countries in the world in health care? I never would have thought this.

Let's take another example — agrarian reform. Our program was accomplished well beyond our dreams. Our countryside has a different face. We've built roads and brought electricity to the countryside. Right now, 85 percent of the homes have electricity, and this will reach 90 percent by 1990.

Unemployment, prostitution, begging, gambling, and drugs have been eliminated. The entire population is covered by social security. We have diversified production.

Reality has surpassed our dreams, even though the task has been much more difficult than we could have foreseen at the time. Despite all our efforts, we haven't been able to totally solve the housing question. We need about 15 more years in this domain. Making the revolution has turned out to be a lot more complex than we imagined or than Marx, Engels, and Lenin imagined. Perhaps there is no task more complex and more difficult than making a revolution and creating a new society.

We have accomplished a real feat in overcoming most of the obstacles: the economic interests hostile to the revolution, the traditions, the complexities of establishing a new system of production.

At the time of Moncada we couldn't have conceived of the enormity of the task. In a sense we were naive in believing that justice and the welfare of the people would be respected. We underestimated imperialism. We didn't think about aggression and the blockade. We didn't know anything about them. They weren't explained in any books. At the time we didn't clearly understand the tragedy of underdevelopment, and we didn't fully understand the big gap that exists between the developed countries and the underdeveloped countries. These problems weren't part of the political struggles of the time. Revolutionaries didn't think about questions of unequal trade relations, the debt, dumping, and protectionism.

Our objective was the overthrow of the dictator Batista. We knew it would be a hard struggle, but we weren't aware of all these other realities. The difficulties of a revolution flow from the necessary domestic tasks to be accomplished but also from the international limitations that condemn millions of people to underdevelopment and misery. Today these are familiar to us. They weren't on July 26, 1953.

Leroy. However, the economic situation has led to some severe measures. Could we call them austerity measures? What happened to the concern about guaranteeing a certain standard of living to the population and the concern about investing in production and for export?

Castro. The international economic crisis affects the entire Third World. Cuba suffers to a lesser degree because more than 85 percent of our trade is conducted with the socialist countries and not more than 15 percent with the capitalist countries. The socialist community assures us fair prices. And that guarantees us a solid basis for our economic and social development. At no time has our development been curbed, whereas other Latin American countries have experienced recession and stagnation.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that we can't

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measure the importance of trade with the capitalist countries just by looking at the 15 percent figure. We must buy products on this market that the socialist community cannot furnish. This includes certain food products, medicines, and essential raw materials. And the drop in prices of our exports is enormous.

Let's take the example of sugar. Currently we sell it for six cents per pound, which is equivalent to one 1959-60 cent. The U.S. economic embargo against Cuba makes this situation worse. The United States has banned the import of Cuban nickel and all products that might contain it.

Why this low price for sugar? There are various reasons, but I want to stress that the EEC's [European Common Market] policies of protectionism and dumping are responsible in large part for this situation. Historically, the countries that today are part of the EEC imported millions of tons of sugar. Now they export millions by subsidizing. Several years ago the United States imported 5 million tons of sugar. Today, this has dropped to a little more than a million tons.

Do you know that from 1980 to 1985 the United States and the EEC each spent \$60 billion subsidizing their agricultural products, and Japan around \$50 billion? Such policies are contrary to the interests of Third World countries.

Cuba, like the rest of the Third World countries, has gone into debt in order to carry out its development. It's not very high, but it exists. I must say that the interest we

“Compare Cuba with the entire Third World. There is no malnutrition, and the lowest infant mortality rate. You can draw your own conclusions . . .”

have to pay worsens our hard currency financial situation. We were beginning to reduce the imports we had to pay hard currency for, while maintaining a minimum of imports to cover our basic needs — that amounted to \$1.2 billion. Over the last years we have been paying the interest on the debt and paying for a minimum of imports.

In 1987 we were forced to adopt severe austerity measures.

In addition to low sugar prices, we should also mention some conjunctural factors. Two severe droughts and a hurricane resulted in a drop in our sugar production. In 1986 and 1987, we produced less than 7.5 million tons of sugar. Interestingly, the low oil prices also affected us. The reason is simple. We import oil from the socialist countries, and then we reexport what we have been able to conserve as a result of strict management. This is an important source of currency for us.

And paradoxically, the devaluation of the dollar did not bring savings for us, because we import mostly from the EEC and Japan. We can import absolutely nothing from the United States. Other currencies, like the mark, the peseta, the franc, the lira, the pound sterling, and the yen have followed a curve opposite that of the dollar. For example, certain equipment that used to cost \$600,000 now costs \$1 million and often double that. The devaluation of the dollar and the increasing cost of other currencies cost us in 1986 almost \$200 million. During this same period our revenues in convertible currencies declined by 50 percent. Therefore our hard currency imports have had to be cut in half. These are the reasons for the austerity measures we have had to adopt.

Despite this, we accomplished a real feat in carrying out our economic development. We have always presented austerity as a necessity for the economic development of the Third World. We never exalted the notion of consumerism for the sake of consumerism.

Taking into account the situation in the Third World, I believe it is a serious error to encourage this type of mentality among the population. We do everything possible to improve the conditions of life — materially, socially, culturally, spiritually — something we have done throughout the years. But we don't put this question at the center of our activity. It is not the axis of our appeals to the people.

We make appeals to the people because in a revolution nothing is done without the understanding and support of the people. Once we were able to provide for essential basic material needs, it was necessary to prioritize investing in what would promote development. And we had to treat as almost sacred our trade relations with the socialist countries. In addition, over the years we had to put a big effort into defense because of the hostility of the U.S. administration toward Cuba. As a result, we were even forced to increase our spending in this area.

Leroy. Reducing investments means you have to make some choices. What are these choices? What priorities have you adopted?

Castro. I want to emphasize two principles that we respect in this austerity program. First, never sacrifice the people's basic needs.

Second, never sacrifice the country's economic development. We have had to make big efforts to assure substitutes for hard-currency imports and to increase hard-currency exports. We have had to prioritize those investments that will guarantee these substitutes for imports or that will generate exports.

We have been forced to raise prices on electricity and transportation. But there have not been and never will be any sacrifices made in the area of food or clothing. Our investment and social programs, especially in the areas of health and education, have been maintained. We have not sacrificed any of our large investments earmarked for development. For example, we are continuing construction of the nuclear power plant in Cienfuegos, which will allow us to save \$500 million in fuel each year. We are continuing to increase our nickel production capacity. We are struggling for greater efficiency and for a better utilization of our material and human resources.

Compare Cuba's situation with that of other Latin American countries or the entire Third World. What do we notice? In Cuba there is no malnutrition. There is the lowest infant mortality rate in the Third World (13.6 per 1,000, with the goal of 10 per 1,000 within five years). Our life expectancy is 74 years, and in 10 years we will have increased it to 80 years. You can draw your own conclusions.

Leroy. What were the reasons for eliminating the "free farmers' markets?" What have been the results of this decision?

Castro. The so-called free peasant market should never have been established. It was an error. This form didn't exist here. Different opinions were expressed, and the free peasant market was presented as a means to improve the population's food supply. That was the argument. That's how we introduced a policy that is practiced in other socialist countries.

At the time, I expressed my reservations, but a majority opinion favored this plan. I told my comrades we had nothing to lose in going ahead with this test. The results have been clearly negative.

Well before this we had made some idealist errors in rejecting material incentives. Back then, we had violated the principle, "to each according to his work." All that was left was to eliminate money! Nevertheless, during this period, Cuba progressed. This was the time of big progress in education, health care, and economic and social development. This idealistic conception resulted in some inconveniences, but it did not corrupt people.

In 1976 we corrected these idealistic errors and created a system of management and planning, copying the experiences of the socialist countries. During the next 10 years, tendencies of another type appeared: a certain acquisitive, irresponsible spirit.

Numerous plants tried to be profitable by charging high prices — real robbery. They didn't try to become profitable by improving efficiency or by reducing energy or labor costs. They even earned money at the expense of other plants. Other negative tendencies included: a certain anarchy in salaries, a certain competition within the work force, the tendency to want money to regulate everything, a lack of strictness in correcting outmoded work norms.

We began paying very high salaries that had no relation to what was being produced. Awards, bonuses, and overtime payments multiplied. Material incentives were being abused. We were beginning to fall into a trend that would undermine the revolutionary spirit, the consciousness of our workers.

Errors in planning and design were committed, especially in letting the idea spread that socialism could be built by spontaneous generation, using simple mechanisms. Socialism is the creation of conscious and planned work on the part of society itself, and subjective factors play a big role in this effort.

In carrying out this rectification, we will not fall into the earlier idealistic errors. We will pay particular attention to perfecting the economic mechanisms at the same time as we pay attention to political and revolutionary work and the struggle against acquisitive tendencies.

We already began to see contradictions arising between the interests of certain enterprises and those of society, as well as tendencies to earn more by producing more, but of poorer quality.

Let's get back to the free peasant market. Usually in socialist countries, the peasants have a small plot of land at their disposal. In Cuba the first agrarian law limited property to 400 hectares [one hectare equals about two and a half acres]. The second law limited it to 65 hectares.

Although most of the land had been nationalized, many peasants have at their disposal 5, 10, 15, even 65 hectares, a difference in size from what exists in other socialist countries, because with 20 hectares a peasant

3. The free farmers' markets were introduced in 1980. They provided individual producers and cooperatives with a place to sell their surplus produce. The markets were eliminated in 1986.



May Day 1981 demonstration in Havana. "In a revolution in the great spirit of patriotism and internationalism, revolution has been creating among our people these n

can become very rich. So what happened?

The farmers stopped selling their produce to the state, despite the amount they were receiving for it, in order to sell, at their leisure, at higher prices. They were getting rich. Middlemen began cropping up.

What was the result? The cooperative movement, which is essential to the country's economic life, stopped developing. We also saw other phenomena develop, such as the leasing of land. What should we do? Should we have raised sales taxes or dissolved the free market? I myself proposed gradually eliminating the free market. The cooperatives demanded its immediate elimination. That's what we did.

We must take into account the fact that the farmers' agricultural production, whether they farm individually or cooperatively, does not exceed 20 percent of total production. The bulk of agricultural production earmarked for consumption and export comes from the state farms, where mechanization and technology are more advanced. The weight of private production is a lot less than what exists in any other socialist country. Even though we are a small country, we export foodstuff for 40 million people.

Leroy. Right now the Cuban Communist Party is in

“The revolution needs a communist party. Its role is irreplaceable. What can move the masses, educate the people, or influence the administration if not the party? . . .”

the midst of a big "rectification campaign." Can you tell us the main characteristics? What needs to be rectified, and how?

Castro. We must rectify, first, all the negative tendencies that grew up in the system of economic management and planning. The role of the party was diminishing. If socialism could be built through magical mechanisms, then revolutionary activity loses its importance. The party would just be concerned with administering its own internal life.

So I said, the party's main task should be the construction of socialism, the country's economic development, a profitable economy, the struggle against negative tendencies, and the formation of a socialist and communist consciousness.

So now, the party is concerned with the functioning of the plants and the work of the administrators. Now we have to know how schools, hospitals, such and such service, and a factory function.

We began to see bourgeois tendencies develop, certain signs of corruption, an unwarranted use of resources —



ary process in motion, enthusiasm never stops growing," Fidel Castro notes. "It is being expressed today among us. More than 50,000 Cubans are currently serving on internationalist missions. . . . The greatest accomplishment of the revolution is the moral values and these sentiments of solidarity. We've won a victory of socialist ideas and values."

Prensa Latina

in short, tendencies that had never existed in our country. Also, a certain favoritism developed in contracts and excessive bonuses.

How could we rectify this? The masses have a sense of justice. They reject all manifestations of egoism or favoritism. Even though the population was buying goods on the free markets, that didn't prevent them from treating these people as thieves. The free market created a division between the farmers and the rest of the population. Our people are used to equality. They reject attempts at easy enrichment.

The administration is not a moral force, much less political. It is not possible to leave political work up to the state apparatus, because it is not capable of such a task. The administration manages. It cannot educate the workers, nor contribute to their political education.

The revolution needs a communist party. Its role is irreplaceable. What can move the masses, educate the people, or influence the administration? What can orient, explain, and convince, if not the party?

In the provinces, the party's activity is easier than in the capital. Perhaps this is because government ministers, institutions, and well-known figures are in Havana. We decided to increase the authority of party secretaries in the 15 municipalities of the capital, where we encounter acute problems.

I want to give you an example. We have 60 hospitals in the capital. Some time ago we received complaints about their functioning. I met with all the directors, party secretaries, the head of nursing personnel, as well as the responsible people from the trade unions and the Union of Young Communists at these establishments. We met for two days and made a number of decisions.

Putting these decisions into effect is the purpose of a monthly meeting under the direction of the party secretary in the capital, with the aim of analyzing the progress of the program we adopted. Hospital service has been greatly improved in a year and a half. These activities have received a big momentum, and complaints have greatly diminished.

We also indicated that the press should be much more critical. Our press must analyze problems in depth. The spirit of self-criticism has always been a characteristic of the Cuban revolution.

Life has shown me that no revolution, and no building and consolidation of socialism is possible without the existence of a party.

Leroy. Does this rectification campaign involve penalties by the party or by the justice system?

Castro. There are penalties when laws are broken, but the rectification battle is fundamentally political — not repressive. The honesty of our workers cannot be measured against what goes on in the rest of the continent. Here, no government official enriches himself; police and military officers don't make deals for money. In our socialist state, tens of thousands of people are called upon each day to make decisions — from the smallest to the most important decision. Some of them make mistakes, and we are trying to help them rectify these errors.

Leroy. However, in the United States, in France, and in other countries in Western Europe, Cuba's enemies present it as a country where human rights are violated, where there are several thousand political prisoners, and where free speech has been stamped out. In France, for example, [Armando] Valladares and [Ricardo] Bofill have been held up, one after another, as examples.

Castro. Our enemies don't criticize us, they slander us. And against Cuba, the slanders are widely echoed. We know this type of campaign, based on nothing, is instigated by the CIA.

No revolutionary process has been as humane as Cuba's. This comes from our traditions during the war against the [Batista] dictatorship. During these years of struggle, never — and I repeat, never — did we carry out any physical violence against our prisoners. This tradition has been maintained throughout the 28 years of the revolution. We have educated our people in this spirit.

There has been no exception to our policy of respecting the adversary's physical well-being, even with U.S. spies. Our laws are strict, because it has been necessary to defend ourselves. But, since the 1959 triumph of the revolution, there has not been one single case of torture, assassination, or political disappearance. Since 1959, no demonstration has been repressed by the police, in contrast to such daily violence we see in the United States, Western Europe, and South Africa. Why not here? Because the people support the revolution.

I read the daily press dispatches, and I know very well what the police in the western world do every day. They throw tear-gas grenades, unleash dogs, and repress the people. In Cuba, such activity no longer takes place. Are there many other countries that can say as much?

The figure of 15,000 prisoners is ridiculous. The truth is we have several hundred counterrevolutionary detainees. At the beginning of the revolution we had many prisoners. War criminals, saboteurs, and CIA agents are still in our prisons. The vast majority of others have been freed. This has not been because of pressure, but rather it is part of our policies, our politics.

In Cuba we have what are called "plantados" — these are counterrevolutionaries who have been sentenced by the courts, people who worked for the dictatorship, who refuse to wear a prison uniform. Is there any other place in the world where prisoners do not have to wear prison clothes? In the United States and Europe they would have been forced to put on these clothes. What other prison in the world permits this violation of discipline?

Cubans have opinions on everything and are more than willing to express them. This is one of our characteristics. So, ask a citizen of our country if he knows of a case of torture. The saddest part about all this is how our people have been offended by these slanders — a people who have a political and revolutionary culture, a people who as a matter of principle will not tolerate torture or crime.

Those who are carrying out these slander campaigns are usually the ones who have been imprisoned and released in good physical condition. Isn't this curious?

Let's take the case of Valladares. This former police-

man under Batista was arrested, tried, and sentenced for terrorist acts against the revolution. He passed himself off as an invalid and a poet. He is neither one nor the other. The best doctors looked after him. But he deceived many people.

Who concocted the Valladares legend? Who financed this operation? World public opinion has been violated. The facts of this story — only the facts — will verify who is telling the truth. This slander campaign offends me, but I have a clear conscience.

As for Bofill, he is a renegade who led a microfaction several years ago. He accused us of being too "independent." He is now being used to slander us. He was freed, but did not abide by his commitment and sought asylum in the French embassy, although France has not signed an agreement on asylum with Cuba.

Naturally we refused him permission to leave. If we had done anything different, that would have meant rewarding someone who had forcefully entered an embassy, using blackmail to try to disrupt relations between France and Cuba. We couldn't do that.

But I wonder: How many people like this is France ready to accept? Will France welcome everyone who wants to leave this country or emigrate to the United States? This is no problem for us. We are willing to let anyone leave who wants to if France will grant them a visa. We have no opposition to this. Let nobody make any mistake about this. The barriers are not of our making.

Let's take the case of the United States. Several years ago we signed an immigration agreement. They suspended it. The U.S. government only issues visas to those who desert while on a mission abroad or those who secretly leave their country. Any delinquent can leave Cuba in this manner and get a publicity campaign. If the United States wants to welcome 10,000, 50,000, or 100,000 people, we will not oppose it. And we say the same thing to France.

If France wants to welcome them, we will give them the necessary authorization. But we will not give in to blackmail as in the case of Mr. Bofill. And to those who prefer capitalist society to our socialist society we say, "good riddance."

We have always said that socialism is a voluntary task, for free men.

In Cuba, prostitution, drugs, gambling, and begging have disappeared. In Cuba you don't see anyone sleeping in the streets. Racial discrimination no longer exists. In the United States it is just the opposite. Here, children are

"I know very well what the police in the western world do every day. They throw tear-gas grenades, unleash dogs, and repress the people. In Cuba, such activity no longer takes place . . ."

not imprisoned. But this occurs in the United States, to force illegal immigrants to turn themselves in to the police.

Where is equality in the United States when 85 percent of prisoners are Black or members of ethnic minorities? What are we to think about respecting human rights in a country whose leaders planned the extermination of the Indians, carried on the Vietnam War, and is allied with South Africa, a country that is conducting a criminal war against Angola? It is the U.S. government that is conducting a dirty war against Nicaragua, carrying out genocide in El Salvador, and preparing "Star Wars."

Hundreds of millions of inhabitants of this earth are starving because of this same country's economic policies. The leaders of that country organize the destabilization of developing countries, authorize biological warfare, bomb foreign capitals, and have nuclear bases throughout the world. And we are accused of "violating" human rights. What other Third World country can point to the progress we have made in the areas of health, education, culture, employment, and freedom?

The slanders against Cuba are an insult to the integrity of the Cuban people — to all people.

Leroy. The problem of the developing countries' foreign debt is one of the central issues in the world today. More and more, the Latin American people and their governments are affirming their positions and solidarity on this question. What do you think about this?

Castro. The Latin American debt is more than \$400 billion. This represents \$1,000 per inhabitant and \$20,000 dollars per square kilometer. This is a diabolical mechanism to exploit our peoples. It is impossible economically, mathematically, and morally to pay this debt. There is no solution to this problem. I believe that the Third World countries financed the development of

Continued on next page

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the industrialized countries with centuries of slavery.

The excess we paid for imported goods and what we lost on what we received for our exports covers the value of this debt. With what we have paid in interest and with the net capital amounts we have sent to developed, capitalist countries, we have long since repaid this debt.

We, the underdeveloped countries, have been the victims of unequal trade, dumping, protectionism, and other phenomena that underlie the debt.

Furthermore, the people are not the ones who contracted this debt, but very often military governments, which came into being by force and have no popular base. These governments wasted, stole, or absconded with bank credits. And now the people are being asked to pay at the price of hunger, unemployment, and economic restrictions, although they received nothing.

This is why I say that it is impossible to pay this debt or to have it repaid now or ever. The debt must be canceled, and the creditor countries should compensate the banks by reducing their military expenditures.

The new international economic order must be implemented, putting an end to unequal trade relations and giving new life to industries of the developing countries. This could eliminate unemployment and allow these countries to utilize fully the existing industrial potential and develop trade.

Did you know that over the last five years Latin America has had to send \$120 billion to the developed capitalist countries? The Third World lost \$65 billion in 1985 alone because of unequal trade relations. Actually, we no longer talk about the debt, but rather interest payments. But we cannot even make the interest payments!

Leroy. The U.S. government's aggressive policies toward Nicaragua threaten to lead to a military intervention. Reagan is coming to the end of his term. There is talk about a possible visit by Gorbachev. Do you think things can change?

Castro. It wasn't so long ago that the United States imposed its policies throughout the region. Today, the Latin American governments no longer take orders. This is a considerable change. Latin America has become more conscious of its common interests and the sacrifices imposed upon it by imperialism. Latin America needs economic integration.

I'll relate to you a recent fact that confirms the changes on this continent. The United States tried to condemn Cuba before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. In a complete reversal of the situation in 1959, where, adopting a dignified, independent stance, only Mexico maintained relations with our country, this time only Costa Rica lined up with Mr. Reagan.

Latin America thwarted Washington's maneuver, which was aimed at dividing it and building barriers between the countries of Latin America. This is encouraging for establishing relations with these governments, no matter what kind of political regime.

The Reagan administration has decided to eliminate the Sandinista revolution. The administration has never come out for a political settlement in Central America. It

“U.S. government military maneuvers along the Nicaraguan border are not just a form of pressure. These are preparations for an eventual invasion . . .”

wants to settle things by force and crush the revolutionary movement in El Salvador — by whatever means necessary. The United States has transformed Honduras into a military base. At this very moment, joint U.S.-Honduran maneuvers are taking place involving 40,000 soldiers. This is the largest military deployment the region has seen.

The threat of direct intervention permanently hangs over Nicaragua. This is Washington's last recourse. Up to now, the United States has tried to defeat Nicaragua by organizing its dirty war and through economic sabotage.

We are indignant at Washington's impudence in loudly proclaiming its intention to intervene openly in the affairs of an independent country, in organizing a mercenary army, and its scoffing at the sovereignty of Central American countries. But these aims run up against the patriotism, fighting capacity, and courage of the Nicaraguan people. The Sandinista revolution has been strengthened because of this aggression and has gained experience.

The United States is still hoping to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution with its economic aggression and by the usury that their dirty war provokes. Nevertheless, the risk of direct aggression still exists. If the United States plunges into this escapade it will most likely get bogged down. We should not underestimate the Nicaraguan

people's capacity for resistance.

Reagan has not been able to win domestic support for his aggressive policies against Nicaragua. American politics have become discredited with the “Irangate” scandal and the government financing of the contras. It is very rare to see such a scandal, such hypocrisy, and such cynicism. These methods of lying and violations of human rights are reminiscent of the fascists' methods.

All this is taking place at the same time that Washington is trying to impede the peaceful efforts of the Contra-

“Cuba's defense has to be the job of the whole population, not just the army. In 1980, we didn't have arms for everyone. Today we do . . .”

dora group, which is calling for a negotiated settlement in Central America.

The Nicaraguans are capable of resisting the dirty war being carried out against them. But we cannot underestimate the risks of a U.S. attack. The maneuvers being carried out all along the Nicaraguan border are not just a form of pressure. These are preparations for an eventual invasion. The Nicaraguan revolution has become an obsession for Reagan.

The Reagan administration's war against El Salvador is destined to fail. After seven years of providing arms and airplanes, the United States has not been able to crush the Salvadoran revolution. The U.S. government underestimated this people's will to resist, which is stronger today than ever. In El Salvador, imperialism's technological power cannot overcome the people's resistance.

When Reagan first ran for office, he held the opinion that it was necessary to neutralize Cuba or destroy it. His advisors drew up a program called the “Santa Fe Plan.” It stated that the island should be swept off the map if it stuck to its revolution. This was a serious threat, forcing us to allocate large resources to defense.

We had to change our conceptions and prepare ourselves for a war to be carried out by the entire people. The country's defense had to be the job of the whole population, not only the job of the army. In 1980 we didn't have arms for everyone. Today we do. We have organized and prepared the entire people. Each citizen knows what he must do and where to go in case of aggression.

We have taken measures to prepare for the possibility of a total blockade or an invasion and occupation of our country; an unprecedented mobilization. We do not underestimate the danger. I think the United States knows the price it will have to pay if it decides to invade us.

It should be known that Cuba has never been so strong. Likewise, Nicaragua is stronger and the Salvadoran revolutionary movement is more powerful than before the Reagan era.

We are not for an eternal antagonism between the United States and Cuba. We are ready to live in peace with the United States and think that the day will come when United States policy will become wiser.

But we are also aware that our independence and sovereignty depend on our ability to defend ourselves. And if the day comes when Cuban-U.S. relations become normalized, we will still not neglect our defense capacities. In Grenada, Reagan attacked a corpse. If Cuba is attacked, he will confront millions of armed men and women.

You mentioned the possibility of a Latin American visit by Gorbachev. I'm not sure this trip will take place in the immediate future. I know that several governments have invited him, and this will undoubtedly be a considerable political event.

This voyage is raising a lot of interest, indicating a recognition of Gorbachev's serious and consistent peace policies. He has been able to win some sympathy throughout the world, including in Latin America. He will be received with a lot of warmth. Personally, as a revolutionary, I would truly like this visit to take place now, at a time when Gorbachev is combating so many myths and lies and is carrying out intensive activity for peace and disarmament. This visit will be of great importance. We are not the only ones who wish this. A number of Latin American governments would be honored by this trip.

And here's a coincidence. A U.S. senator has just called for canceling the Latin American debt. This is to avoid Gorbachev getting a bad impression of U.S.-Latin American relations. You can already see that there is a fear that a visit by Gorbachev will be successful.

It's not certain that this visit can take place in the near future. In my opinion, the greatest difficulty with this trip is that a great many countries are going to invite him, and there will be the political problem of not insulting anyone in deciding which countries to visit and which not to. But

they will receive him with a hundred times more friendliness than they would receive Reagan.

Leroy. How are Franco-Cuban relations?

Castro. As for Franco-Cuban relations, perhaps we had some illusions after the 1981 victory of the left [election of Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand as president of France]. I'm talking about illusions concerning our relations. For a time there was some progress, but not as much as we had hoped.

Historically, Cuba has had friendly relations with France. We continue to maintain these relations, but that doesn't mean we are satisfied. France's position during the meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva was unpleasant.⁴ How would I define the present state of Franco-Cuban relations? I would say they are normal.

Leroy. Do you think that after almost 30 years of the revolution there is as much enthusiasm as there was the first day?

Castro. There are a lot of opinions about enthusiasm. Many think that the enthusiasm of the first years has fallen off. We have heard that many times.

During the first years of the revolution there was a lot of emotion expressed — a hatred of tyranny and injustice and a desire for change. Then we saw greater and more conscious support.

Today the Cuban people have attained an unprecedented social, political, and cultural level. During the last 28 years, they have learned about imperialism. Millions of young people, under age 35, have grown up with the revolution.

There is a saying that power corrupts. This is a truism. But does this apply to us? We used to live in a class society — a society of rich and poor, exploited and exploiters. These kinds of societies effectively use their governments. We have lived through a different experience. Society has changed. The exploiting classes have disappeared; Cuba has a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

For the first time in our history, the nation's wealth belongs to the people. There are no more foreign companies

“In Cuba the nation's wealth belongs to the people. There are no more foreign companies or private enterprises. For the first time the people hold power . . .”

or private enterprises. For the first time the people hold power.

Louis XIV said, “I am the state.” For the first time the Cuban people can say, “The arms are my arms. The wealth is my wealth.”

To those who say that Cuba has no respect for human rights, I ask, “Is it possible to violate human rights in a country where the arms are in the hands of the workers?” I have a proposition to make. Why not distribute arms to the workers of North America and western Europe? Can a government that is spurned by its people survive if it arms its workers and peasants?

To return to your question: in a revolutionary process in motion, enthusiasm never stops growing. If there were no enthusiasm, would it have been possible to involve millions of men and women in the defense of the country?

I am convinced that the rectification program now being led by our party is strengthening the enthusiasm of our Cuban women and men. Enthusiasm isn't expressed only by shouting. It is being expressed today among us in the great spirit of patriotism and internationalism. More than 50,000 Cubans are currently serving on internationalist missions, and hundreds of thousands have already served. The greatest accomplishment of the revolution has been creating among our people these moral values and these sentiments of solidarity. We've won a victory of socialist ideas and values.

I hope that humanity will be able to overcome the risks generated by irrationality. Peace and ending the arms race are even more necessary for the Third World countries, because this affects not only our security but our right to conquer a life of dignity, our right to vanquish poverty and ignorance. And I really don't see how this will be possible without an atmosphere of peace and without putting an end to the incredible insanity of spending billions of dollars every year for military activities.

Yes, definitely, along with the Cuban people, I am still enthusiastic and resolutely optimistic about the future of humanity.

4. On March 11, 1987, the UN commission rejected a U.S. resolution condemning Cuba for human rights violations. The French representative voted for the resolution.

Cuba: A historic turning point

The following is the introduction to two speeches by Cuban President Fidel Castro that will appear in the *New International* (No. 6, 1987), a magazine of Marxist politics and theory.

The speeches, "Renewal or Death" and "Important Problems for the Whole of International Revolutionary Thought," were presented respectively, to the first session of the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in February 1986 and the deferred, second session in December 1986.

This issue of *New International* is scheduled for publication in July.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The two speeches by Fidel Castro published below reflect a turning point in the Cuban revolution.

The developments unfolding in Cuba today have been virtually ignored by the press around the world. Inside Cuba, however, the last year and a half has been a period of intense public debate and action, led by the Cuban Communist Party and involving every sector and level of society. Both speeches in this issue were broadcast and telecast live and then replayed so that Cubans working any shift could hear them.

The aim of the current rectification process, as it is called in Cuba, is to carry through a historic correction in the course of the revolution itself. In his speech to the deferred session of the third party congress in December 1986 published here under the title "Important Problems for the Whole of International Revolutionary Thought," Castro explains that the questions now being confronted and dealt with are not new. Problems had been developing for more than a decade. But the evidence was mounting, Castro says, that the mistaken course of the revolution was leading Cuba not toward socialism and communism but "to a system worse than capitalism."

Had the mistakes remained unacknowledged and uncorrected the consequences would ultimately have proved "irreversible," Castro adds. Discouragement, depoliticization, and demoralization would have eventually developed to the point where the revolutionary consciousness and internationalist commitment of the masses of Cuban working people would have been destroyed — all under the banner of building socialism.

No automatic mechanism

The process that the Cuban Communist Party is leading can be described as a genuine political revolution. It is a battle to eradicate the mistaken idea that there is some mechanism — whether it is the Economic Planning and Management System or People's Power — whose automatic functioning provides the motor power of the advance toward socialism. It is a battle to once again place at the center of the revolutionary process the only force that can drive forward the transition from capitalism to socialism — the working people themselves, mobilized to take increasing control over the administration and leadership of their own state and to chart the path of the Cuban economy.

Where the Cuban leadership was going off course, Castro explains, was in thinking and acting as if "the construction of socialism is basically a question of mechanisms." That was the heart of the errors, Castro insists, because "the construction of socialism and communism is essentially a political task and a revolutionary task, it must be fundamentally the fruit of the development of an awareness and educating people for socialism and communism."

Even an Economic Planning and Management System or a People's Power structure, reformed and improved, can serve only as an auxiliary instrument, however important, to be used, not turned into fetishes.

Only revolutionary men and women, communists, who have conquered a new political and social consciousness can lead humanity to build a better world. That will be a world in which free, voluntary social labor assumes a larger and larger place, as the mechanisms and separate administrative apparatuses wither away and the field of operation of blind laws increasingly

gives way to the conscious decisions of humanity.

Renewal of leadership

The Cuban socialist revolution is advancing, qualitatively deepening its proletarian and internationalist roots, and mobilizing Cuba's working people to take new steps in conquering the leadership of their revolution. In this framework the question of leadership is dealt with directly in Castro's speech "Renewal or Death."

Castro explains the criteria that guided the election of the new Central Committee and Political Bureau at the third party congress in February 1986. Previous attempts to renew the leadership were only partial and incomplete, he notes. The second party congress in 1980 brought more workers, women, and internationalist volunteers onto the Central Committee. "The most revolutionary thing" about the second congress, Castro told a public rally in December 1980, "was the composition of our Central Committee. The leadership of our Party was given a strong dose of worker cadres, a strong dose of women, and a strong dose of internationalist fighters."

Moreover, he noted, "the number of workers in our Party has almost tripled, which means that our Party has become more proletarian and, therefore, more Marxist-Leninist and more revolutionary."

The 1986 party congress, however, went far beyond the important initial steps of 1980. It carried out a deep-going renewal and the beginning of a historic transition in leadership to a new generation. Forty percent of the members of the new Central Committee and 50 percent of the new Political Bureau had not served on the outgoing committees.

Moreover, the congress recognized, the process of renewal and transition could be carried forward only by advancing the working-class composition of the leadership. That meant consciously confronting the legacy of race and sex divisions and stratifications within the working class inherited from imperialism, because the consequences of these divisions are not eliminated overnight. The new, more proletarian, leadership included a strong infusion of youth, of women, and of Blacks and mestizos.

Since the February 1986 congress, the example it set on leadership selection has been extended, and similar measures have been implemented in the trade unions, the Union of Young Communists, and other organizations.

Internationalist volunteers

A weighty factor in the ability of the Cuban communists to advance the battle to deepen the revolution in Cuba is the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who have volunteered to work as internationalists overseas. They have dedicated their energies and skills as teachers, doctors, engineers, and construction workers in countries such as Ethiopia, Kampuchea, Nicaragua, and Grenada and in return acquired a deeper revolutionary consciousness about the fight against imperialism and Cuba's place in the world. Of decisive importance have been the experiences of the Cuban soldiers who have volunteered, beginning in 1975, to fight to defend Angolan independence and sovereignty against the South African army and the U.S.-backed mercenary forces. These experiences have educated, politicized, and mobilized the best and most conscious of the young generation of Cuban communists "to pay our debt to humanity," as they often put it.

A new, more profound understanding is now being forged, a realization that there can be no separation between proletarian internationalism and communist class consciousness at home. Moreover, it is only fresh victories against imperialism by workers and farmers elsewhere in the world that will bring forward new revolutionary leadership and make possible the continued deepening of the Cuban revolution. Without the advances for the world revolution in Angola, Nicaragua, and Grenada over the past decade, Cuba, too, would have been pushed back.

Combating privilege

This is true above all because the rectification process is not primarily a struggle over ideas. As Castro explains, the Economic Planning and Management System,

left to function "blindly" without the counterweight of leadership and control by communist workers, has bred a social layer of administrators and functionaries, some of whom began to act like, dress up like capitalists, and develop the tastes of capitalists.

They sought support within the better-off layers of the working class who became accustomed to and corrupted by unearned bonuses and privileges, and those small farmers who raked in windfall profits on the sale of scarce food items and other consumer products. These social layers benefited under the economic system of the last decade. Many of them are opposed to the steps being taken to deepen the politicization and revolutionary mobilization of the working class to take command and to make conscious choices to advance the broadest social interests of all working people in Cuba and abroad.

The most telling fact about the seriousness of the challenge facing the Cuban leadership was the recognition that the corrupting influence and weight of these social layers had begun to be felt within the Communist Party as well. The party itself, Castro commented, "was starting to go to pot."

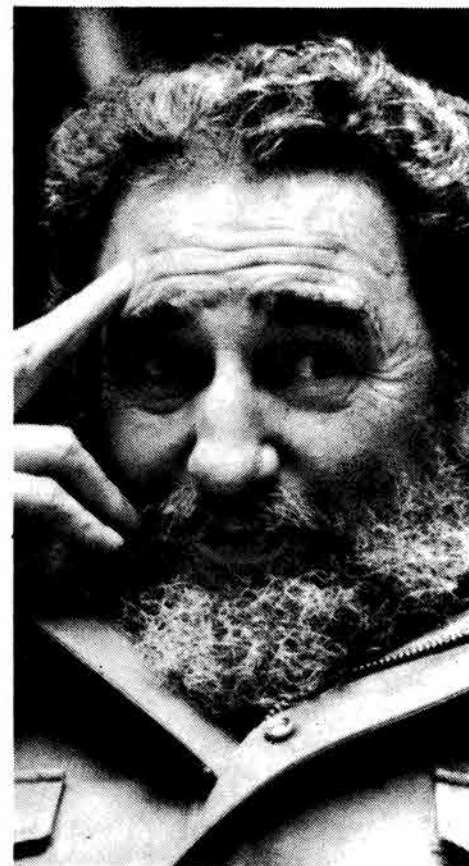
The heaviest counterweight to these negative pressures in Cuba over the last decade have been the advances of the world revolution. Proletarian internationalism and the direct revolutionary experience of hundreds of thousands of internationalist volunteers have been powerful politicizing factors. They have become a material force. With the aid of the workers and peasants of Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean, the workers and farmers of Cuba were able to begin their correction process in time, to change course before depoliticization, demoralization, and corruption could become irreversible.

An ongoing fight

The rectification process now under way is not the first time in recent years that the Cuban leadership has taken up this fight. In 1979 [Vice-president] Raúl Castro made several powerful speeches in which he addressed these issues.

In 1980 millions of Cubans poured into the streets three times in one month responding to growing U.S. military threats and provocations and the Mariel exodus with the Marches of the Fighting People. Later in 1980 the voluntary Territorial Troop Militias were formed, rapidly mobilizing more than a million and a half Cubans and revolutionizing Cuba's defense system.

In 1982 at the Communist youth congress and the congress of small farmers Fidel Castro spoke out sharply against



Fidel Castro

numerous manifestations of corruption and bureaucracy. All these steps resulted from growing consciousness about the problems Cuba was confronting and were taken to mobilize working people to combat them.

The conclusions reached by the third party congress, however, and the course that has now been charted mark a definitive turning point and the opening of a new stage of the Cuban revolution. Leadership renewal is no longer partial or symbolic. The necessary political mechanisms and economic planning systems, no matter how reformed, are being assigned their proper place as instruments, forms to be used and altered in practice by a politicized, communist working class. The course that has been charted is not a short-term campaign against isolated examples of corruption. It is a course of mobilizing working people to take command of their own present and future, advancing humanity towards a future that is far better — not worse — than capitalism.

"The road to communism is completely new to humanity," Castro explains. There are no blueprints; there can be none. Ever higher levels of social understanding and class consciousness are needed to keep correcting the course and moving forward. All these factors indicate the centrality of the revolutionary political developments in Cuba today to working people the world over. As Castro says, they are important to "the whole of international revolutionary thought."



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Finnish brigadistas aid Nicaraguans

BY JON HILLSON

ISIDRILLO, Nicaragua — The big metal ring that Jukka Numminen presented to his Nicaraguan hosts had 50 keys on it, one for every house built here by a 14-member brigade of skilled union construction workers from Finland.

Their dawn-to-dusk labor completed the six-month project on time, May 1. It was celebrated that day at ceremonies here on the outskirts of Estelí, the capital of Las Segovias Province in northern Nicaragua.

The houses will go to tobacco workers organized in the Rural Workers Association (ATC).

The labor, parts, materials, and travel of the 12 men and two women from Finland were paid for entirely by the country's major construction trade union, an affiliate of one of the nation's largest union federations.

Numminen — a skilled carpenter and mason with 16 years experience — visited Nicaragua in 1985. Inspired by the achievements of the revolution and moved by the difficulties facing it, he came up with the idea of forming a union brigade to build housing. He collaborated with the Nicaraguan authorities and his union in working up a proposal.

The plan won a big response from Numminen's fellow unionists in Finland. "More than 350 workers wanted to go to Nicaragua to fill 14 openings," he told the *Militant*.

The workers, most of them in their 20s, were selected to provide a cross section of skills. "We had three goals," Numminen said. "First, to build the houses. Then, to exchange work methods with the Nicaraguans. And to bring back information and knowledge about Nicaragua to our country and to answer lies about the Sandinistas told by the right-wing politicians and the big-business press."

Upon their return, the construction workers plan to use their union paper to describe their trip, and to promote solidarity with Nicaragua in the 20 affiliates of their national federation.

"We'll speak at union local meetings, use slideshows, write articles, and speak wherever we can," the 36-year-old unionist stated.

Tobacco industry

Isidrillo was chosen because it was here that some of the displaced victims of the U.S.-directed contra war were being relocated. They were provided jobs in tobacco



Cindi Kerr

U.S. construction brigadistas with Nicaraguans. Finnish brigade members who built houses for tobacco workers hope that more delegations come.

fields and at Nicaragua Cigar in nearby Estelí.

This cash crop brings important export dollars into Nicaragua's war-torn economy.

Since tobacco work is both seasonal and skilled, the quality and quantity of production are determined by the stability of the work force.

If trained seasonal workers don't return to the fields, time, money, and production are lost while new workers are recruited and trained. Because of the severe econom-

ic difficulties that Nicaragua is experiencing, some skilled workers have left production jobs to work as individual artisans, craftspeople, or market vendors of their own products.

Such departures of skilled workers "are the biggest blow of all to production," José Mendieta told 1,000 workers assembled in Isidrillo for the May Day ceremonies during which the tobacco workers received the new houses from the Finnish workers.

Mendieta hailed the internationalist example of the Finnish volunteers, who were inducted as honorary members in the ATC earlier in the rally.

Next phase

The new houses are now among the incentives — including factory-related day-care, subsidized food and consumer goods, and production bonuses — that the Nicaraguan government is trying to make available to maintain a stable, skilled work force in Estelí's tobacco-processing plant, its largest industrial factory.

The impact on the Finnish union men and women was profound, Numminen told me. "We learned of the role of the U.S. government and its war, and saw that the image of Third World countries as passive is a lie."

The next phase of the construction project will be completed by a second Finnish-Nicaraguan brigade of electricians and plumbers, who'll bring power and running water to the homes.

Numminen and the other Finnish unionists hope more such delegations will come from other countries, especially the United States. In Nicaragua, he explains, U.S. workers will learn that "between the workers of whatever country, there's no difference. And if the workers in Nicaragua improve their lives, that's good for workers everywhere, including the United States."

Six sentenced to death in Kuwait

BY FRED FELDMAN

About 200 men and women staged an angry protest outside the main courthouse in Kuwait June 6 as six young men were being sentenced to death. The six were among 16 people recently tried on charges of subversion and sabotage.

The six were the first Kuwaiti citizens to be sentenced to death on charges of participating in the growing unrest in this small, oil-rich emirate of 1.7 million people located just south of Iraq.

Participants in the protest shouted, "Death to America," "America is the number one enemy," and "We will not accept America in the gulf."

In order to justify Washington's provocative move to provide U.S. flags and naval escorts to Kuwaiti tankers in the Persian Gulf, government officials and the major media have taken to referring to Kuwait as a democracy. The facts tell a different story.

Kuwait has been governed since the 18th

century by a single family, the Sabah family. Their control of the state is written into the constitution, adopted when the British rulers conceded political independence to Kuwait in 1961.

With the growth of the oil industry after World War II, many Palestinians and people from other Middle Eastern countries flowed into Kuwait. The regime has denied them the rights of citizens. Only 40 percent of the Kuwaiti population have citizenship rights. And only males who have been citizens for 10 years may vote.

The example of the 1979 Iranian revolution, which smashed the monarchy and broke the power of the great landed families, threatened the archaic system in Kuwait.

Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, the current emir, has responded to growing demands for social and political change by increasing repression at home and seeking to weaken Iran. From the start he has backed the Iraqi regime's war

against Iran. Iraqi jets fly over Kuwaiti airspace to attack shipping in the Persian Gulf, and the regime provides Iraq with its only ports.

Last July the emir dissolved the parliament, imposed press censorship, and suspended other parts of the constitution.

The ruling family has also fostered intensified religious discrimination against Shiite Muslims who make up 40 percent of the population. (A slightly larger percentage of the people in Kuwait are Sunni Muslims. Iran is predominantly Shiite.)

The regime fired some 200 Shiites from jobs in the oil industry, and has been weeding them out of the army and police. Shiite citizens have reportedly been detained, placed under surveillance, or had their passports confiscated. The media is carrying out a strident anti-Shiite campaign.

The six who received the death sentence were Shiites.

In the wake of the several bombings and assassination attempts attributed to political dissidents last year, the regime deported 4,000 noncitizens, including people charged with "radical political or religious leanings."

CIA agents captured by Cuban gov't

BY MIKE TABER

HAVANA, Cuba — On June 8, millions of TV viewers throughout Cuba tuned their sets to a special program: an interview with two CIA agents captured by Cuban state security forces in April. Before the cameras, these two told their story.

Gladys García Hernández had left Cuba to live in Miami a number of years ago. In March 1985 on one of her trips to Cuba to visit family she recruited her brother, Néstor García Hernández, as a CIA informant. The motive? Money; in her brother's case \$1,500 a month — although the sister, obviously more experienced in these types of matters, convinced her brother that she should get two-thirds of it. In all, the agent "earned" \$31,000, paid directly to a bank account in Miami.

All Néstor García had to do was pass on "information," destined for his contact person at CIA headquarters, Roberto Martín. His CIA superiors in Langley, Virginia, were interested in several things: rumors about Fidel Castro's health, the impact of Washington's "Radio José Martí," Cuban construction aid to Nicaragua (García himself was a construction worker who had been to Nicaragua), opinions on the regular U.S. spy flights, and Cuba's progress in the use of computers.

In his two years as a CIA agent, Néstor

García sent 33 radio transmissions reporting on these questions, using equipment brought down by his sister. In addition, he sent several letters written in code to an address in Costa Rica and later to one in Montevideo, Uruguay.

But the two agents got a surprise they hadn't expected. In April, when Gladys García was in Cuba, ostensibly to visit her "sick" brother, they were both arrested by state security, which had caught on to the operation. "I never thought I'd be discovered," she told the interviewer. Néstor García shared the sentiment: "I never felt I'd been detected; my arrest totally surprised me."

Both agents are being held pending trial, which will be public and in which they will be able to present their defense.

The Cuban people, who over the years have been witness to countless CIA operations — from the training and sending of armed mercenary bands; numerous assassination attempts against the revolution's leaders; the deliberate introduction of diseases against agriculture, livestock, and people; organized disinformation and rumor spreading — were able to see on their televisions what they already knew: that these efforts to undermine the Cuban revolution continue.

But for these two agents the show is over.

Subscribe to 'Perspectiva Mundial' July issue: Cuban union leader speaks

As a reader of the *Militant* you are familiar with our weekly coverage of the struggles of working people around the world.

If you can read or are studying Spanish, there is a complementary monthly magazine for you: *Perspectiva Mundial*. PM is a Spanish-language socialist magazine that carries many of the same articles you read in the *Militant*.

The July issue features an interview with Jesús Antonio Escandell, secretary of international relations of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions.

Workers in every factory in Cuba are taking part in a "rectification process," a deep political discussion to solve problems of waste, inefficiency, and poor quality of goods.

Socialism can't be built only on the basis of economic mechanisms and incentives, Escandell explains. "Political consciousness is needed." He lays out what this new process means for Cuban workers and the role of the trade unions in it.

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Left Front wins third term in West Bengal

Communist-led coalition in office for decade in impoverished Indian state

BY KUNAL CHATTOPADHYAY

CALCUTTA, India — Last March the Communist Party of India (Marxist) headed a political bloc, the Left Front, that swept the polls for a third time running in the state of West Bengal's Legislative Assembly elections. The Left Front (LF) increased the number of seats it holds over the previous two terms. The CPI(M) itself secured a majority of the seats.

Besides the CPI(M), the LF includes the Communist Party of India, Revolutionary Socialist Party of India, All-India Forward Bloc, and many smaller groups.

The CPI(M) victory, however, does not indicate any leftward swing in West Bengal or Indian politics or an intensification of the class struggle.

Most of West Bengal's 60 million inhabitants, as in all of India, live in rural areas. This is where the CPI(M) has its strongest base of support.

The capitalist Congress (I) Party of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is strongest in Calcutta, the state capital and a city of more than 9 million people — the largest in India.

Despite a major campaign by Gandhi himself to turn the tide against the CPI(M) and the Left Front, the Congress Party lost seats in West Bengal's 294-member assembly. The CPI(M) won 187 seats to the

coming to power in 1977.

Over this last decade of heading the West Bengal government, however, the CPI(M) and its left allies have concentrated on maintaining a stable government. Since 1977 the front has proved time and again to the ruling class that in carrying out certain reform measures, it will not rock the boat.

Ties to peasants

The main reform carried out by the government has been to provide some aid to the peasantry. Among its modest measures is "Operation Barga," the registration of the state's 1.3 million sharecroppers that gave them a better share of their produce and relative security from eviction. About 800,000 acres of land have been distributed to some 1.64 million recipients. But millions more want land.

The percent of people below the poverty line has gone down from 59 percent in 1977 to 43.8 percent in 1983-84.

Other rural reforms include a significant extension of irrigation. Already these efforts have increased rice production.

The LF has also sought to maintain their peasant base through calling elections for the *panchayats*, rural self-government bodies. This led to the election of peasants, in some cases poor peasants and agricultural laborers, to positions of authority. Panchayats help to get jobs for the rural poor, maintain schools, etc.

At the same time, the LF has rejected struggle, arguing that change comes from above. West Bengal's Chief Minister Jyoti Basu says strikes are the weapons of last resort for the working class and should be used sparingly.

A decade of the Left Front

The effects of a decade of LF rule, despite the genuine reforms for the peasantry, has been a shift to the right politically.

The LF's solution to problems it can't solve is to point the finger at New Delhi or elsewhere by whipping up Bengali regionalism. This Bengali nationalism is used to push reactionary ideological positions. The regime, for example, has campaigned against the demand of oppressed tribal people for a Jharkhand state, which would include part of West Bengal.

It has carried out a chauvinist campaign against the demand for a separate province for the Gorkhas. Most Gorkhas work on the tea plantations in Darjeeling, a district of West Bengal.

In general, the economic policy of the LF is all too often a copy of the policies pursued by the ruling Congress government in New Delhi. The measures in the countryside are aimed at securing electoral support, not as the beginnings of vast rural struggles that can help fundamentally alter the class relations.

The LF's industrial policy consists of advocating orderly settlement of disputes and preventing growth of workers' struggles outside the front's control, including through the use of paramilitary and police forces. In a decade West Bengal has become one of the provinces with the least "labor troubles." There are far more work-



Homeless family in West Bengal's capital, Calcutta.

days lost due to lockouts or other actions taken by the employers than to working-class struggles.

This in turn has enabled the LF to convince the big capitalist monopolies and multinational corporations that West Bengal is a good place for their investments.

Downturn in the class struggle

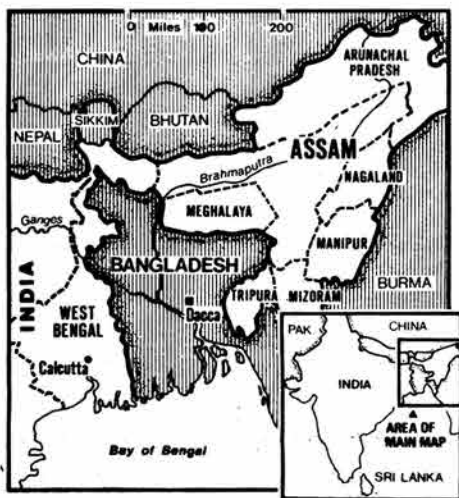
The rightward political evolution of the LF over the past 10 years reflects the downturn in the class struggle, and the CPI(M)'s ability to contain class combat. In fact, the capitalist class in West Bengal, or large sections of it, prefer to see the front in power at present. That's one reason why Gandhi's open appeal during the campaign

to overthrow the "red bastion" fell on deaf ears.

Disappointment by many working people in the LF is not leading to political radicalization, however.

Instead, communal organizations — those based on religious sectarianism — have begun to grow, particularly Hindu chauvinist groups. Muslim communalism has also grown.

The LF, however, has failed to make anticommunalism, especially that directed towards Hindu chauvinism, a permanent plank of its campaigns. Continued failure on this point may lead to the type of social tensions and riots already common in many of the other states of India.



Congress's 40, down from 49.

For Gandhi this was a major setback. It comes in the context of corruption scandals in New Delhi and growing divisions in the Congress.

Evolution of the Left Front

What is most revealing about the West Bengal elections is the political evolution of the reformist parties. While the CPI and CPI(M) — a split from the CPI in the early 1960s — claim to be revolutionary Marxist, they are not.

The CPI was active in the peasant movement in Bengal prior to the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947. This continued after Bengal was partitioned, with the eastern half becoming East Pakistan (now the country of Bangladesh).

The CPI(M)'s opposition to the Congress's attack on democratic rights in the mid-1970s and support to peasant struggles for land laid the basis for the Left Front

3,000 in Iceland protest U.S. bases

BY GRÉTAR KRISTJÁNSSON

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Some 250 protesters gathered outside the entrance of the U.S. military base in Keflavik in the early morning hours of June 6. They were assembling for a 30-mile march to Reykjavik, the capital.

This was the 10th Keflavik March protesting the U.S. military presence. The first was held in 1960, nine years after the U.S. military established itself here under the North Atlantic Treaty.

This march was called by the Campaign Against Military Bases. Trade union leaders and leaders of the People's Alliance, the only party in Iceland that professes opposition to the U.S. base, cosponsored the protest. Prominent slogans during the march were "Iceland out of NATO — army out" and "A nuclear-free zone in the Nordic countries!"

The march comes in the wake of a military buildup in Iceland by the U.S. govern-

ment. Washington spends \$80 million a year to build and repair military facilities here. The latest construction includes a port for submarines in Helgavik, two new radar stations (in addition to the three already in existence), and bomb-safe hangars for F-15 and F-4 military aircraft. There has also been talk of building a new military airfield in the northern town of Saudarkrokur.

The Keflavik March this year was also a demonstration against the ministerial meeting of NATO countries held here in mid-June.

As the march went along more people joined. The 250 sore-footed demonstrators grew to 3,000 as the march entered downtown Reykjavik. It ended in a rally where slogans demanding the removal of the U.S. forces and Iceland's withdrawal from NATO resounded in the calm of the summer evening. Many workers and students participated.

— WORLD NEWS BRIEFS —

Mexico to resume oil supplies to Nicaragua

Government officials in Mexico City revealed June 19 that the Mexican government is planning to resume oil shipments to Nicaragua. The Venezuelan government is reported to be considering a similar decision.

From 1980 until 1984, Nicaragua received most of its oil from those two countries, at concessionary rates. But in 1984 Venezuela halted its supplies to Nicaragua, and in March 1985 Mexico did the same. Both governments said the cutoffs were because Nicaragua had fallen behind in its payments. But some Mexican officials now admit that pressure from Washington was also a factor.

Following this cutoff, Nicaragua appealed for oil from the Soviet Union, which supplied 80-90 percent of Nicaragua's oil needs in 1985 and 1986.

For 1987, according to a statement by Nicaragua's Ministry of Foreign Cooperation, the Soviet Union agreed to supply 300,000 tons of oil (out of the 765,000 tons needed this year). The statement noted that the 300,000 tons "have already been delivered, completely fulfilling the agreement."

Other countries — East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, Bulgaria, and Hungary — have agreed to supply another 330,000 tons.

This leaves Nicaragua short at least 135,000 tons this year.

Besides the reported moves by Mexico and Venezuela to resume oil shipments, there have been indications that the government of Peru is also considering sending some oil to Nicaragua as a gesture of solidarity.

Protests in Quebec over constitutional accord

The three major Quebec union federations, the Parti Québécois, the Quebec branch of the New Democratic Party (Canada's labor party), and other groups

that defend the linguistic and national rights of the Québécois have protested the new constitutional accord reached in Canada.

On June 3 Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and the 10 provincial premiers of Canada formally ratified the accord. On the basis of this agreement, the Quebec government agreed to endorse the Canadian constitution.

Previously, the Quebec government had refused to accept the constitution in protest over an earlier move to eliminate Quebec's power to enact laws it judged necessary to protect the French language — the language spoken by the oppressed majority in Quebec.

The new accord contains some minor concessions, but Quebec's powers to protect the French language remain extremely limited. The accord recognizes what it calls "the distinct character of Quebec" inside Canada, but does not recognize Quebec as a nation with its own right to self-determination.

Togo resumes ties with Israel

The West African government of Togo announced June 9 that it was resuming diplomatic relations with Israel. A week later, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir arrived in Lomé, the capital of Togo, for the start of a tour of several African countries.

Togo follows the example of four other proimperialist regimes in Africa — those of Zaire, Liberia, Ivory Coast, and Cameroon — that have resumed diplomatic ties with Israel since 1982.

Those relations were originally cut following the 1973 Mideast war, when 26 independent African states severed ties with Tel Aviv as an act of solidarity with the struggle of the Arab peoples.

Besides the resumption of Israeli diplomatic ties by several regimes, a few of them are also receiving Israeli economic and military assistance. The presidential guard in Cameroon, for example, is Israeli-trained and -armed, while Israelis have helped train Zaire's political police.

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

That's sad — "TOKYO — The disclosure that 16,000 cases of Winston Lights cigarettes shipped to Japan contain illegally high levels of a herbicide could threaten



Harry Ring

a major effort to sell American cigarettes in Japan."

The march of civilization — The death chamber in the Virginia

state pen has been air-conditioned to "make it more comfortable for everybody."

View from the bench — "A dictator can do whatever he can get away with. A court in this country simply cannot second-guess how that power is exercised." — Judge Alex Kozinski explaining why a federal court here lifted a freeze on \$1.5 billion in assets stolen by the Marcoses from the Filipino people.

A darker race, you know — "They have a kind of tradition of confrontation rather than a tradition of compromise. It's sort of part of the Korean character." — Secretary of State George Shultz

on the situation in South Korea.

Member of the Abrams team — A contra officer in Honduras was sporting a baseball cap sent down by the CIA and inscribed, "Admit Nothing — Deny Everything — Make Counter-Accusations."

Praise the lord and pass the pen — Checking the PTL's tax-exempt status, the feds are looking at "lavish expenditures," such as a \$120 Gucci pen. But since 1984, the Bakkers have drawn \$4.8 million in wages and fringes. Does the government expect them to be signing those kinds of checks with a 29-cent Bic?

Sort of a Club Med — A patent

has been issued for a nuclear survival camp for city dwellers. (The inventor suggests they be spotted at least 25 miles from likely targets.) They will offer protection from fallout and from bands of marauders. Also, there will be facilities to keep the sheltered physically and mentally healthy.

A Meeseite? — We're a bit late in reporting it, but a fellow was committed in D.C. after taking a hammer to the glass-enclosed Constitution at the National Archives.

Despite all the bad-mouthing — It may have been a poor year for Wall Street image-wise, but in

1986 the top 10 operators "earned" an average of \$68.8 million. Leading the pack was Michel David-Weill of Lazard Freres. His wages were \$125 million.

Ivan Boesky will rap? — Several Florida resorts are offering weekly "money management" seminars for youngsters 10 to 15. It's \$500 for the five sessions, but each student gets a \$100 portfolio.

Thought for the week — "Until we get real wage levels down much closer to those of the Brazils and Koreas, we cannot pass along productivity gains to wages and still be competitive." — Goodyear exec Stanley Mihelick.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Behind U.S. War Moves in the Persian Gulf. Speakers: Georges Sayad, Socialist Workers Party; others. Translation to Spanish. Thurs., July 2, 7 p.m. 3808 E 14th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

Oakland (East Bay) Socialist Summer School. A series of eight classes.

Sat., July 11. Class 1: "The Russian Revolution: 1917 and Today," 3-5 p.m.; Class 2: "Why Revolutionary Socialists Defend the Soviet Union Today," 7-9 p.m.

Sat., July 18, 3-5 p.m. Class 3: "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop."

Sat., July 25, 3-5 p.m. Class 4: "What Causes War — How To Fight It."

A second series of four classes, on labor, will be announced. All classes translated to Spanish and held at 3808 E. 14th St. Donation: eight classes, \$6; single class, \$1. Sponsors: Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (415) 261-3014 or 658-8898.

COLORADO

Denver

Farewell Party for Denver Socialist Workers Party. Sat., July 4, 4 p.m. For more information call (303) 698-2550.

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FLORIDA

Miami

U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! The Role of Washington in the Iran-Iraq War. Speaker: Peter Seidman, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Future of the USSR: Lenin's Unfinished Fight. Speaker: Doug Jenness, editor of *Militant*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 3455 S Michigan. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 326-5853.

IOWA

Des Moines

Socialist Educational Weekend. Issues in the 'Baby M' Case. Speaker: Pat Grogan, national leader of the Socialist Workers Party. Sat., July 18, 7 p.m.

The Propaganda War Against Women's Rights. Two classes based on the book *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. Speaker: Pat Grogan. Sun., July 19. Class 1, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; Class 2, 3-4 p.m. All events at 2105 Forest Ave. Donations: \$2 each class, \$5 for weekend. Sponsors: Des Moines, Iowa; Austin, Minnesota; and Omaha, Nebraska, Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (515) 246-1695.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The U.S. Constitution: A Document for the Rich or for Working People? A Marxist Analysis. Speaker: August Nimtz, Socialist Workers Party, professor of political science, University of Minnesota. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

The Facts About the AIDS Scare. Speaker to be announced. Sat., June 27, 7 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

U.S. Navy Out of Persian Gulf! — Role of the United States in the Iran-Iraq War. Speaker: Mike Italie, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., July 11, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Roy Brown in Benefit Concert for Pathfinder Books. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$10. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

The Reality of the Contra War Against Nicaragua. Speakers: Commander Monica Baltodano, vice-minister of Nicaragua's Ministry of the Presidency; Zulema Baltodano, longtime Sandinista activist; Santos Buitrago, leader of the Committee of Mothers of Martyrs and Heroes. Tue., June 30, 7:30 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Parochial School, 126 W. 17th St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: New York Sister City Project. For more information call (212) 769-4293.

Why the U.S. Government Frames Up Puerto Rican Activists and What We Can Do to Fight It. Speakers: Elias Castro Ramos, one of the Hartford 16 defendants and organizer of the Teachers Federation of Puerto Rico; Victor Nieto, Socialist Workers Party; Roger Wareham, New York 8+ defendant; Zoila Torres, president of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights and United Auto Workers District 65 organizer for the Hispanic Committee. Translation to Spanish. Fri., July 10, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

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Sun., June 28. "The Industrial Workers of the World," 11 a.m.; "The Socialist Party of Debs and Berger," 2 p.m.; "Origins and Decline of the Communist Party," 4 p.m.

Sun., July 12. "The Regeneration of American Communism," 11 a.m.; "The Turn to Mass Work," 2 p.m.; "The Entry Into the Socialist Party and Formation of the Socialist Workers Party," 4 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Sponsors: Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Cleveland

Washington's War Threats Against Iran. Speaker: Barry Sheppard, member of National Committee of Socialist Workers Party, witnessed 1979 insurrection that toppled the shah of Iran. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 2521 Market Ave. (across from West Side Market). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (216) 861-6150.

Socialist Summer School. Four classes on *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Fredrick Engels. Sundays at 2 p.m. on June 28, July 12, 19, and 26. 2521 Market Ave. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (216) 861-6150.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

U.S. Out of Persian Gulf: The Role of the U.S. Government in Iran-Iraq War. Speakers to be announced. Sat., June 27, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

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Washington sabotages peace discussions in Central America

Continued from front page

Arias's plan "is simply a continuation of the interventionist policy of the United States against Nicaragua."

On February 15, with the U.S. government's blessing, the presidents of El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Guatemala held a meeting in San José, Costa Rica, to discuss the Arias plan. Nicaragua was excluded. Contrary to Washington's hopes, however, the meeting failed to come up with a united proposal that could be used to torpedo further attempts at Contadora negotiations.

In fact, the four Central American presidents could only come to agreement on a declaration that "The time for peace has come in Central America." They did not approve Arias's plan. Instead, they voted to convene the June 25-26 meeting, this time inviting Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega.

Debate over Arias plan

At about this time, the U.S. Senate passed a motion praising the Arias plan. This provoked debate in Washington, with the White House raising strong reservations about the Costa Rican president's proposal.

These reservations were heightened when the Nicaraguan government announced, in light of the San José meeting, that it thought the Arias plan had "constructive" elements and should be included in the discussions of the five Central American presidents.

Arias's plan, as he describes it, includes the following points:

- A cease-fire between all contending military forces in Central America;
- A general amnesty for those charged with political or military crimes;
- A dialogue in each Central American country between the government and internal opposition groups;
- An end to foreign aid to the contras in Nicaragua and to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador;
- Restoration of suspended civil liberties in all five countries;
- Elections in all five for a Central American parliament, to be followed by domestic elections.

What bothers the White House most is the plan's call for a halt to aid to the con-

tras. If put into practice, it would mean that the mercenaries would lose their massive financial and military support from Washington, without which they cannot survive.

Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte objects to the plan's call for a cease-fire between his government and the FMLN.

Nicaragua's proposals

As the June 25-26 meeting drew closer, the Nicaraguan government announced the proposals it would put on the table. Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said June 10 that his government favored the approach laid out by the Contadora Group in 1986, which included:

- An end to foreign aid to "irregular forces" fighting in Central America;
- Suspension of international military maneuvers in the region;
- Withdrawal of all foreign military advisers and bases from Central America;
- Nonaggression pacts between the five countries.

Within this framework, said Ortega, the Arias plan should certainly be discussed, as well as proposals from any of the other presidents.

U.S. envoy Philip Habib, meanwhile, had appeared in Central America to meet with the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. He did not come to Nicaragua.

On June 12, shortly after meeting with Habib, Salvadoran President Duarte suddenly announced that the June 25-26 meeting should be postponed, offering the lame excuse that it hadn't been properly prepared. Arias and Honduran President José Azcona seconded the postponement. The three presidents proposed that a meeting of the five countries' foreign ministers take place instead, and that the presidents' meeting be put off for several months.

Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo, on the other hand, said the meeting of presidents should go ahead as scheduled. He argued that Washington was damaging its own image: "Everyone will think it was U.S. influence that broke up the meeting." Several days later, however, he agreed to postpone the presidents' meeting until August.

Nicaraguan President Ortega charged June 18 that Philip Habib had engineered the postponement because Washington opposes the contra aid cutoff in the Arias plan. Ortega urged the presidents to meet as originally scheduled.

Washington, he explained, "is trying to deny Central Americans the possibility of a dialogue." Nicaragua rejects such interference, he continued, and will therefore not participate in either the foreign ministers' meeting or the presidents' meeting now set for August.

Arias meets with Reagan

Arias was suddenly called to Washington for a meeting with Reagan and other top U.S. government officials on June 18. Aides to Arias called the meeting "sharp, tense, and frank."

Reagan told Arias that his plan had to be modified, because Washington intended to continue aiding the contras. Reagan also complained that the Arias plan calls for "democratization" not only in Nicaragua, but in El Salvador and Guatemala as well.

Arias told reporters that the U.S. and Costa Rican governments "agree on the ends, but not the means."

"I don't think the contras can do the job," he said. "I think we should get rid of them."

As the *Militant* goes to press, the meeting of Central American foreign ministers is scheduled for June 25-26. Nicaragua maintains its position that it will not attend. The Guatemalan government says its foreign minister will not participate if Nicaragua's is not there.

The Nicaraguan government announced June 22 that Panamanian President Eric Arturo Delvalle had invited Ortega to meet with him to discuss ways to bring about the Central American presidents' meeting as rapidly as possible.



Militant/Harvey McArthur
Co-op Monterrey agricultural cooperative in Nicaragua's Jinotega Province after contras attacked it. Nicaraguan farms are top targets of U.S. war.

Linders begin antiwar tour

Continued from back page

Linder was murdered. The local Nicaragua Network and many other groups helped build the tour.

"Our brother's murder was a crime," John Linder told the audience at the meeting at the Unitarian Church, "and for every crime there is a criminal. Those who killed Ben were hired guns. The real murderers are in Washington." More than \$1,000 was collected following a slide show by Miriam Linder outlining plans to finish the project Ben was working on when he was assassinated.

The slide show explained the work done in Nicaragua by volunteers from other countries and encouraged everyone to go to Nicaragua in spite of U.S. government warnings not to do so.

John Linder's next stop in the tour was Denver. From there he will go to Kansas City, June 25-28; Los Angeles, July 10-11 and July 19-23; the San Francisco Bay Area, July 12-19; and Milwaukee, July 25-27.

Elisabeth Linder, Benjamin's mother, will tour Seattle June 26-28; New York

City, July 17-18; Washington, D.C., July 19; and the New York area, July 20-24.

Miriam Linder will be in Seattle July 4-6.

Honduras to get U.S. jet fighters

A House subcommittee has effectively defeated a move to block the sale of 12 F-5 jet fighters to Honduras. By a vote of six to six June 4, the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs refused to submit a resolution to the full House Foreign Relations Committee blocking the sale by the Pentagon. In Congress, tie votes fail to pass.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had endorsed a similar resolution by a vote of 10 to 9.

Rep. Sam Gejdenson, a Connecticut Democrat who urged stopping the deal, said the subcommittee vote meant that efforts to get Congress to block the sale are now "dead."

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 35¢
July 1, 1977

On June 20 the Supreme Court ruled six to three that states have the right to deprive low-income women of government funds for abortion. By overturning lower court rulings in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Missouri — rulings based on the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion — the justices have carried out a major retreat on one of the most important gains the women's movement has won.

Their ruling followed by three days the House of Representatives vote to approve a federal ban on all Medicaid-funded abortions — the Hyde amendment — as part of the appropriations bill for the Department of Labor and Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

This is a major victory for the anti-woman foes of abortion and a severe setback for the women's movement. Those spearheading the attack have let it be known their target is *all* women's right to abortion.

"I certainly would like to prevent if I could legally, anybody having an abortion — a rich woman, a middle-class woman, or a poor woman," proclaimed Rep. Henry Hyde, sponsor of the House amendment.

In voting to deny some 300,000 women each year safe and legal abortions, however, Hyde and his colleagues consciously singled out the most oppressed women. The ban would hit hardest at Blacks, Chicanas, and Puerto Ricans — 38.5 percent of whom rely on Medicaid for health care — and other working-class women.

In 1973 the Supreme Court ruled that *all*

women — poor and rich alike — have the constitutional right to choose whether to have an abortion.

Today, the court has wrested that right from poor women and handed it back to the states. In the court's opinion, state governments now have a constitutionally protected "valid and important interest in encouraging childbirth."

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The gutter press is devoting space to express indignation at the Supreme Court's "atheistic" ruling against official prayers in the public schools. Southern racists in Congress and witch-hunters like House Un-American Activities Committee Chairman Walter want to amend the Constitution's provision for separation of church and state.

That is logical. These reactionaries and obscurantists have really always been against the Bill of Rights and every kind of freedom — including the freedom of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment, which they now propose to repeal.

The high court's ruling was six to one, so unequivocal is the Constitution on the issue. Nor does it protect only the children of atheists, agnostics, freethinkers, etc., from having government-endorsed prayers shoved down their throats at school. It does that, which is very fine and proper. But it also protects the children of all religious denominations.

Christians in the Sandinista Revolution An Interview with Luis Carrión By Marta Harnecker

Luis Carrión is currently Nicaragua's deputy minister of the interior, and has been a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front's (FSLN) National Directorate since its creation in 1979.

He was previously a founding member of the Revolutionary Christian Movement, which mobilized Christian youth against the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza throughout the 1970s.

In this interview, Carrión discusses the crucial role played by Christians in the fight against Somoza, and the FSLN's strategy for incorporating Christians into the revolutionary process.

The interview was conducted in August 1986 by Marta Harnecker.

16 pp., \$2.25

Available from New Americas Press, P.O. Box 40874, San Francisco, Calif. 94110; (415) 626-6626. Discount on bulk orders.

Gov't sets up limits on rights

The Justice Department announced June 10 that it is preparing a lawsuit aimed at removing the executive board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and placing it under federal control. The federal officials say that government control is needed to end growing control of the union by "organized crime." With 1.7 million members, the IBT is the country's largest union.

The Justice Department is considering similar moves against the International Longshoremen's Association, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, and the Laborers' International Union of North America. A presidential commission on "organized crime" termed them all corrupt.

In threatening this move against the Teamsters, the Reagan administration chose a vulnerable target. Millions of workers, including the membership of the Teamsters, know that many Teamsters' leaders are corrupt and connected to "organized crime."

The top officialdom of the union is as crooked as they come, and the membership has no say in choosing its officers or deciding its policies.

But the threat to place the Teamsters under government trusteeship has nothing to do with ending gangster control of the union or introducing democratic control by the membership. It has everything to do with setting a precedent, by asserting the power of the government, acting for the employing class, to restrict the right of workers to organize to defend their interests without government interference or dictation. It is an attack on the freedom of association guaranteed in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The threat to place the Teamsters in government trusteeship is part of a pattern. The rulers know that frontal assaults on the democratic rights of all working people would meet massive resistance today. So they take issues such as drugs, AIDS, crime, immigration, etc. — issues about which there is confusion and concern among working people — and use them as pretexts for getting acceptance to institutionalize new guidelines restricting democratic rights.

The government's vaunted "war" against "organized crime" is an example. Supposedly to help the government wage the "war," the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act was adopted. This antidemocratic law provides for government "reorganization" of any enterprise found to be under criminal influence.

The Supreme Court recently used the case of Anthony Salerno, a well-known "organized crime" boss, as the peg for upholding the 1984 Bail Reform Act, which allows courts to deny bail to any accused person whom the government asserts is potentially dangerous.

None of this has put a stop to the activities of "organized crime" — nor is it intended to. The involvement of big business, federal and local governments, and cops at all levels in the lucrative activities of "organized crime" — from prostitution to drug-dealing — guaran-

tees that it will be around as long as capitalism is, even if some Mafia figures have to do time to lend credibility to the government's "war."

The real target is the rights of working people. The popular fear and concern about AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is being used in a similar way. Instead of helping victims of the disease, educating about causes and prevention, and countering exaggerations about how easily AIDS can be spread, the government presents myths and fears to justify imposing new restrictions on the right to privacy and the rights of prisoners and immigrants.

Attorney General Edwin Meese has now decreed compulsory AIDS testing of anyone seeking admission into or permanent residence in the United States, as well as of new inmates in federal prisons.

These are police measures, not medical remedies. There is no evidence that immigrants or prisoners are primary carriers of the AIDS virus. There is no reason these groups should be selected for testing, except as a form of discrimination and harassment.

The Reagan administration's campaign against drug use is also a case in point. Millions of working people are concerned about the destructive effect of drug addiction in their communities and the potential safety threat on the job posed by workers under the influence of drugs.

So Attorney General Meese called for compulsory drug testing for federal employees and encouraged private employers to take similar steps. He urged employers to step up spying on workers on and off the job.

This will not result in a reduction in drug addiction, the social problems it poses, or accidents on the job. The employers don't give a hoot about these. They want another weapon to use against workers' right to privacy, to create an atmosphere of intimidation in the workplace, and to undermine the unions' right to organize.

The rulers know that workers are concerned about the fact that unemployment stays high even as big business continues to rake in profits. The government and media have often pointed to immigration as the cause of joblessness, and many workers are convinced that this must be at least part of the problem.

Democratic and Republican legislators used this sentiment to provide a base of support for the new immigration law that recently went into effect. It further institutionalizes legal discrimination against undocumented workers by barring them from employment, and seeks to treat them as a caste of "illegals" who can be brutally superexploited because they have no legal rights.

In addition, the government tightened surveillance over all workers by requiring employers to confirm the legal status of all new hires with the U.S. government.

Working people have a vital interest in answering all the lies and probes used by the government to justify eroding democratic rights and to prepare for a sharper crackdown on working people.

Church, state separation upheld

Academic freedom and separation of church and state were both upheld June 19 when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a 1981 Louisiana state law requiring schools to give equal time to "creation science" if biological evolution is also taught. The law also barred teaching evolution as a proven fact.

Biological evolution is the scientific view that life has existed on earth for billions of years; that life forms evolved through a process of natural selection; and that human beings evolved from the primates. Almost all scientists regard biological evolution as an established fact.

"Creation science" is actually a pseudoscience aimed at upholding the tenet of some Christian sects that the version of creation in the Bible's book of Genesis is accurate.

The challenge to the Louisiana law was supported by the American Civil Liberties Union, National Academy of Sciences, New Orleans School Board, National Council of Churches, and other groups.

Backing the law were rightist outfits such as the Heritage Foundation and National Legal Foundation, as well as fundamentalist Christian groups.

The Louisiana law was only the latest reactionary effort to restrict the teaching of evolution.

In the 1920s, the governments of Tennessee, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Arkansas outlawed the teaching of evolution. In 1925 John Scopes was convicted in Tennessee of teaching evolution to his students. His conviction was over-

turned on technical grounds, and the publicity given the case widely discredited the antievolutionists' attempts to impose their religious doctrines.

The Tennessee law remained on the books until 1967, and a similar Arkansas law was ruled unconstitutional as late as 1968. Despite such laws, the teaching of evolution became established in schools across the country.

The foes of separation of church and state then shifted their ground. Unable to ban evolution outright, they demanded that schools present pseudoscientific arguments for the biblical version as at least equally valid. That's why they push the inherently contradictory term "creation science."

This maneuver has also been dealt setbacks. In 1972, the California State Board of Education repealed a 1970 decision to give equal recognition to evolution and creationism in the schools. An Arkansas law similar to the one in Louisiana was struck down by a federal court in 1982.

The advocates of restricting the teaching of evolution claim that the right to hold creationist beliefs is now threatened. The claim is a fraud. The right to believe creationist theology without fear of government persecution is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. But the Bill of Rights also bars the imposition of religious beliefs on the secular public school system, and guarantees the right of teachers to present scientific facts, including biological evolution, and the right of students to study such important subjects.

The Supreme Court decision reaffirmed those basic rights.

How to get rid of rents and mortgages system

BY DOUG JENNESS

After completing last week's column proposing that the government take over all land in the United States and make it a public trust, I thought it would be a while before I dealt with the subject again. There were several

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

other topics I had wanted to take up.

But two readers raised questions that have led me to come back to this matter.

The first wondered what I meant by the rents and mortgages system.

One of the characteristics of capitalism is that land can be bought and sold like a commodity. It can be divided into plots and sold, rented, or mortgaged.

For example, working farmers have to either buy land or rent it from a landowner (often through a sharecropping arrangement). They have to pay rent or interest on a mortgage loan to cover a land purchase, simply to get access to grazing land or a field to till. The landowners and bankers expropriate a big portion of the value produced by farmers through land rents and interest payments on mortgages.

This commodity-like character of land also results in the lucrative and parasitic business of real estate speculation.

Moreover, when capitalist property owners hire wage laborers to work on their land in order to make a profit, land becomes a form of capital.

Landed property under capitalism is quite different than it was under feudalism, where the production of commodities for exchange on the market was not generalized. Under that mode of production buying and selling of land didn't occur, and land couldn't be put up for collateral on loans. Land was generally transferred from one landholder to another through conquest or primogeniture (that is inheritance by the eldest son).

Even the forms of rent were different under feudalism (it would be a digression to go into them here) than under capitalism where rent is intertwined with the capitalist system of production and exchange.

Under capitalism certain persons enjoy the monopoly of disposing of land. Simply by dint of their possession of land titles, these landowners acquire the right to profit from the labor of others.

This system of rents and mortgages, along with wage labor, forms one of the two pillars of exploitation in capitalist society.

Another reader took issue with my statement that making all land public "would smash the rents and mortgages system." He questioned whether nationalizing the land, without a fundamental change in the government, could eliminate the rents and mortgages system. His point was well-taken.

Even if all the land was under government ownership, a capitalist government could charge exorbitant rents to working farmers. Under these conditions, farmers squeezed by high production costs and a low return for their product would not be guaranteed any more security in having use of the land they farm than they do today.

Moreover, a capitalist government would be inclined to favor big ranchers, timber corporations, mining companies, and so on in leasing the use of public lands. This has been amply demonstrated on the 40 percent of U.S. land that is currently publicly owned.

In the United States today it is also highly unlikely that nationalization of the land would be carried out by a capitalist government. The interconnection between the capitalist landowners and the big bankers, industrialists, and timber companies is so extensive that expropriating the big landowners is necessarily linked to expropriating the handful of ruling families in the United States.

The struggle, then, for making land a public trust will go hand in hand with the struggle to build a revolutionary movement that can topple capitalist political rule, establish a workers' and farmers' government, and expropriate the exploiting classes.

A workers' and farmers' government is the only force that can eliminate the rents and mortgages system and prevent it from rearing its ugly head again.

And it's only through workers and farmers wielding power that the principal aim of getting rid of capitalist rents and mortgages can be achieved: guaranteeing to working farmers the use of the land they rent or hold title to for as long as they choose to do so.

This is the only way to prevent expropriation by the bankers and landlords of farmers' machinery, buildings, livestock, crops — and the land upon which they depend for their livelihood. It will secure their right to put these means of production to work, and to own their output, for as long as they choose to continue farming on a private basis.

Chicago & Northwestern targets rail jobs, safety

BY JIM MILES

The Chicago & Northwestern Railroad (CNW) has served notice on the United Transportation Union (UTU) of its intent to eliminate the jobs of at least 1,400 brakemen. The CNW filed notice under Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act on May 15 to change the crew-size agreement with the UTU in the current contract.

Three days later, the company mailed out copies of its proposed changes to "all ground service employees,"

UNION TALK

promising to keep us "updated" on "progress" in bargaining.

The notice said that Northwestern wants "the unrestricted right under any and all circumstances, to determine when and if any ground service employees shall be used on each crew employed in all cases of road freight and yard service." Only brakemen still employed on June 30, 1987, would be "protected." A "protected" brakeman who is laid off would have two options: resign for a lump sum of \$25,000 or continue to receive a brakeman's salary for one year, subject to "recall." But hundreds of brakemen are already laid off systemwide, many for several years.

The company's selection of a June 30 protection date has caused some to speculate that the carrier will attempt to lay off as many brakemen as possible before then. But other workers consider this unlikely.

The CNW's notice dovetails with the carrier's recent proposal to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), still under negotiation. The proposal calls for a crew of one engineer and a "co-engineer," if needed. Besides gutting all existing work rules, it also contains a no-strike clause and a pledge by the BLE not to honor the picket lines of other rail unions. The company declared these two clauses non-negotiable.

The Northwestern is trying to use the threat of the BLE working during a strike to intimidate the UTU into a crew-consist agreement that would gut jobs, working conditions, and safety.

Although the CNW has had a limited reduced-crew agreement since 1973, most road and yard crews still have one engineer, one conductor, two brakemen, and occasionally a fireman. Since 1973 most other railroads have succeeded in eliminating one of the brakemen. The CNW cites the cases of other railroads paralleling CNW east-west main lines "which have far more flexibility in terms of rates of pay, work rules, and manning requirements than does the Northwestern."

A recent stockholders' report cited CNW profits of \$43

million last year. The May 11 edition of *Craine's Chicago Business* reported that CNW President James Wolfe's salary increased 40 percent in 1986 to \$702,000. A company report on the 12 executive board directors cited total salaries of more than \$3.6 million.

Some brakemen feel that a buy-out is better than getting fired or laid off with nothing. But others, especially those with home mortgages and families, don't want to sell their jobs. One worker said the company's notice was a "slap in the face."

Negotiations could drag out for months under the Railway Labor Act. If an impasse is reached, the carrier could try to lock out the UTU or force the union out on strike. Ultimately, Congress could intervene to impose a settlement.

On May 29 some 140 workers attended three meetings sponsored by UTU Local 577 and officers of other rail union locals to discuss the company's attacks. Three meetings were held to allow workers from all shifts to attend. Most of those present were from the UTU, which has some 500 brakemen and conductors in the Chicago terminal. Union officers said the company was trying to generate an atmosphere of fear in the work force, citing an article in the May 19 *Chicago Sun-Times* that CNW planned "to fire nearly two-thirds of 2,200 union members."

Although no plans for future meetings or actions came out of the meetings, a number of people felt that some sort of response was needed to the company attacks.

A company statement in the May 19 *Chicago Tribune* called brakemen "totally unproductive workers" made "obsolete" by technology. Donald Markgraf, UTU general chairman on the CNW, said in a May 22 letter to all local chairmen, "We know this is ridiculous, but in negotiations or where this may lead us, it will be necessary to support our position."

The UTU should go on a public campaign to get out the facts about why brakemen are necessary to the safe operation of trains. We should explain why larger crews are more alert and less fatigued than small crews. Many rail workers work long hours, subject to round-the-clock call on the extra board at often unpredictable times. Small crews only increase the workload on each crew member, thus heightening fatigue.

Part of the rail companies' rationale for eliminating brakemen is the elimination of cabooses. Flashing rear end devices (FREDS) are now placed on the rear of many trains instead of cabooses occupied by the conductor and a brakeman. Although the FRED has a radio link to the engineer to report on air brake pressure, it is unable to spot a car on the train that is about to derail, or warn trains following on parallel tracks if a derailment occurs, or spot a fire in the rear of the train near hazardous chem-



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Railroad workers protest layoffs. Cuts in crew size proposed by CNW threaten safe operation of trains.

icals, to give only a few examples.

At a meeting in Rockford, Illinois, last month, 25 officers and members of the UTU and BLE agreed to form a multi-craft committee called the Alliance of Railway Labor (ARL), open to all union members. Although the ARL has not scheduled any further meetings at the present time, it has solicited funds to put out bumper stickers and a newsletter, *ARL Confidential*.

Besides keeping union members on the CNW well informed about the carrier's moves, the ARL wants to "extend public relations campaigns to include all labor organizations, especially in the railroad crafts on the CNW." Seven hundred copies of the newsletter were mailed out to BLE engineers across the 11 states covered by the CNW.

Last year, 826 miles of "marginally profitable" track were sold to a new railroad company owned by retired CNW officers. Another 333 miles of Michigan trackage were sold last month for some \$66 million. These sales allow the company to concentrate on the movement of more profitable single commodity "unit" trains. Meanwhile, jobs are eliminated, and service to small farmers and shippers is disrupted or curtailed. These practices are spreading throughout the rail industry.

Jim Miles is a brakeman in the Chicago & Northwestern's Chicago Freight Terminal and a member of UTU Local 577.

LETTERS

AIDS

Your excellent editorial in the June 19 *Militant*, along with Margaret Jayko's "Fact vs. myth" article, were well received, as I've been waiting for the *Militant* to do an update piece on AIDS.

I do think that the stress and repeated references to anal intercourse both in the editorial and Jayko's article can feed into the misconception that sex is the primary, if not only, cause of AIDS. Sex is simply a very convenient method for the AIDS virus to spread.

The gay paper *New York Native* has done some excellent and maverick coverage recently on the struggle of various scientists to discover cures and vaccines. Unfortunately, some of these are not being heard because their findings and theories challenge the assumptions established by others who have set up their own AIDS fiefdom in the medical community to promote their own careers.

Drs. Stephen Caiazza and Robert Cathcart recently held a press conference at the offices of *Penthouse* to present their ideas. Caiazza believes a close relationship exists between the AIDS virus and syphilis and that "this country has been undertreating syphilis for the past 40 years."

No doubt one reason these men's ideas are being ignored is that the pharmaceutical makers do not stand to make enormous profits from a cure that would use already widely available and inexpensive drugs like penicillin or even Vitamin C.

An important way for socialists and progressive friends to lend support to the gay community and put the necessary pressure on

Washington to make some of your editorial demands real is to participate and help build the upcoming October 11 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

Craig McKissic
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Unequaled

Thanks to those at the *Militant* who produce a socialist paper unequalled in terms of coverage of important events and developments around the world and in Cuba and Nicaragua particularly.

Unfortunately for my pocket, the *Militant* has become indispensable.

A.F.
Swanley, England

Gorbachev

I'd like an analysis of developments in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev and how this affects the development of a world communist leadership (or not).

Having read the *Militant* since 1974, it remains by far the best Marxist paper.

D.B.
London, England

Anticommunist

It's laughable when you imply in your June 19 article "New wind blowing in Union City" that the citizens of Union City are ripe for what you call socialism, but what's obviously communism.

Supporters of the right are not in the minority in Union City, or West New York, or any of the surrounding cities that are heavily populated by Latin American immigrants, as you claim. Many people living in these areas escaped Castro's Cuba and Ortega's

Nicaragua and are staunch supporters of President Reagan's anticommunist doctrine.

That story is another example of Soviet influence in everything the *Militant* prints. Castro-Ortega worship, anti-Americanism, and the abuse of the Bill of Rights seem to be the foundation of your ideology, and the twisting of the truth to conform to Moscow's line dominates every issue.

I'm a subscriber to the *Militant*. I subscribed out of curiosity, to see if your paper would be as Marxist-Leninist as I thought it might.

Pete Armetta
Parlin, New Jersey

Free Amon Msane!

My union — the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers — has begun a campaign demanding the freedom of South African trade unionist Amon Msane.

Msane is chief steward at the 3M plant in Johannesburg and chairman of the 50,000-member Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union of South Africa, a sister union of OCAW.

Msane has been detained since his arrest on February 19 this year after his second speaking tour in the United States. To date, no charges have been filed. Under the state of emergency laws, the police are granted almost unlimited power to arrest and hold people for an indefinite period.

Msane is being held for his trade union activity. In February 1986 he led a walkout of 450 workers at 3M in Johannesburg in a solidarity action with OCAW members being laid off by 3M in Freehold, New Jersey.

The South African trade union leader then toured the United States with Freehold OCAW Local 8-760 President Stanley Fischer, speaking to trade unionists throughout the country on the need for international solidarity.

The current issue of *OCAW Reporter* has a feature article on Msane's arrest and urges a campaign to gain his freedom.

3M-St. Paul OCAW Local 6-75 hosted a news conference with prominent trade unionists and community leaders calling for Msane's release.

The *OCAW Reporter* notes that to help in the campaign OCAW members can write the 3M Co. to ask that it pressure the South African government to release Msane. Letters can be sent to Allen Jacobson, chairman of the board, 3M Co. General Offices, St. Paul, Minn. 55144. The South African embassy can be contacted to demand his release by writing Ambassador Herbert Beukes, Embassy of South Africa, 3051 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. The *Reporter* suggests "publicizing Msane's arrest in union newsletters or meetings and among coworkers; have local unions pass resolutions or circulate petitions supporting him." Copies of the protests should be sent to: President L. Calvin Moore, OCAW Headquarters, P.O. Box 2812, Denver, Colo. 80201.

Ramona Olson
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Persian Gulf

I recently read an article in the June 6 *Wall Street Journal* that had some alarming facts.

The purchase by the Iraqi government of six warships will significantly change the balance of naval power in the Persian Gulf. The ships are listed as corvettes and frigates, which are larger than most of the naval craft owned by Iran. These classes of ships have been around a long time, and the current examples have grown considerably since World War II. The USS *Stark* is listed as a frigate, and it is larger than any World War II destroyer.

These ships could greatly slow down if not stop the Iranians from exporting any oil, the consequences of which you are well aware of. I wouldn't be surprised if the Iraqis didn't try to sneak these ships into the gulf under the cover of the U.S. Navy convoys of the reflagged Kuwaiti oil tankers.

This would probably cause the Iranians to use their Silkworm missiles, prompting a response by American imperialism. This would make it easier to sell war to American workers and farmers than if they tried to manufacture something like the Gulf of Tonkin incident during the Vietnam War.

I hope you can make use of this information and can find out more about this and print it up in the *Militant*.

Peter Verner
Denver, Colorado

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.

Linders open antiwar speaking tour

Warm welcome from Miami sanitation workers, Haitians

BY PAT SILVERTHORN

MIAMI — "The United States government wants silent victims who, in their grief, won't speak out. We will not be silent victims," declared John and Miriam Linder in a statement to a May 18 news conference here opening a nationwide speaking tour by family members and friends and associates of Ben Linder.

John and Miriam's brother, Ben Linder, was murdered in Nicaragua April 28 by U.S.-directed contras. He had been working as a U.S. volunteer in the northern part of the country.

During three days in Miami, the Linders spoke to hundreds of people at gatherings in the Haitian community, union meetings, and antiwar protests. The tour raised \$1,700 toward a goal of \$200,000 to finish the hydroelectric project Linder was working on when he was killed.

The opening of the tour received extensive coverage in the major media here and nationwide.

At a meeting held in the Haitian community, more than 200 people heard Miriam Linder explain how her brother was killed in Nicaragua while working to bring electricity to the poor and once-isolated peasant communities of the country.

Gerard Jean-Juste, a leading Haitian activist, translated her remarks into Creole and told the Linders, "I speak for the Haitian community when I say that we feel great pain as you do. We feel Ben was our brother too."

"Your work is important humanitarian work, to educate the people of this country about how the blood of innocent people is being shed by the U.S. government," he said. "The work you are doing is for all of us."

Sanitation workers applaud Linders

More than 75 members of the Sanitation Workers Association, a predominantly Black union, stood and applauded in solidarity with the Linders after they showed a video of their brother's funeral to the local meeting. One local member proposed that a collection be taken to show the union's support for finishing the hydroelectric project Linder was working on. After \$92 had been collected, a woman in the audience said she would contribute another \$8 to bring the local's contribution up to \$100.

Members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union helped to organize a reception for the Linders at the union's national convention, which was being held in Miami Beach.

At a meeting of nearly 350 people at the Unitarian Church, one of the largest antiwar meetings in Miami in recent years, Bill Loomis held up a bullet that had been fired into the roof of the church during a right-wing gang's attack on a meeting there in 1979.

"It is good to be able to have a meeting that isn't attacked," said Loomis, who organized the Linders' tour in Miami. Outside, half a dozen contra supporters handed out leaflets proclaiming that the killing of Linder was justified because he was a "known communist."

The tour scored a victory for the democratic right to oppose the war against Nicaragua.

In recent years antiwar protests and other meetings have sometimes been attacked by right-wing gangs of counterrevolutionary Cuban and Nicaraguan émigrés with the complicity of the city administration.

But there were no attacks or threats against the meetings held for John and Miriam Linder. The tour's broad support and sponsorship helped assure its success.

The sponsors included Postal Workers for Peace, a national group that had a group of supporters touring Nicaragua at the time

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Matagalpa, Nicaragua: funeral of U.S. engineer Ben Linder, who was murdered by CIA-run contras.

Militant/Harvey McArthur

Nebraska meat-packers strike remains solid

BY DEAN DENTON

DAKOTA CITY, Neb. — Meat-packers at Iowa Beef Processors (IBP) here have been out on strike for six months. They are still staffing the picket lines every day from their strike center near the stockyards.

Strikers on the picket line said that even with court injunctions and fines to limit picketing, the company has been able to hire only a few hundred scabs, much less than the normal work force. Few local people have been willing to cross the picket line.

Sherry, one of the strikers, told the *Militant* that if the workers are forced to accept further concessions, it would be questionable whether the job would be worth going back to, given the declining pay and benefits and the increasing difficulty and danger of the job.

A worker at the plant for six years, she went through the 1982 strike that was broken by the National Guard. She was also in the 1984 strike, where the workers were forced to make further concessions in wages and working conditions.

IBP workers face a powerful adversary. The company is owned by Occidental Petroleum, a corporate giant with vast financial and economic resources.

IBP can also count on the full support of the government for help with their union-busting schemes.

The Iowa Transportation Commission, for example, just approved a \$475,000 grant to pay for improvements to rail and road access to "entice" IBP to build a new faster production plant in that state. The overall effect would eliminate jobs in meat-packing and force smaller companies out of business.

The State of Nebraska recently awarded IBP a \$300,000 grant in funds "to train new workers" when the company decided to reopen a plant that had been closed by ConAgra's Armour Foods division in February after plant workers refused to take a pay cut.

In Sioux City, Iowa, across the Missouri River from Dakota City, 800 members of UFCW 1142 have been out on strike since March 9 against John Morrell & Co. They oppose company demands for wage cuts and other concessions. Three years ago when the last contract expired, the union voted to accept wage cuts of several dollars per hour that were demanded by Morrell.

This year on May 1, after negotiations for

Morrell refused to back off from their demand of \$1.25 per hour wage cut, Local 1142 sought support from fellow workers at another Morrell plant. It sent roving pickets to the plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

The plant, which is organized by UFCW 304A, was at first completely shut down when virtually all 2,500 union workers honored the picket lines.

The Local 304A contract at Sioux Falls expires in a few months. Workers there told us that if Morrell succeeds in forcing more concessions from Local 1142 it will put them in a weaker position when it comes their turn.

Local 1142 has been keeping its roving

picket lines staffed around the clock in Sioux Falls. The union *Solidarity Letter* issued by Local 304A states that after a costly and extensive advertising campaign, Morrell has hired 500 scabs, which is about 17 percent of the usual work force. The union calculates that production is only about 10 percent of normal.

To break the strikes IBP and Morrell have been hiring a relatively larger number of women and minorities at the struck plants in an effort to use racism and sexism to undermine solidarity for the strike. The 304A letter countered this, saying, "... it is clear Morrell is exploiting the most exploitable people in our society — minorities, females, and young."

Colorado grocery workers end strike

BY DAN ADAMS
AND DUNCAN WILLIAMS

DENVER — United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 7 members here ended their month-long strike against the King Soopers supermarket chain on June 5.

The settlement, approved by a 5 to 1 margin, registered the strikers' success in resisting the initial concession demands of King Soopers, a subsidiary of Kroger, the largest grocery chain in the country.

On wages and benefits, the strikers gave up about \$1.40 per hour, or 8 percent, for all but the lowest-paid clerks. The initial company demand was a cut of \$2.75 an hour.

The clerks and meatcutters denied the company the week of vacation it wanted to take away, but they did give up two paid holidays.

Finally, on what many strikers considered the most important issue, the company had to scrap its new job-classification system, which would have created a category of utility clerk to take the jobs of higher-paid clerks.

More important than the final settlement, however, is the greater unity and strength the strike has inspired not only in the 5,400 King Soopers workers, but in many other unionists and working people as well.

This strength was put to the test at a June 1 meeting when a vote was taken on an earlier, worse offer from the company.

On May 31 union President Charles Mercer announced a tentative agreement had been reached and put out the word to take down the picket lines "as a show of good faith."

This move undercut the strike and allowed the company and the news media to talk as though the deal was cinched, and the ratification vote a mere formality.

At the June 1 meeting, the vast majority took Mercer to task for pulling down the picket lines. Some felt that the proposed contract was bad but argued for approval on the basis that it was the best they could get.

But the majority spoke for rejection. One Chicano meatcutter, tears in his eyes, said he would lose his house if the strike lost, but he would not go down without a fight. The vote was 1,571 to 1,117 to reject the offer.

After the vote, a nearly unanimous standing vote was taken to show unity in reviving the strike and setting up picket lines, which the strikers proceeded to do.

The workers had plenty of second-guessers telling them they had hurt themselves and should have taken the proposed pact. One of these was Al Zack of the UFCW international, who said, "The vote was not an overwhelming show of strength for the local union to go back to the bargaining table with."

But in fact the union's rejection of the first offer and their determination in continuing the strike is what forced the company back to the negotiations.