

March in Cuba protests U.S. gov't provocations

Hundreds of thousands chant 'Cuba yes!'

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

HAVANA, Cuba — Hundreds of thousands of Cubans demonstrated here the night of January 27 in a "March of the Torches" to celebrate the 137th anniversary of the birth of José Martí, a leader of Cuba's fight for national independence in the last century. Tens of thousands also marched in other cities.

Demonstrators carried torches to com-

memorate a similar demonstration against the Batista dictatorship in 1953. This year's march was the answer of the Cuban people to the escalating threats against their revolution by Washington. One of the central themes of the demonstration was a denunciation of TV Martí, the anticommunist television station that the U.S. government plans to broadcast to Cuba.

"My sling is that of David" was the main

slogan of the march. It expressed the determination of the people of this small island to resist the Goliath of Washington at whatever the cost.

The Union of Young Communists (UJC) was the main organizer of the event and the majority of demonstrators were very young. Many wore headbands declaring, "Here, no one surrenders," "100 percent Cuban," "Cuba . . . sí!" and "Trenches are already being built!"

The 2,500 delegates attending the 16th congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions also marched, wearing the uniforms of Cuba's territorial militias.

Members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and Ministry of the Interior joined the demonstration. In the 1953 March of the Torches, the police were on the side of the enemy.

"We reject the vile, anti-Cuban television aggression," and "Socialism or death" were some of the slogans on handwritten placards.

Cuban President Fidel Castro marched directly behind the lead banner that read, "Up with socialism."

In a brief speech at the end of the march Castro said, "There is such a symbolism in the union of our working class, creators of all wealth — and the students — at a time when imperialism is threatening us more than ever."

"Destiny has given our people the privilege of maintaining the most revolutionary and noble ideas of humanity. This is the people that can defend these ideas. And now the whole world is turning its eyes on us. It could be that on this little island the destiny of the world revolutionary movement will be decided."

Speech to trade unionists

The following day, Castro delivered the closing speech at the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions (CTC) congress. He

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Strike advances; Eastern's fortunes plummet

BY SUSAN LaMONT

As the strike by ramp workers, cleaners, mechanics, and other Machinists union members against Eastern Airlines nears the end of its 11th month, hardly a day goes by without more news confirming the strike's increasing momentum and the airline's plummeting fortunes.

On January 30 the committee representing preferred stockholders at Eastern Airlines told the federal bankruptcy court overseeing

For more coverage on the Eastern strike see pages 6, 7, and 10

the airline's affairs that it had lost faith in Eastern's management and called for drastic steps to salvage any value remaining in the carrier.

Eastern's managers are "unable to make the airline work," the committee said, "nor are they able to accurately forecast its future even for a few weeks at a time."

The committee urged the court to release only \$40 million of the \$100 million Eastern requested be released from the escrow account holding funds from the sale of the Northeast corridor shuttle and other assets. The request "is but the latest example of Eastern's cannibalization of the airline in a frenzied attempt to keep it alive," the committee noted. "The airline is literally living off the proceeds of its asset sales, funding ever-increasing operating losses, and putting its preferred stockholders and unsecured creditors further in the hole."

Preferred stockholders are assured by a company's charter of dividend payments

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W. Virginia coal miners fight union-busting



Strike supporter Cora Ballard after being clubbed by a federal marshal

Militant/Cecelia Moriarity

BY JIM ALTENBERG AND CECELIA MORIARITY

DEHUE, W.Va. — Coal baron E. Morgan Massey, head of A.T. Massey Coal Co., has stepped up his campaign of violence and harassment against union miners in West Virginia by attempting to open and operate a once-union, now nonunion coal preparation plant here. Dehue is a mining community two hours south of Charleston in Logan County, West Virginia.

The provocation came less than a week after mine workers' union activist John McCoy was murdered by gun-toting thugs outside a Massey-owned mine in Worth, an hour southeast of here.

Massey's attempt at opening the Rum Creek prep plant here has run into stiff opposition, part of an increased resistance by miners and other workers to union-busting tactics in the coalfields.

On January 22 armed scab drivers behind the wheels of loaded coal trucks barreled into Dehue determined to get their federal marshal-escorted rigs into Massey's prep plant. Their actions sparked a fierce battle, now in its second week, as miners and hundreds of

supporters organize to block the trucks and defend themselves.

Members of United Mine Workers of America Local 2903 working at the prep plant struck Massey on August 20 last year. Massey claimed the operation had been forced into bankruptcy in June when miners at the prep plant joined 44,000 union miners who walked off their jobs for up to six weeks in 10 states.

The action was in support of 1,900 miners on strike at Pittston Coal Group mines in West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky. Included are 200 Pittston miners on strike in Logan County. Although a tentative contract was announced January 1 by Pittston, the government, and union officials, UMW miners haven't seen it and remain on strike.

After declaring the Rum Creek prep plant "bankrupt," Massey hired a contractor, Con-Serv, Inc., to reopen it nonunion.

This outfit is headed by Mike Holbrook, who promotes himself as "Scab 1" and openly boasts of his violent attacks against unionists. Massey and Holbrook go way

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New moves against Curtis

DES MOINES, Iowa — In a letter to his defense committee, political activist Mark Curtis reported that on January 28 prison guards frisked him in a "shake-down" and later searched his room. At 11:00 p.m. guards awakened Curtis and handed him a "major report." Charges included "disruptive conduct," "gambling," and "complicity" for an alleged bet on the Super Bowl football game.

The next morning Curtis appeared before a prison investigator and denied the charges. "I didn't make one bet on any game," Curtis wrote to his supporters. A hearing took place January 30, but authorities have delayed making a decision on the charges.

In June Curtis received a major report for spitting during a basketball game when his mouth dried. His supporters said the report was an act of retaliation for the political campaign Curtis and his defenders initiated to win the right for prisoners to receive literature and books in languages other than English. Curtis' punishment included two weekend lockups and denial of several inmate privileges. After international protests, authorities dropped the major report to a minor infraction.

This new frame-up comes as Curtis has stepped up his political activities in prison, including writing columns for the *Militant* describing political life behind prison walls, helping lead his defense effort, and participating in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, an inmate group.

"False charges were brought against Curtis just one day after he and other prisoners won an important victory in a year-long fight led by the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, of which Mark was recently reelected secretary," John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, stated. "Authorities were forced to make available in the prison library books by Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X, Maurice Bishop, Thomas Sankara, and Piri Thomas."

The defense committee has asked that all supporters of political rights write prison warden John Thalacker at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205, to demand that this persecution be stopped and any disciplinary measures taken be reversed. Copies of protests should go to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

Sales teams bring Eastern strike news to miners

Some of the most solid backers of the 11-month strike by members of the International Association of Machinists against Frank Lorenzo's

teams have traveled to coal-mining regions across the United States.

The teams are part of an effort to introduce coal miners and other

participated in joint activities with the Machinists. Several pointed to the success of a combined Eastern and Pittston strikers' tour last spring through West Virginia.

In southwest Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky, the centers of the 10-month strike of the United Mine Workers of America against Pittston, 31 miners and other coal community residents bought introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* from team members traveling in the week of January 8-14.

One of these was purchased by a Pittston striker who ran across a copy of the paper that someone had left behind in his picket shack. When sales team members stopped by to visit, he signed up to subscribe.

Many miners wanted news on the Eastern strike and had met Machinists, pilots, and flight attendants at various activities. Team members report that miners expressed concern for the outcome of the strike. "We'll go anywhere they need us to give aid," was a common sentiment. In addition to the subscriptions, 93 single copies of the *Militant* were sold.

In western Pennsylvania a seven-

day team in January visited nine union portals, and 103 miners bought a copy of the *Militant* and four signed up to subscribe. The sales team also stopped to visit UMWA miners on strike at Valley Coal Co., and two bought subscriptions to the paper.

Militant salespersons traveling to southern Ohio in early January spent three days visiting mine portals and going door to door talking with coal community residents.

The team visited three mine portals where miners bought 22 copies of the *Militant* and one subscription. In several towns a total of 11 single issues were sold, and six subscriptions.

On January 11 miners at Jim Walter Resources No. 4 mine in northern Alabama were greeted by *Militant* sales team members holding a sign that said, "Read the *Militant* — supports the Eastern and Pittston strikes." They sold 12 single issues of the paper there. In a week's time the sales team members visited seven portals and sold 56 papers.

Many miners asked about the January 1 contract proposal in the Pittston strike. One miner said he

was sure the Pittston miners would win their fight. But "If the tentative contract isn't too good," he explained, "we're sending the strikers a lot of money and groceries so they can stay out as long as necessary."

Coalfield sales teams will be hitting the road through the spring. Teams traveling to mining regions over the next month will bring with them news on the Eastern strike and the sorry shape Lorenzo's in — news that is sure to inspire coal miners battling Pittston and Massey in the East and miners in the West facing contract expirations this year.

During the four-week renewal drive team members are visiting miners and other coalfield workers already subscribing to the paper and urging them to continue so as not to miss a single issue.

Pete Brandli from St. Louis; Jeff Powers from Detroit; Theresa Delgadillo, Jose Alvarado, and Eva Braiman from New York; Margaret Jayko from Oakland, California; Dan Furman from Washington, D.C.; and Ned Measel from Cleveland contributed to this column.



GETTING THE MILITANT AROUND

Eastern Airlines can be found among coal miners, especially union miners on strike at Pittston Coal Group and their supporters.

Pittston miners began their strike last April, a month after the Eastern workers walked out. Many Eastern and Pittston strikers from Miami to St. Paul, Virginia, continue to get to know one another as they march, picket, protest, and speak together building solidarity for their battles.

By far the best source of news about the Eastern strike can be found in the pages of the *Militant*. And this strike coverage has attracted many miners to the paper over the last month and a half as 12 *Militant* sales

coalfield workers to the *Militant* and win new readers at mine portals, towns, and picket shacks.

Miners and their families in the area of Mingo, Wyoming, and Pike counties of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky bought seven subscriptions to the *Militant* and 126 single copies. Miners at five portals bought 73 of the 126 papers. Union miner John McCoy was murdered on a picket line in that area and many miners appreciated the paper's coverage on McCoy and his funeral, which was attended by hundreds.

The team found that many striking miners followed the Eastern fight and were familiar with and had

'Perspectiva Mundial' readers are urged to renew

BY SELVA NEBBIA

As part of the effort to win long-term readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the French-language quarterly *Lutte ouvrière*, a four-week subscription renewal campaign was launched January 27. Last fall, of the more than 10,000 new readers won to the publications, 1,589 signed up to get *Perspectiva Mundial*.

The February *Perspectiva Mundial* is an especially attractive issue to begin the renewal drive for this Spanish-language magazine. Celebrating Black History Month, the periodical features one of the final speeches given by Malcolm X, making it available for the first time in Spanish. The speech, given Feb. 16, 1965, in Rochester, New York, appears in English in the recently published Pathfinder book *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Malcolm was assassinated in New York City five days later.

If you read Spanish, you should subscribe to the magazine; and if you are already a subscriber, you should renew and become a long-term reader.

"The speech by Malcolm X is very timely for those who today want to understand the role that both U.S. imperialism and racism play in the United States and internationally," explained Luis Madrid, editor of the magazine.

"This issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with the January *PM*, which features an interview with Ricardo Alarcón, the recently appointed Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, offers the reader an appreciation of the tasks that working people have before them today in the struggle for a better world," added Madrid.

Perspectiva Mundial brings to Spanish-speaking workers around the world news and analysis of the Machinists strike against East-

ern Airlines and the miners' resistance currently developing in the United States. The momentum of these labor battles is having an impact on workers in meat-packing plants in Arizona, garment shops in New York or Montréal, in the farms of Washington state, or machine shops in London. By renewing their subscription to *PM*, Spanish-speaking workers can continue following these and other important fights.

As a special inducement to those who

renew their subscription, *PM* offers a three-month subscription to the *Militant*.

"I encourage *PM* readers who understand or are learning English," said Madrid, "to take advantage of this offer." Many of the articles in *PM* are translated and reprinted from this weekly newspaper.

Madrid encouraged *PM* subscribers to urge their friends and coworkers to become readers of the magazine as well.

An appeal to our readers on the picket lines

In recent months fighting workers, from the battle lines at Eastern Airlines to the picket shacks in the coalfields, have more and more turned to the *Militant* for news of each other's fights. Many strikers and supporters have come to count on our coverage for information needed to forge solidarity between these struggles, because it is the only place it is available.

You have learned over the months how important it is to have a paper that reports accurately the workers' fight for justice, helps draw this information together in an overview, and explains what's needed to keep advancing. The big-business press has virtu-

ally blocked the Eastern Airlines strike out of its pages. Even articles on Frank Lorenzo's various reorganization schemes don't mention the strike.

The bosses' news media are also silent about events in the coalfields, like the murder of union miner John McCoy and the recent struggles in Logan County, West Virginia. The *Militant*, however, is putting a spotlight on these working-class battles that are so important for working people in the United States and internationally.

To bring our readers the most up-to-date coverage, we depend on many of you for on-the-scene reporting, news items, and pho-

tographs. And we count on the important financial contributions that some of you are able to make from time to time.

We also want to appeal for a different kind of support. We invite Eastern, Pittston, other strikers, as well as their supporters to help get the *Militant* around to your co-fighters.

Order a small bundle of papers — from our business office listed below or from any one of the bookstores in the directory on page 12 — and get them into the hands of those fighting alongside you, to other unionists organizing solidarity with your strikes, and to supporters of working-class struggles wherever you meet them.

KEEP GETTING the MILITANT

The *Militant* features:

News from the picket lines of striking Eastern Airlines workers, where, after 11 months, strikers are getting stronger in relation to corporate chief Frank Lorenzo.

Growing resistance of miners in U.S. coalfields • The freedom struggle in southern Africa • The fight of working people in Cuba to build socialism • Coverage of Nicaragua's election campaign • The independence struggle in Azerbaijan

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Azerbaijanis seek ways to get Soviet invading army out

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Moscow's real aims in mounting its brutal invasion of Azerbaijan were revealed by Soviet Defense Minister Gen. Dmitri Yazov in a press conference with Soviet journalists on January 26. "Our task is not to arrest everyone, but to destroy the structure of power that has formed at all the enterprises and offices," Yazov said, speaking in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital. "This is not a slip of my tongue. I mean power."

The defense minister claimed that January 20 had been targeted by the Azerbaijan Popular Front to assume control of the republic and that the local Interior Ministry forces had been split, with most joining the rebels and providing them with arms.

Yazov added that Azerbaijani fighters, whom he called "extremists," had gone "underground" after the January 19 invasion, making it difficult to restore the Kremlin's control. He reported that the general strike called to protest the Soviet invasion and occupation had gained momentum and that only 22 out of 350 factories in Baku were functioning.

While Soviet occupation forces began to direct affairs in Baku, provisional administrations set up by the Popular Front with the support of disillusioned Communist Party members were functioning in several provincial cities, according to the January 28 *Washington Post*.

In Lenkoran a new governing committee of 15 was led by the deputy manager of the auto workers' union and founder of the local Popular Front. The committee took power January 11 and proceeded to organize to meet residents' needs. Andrei Krainy, a Soviet journalist, reported that local Popular Front leaders insisted that they support socialism, which they described as an association of free people, living on the land that belongs to them. Soviet troops entered the city January 27.

A popular committee formed in Nakhichevan, an area surrounded by the Armenian Republic bordering Iran and Turkey and populated by 250,000 Azerbaijanis, declared the area's independence January 20. When Baku TV broadcasts were cut off January 19, Nakhichevan TV took over issuing appeals for support to the Azerbaijanis' struggle for self-determination. "Let foreign powers know that we will continue our fight for independence," an announcer said. "Let them know that no one can come into Nakhichevan."

Front supporters reported January 26 that some 4,000 Soviet troops entered the area.

Thousands of Azerbaijanis quit the Communist Party and many publicly destroyed their membership cards in protest against Moscow's occupation. Andrei Krainy in the Soviet newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported Soviet soldiers were surprised when Azerbaijanis called them "occupiers." The paper also revealed that two senior Soviet colonels, both veterans of the Afghanistan war, opposed the invasion. Yuri Afanasyev, an outspoken opposition deputy in the Soviet parliament, compared the use of troops to the Soviet Union's invasions of Hungary in 1956,

Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Afghanistan in 1979.

In a bid to end the Soviet occupation, the Popular Front sent one of its leaders, Ekhtibar Mamedov, to Moscow to open negotiations with the central government. The Front demanded that the Soviet troops be withdrawn and the state of emergency be lifted as preconditions for negotiations to begin. Mamedov was arrested after a press conference. The Kremlin claims to favor negotiations and asserts that it is trying to identify "moderates" in the Popular Front with whom to negotiate once "law and order" have been restored.

Washington backs Moscow

The open admission that Moscow entered Azerbaijan to crush a rebellion has caused public relations problems for Washington. When the invasion occurred the U.S. State Department wasted no time in supporting Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's intervention, echoing his claims that the action was intended to prevent interethnic bloodshed between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. U.S. President George Bush unequivocally supported Gorbachev, calling him the "best hope" for U.S. interests. But by January 29 the State Department began to hedge, saying it was disturbed by Yazov's comments.

Washington's real concerns that the rebellion could cause instability for imperialist interests in the region beyond Soviet borders were not without foundation.

The solidarity and support of Azerbaijanis in Turkey has caused apprehension and divisions in the Turkish government. In Alarik, a town on the Turkish-Soviet border near Nakhichevan, Azerbaijanis have organized demonstrations chanting "Down with the Red Army!" and "Freedom for our brothers!" Many have relatives in Soviet Azerbaijan and some have offered to go there to fight alongside their "cousins." TV news broadcasts from Nakhichevan have thanked the Azerbaijanis in Turkey for their support.

The Iranian government in Tehran has also been alarmed by the rebellion, fearing an upsurge of nationalism among the 9 million Azerbaijanis in Iran. "The potential for deterioration is there," said Baqer Moin, an Iranian author in London. Popular sentiment in favor of the Azerbaijanis' struggle is increasing.

On January 23 more than 160 members of the Iranian parliament sent an open letter to Gorbachev expressing their concern about the invasion and the treatment of Soviet



Militant/Jayran Salmasi

January 26 picket at the Soviet embassy in Washington, D.C., demanded, "Soviet Troops Out of Azerbaijan" and "End the Occupation Now." The action was called by the Azerbaijan Cultural Association.

Muslims. Even so, the Iranian government has gone out of its way to tone down its rhetoric, worried that strong statements could set off protests in the country and disrupt warming relations with Moscow.

Baltic initiative

Azerbaijani and Armenian nationalists from the two Soviet republics took significant steps to find common ground after the invasion. Representatives from both nationalist movements met in Nakhichevan around the time of the invasion and called upon both their peoples to struggle together against "colonial politics," Nazim Ragimov, a journalist based in Baku, told the *Christian Science Monitor*. The Armenian National Movement called Moscow's use of troops a "violation of the sovereignty of Azerbaijan."

Since then a cease-fire on their mutual border has taken effect, hostages have been exchanged, and both have agreed to begin negotiations to resolve their disputes. In an initiative revealing the Kremlin's disintegrating authority, the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia will host the talks in the Latvian capital, Riga.

The Armenians and Azerbaijanis have accepted the offer and agreed on a three-point agenda, which includes arriving at a common stand on the Soviet occupation, resolving the position of refugees from each other's republic, and discussing other humanitarian concerns.

The Baltic republics are themselves involved in a political struggle for their independence from the Soviet Union.

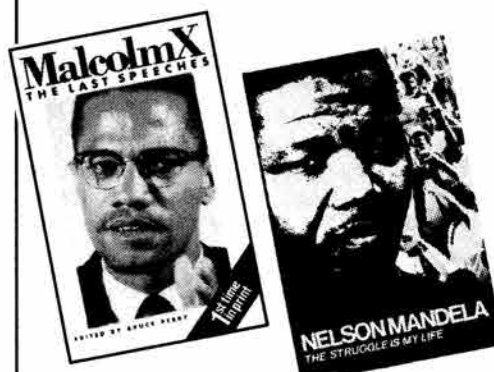
Nationalists in the Soviet Republic of Georgia, which borders Armenia and Azerbaijan, have rallied to the Azerbaijanis' cause. "Now the Azerbaijanis know what we found out," said Gia Chanturia, a leader of Georgia's National Democratic Party. "The Kremlin is the real enemy," he said referring to the use of Soviet troops in his republic last April. "The nations of the Caucasus should not fight each other, but rise up together against Moscow," said a speaker at a rally in Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. "Don't let anything distract you from independence," he said. Local Communist Party leaders appearing at similar rallies across the republic have been hooted off the stage.

Mandela document to be published in the next 'Militant'

Our next issue will publish the full text of a statement by Nelson Mandela, long-time leader of the African National Congress and the liberation struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

The document is Mandela's first major public statement since his imprisonment by the Pretoria regime in 1962.

Along with the statement will be coverage of a recent meeting of the ANC in Lusaka, Zambia. Attendance included eight ANC leaders released from apartheid's jails in October.



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U.S. coal miners, Philippine unionists back Curtis

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year prison term in the Iowa state penitentiary in Anamosa on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048,

"investigations" are taking place.

Because of this struggle, many miners easily see how a union militant like Curtis could be framed up and wind up behind bars.

In January Pittston strike activists James and Jackie Counts invited Curtis supporters to their home in Dante, Virginia, to show the video *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*. James is a retired miner. After viewing the video and some discussion, the Counts endorsed the Curtis de-

Leaders of the Philippine National Federation of Sugar Workers-Food and General Trades, which is based on the island of Negros, have added their voices to the protest campaign against Anamosa prison authorities' denial of non-English literature and correspondence to Curtis and other prisoners.

"We have been saddened to learn what has been happening to one of our brothers, who for a long time has been fighting for the democratic rights of his fellow workers. We had been shocked when Mark Curtis — a packinghouse worker who is fighting to unify fellow workers, a strong advocate and defender of immigrant rights and the rights of women, and a man of principle who is fighting against racism, brutality, and nuclear war — was framed up, jailed, and brutally beaten by the police for his noble and humanitarian work. We had been angered when he and his fellow prisoners were being denied non-English correspondence and literature, an act which strongly shows the violation of their democratic and basic human rights.

"Is this what the United States of America is proud of? That they, who are in the vanguard of freedom and democracy, be treated like this? Is this how you treat your own fellow Americans, when America is supposed to be the guardian of freedom and democracy?

"We therefore strongly protest the brutality and denial of correspondence and receiving of literature in languages other than English to Mark Curtis and all other prisoners of the Iowa State Men's Reformatory."

The message was signed by Arnel Steve Ligahon, NFSW-FGT Inter-

national Solidarity Department; Serge Cherniguin, NFSW-FGT national vice-president; Chylah Agustin, NFSW-FGT Human Rights Department; and Gloria Fabela, NFSW-FGT publication staff. Copies were sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines, Amnesty International in London, and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights in New York.

Prison authorities have denied Curtis and other prisoners non-English materials and letters, claiming they are a "security" problem. The real aim of the authorities is to iso-

late and demoralize Curtis and other prisoners by cutting off their contact with the outside world.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is on an international campaign to win Curtis and other prisoners the right to obtain literature and correspondence in the language of their choice and to share those materials with each other.

You can help in this fight by sending a protest message of your own or from your organization to John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205.

Copies should be sent to Attorney General Thomas J. Miller, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319; Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309; and the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

New support for Curtis' fight and the Mark Curtis Defense Committee have come from the Grenada Trade Union Council; Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, a leader of the Papaye Peasant Movement in Haiti; Dennis Brutus, well-known South African poet in exile, and president of the South Africa Non-Racial Olympic Committee; U.S. folk singer Pete Seeger and his wife Toshie; the Committee in Solidarity with El Salvador in Montréal; and St. Louis Eastern Airlines striker Donald Spruell, a member of Machinists union Local 949.

Jim Altenberg from Charleston, West Virginia, contributed to this week's column.



Militant
Serge Cherniguin, vice-president of the Philippines sugar workers union.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS

Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee have found a hearing and support for Curtis' fight in the Appalachian coalfields.

The interest stems from miners' experiences with the courts and police. Hundreds of Virginia state police have occupied Pittston Coal strike areas for months. They have harassed residents, and have become a private escort service for the Pittston company's scabs. State and federal judges have imposed sweeping injunctions against picketing. The union has been fined more than \$60 million.

Hundreds of miners face charges stemming from alleged violations of court injunctions that make picketing virtually impossible. Nine West Virginia miners are facing frame-up charges of bombing and conspiracy. Federal agents have said that further

fense effort. Jackie later showed the video to members of the Daughters of Mother Jones, an organization of women active in the Pittston strike.

On January 16 the women's auxiliary of United Mine Workers of America Local 5737 in Stone, Kentucky, saw the video and heard a presentation on Curtis' fight. A wide-ranging discussion with Curtis' supporters followed. One woman said that she was convinced of Curtis' innocence because at his trial Curtis refused to slander or insult the woman he allegedly raped. Another woman thought Pittston strikers facing charges could have them dropped, if they had a fair judge. "But then when I think about what they did to Mark Curtis," she said, "I wonder if you can get fair judges."

Upset about prison authorities' harassment of Curtis, another auxiliary member said she doubted whether the warden would ever stop. She asked how she could help and said it's important for the warden to know that the world is watching him.

Curtis defense leader winds up tour of the South

BY LIZ ZIERS

ATLANTA — Kate Kaku, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, recently completed the last leg of her four-week tour of the South and won new support for framed-up packinghouse worker Mark Curtis. Her stops included meetings in Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Curtis, a Des Moines, Iowa, unionist and political activist, is serving a 25-year jail term on a 1988 rape and burglary conviction. The frame-up stemmed from his activities in defense of Latino coworkers who had been victimized by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Swift meat-packing plant where Curtis worked.

Kaku, who is also Curtis' wife, spoke at two meetings in Louisiana January 19, including a student gathering at Southern University in Baton Rouge. The event was sponsored by the Student Government Association. The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond hosted a meeting attended by 25 people later that evening. The video by Hollywood director Nick Castle about Curtis' fight, *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*, was shown. A serious discussion followed a presentation by Kaku.

The next day Kaku spoke to a meeting in Marion, Alabama, organized by Albert Turner, a leader of the Perry County Civic League and a well-respected civil rights leader in the state. Turner was one of several

civil rights workers framed several years ago on vote-fraud charges. All the defendants in his case were eventually acquitted.

Some 50 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 9226 in Bessemer, Alabama, heard Kaku explain Curtis' case at a union meeting January 21. The union represents workers at the old Pullman-Standard plant (Trinity Industries). Workers contributed generously in a collection for the defense effort.

Kaku addressed a group of 50 students at Earth Day activities at the University of Georgia in Athens January 23. One student urged Curtis supporters to return the following week for a campus organizations' day, which she was coordinating.

In the evening, a cook at the Downstairs restaurant set up a showing of the Curtis video for 20 young people. Afterward, while a band played, many more young people came by and talked with Kaku. Several signed petitions to the warden at the prison where Curtis is held, demanding he allow prisoners to receive non-English literature and letters. Some donated money for the defense campaign.

Kaku discussed the growing support for Curtis' fight with the Grassroots Organizing Workshop (GROW), a printing collective, in Columbia, South Carolina, January 24. A past issue of GROW's newsletter featured an article about Curtis' frame-up.

Two members of the People's Alliance for Justice in Chattanooga, Tennessee, signed up as endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee after viewing *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* and listening to Kaku January 25. The group, based at the University of Tennessee, has been active against police brutality and in strike support actions.

In Atlanta the next day Kaku met workers as shifts changed at the Hormel plant, organized by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 442. Many of the workers were already familiar with Curtis' fight and stopped to express their solidarity with Kaku. A half-hour interview with Kaku by a graphic artists' union activist was broadcast over WRFG radio.

Upon returning to Alabama, Kaku was invited to address the Birmingham City

Council January 30. Curtis is a former resident of the city, and it was the second time since the defense effort began in 1988 that Kaku had been invited to speak. Some 25 students and faculty members heard the defense committee leader later that evening at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Joan Levitt from Birmingham, Alabama, is active in the Curtis defense effort and contributed to this article.

Louisiana governor denies shorter term for Gary Tyler

Louisiana Gov. Charles Roemer rejected appeals to reduce Gary Tyler's life sentence on January 24. Tyler, the victim of a racist frame-up, has been in jail for 16 years.

In December Louisiana's State Pardon Board had recommended that the governor reduce Tyler's life sentence to 60 years, opening up the possibility of parole after five years. Amnesty International and other organizations, as well as thousands of individuals, have demanded Tyler's release.

Tyler, 31, was sentenced to death following his conviction in the 1974 shooting death of a white student. He was resented to life with no possibility of parole when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the state's mandatory death penalty.

Then 15 years old and an outspoken supporter of Black rights and desegregation, Tyler was on a school bus with other Black students when they were surrounded by whites who hurled bottles, cans, and stones. A shot was fired, allegedly from the bus, and a white youth in the schoolyard was killed.

Witnesses said a gloved hand held the gun, and police claimed Tyler was the only one on the bus wearing gloves. The prosecution's key witness later admitted to lying on the stand.

In denying clemency, Roemer reasoned that Tyler's trial was "fundamentally fair by all legal standards," and he added, "I believe his efforts toward rehabilitation have not been sufficient."

Calls for indicting cop grow in killing of Hmong youths

BY KEN KAWAKUBO

ST. PAUL, Minn. — More than 400 people attended a meeting January 25 to protest the cop killing of two 13-year-old Hmong youths. At the front of the hall two large banners read, "Justice for Ba See Lor and Thai Yang," and "Bring Murphy to trial for justice."

Ba See Lor and Thai Yang were shot in the back by Inver Grove Heights police officer Kenneth Murphy on Nov. 15, 1989. Murphy killed both with a single blast from a shotgun. A grand jury, convened to review the case, refused to indict Murphy in December.

Some 15,000 Hmong, a highland people of Laos, live in St. Paul. This is the largest concentration of Hmong in the United States. The highly spirited meeting heard speakers condemn the killing and call for the prosecution of Murphy. Several speakers called for state guidelines on police accountability. A half-dozen state and county elected officials also spoke.

The event was the first organized around the demand to prosecute Murphy. One Hmong organizer noted, "There are more

non-Hmong present at the meeting. It shows our efforts to reach out to other communities bore fruit." The event had been built at Martin Luther King Day events in the area.

A petition campaign was announced at the meeting. The petition demands that the Minnesota governor and attorney general initiate an investigation of Murphy leading to prosecution.

"This petitioning campaign will be an active campaign," said one organizer. "We will ask organizations of the communities of color, women's organizations, antiwar organizations, labor unions, and others to invite us to present our fight for justice."

Yao Lo, a leader of the Lao Family Community, expressed the sentiment of many at the meeting when he said, "The more we go out and let people know about our fight for justice, the more people will support our fight, and the more politicians and the press will listen to us. We will win!"

For information about the petition call or write the Women's Association of Hmong and Lao, 1544 Timberlake Road, St. Paul, Minn. 55117; phone (612) 488-0243.

Anti-Cuba TV Martí violates int'l law, Cuban sovereignty

BY CINDY JAQUITH

HAVANA, Cuba — Does the U.S. government have the right to impose an anti-Cuban television station on the people of Cuba, directly interfering with their normal programming?

The U.S. Congress says yes and has approved \$7.5 million in initial funds for TV Martí, which will broadcast from the United States exclusively, and \$32 million for TV Martí in 1990 and 1991.

The station will broadcast programs against the Cuban revolution. It is scheduled to begin in February.

Violation of self-determination

TV Martí violates both Cuba's right to self-determination and international telecommunications agreements said Jorge Gómez Barata in a January 26 interview here. Barata is a section head of the Department of Revolutionary Orientation of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party.

Washington's plan to begin TV Martí broadcasts is part of a stepped-up campaign of provocations against Cuba in the wake of the invasion of Panama, Barata said. Particularly serious are new military moves by U.S. warships in the Caribbean.

On January 23 the battleship USS *Wisconsin* arrived at Guantánamo Bay naval base, the U.S. military installation located on the eastern tip of Cuba in violation of Cuban sovereignty. On January 26 Washington flew a group of Cuban counterrevolutionaries and

Sen. Connie Mack of Florida — a proponent of TV Martí — to the Guantánamo base for a meeting.

Meanwhile, a group of U.S. warships originally destined for Colombia have stopped en route and are conducting maneuvers in the waters north of Cuba.

"This doesn't scare us," said Barata, "but the increased U.S. military presence is dangerous. They are trying to fabricate an incident that could justify aggression."

TV Martí is another form of aggression, said Barata. He explained that the projected station runs directly counter to the International Telecommunications Convention adopted in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1982. Both the U.S. and Cuban governments signed that accord, whose preamble states that all signatories must observe "full recognition of the sovereign right of each country to regulate its telecommunications."

Like 'another Guantánamo'

TV Martí would not simply appear on Cuban television on an additional channel to the two national and seven local stations Cubans currently receive. Rather, it would use the same airspace as the Cuban stations and would interfere with them. This would be like "another Guantánamo," said Barata, a second U.S. presence on Cuban territory against the wishes of the Cuban people.

It is also an escalation of the tactics employed by the U.S. government when in 1985 it launched Radio Martí, an anti-Cuban rev-



Militant/Nancy Cole

Miami protest last year against TV Martí. Sign with José Martí's picture calls the independence fighter a "champion of Cuba." Martí opposed U.S. intervention in Cuba.

olution station. Radio Martí uses one of the frequencies assigned internationally to Washington's "Voice of America." Since Voice of America does not basically interfere with any Cuban station, Barata said, "We do not jam Radio Martí."

But TV Martí "breaks the status quo," he explained. "We will fight it with all the means we have."

Barata pointed out that Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca has sent a letter to the United Nations Security Council requesting that it intercede to uphold international law. Malmierca's letter reiterated Cuba's willingness to negotiate with the U.S. government on the subject of mutual exchange of TV programs. Cuba is also willing, the letter said, to submit the TV Martí issue to international arbitration.

As a gesture of Cuba's good faith, national television here broadcast a program produced in the United States by Cable News Network the night of January 26.

Barata explained that if Washington goes ahead with TV Martí in spite of all these efforts, Cuba will seek to block the signal and will take whatever additional steps are necessary to defend Cuba's sovereignty.

The Cuban government will not retaliate by cutting off the daily flights between Cuba and the United States, Barata emphasized, because the passengers on those flights are "innocent." However, he warned, U.S.-Cuba travel may become more difficult due to the deterioration of relations between the U.S. and Cuban governments that TV Martí would represent.

U.S. renews rights slander of Cuba

BY GREG McCARTAN

The George Bush administration is pressuring United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar to continue a U.S. government-orchestrated human rights slander campaign against Cuba.

Vice-president Danforth Quayle sent an official letter of protest to Pérez de Cuéllar in late January following the secretary general's refusal to submit a report on Cuba to this year's session of the UN Human Rights Commission. Quayle had requested Pérez de Cuéllar present the report to the meeting, which began in Geneva, Switzerland, on January 29.

The U.S. representative to the Human Rights Commission, Morris Abrams, said the Bush administration also wants the commission to continue monitoring Cuba by appointing a special investigator to prepare another report for the 1991 session.

For the past several years Washington's anti-Cuba campaign has been its central focus in the Human Rights Commission. This has included organizing a parade of Cubans who had left the country to testify before the commission that their physical defects were a result of torture in Cuban prisons.

In 1988 the Reagan administration succeeded, after a vigorous pressure campaign and a tough diplomatic battle, in getting the commission to conduct its first investigation of Cuban "human rights abuses."

The Cubans responded by inviting the commission to send a delegation to visit prisons; talk with a wide variety of persons, including "dissidents"; and discuss the matter with President Fidel Castro and other top government and Communist Party officials.

A 400-page report issued by the investigative team did not produce any concrete proof of human rights abuses in Cuba. A 350-page document with testimony from right-wing Cuban groups and individuals outside of Cuba was included as an addendum to the report though.

At last year's meeting the commission rejected the U.S. delegates' demands that it continue the anti-Cuba effort, voting down two resolutions demanding additional reports on Cuba in 1990. A proposal was adopted by 32 of the 43 commission members instructing Pérez de Cuéllar to discuss with Cuban officials the 1988 findings. But the commission rejected requiring another review of Cuba's human rights record.

Despite this blow to their campaign, U.S. delegates pledged to continue the effort and expressed optimism that Washington would be able to get Cuba back on the agenda.

The administration says that the UN secretary general is empowered to submit his report on discussions with the Cuban leadership under the guidelines adopted by the commission at its 1989 meeting.

Quayle and Republican Congressman Christopher Smith also maintain that Pérez de Cuéllar personally told them he would submit the report if the U.S. government

requested it. The UN official responded that he would only submit the report upon request of the commission.

According to an article in the January 27 *New York Times*, "State Department officials this week expressed surprise and irritation" at Pérez de Cuéllar for not complying with Quayle's request.

Administration officials complained Pérez de Cuéllar is holding back because he fears giving in to the administration's demands "would be perceived as an anti-Cuban, pro-American gesture," the *Times* said.

15-minute strike backs ambulance workers

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — Hundreds of thousands of workers participated in a 15-minute strike action in Britain January 30 in response to a call by the Trades Union Congress and ambulance workers' unions for a "day of action" in support of the ambulance workers' wage demands. Their campaign is now in its 21st week, but the government is still refusing to budge from its 6.4 percent wage offer, which, in effect, would be a cut in real wages. Inflation in Britain is running at 7.7 percent annually.

The broadest action came from the teachers' and local government unions, but large numbers of industrial workers were also

involved. At midday, rallies and demonstrations began in big cities and small towns alike, the largest being in Liverpool where 20,000 demonstrated. Some sort of action took place in thousands of workplaces from strikes, to lunch-time rallies, or simply special collections. Roger Poole, chief union negotiator, called the day's events "stunning."

In Manchester, in the northwest of the country, a series of demonstrations and rallies took place. More than 1,000 people rallied in the city center, including local government workers, teachers, students, and postal and telecommunication workers. Another rally was organized in Trafford Park, a major in-

dustrial estate, with workers from General Electric, Massey Ferguson, and Carborundum.

In the Stretford district of the city, 300 workers at the Schlumberger engineering factory walked out, and groups of workers in other factories also took strike action.

London saw numerous rallies and demonstrations. In addition to a large central London march, post office workers in south London joined teachers, local government workers, and students in a militant demonstration. In west London, workers at the main London Underground workshops marched out of their factory with banners and placards in a spirited show of support.

In Walthamstow, in east London, large rallies were organized in the shopping mall and at the town hall. Over half the work force at Hawker Siddeley Power Transformers walked out 15 minutes before their lunch break and rallied at the factory gate to hear ambulance worker Sue Douglas hammer government lies about their campaign.

Cardiff, in Wales, witnessed a big city center demonstration at which nurses blocked traffic. Workers took action at a number of plants, including 150 workers at Powell Duffryn Wagons who got management permission to move up their lunch break in order to organize a march. In Bristol, in the Southwest, 2,000 workers at Rolls Royce engineering took 15 minutes off and rallied at the factory gate. These workers had recently been involved in strike action for a cut in the workweek and had won a reduction from 39 to 37 hours.

Killing of Black Muslim protested

BY BARRY FATLAND

LOS ANGELES — On January 23 Nation of Islam member Oliver X Beasley was shot to death by Los Angeles County sheriffs after a routine traffic stop erupted into a fracas between deputies and members of the Black religious organization.

The 18-year-old driver of the car, David Hartley, also a Muslim, was seriously wounded by the deputies' gunfire.

This was the second major incident between police and Muslims in less than three weeks. On January 3 three Muslims were injured and 13 arrested following a similar stop for a minor traffic violation in the Crenshaw area of Los Angeles. Four police officers were also injured.

It is widely known, especially after the January 3 incident, that the Nation of Islam members are active in campaigns against drugs and gang violence and that they do not carry weapons of any sort. No weapons were found on the Muslim victims in either incident.

On 24-hour notice, a protest meeting was held at the First A.M.E. Church on January 25. Virtually all major Black civil rights organizations and churches were represented on the platform. More than 600 people participated.

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan flew into Los Angeles for the funeral services two days later, which had more than 2,000 in attendance.

Buffalo unions 'adopt-a-striker,' aid Machinists

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines March 4 in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

Backed by flight attendants and pilots, the walkout crippled Eastern, grounding a big majority of its 1,040 prestrike daily flights. Since July Eastern has been trying to restart operations and is currently scheduling roughly 800 daily flights.

In November the Air Line Pilots Association and Transport Work-

Local 75 represents workers at Northwest, United, and several other airlines, many of whom came to the rally.

There are five Eastern flights a day in and out of Buffalo, reported Pomeroy, a ramp worker with 17 years at Eastern. "We picket on a daily basis, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the free speech area inside the terminal. We talk to a lot of passengers."

Many sign the strikers' pledge card not to fly Eastern. "Lots of them come off those flights disgruntled," he said. "They tell us, 'I'll never fly Eastern again.'" The free speech

be put on our mailing list, promised to help spread our story in Europe, and lastly, made a sizeable contribution to Local 702's food bank as a personal show of support," the bulletin noted.

When they boarded their Lufthansa flight to return home, the German unionists were wearing "Stop Lorenzo" strike shirts and stickers.

Strikers in New York are urging supporters throughout the area to come to La Guardia Airport March 4 to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the strike against Lorenzo.

Beginning at 12 noon, there will be a solidarity rally across from the Continental Airlines hangar, followed by a social. The celebration is sponsored by striking IAM Local 1018 and New York-area unions.

lines plane landed in Gulfport, Mississippi, for repairs.

The foreman in charge of Northwest's maintenance base in Atlanta told IAM mechanics about the plane. The only way to get the mechanics to Gulfport to do the needed repairs, he said, was on an Eastern flight.

Every Northwest mechanic, to the last person, refused to get on the Eastern flight. Faced with this wall of solidarity, the foreman paid \$1,200 to charter a plane to send two mechanics to Mississippi to fix the plane.

Northwest responded by giving the foreman three days off and has threatened to fire any mechanic on

ica, will be held March 2 in the evening at United Auto Workers Local 174's union hall.

The benefit is sponsored by the Metropolitan Labor Council AFL-CIO, UAW Region 1A, and IAM Local 141, which represents the 40 Eastern strikers in Detroit along with other airline workers.

About 75 of the 200 protesters who were outside the Omni Hotel in Miami January 19 to "greet" President George Bush were Eastern strikers. Bush was in town to attend a fund-raiser for Florida Gov. Robert Martinez.

Members of the National Organization for Women, a group of Haitian workers protesting Washington's complicity with repression in Haiti, and several people protesting the U.S. invasion of Panama were also there.

NOW members offered to share their spot with the Eastern strikers after the cops tried to move the strikers away, claiming they had no permit. Together everyone chanted "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Frank Lorenzo's got to go" and "What do we want? Choice!"

An IAM Local 1018 member who was staffing a strike information table inside the terminal at La Guardia Airport in New York on a recent afternoon got a pleasant surprise.

As he was distributing leaflets and talking to passersby, a man came up to the table. "I'm with you 100 percent," the man said, dropping a bill into the donation bucket as he walked away.

A little later, when the striker looked into the bucket, he saw the man had dropped in a \$100 bill.

IAM District 100, which represents Eastern strikers throughout the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico, has begun a biweekly "Eastern Strike Update" bulletin for unions, consumer groups, churches, and others supporting the strike. "Our strike is a tribute to your resolve and we look forward to your continuing participation in our struggle," the bulletin says. District 100's address is 3026 NW 79th Ave., Miami, Fla. 33122.

IAM Local 702 member Jeff Miller from Miami and IAM Local 796 member Nancy Brown from Alexandria, Virginia, both on strike at Eastern, contributed to this column, along with Michael Brown from Atlanta and Kathie Fitzgerald from Detroit.



SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

ers Union, which represented striking Eastern flight attendants, ended their support for the strike.

The Machinists' walkout remains solid. Under the blows of the strike and stepped-up competition in the airlines industry, Eastern's plan to rebuild as a non-union carrier is faltering.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Sweden, and elsewhere in the world. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

Five hundred unionists from Buffalo, New York, turned out January 27 for a rally to back the 17 Eastern strikers there. "It was a celebration for all of labor and all those who have helped us," said IAM Local 75 strike coordinator Tom Pomeroy. "We hadn't had a rally for some time and we needed one after the holidays."

The event began with a program at the Ramada Renaissance, a hotel near the Buffalo airport. Speakers included IAM International airline coordinator Bill Scheri; Tom Fricano, United Auto Workers Region 9; Tom Hobart, president of the New York State United Teachers; and George Wessel, head of the Buffalo AFL-CIO.

After the program, Pomeroy said, "We all lined up and marched out of the hotel and over to the airport, two and a half miles away. Then we marched around the East and West terminals at the airport for two hours."

In addition to the strikers, IAM

area is very close to Eastern's ticket counter, the strike leader added.

Pomeroy stressed the importance of reaching passengers. "Lorenzo can replace flight attendants and pilots and mechanics, but he can't replace passengers," he said.

Pomeroy is proud of the Local 75's "adopt-a-striker" program, worked out in conjunction with the AFL-CIO. When locals or other union bodies contribute to the strikers' fund, "we plug a striker into their local, to go to their meetings and report on the strike and participate in their other activities," Pomeroy explained. Right now, four strikers have been adopted by other unions. The other strikers have jobs.

The Buffalo strikers get around to other union and strike activities, Pomeroy said. "We've been to Newark, Albany, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C. We're a strong force up here."

The strike leader is confident about the strikers' prospects for winning. "I believe it's going very well," he said. "We've been effective. We're slow and steady, in their faces day after day. We've shown we're not going to go away — we'll be there one day longer."

A delegation of unionists from the German Trade Union Federation (DGB), the West German counterpart to the AFL-CIO, visited Eastern strikers in Miami January 27, the IAM Eastern strike bulletin reports. They met with IAM District 100 Vice-president Russ McGarry. They also visited the airport picket lines and were given a tour of IAM Local 702's headquarters. "The delegation spoke to our membership, asked to

On January 24 unionists participated in two Eastern picket lines in Washington, D.C.

Some 125 strike supporters picketed Eastern Airlines' main ticket office downtown, while 75 Machinists union members, led by IAM District 100 President Charles Bryan, picketed the D.C. mayor's office. Earlier in the week, Mayor Marion Barry had flown to West Palm Beach on Eastern.

Many pickets were in town to attend the IAM's legislative conference, held in D.C. January 22-24.

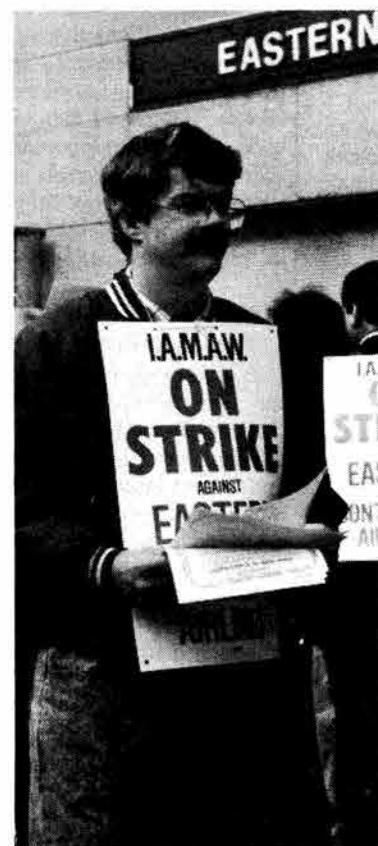
A special conference session discussed Lorenzo's crumbling "reorganization" plan for Eastern. Thirty Eastern strikers from around the country attended the gathering, joined in the picket lines, and lobbied members of Congress to override President George Bush's veto of a congressional panel to investigate the conflict at Eastern. Some 300 IAM members altogether attended the legislative conference.

Members of the Newspaper Guild, Operating Engineers, International Union of Electronic Workers, Association of Flight Attendants, Justice for Janitors, and other unions joined the strikers' picket lines.

The picketing, organized by IAM Local 796, kicked off a month of stepped-up strike support activities, leading up to the March 3-4 strike anniversary.

Local 796 members have lined up speaking engagements for February union meetings throughout D.C., northern Virginia, and Maryland.

In December a Northwest Air-



Militant/Nancy Brown
Strikers picket Eastern's Washington, D.C., ticket office in January.

the spot who refuses again. IAM members at Northwest are discussing how to defend their right not to fly on struck work and unsafe equipment.

The 1,300 IAM members at Northwest's Atlanta maintenance base include many Eastern strikers who have gotten jobs there.

Eastern strikers in Detroit are also moving ahead with plans to celebrate the year's anniversary of the walkout. A benefit dance and program, featuring a speaker from the United Mine Workers of Amer-

Bermuda labor's boycott deals blow to Lorenzo

BY SUSAN LaMONT

Unionists in Bermuda struck a powerful blow against Eastern Airlines when an eight-month boycott finally forced the strike-bound carrier to cancel service to Bermuda on January 19.

Ottiwel Simmons, president of the Bermuda Industrial Union, recently described the successful boycott campaign in a telephone interview from Hamilton, Bermuda. The BIU, Simmons said, has 6,000 members and represents virtually all the workers in the country's construction and tourism industries, at the airport and ports, at hospitals and government offices, and elsewhere.

The BIU has good working relations with the AFL-CIO, Simmons explained, and with U.S. unions on the East Coast.

"Last year, when we found out that our brothers and sisters at Eastern Airlines were striking Lorenzo, we promptly decided to give support," Simmons recalled. Between March 4, when the strike started, and early June, there were no Eastern flights between the United States and Bermuda.

Then, in June, Eastern restarted a daily

flight from New York's La Guardia Airport to Hamilton. The BIU immediately objected, Simmons said. "We wrote to the Bermuda government and explained that Eastern was now flying with scab labor. We asked the government to tell Eastern it was not welcome here. If the government did not end the flights of Eastern and Continental, we said we would organize a boycott of the two airlines."

When the daily flight resumed in June, the BIU organized a picket line at the airport. Meanwhile, the International Transport Workers Federation had contacted the BIU about supporting the Eastern strike.

The government didn't budge, however, so the BIU declared an all-out boycott. "When one worker hurts, all workers feel pain," Simmons said.

They publicized the boycott in the union's newspaper, *The Workers Voice*, and in other media. "We made constant announcements to people not to fly Eastern or Continental," Simmons said. "And despite their cut-rate fares, they could not get the passengers. People in Bermuda responded to our campaign,

and so did people in the United States coming here as tourists."

Last November at the Caribbean Congress of Labour convention in Curaçao, the BIU sponsored an emergency resolution calling for a Caribbean-wide boycott of Eastern and Continental, the BIU leader noted. The CCL represents many unions in the English- and Dutch-speaking countries of the region, including Barbados, the Bahamas, Curaçao, Jamaica, and Suriname.

"Recognizing the need for all unions to unite against the union-busting tactics of Mr. Frank Lorenzo, owner of Eastern and Continental airlines;

"Be it resolved that the CCL urge all member unions to initiate boycotts of Eastern and Continental airlines in their respective countries," the resolution said. The motion passed unanimously.

Later in the month Simmons attended the AFL-CIO national convention in Washington, D.C., and read the CCL resolution to delegates there.

Now that a victory has been scored against Eastern, the BIU is going to continue their

boycott action against Continental. "We are going to continue until Lorenzo has reached an agreement that is satisfactory to the Machinists," the union leader said.

Simmons and the BIU have pledged to aid the 24 Eastern workers who will lose their jobs when the airline ceases its Bermuda flights.

"It would be typical of Mr. Lorenzo and Eastern to leave the staff suspended in midair once they take the planes away," Simmons told the *Royal Gazette*. "They don't care about their workers."

Eastern's flights ended on January 31. Before the strike started last March, the airline had four daily flights to Bermuda. Since Christmas, Eastern's passenger load to Bermuda had been "terrible," said Eastern's station manager Eric Bell.

Eastern had planned to cut a number of flights to the Caribbean on January 30, but Bermuda was due to continue. The victory in Bermuda was reported in the Eastern Machinists' daily strike bulletin January 25.

Bermuda, a colony of Great Britain, lies in the Atlantic Ocean 580 miles east of North Carolina, and has a population of 58,000.

Eastern's fortunes plummet as strike picks up momentum

Continued from front page
ahead of holders of common stock and also have preference in the distribution of a bankrupt company's assets.

The committee's statement came five days after Texas Air Corp. Chairman Frank Lorenzo presented the third bankruptcy reorganization plan to the company's unsecured creditors. Texas Air is the parent company of both Eastern and Continental airlines.

10 cents on the dollar

The latest reorganization plan proposes that Eastern pay its unsecured creditors 10 percent of its debt when the airline comes out of bankruptcy — in July, Eastern now says. Another 70 percent of the debt would be repaid over 10 years without interest, and the remaining 20 percent would be exchanged for stock in the company.

The unsecured creditors, who are owed \$1.1 billion, include Airbus, Boeing, General Electric, Rolls Royce, and other suppliers, as well as the IAM and the pilots' association. In Eastern's previous bankruptcy reorganization plans, the unsecured creditors had been promised full repayment of the airline's debt, with interest.

Eastern said payments to its secured creditors, who are owed \$1.2 billion, will be in full, though delayed. The debts to these creditors — mainly banks and other financial institutions — are backed by planes and other collateral.

At the same time, Eastern predicted losses of \$155 million during the first six months of 1990. Last year, the carrier lost an estimated \$850 million — a record for the airline industry.

Despite Eastern's rock-bottom fares, passenger loads so far in January have averaged between 55 and 59 percent. In December they averaged only 53 percent. Most airlines require 60 to 65 percent to break even.

In addition to increasing public support for the Machinists strike, which has kept many people off Lorenzo's flights, concern over safety is keeping others off.

George Davis, Jr., and his wife Mary recently spent \$238 apiece to fly from Atlanta to Norfolk, Virginia, on Delta Airlines rather than \$138 apiece for tickets on Eastern. "We worry a little about Eastern's ability to maintain the planes," George Davis told the *Wall Street Journal*.

The IAM reports that many of Eastern's newly hired mechanics are not licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration and the airline has had to defer most of the major aircraft overhaul and FAA-required structural modifications for older aircraft. Daily repairs are made by cannibalizing parts off parked aircraft. The result has been many emergency landings over the last two months, the union reports.

Texas Air's fortunes are also being rocked by Eastern's decline. The price of Texas Air stock on the American Stock Exchange had sunk to \$7.37 a share on January 24. Six days later, it closed at \$6.00 a share.

On January 30 Eastern suspended flights to nine Caribbean destinations.

Strikers gain momentum

After more than 330 days on the picket line, machinists around the country are moving ahead to take advantage of Lorenzo's weakened position by expanding their outreach efforts to other unions and community groups. Strikers are organizing a new round of speaking engagements at union meetings, expanded fund-raising activities, production of new strike literature and T-shirts, beefed-up picket lines, and other activities — often with the help of coal miners from the United Mine Workers of America.

IAM Local 1018 at New York's La Guardia Airport — following the example of strikers in Los Angeles — is organizing regular biweekly expanded picket lines at the airport. The first two will be February 3 and 17.

In New York, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and other cities, plans for celebrations of the March 4 anniversary of the strike — which have the potential to mobilize broad labor support — are moving ahead.

"We are closer today to a breakthrough than at any point in our strike," IAM District

100 explained in a recent strike bulletin. "This may come as a surprise to many of you given the setbacks in November and the misleading declarations by the mass media in December that the strike is over and Lorenzo won. . . .

"The unity of the Machinists, Pilots, and Flights Attendants was the cornerstone of our line during the first phase of the strike," the bulletin explains. "It forced the shutdown of the company and extended for months the rebuilding of the airline by Frank Lorenzo under the protection of the bankruptcy court. By November, however, Lorenzo had combined new hiring of pilots and attendants and the use of Continental crews and aircraft to put 800 Eastern daily flights back in the air.

"The decision by the pilots and flight attendants to call off their sympathy strike was unfortunate, but by the time it was taken it had no real effect on Eastern's operation," the union stresses.

Airline workers discuss American sale

BY PETER SEIDMAN

MIAMI — In December Texas Air Corp. Chairman Frank Lorenzo concluded a \$471 million deal to sell Eastern Airlines' Latin America routes to American Airlines, along with other assets.

Faced with estimated 1989 losses at Eastern of \$850 million, Lorenzo has already been forced to sell some of what were the company's most profitable assets, including the New York-Boston-Washington shuttle. Last fall he also sold off the bulk of Eastern's Philadelphia operations to Midway Airlines.

If the sale to American is approved by the U.S. Department of Justice, Department of Transportation, and the bankruptcy court that oversees Eastern's financial dealings, it will virtually put an end to Eastern's longstanding hub in Miami, which served as a base for its Latin America operations. American will replace Eastern as this city's largest carrier, with a projected 90 flights a day. Under Lorenzo's "reorganization" plan, Atlanta will replace Miami as the carrier's main hub.

Discussion among unionists

Among union officials and members at both American and Eastern, there's a range of views about how to approach the proposed sale, and what its potential impact will be on the Eastern strike.

The leadership of the International Association of Machinists, which represents the striking ramp workers, cleaners, stock clerks, and mechanics at Eastern, opposes the sale and plans to challenge it.

The sale is "critical to Lorenzo's reorganization plan," said IAM staff member Steve Abrecht recently. "If he can't put this together, he'll fail. He's losing too much money here due to competition.

"We need to force these losses to be so acute, the bankruptcy court judge and the creditors will cut Lorenzo off," he continued. "In addition, losing its hub in Miami hurts Eastern's viability as a carrier. Without this hub, it will be harder for the airline to come back after our strike."

Mechanics, ramp workers, and cabin service workers at American are members of Transport Workers Union Local 513. Many feel American's acquisition of Eastern's Latin America routes will help make their jobs more secure.

The rapid expansion American has made at Eastern's expense during the strike has already meant a big jump in jobs and overtime earnings at American. In the last six months, the number of TWU members at the carrier here has gone from 225 to 525. If the sale of the Latin American routes is approved, American's total employment in Miami is expected to reach 2,000 in the next few years.

Some American workers think that since the sale is likely to be approved, it's better for American to be the buyer than a nonunion carrier like Delta. "It's going to be sold," said one TWU member, "so American might as well get it, because we're union."

The TWU here has supported the Machin-



Militant/Jim Rogers

United Mine Workers of America members are committed to aiding Eastern strikers. On January 25, 20 UMWA members drove to the St. Louis airport to join strikers in a 100-year "birthday party" for the UMWA. The cake was shared with Eastern Machinists, their families, and supporters from other unions. "From Pittston to Eastern, we're going to draw the line, we're going to stick together on the picket line," the unionists chanted.

ists' fight at Eastern. TWU Local 513 sends a check every month to striking IAM Local 702, reported TWU Local 513 Chairman Willie Piña. The union at American has also donated several truckloads of food to the strikers' foodbank.

TWU International Vice-president Ed Koziatek reported that all local presidents of his union are under a temporary restraining order issued by the U.S. District Court in Ft. Worth, Texas, severely restricting what they can do to back the strike at Eastern. The order, Koziatek explained, came shortly after the strike started.

Similar injunctions were also sought — and obtained — by United Airlines and several other carriers seeking to head off solidarity actions with the Eastern strikers.

"We have problems on both sides," Koziatek said. "IAM members want to stop Lorenzo in his tracks. But for TWU members, the problem is that American will buy the gates. If the sale goes through, we'll insist these flights be organized by the TWU. I'm not sure how this can be done in a way that meets everyone's needs.

"One thing we've tried to do," he added, "is to insure that American hires as many Eastern strikers as possible. We're happy to have them because we want these people to survive in the unionized work force."

According to Piña, some 80 percent of the 300 new hires at American are Eastern strikers. This has been "through our direct efforts," Koziatek stressed.

Response of strikers

Strikers at Eastern, who are pushing ahead now to take advantage of their strengthened position in the fight against Lorenzo, are also thinking through how to respond to the proposed sale.

Rubin Proctor, a member of Miami IAM Local 702's Outreach Committee, noted that the IAM leadership has protested each of Lorenzo's previous asset sales but "it hasn't done any good. I hope that Congress will override President Bush's veto of a congressional 'blue ribbon' panel to investigate the Eastern strike. If Congress overrides, such a panel could stop the sale. I don't see what else could stop it."

But, Proctor added, "if we could reach the people at American, that might be viable also."

Refusal by TWU workers to do work on American flights taken over from Eastern would be a tremendous boost to the Eastern strike, Proctor said, and it would also be a powerful move toward strengthening the union at American.

"American Airlines, where wages start at \$6.85 an hour on the ramp and it takes 12 years to reach a maximum of \$17.31 an hour, is already paying what Lorenzo wanted to push on us," he explained.

"It's important for both the TWU and IAM to take a strong stand that the assets Lorenzo is selling remain part of the strike," said Jeff Miller, another Local 702 Outreach Commit-

tee member. "We have to look at this sale from the point of view of maintaining the strength and momentum of the fight at Eastern — that's really the only question. The TWU and IAM working together to defeat Lorenzo will put all of us in a stronger position."

"Letting another section of the strike — not the airline, the *strike* — be divided off, which is what happened with the sales to Midway Airlines and Trump Shuttle, is not going to help us," Miller continued. "The Latin American flights are struck now, and should remain struck."

Getting a hearing

Miller also thinks a campaign of education and solidarity directed to American workers can get a serious hearing, especially from the many Eastern strikers who are now working there. "Many of us at Eastern also used to think of the company as a 'family,'" Miller said. "It's taken a long strike to help us understand that Eastern never really was a family and that the only 'family' we can count on is our unions and other working people. American Airlines isn't a 'family' either."

"There's no reason for workers at American to have to repeat every painful step we went through," Miller continued. "By taking steps now to strengthen our unions and union solidarity, working people — no matter what company they work for — will be more able to defend themselves against attacks from their employer."

"Just because the owner of these assets changes doesn't mean it's not still part of the fight. TWU members should think of those gates as having a picket line around them until the fight at Eastern is resolved."

Miller was one of four strikers who recently spoke to 100 TWU members at their union meeting here. "We got a good response," he reported. "I explained that the sale of the Northeast corridor shuttle to Donald Trump and the sale of the Philadelphia gates to Midway were blows to the strike. This was not because the airline itself was being broken up and sold off, but because the union officials didn't act as if these 'assets' were still struck work, despite the owner changing."

The TWU members gave the Eastern strikers a big applause, Miller said.

"When I finished speaking, the local president proposed giving more money to help us," the striker said. "This is very important. But we need TWU members to begin to use their union's power to aid our strike in action too. That's not only in our best interest — but in the TWU's as well."

When the Eastern strikers returned to picket duty at Miami International Airport, Miller added, some American workers who had been at the union meeting came up and thanked the strikers for coming.

Peter Seidman works for Dispatch Services at Miami International Airport. He is active in Eastern strike support work through his union, IAM Local 1126.

FSLN focuses on foes' U.S. ties in Nicaragua elections

BY LARRY SEIGLE

(Second of two articles)

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — When contra terrorists assassinated two nuns on New Year's Day, the National Opposition Union (UNO) — which, like the contras, is financed by the U.S. Congress — said Nicaraguan government forces had killed the women.

Virgilio Godoy, UNO vice-presidential candidate, asserted that "the circumstances surrounding the case indicate that it was the Sandinistas who killed the two." The claim, believed by hardly anyone in Nicaragua, was an echo of the position taken by contra chiefs and Washington officials.

And when U.S. troops invaded Panama December 20, UNO presidential nominee Violeta Chamorro rushed to welcome the "coming to power of the representative and freely elected government of President Guillermo Endara" as a result of the invasion. She thus placed herself to the right of even most heads of state in Latin America, who felt compelled to condemn the invasion in public statements even if they did little or nothing to oppose it in practice.

These recent responses illustrate the problem facing the pro-U.S. opposition bloc: it is despised by a majority of Nicaraguan toilers, as well as many middle-class people, because of its identification with Washington. Even in most other Latin American countries, UNO's subservience to the U.S. government would be a fatal political liability.

Financed by Congress

The U.S. Congress has allocated \$4 million to UNO, a huge sum in Nicaragua. Another \$5 million is being funneled to organizations that are supporting "free elections" in Nicaragua, much of which undoubtedly makes its way into the UNO campaign.

This money enables the opposition bloc to maintain a large apparatus and even to dispense a form of patronage with U.S. dollars. But the political overhead is high. It is not lost on anyone that the government now backing UNO also imposed the Somoza tyranny on Nicaragua until the workers' and peasants' revolution of 1979, and has since financed a war of terror and destruction against the country.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) is focusing its campaign fire on UNO's ties to Washington and the contras. It also argues that a victory for the opposition coalition would mean a return to the days of the Somoza dictatorship.

"UNO is the contras. It is *somocismo*," Daniel Ortega, the FSLN candidate for president, says repeatedly. On election day, he adds, "we are going to definitively bury the contras, the war, UNO, and the Yankees, because they are all the same."

At a recent campaign appearance in San Rafael del Sur, Ortega said, "Don't forget that UNO is an invention of the Yankees. Daniel is an invention of the Nicaraguan people and has his roots here and not in the United States."

FSLN hopes for 70 percent

Bayardo Arce, head of the FSLN campaign, has said that the goal is to get a minimum of 70 percent of the vote. The FSLN won with 63 percent in 1984.

A survey made public in January by a pro-FSLN polling organization showed the Sandinista Front receiving 48 percent of the vote, and UNO with 15. None of the other eight parties registered more than 1 percent. The remainder of those polled expressed no opinion.

Opposition groups dispute the accuracy of these findings. UNO officials claimed in January that their candidate was ahead by a 2-1 margin. But few political forces here seriously doubt that the Ortega-Ramírez ticket will be elected.

UNO has made opposition to the draft a central plank in its campaign. It is an issue that gets an echo from a layer of workers and peasants, many of whom have lost sons or brothers in the fighting. At UNO campaign events, calls for an end to conscription get the biggest response.

The FSLN tried to undercut this issue somewhat by agreeing to suspend the drafting of young men until after the elections February 25. At the same time, the FSLN argues that military service is a patriotic duty in a country facing military threats and aggression from U.S. imperialism and its mercenary army.



Militant/Larry Seigle

Wall in El Viejo, Nicaragua. Daniel Ortega and Sergio Ramírez are the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) candidates for president and vice-president.

The candidates of the U.S.-backed coalition also keep hammering on the economic crisis, charging that the FSLN is responsible for high prices, low wages, and declining production. In response, the FSLN says the country's economic problems are the result of the contra war.

UNO itself is "responsible for this inflation, low wages, and high bank interest rates," says vice-presidential candidate Sergio Ramírez, "because they did so much damage when they were leading the contras."

Coalition government?

The FSLN leadership has begun openly floating the idea of some form of coalition or "national unity" government following the vote. A number of opposition politicians have long pushed for some such change, insisting that it is the only way for the FSLN to gain the political confidence of the capitalists.

Contradictory reports about private discussions between the governing party and UNO have been appearing for several months. In September Virgilio Godoy, UNO's candidate for vice-president, declared at a Managua press conference that the FSLN had offered the opposition bloc three cabinet posts. However, Godoy said, that proposal failed to meet the coalition's demand for "institutional conditions that would produce a new peaceful spirit of coexistence."

However, Sandinista Front leader Tomás Borge, who is the minister of the interior, said the possibility of a coalition government had not been discussed, and no offer of cabinet seats made. "The FSLN will win the elections with friendly and unfriendly observers from all over the world, and we will not be forced to share the government," he said.

Reports and denials

In December *La Prensa*, the right-wing daily, claimed that representatives of the FSLN had initiated private talks with UNO officials "proposing the formation of a government of national unity." According to *La Prensa*, Bayardo Arce of the Sandinista Front had met privately with some opposition functionaries.

"To date, exactly who in UNO agrees with the FSLN proposal is not known," the paper added. "Members of the Political Council [of UNO] approached by *La Prensa* on the subject refused comment."

Several days later, Arce acknowledged what he characterized as informal conversations with UNO members, but denied that a coalition government had been taken up. The only topic discussed, Arce said, was the possibility of renewing the "national dialogue," a series of meetings in which the FSLN has held negotiations with the opposition in the past.

The possibility of serious talks about a coalition government prior to the elections now seems remote, and attention has focused on what may happen after February 25. So far, public discussion has been confined to comments by politicians of various parties. It is a development that many working people are watching closely.

The question was raised anew early in January by Sergio Ramírez in an interview with the opposition weekly *La Crónica*. The text was reprinted in *El Nuevo Diario*, which

supports the FSLN.

Ramírez called for "a genuine common effort, removed from all the noise of the elections and from the antagonisms of the elections, where everyone sits down and seriously thinks about what must be done. That is where the civilized relation between the government and the opposition must be established."

El Nuevo Diario followed up the Ramírez interview by publishing comments on it by several representatives of the self-styled "moderate" opposition forces, who are not part of the UNO bloc. UNO itself has made no response.

Mauricio Díaz, head of the Popular Social Christian Party, told *El Nuevo Diario* that Ramírez' comments were "statesmanlike." He added, "I think we agree on the need for what I have called an ecumenical peace for national reconstruction and reconciliation."

Díaz said a "mosaic" of points of view exists inside the FSLN. "There are various currents with a substantially common ideology: nationalism and *sandinismo*. But I also think there are orthodox sectors within *sandinismo* that think it is possible to build a Cuban-style socialist model in Nicaragua."

'Willingness to share power'

According to Alfonso Moncada of the National Unity Liberal Party, Ramírez' statements indicate that "the FSLN has decided to implement its political willingness to share power," in contrast to its earlier "hegemonic outlook."

Speaking for the FSLN, Rafael Solís, a leader of the party in the National Assembly, stressed that negotiations on any form of coalition government should take place after the voting, not before.

"If it were possible to produce a government of national unity, that would be a benefit for the country. But that does not mean we are talking about a pact or negotiations in advance."

The forms of the coalition — in the cabinet, the National Assembly, and the judiciary — Solís said, "would be a point of discussion after the elections."

Privatization

Part of the search by the FSLN and government leadership for a "national consensus" with the major capitalist forces is its continued movement away from earlier challenges to the property rights and prerogatives of the wealthy families.

The Sandinista Front is seeking to assure the employers that it will not infringe on their right to decide how to manage their businesses and that there will be no further expropriations of their holdings. As part of this effort, the government is moving toward returning some state property to its former owners.

Minister of the Economy Luis Carrión recently stressed the difference between the current approach and that of the first few years of the revolution, when mass mobilizations by workers and peasants led to government expropriation of many factories and capitalist farms.

"In the heat of the intense class struggle, land occupied by peasants or factories occu-

Continued on Page 13

Nicaragua's economic output drops

BY SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Nicaragua's gross national product declined by 3 percent in 1989, following a 9 percent GNP drop in 1988. Unemployment increased and real wages remained at their lowest level in years.

The government budget was cut in half in 1989. Deep reductions were carried out in health, education, defense, and other government spending. Seventeen thousand government workers were laid off, along with several thousand army and Interior Ministry employees. Government-financed investment was cut substantially.

Agricultural production, which had dropped 11 percent in 1988, recovered by 4 percent in 1989.

Industrial production in 1989 dropped 7 percent. It had fallen 28 percent the year before.

One of the sharpest declines in 1989 — 15 percent — was in construction activity. Most construction work is government financed.

Government officials here reported a rise in "open" unemployment from 5.6 percent in 1988 to 6.3 percent in 1989. But what the government defines as "underemployment" grew from 27 to 36 percent. Taken together these figures represent an increase in joblessness from 33 to 42 percent.

Real wages have been declining since 1982, with a sharp drop from 1986 to 1988. Wages had fallen so low in 1988 that one group of progovernment economists warned that "the deterioration of the work force" was endangering the ability of the

working class "to reproduce itself."

According to government figures, real wages rose in 1989 but still have not reached 1987 levels.

The government scored success in reducing the rate of inflation from 33,500 percent in 1988 to 1,700 percent in 1989.

Exports — principally from agriculture — grew to \$298 million in 1989. This is a 26 percent increase over 1988, but still less than any year from 1979 through 1985.

Nicaragua has suffered from the effects of the U.S.-backed contra war and economic embargo, as well as from the world capitalist crisis. Washington has successfully blocked requests for loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The Nicaraguan government hopes that the economic and political measures it has carried out will open the door to future loans from the IMF and other financial institutions.

Alejandro Martínez Cuenca, the government planning minister, announced at a January news conference that an IMF delegation had recently visited Nicaragua. The group's report was favorable, he said. "We have friendly relations with the IMF and other international financial institutions. We hope to improve these relations."

The Nicaraguan government also plans to organize a conference of "donor nations" in Stockholm, Sweden, later this year to seek \$115 million more than the foreign aid currently committed for 1990. Figures on the total amount of foreign aid Nicaragua receives are unavailable.

Yugoslav League of Communists shatters, regional party bosses stir chauvinism

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Yugoslavia's ruling League of Communists held a special congress January 20, attempting to halt the organization's disintegration. Two days later the League shattered, split by sharp rivalry between party bosses from two of the country's six republics. The official party daily *Borba* flatly announced that the League, a federation of the republics' Stalinist Communist parties which has dominated Yugoslavia since the end of World War II, "no longer existed."

The Yugoslav CP's crisis follows the disintegration of Communist parties in six other Eastern European countries.

Its abrupt end in Belgrade came just hours after delegates voted almost unanimously to renounce constitutional provisions guaranteeing the League's political domination of the country. But later delegates from the northern republic of Slovenia staged a walk-out, protesting the congress' refusal to adopt their demands to overhaul the League along the lines of social-democratic parties in capitalist Europe and to grant greater independence to each republic's CP.

Proposals supported by the Slovenes for human rights provisions and changes in the country's thought-control laws dropping "crimes of opinion" as a punishable offense were also rejected. Particularly galling to the Slovene delegates was the congress' overwhelming refusal to endorse a plan for Yugoslavia to join the European Community, also known as the Common Market, along with other Eastern European countries.

Rising discontent

The Slovene CP, faced with rising discontent and the growing popularity of newly formed opposition groups, had pressed the League to adopt these changes as a means of appealing to voters. The republic's first open elections are scheduled for April. Slovenia, the most prosperous republic and second from last in population, recently established the country's first stock exchange.

Croat delegates, facing similar pressures, backed the Slovenes at the congress. The Croat CP is also up against stiff opposition in spring elections and expects to lose its hold on the Sabor, the republic's parliament. At best the CP might do well enough to enter a coalition government, the *Washington Post* reported December 26. Croatia is the country's second-largest republic and borders Slovenia.

Opposition to the Slovenes' proposals came from the Serb delegation headed by regional party chief Slobodan Milosevic, who for almost two years has been on a drive to reassert Serb dominance in Yugoslavia. Serbs are Yugoslavia's most populous nationality and dominated the country before World War II.

Milosevic, who opposed a looser association of regional CPs, insisted the congress continue with its business following the Slovenes' departure, but Croat delegates resisted and the meeting was suspended.

Yugoslavia is a federation of six republics and two autonomous provinces on the Adriatic Sea east of Italy. The republics are Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro. The autonomous provinces within the Serb republic are Vojvodina and Kosovo. Each republic has considerable self-government.

According to 1989 estimates, 36 percent of Yugoslavia's nearly 24 million people are Serbs; 20 percent are Croats; 8 percent, Slovenes; 8 percent, Albanians; 6 percent, Macedonians; and 3 percent, Montenegrins. In addition there are more than 750,000 Turks, Romanians, Hungarians, Gypsies, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Czechs, and Italians.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was established after massive resistance by workers and peasants to the military occupation by German, Italian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian forces during World War II, which culminated in a revolution led by the National Liberation Army (Partisans) headed by Josip Broz Tito. Capitalist property relations were overturned in 1945-46 when capitalists and landlords who had formerly ruled the country were expropriated and a nationalized economy was set up.

In the course of their revolutionary struggle, unity among the country's working people,



ple, long blocked by a legacy of imperialist divide-and-rule in the region, was forged. Equal rights for nationalities were guaranteed.

This unity made the revolution's triumph possible and opened the door to begin resolving the deep social and economic inequalities, conflicts, and distrust between the working people of the country's various nationalities.

Following the revolution the country experienced rapid economic growth for almost two decades as an industrial base was developed and a shift of many peasants to factory work in the cities occurred.

Instead of mobilizing working people to build on these initial conquests of the revolution, the country's leadership increasingly relied on capitalist methods and market mechanisms in running the nationalized economy. Such measures date back to 1950. These policies encouraged the accumulation of private wealth and also reinforced the development of a privileged bureaucratic layer rooted in the governmental apparatus, which asserted its domination of the country.

Since the 1960s difficulties have grown, and unemployment and inflation have become chronic problems. The country also accumulated an enormous debt to the imperialist banks totaling \$17 billion.

Under pressure from the International Monetary Fund belt-tightening measures to meet payments on the debt have been imposed by the government since the mid-1980s. This mounting crisis has reinforced and deepened inequalities among the country's nationalities. Today unemployment stands at 17 percent. Inflation is raging at 2,000 percent annually.

In December Prime Minister Ante Markovic, spurred by the country's deepening economic and social crisis, announced even more draconian economic measures. His proposals included closing enterprises deemed "unprofitable," freezing wages, making Yugoslavia's currency convertible on the world capitalist market, and cutting back government spending for social programs.

On January 1 the government tied Yugoslavia's currency to the West German mark. The Ministry for Development expects 150,000 workers to lose their jobs as the plans are implemented.

Emergency powers

Faced with rising intraparty battles stemming from the organization's disintegration, Markovic has assumed emergency powers to drive through the belt-tightening measures.

Discontent among working people and opposition to the Communist parties has increased as a result. Half-hour protest strikes were organized by workers in the southern republic of Montenegro; in Belgrade, the country's capital city; and in Macedonia in response to Markovic's announcement.

Tensions and conflicts among the nationalities have also increased as leaders of the republics' CPs, pursuing their own "national" interests, have sought to divert attention from their failed policies by scapegoating other nationalities. This has given rise to racist and chauvinist appeals to working people and the rise of reactionary nationalist groupings in the better-off republics of the north, whose foreign exchange earnings have been used by the national government to help the poorer and less developed southern republics.

Conflict between Slovenia and Serbia escalated at the end of last year when Serb leaders attempted to organize several thousand Serbs to travel to Slovenia's capital to protest the Slovene CP's policies. Slovene police set up roadblocks and rail workers threatened to block tracks against Serb trains.

In response, the Serb CP called on all Serb "institutions and enterprises to break all contact with Slovenia" and said that Serbs would no longer allow themselves "to be humiliated" by Slovenia. A director of the Slovene Chamber of Commerce has reported that so far 483 orders and contracts for Slovene goods have been canceled by Serbia. Many stores in each republic refuse to sell products made in the other. Even the national rail system has been hampered by the dispute. Cross-country trains have been forced to change crews at each republic's borders.

In the worst violence in almost a year, police killed more than 20 ethnic Albanians in a week of protests in Kosovo. This is the least economically developed part of Yugoslavia and has especially high levels of unemployment. Protesters demanded free elections, an end to the CP's control of the media, a halt to political discrimination, the freeing of all political prisoners, and the right to form political associations.

Serbia imposed constitutional restrictions on Kosovo in March, claiming Albanian separatists were seeking to annex the province to neighboring Albania. On January 30 thousands of Serbs marched in Belgrade demanding the central government crush the Albanian protests.

1,200 attend celebration of Boudin's life

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Some 1,200 people crowded into Manhattan's Community Church January 27 for a meeting to celebrate the life and contributions of Leonard Boudin, a staunch defender of civil liberties and prominent U.S. constitutional attorney. Boudin, 77, died in November.

In attendance were family members, friends, collaborators from the legal profession and battles to defend democratic rights, diplomats from Cuba and Angola, individuals and representatives of organizations defended by Boudin, political acquaintances, and activists.

Boudin's "long career on behalf of the disadvantaged and dispossessed, precondemned by a hostile government" was an example to others, said Derrick Bell, the dean of Harvard University's law school. For more than 50 years, Boudin defended victims of government repression, even when they or the issues involved were unpopular in some circles.

Corliss Lamont, chairman of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, recounted Boudin's contributions over more than 35 years as general counsel for the organization. He recalled how Boudin in that capacity had fought for democratic rights, conducting successful legal challenges before the U.S. Supreme Court in defense of the right to travel and freedom from censorship.

Defending witch-hunt victims

Boudin defended "hundreds of persecuted, frightened, vulnerable, and often penniless men and women" with the same dedication

as more prominent clients, said Victor Rabinowitz, Boudin's law partner for more than 40 years. The two attorneys defended many victims of the government-led witch-hunt in the late 1940s and '50s. "Representing these people required a degree of courage, integrity, legal ability, and political understanding beyond anything we had experienced," Rabinowitz said. "In that atmosphere, our worth was really tested and our legal character was formed. Leonard passed that test."

International victims of the U.S. government were also among Boudin's clients. They included the governments of Cuba, Angola, Chile in the early 1970s when socialist Salvador Allende was president, Iran's Central Bank following the 1979 Iranian revolution, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Just a few days before he died, Boudin filed a brief challenging the U.S. government's denial of a visa to Gerry Adams, president of the Irish republican party Sinn Féin.

'Brightest star'

"The brightest star in our practice," said Rabinowitz, "was our defense of Cuba, since the very beginning of the revolution." For more than 30 years Boudin and his firm provided legal representation for Cuba in the United States.

Rabinowitz introduced Ricardo Alarcón, recently named as permanent representative to the United Nations by the Cuban government. Boudin "was Cuba's best friend in the United States, and therefore the world," Alarcón said. For more than 30 years "he provided many hours of hard work and ad-

vice" for Cuba. "The greatest tribute" to his memory will be for us to continue our "efforts and sacrifices," the Cuban leader said.

Pediatrician and author Benjamin Spock, who was indicted by the U.S. government in 1968 for his activities against the Vietnam War, paid tribute to Boudin, who provided him with legal counsel. Boudin defended, often successfully, many opponents of the Vietnam War, including Daniel Ellsberg, who revealed the Pentagon Papers, secret government documents exposing the U.S. government's role in Vietnam.

A poem from Kathy, Boudin's daughter, was read by political activist Bernardine Dohrn. In 1984, Kathy Boudin, a political activist, was sentenced to 20 years to life in prison on charges of being involved in an armored car holdup.

Other speakers included Jon Snow, a British broadcast commentator, whom Boudin befriended in Iran following the 1979 revolution; and Helena Kennedy, an attorney from Britain who described the support Boudin provided younger lawyers involved in defending democratic rights.

Filmed excerpts of Boudin's commencement speech last year at Colby College in Maine concluded the meeting. In the speech Boudin discussed his legal battles against the U.S. government and called on young people to resist abuses of civil liberties.

Michael, Boudin's son and an attorney in the U.S. Justice Department, chaired the meeting and expressed the family's appreciation for the several hundred messages of solidarity and condolence sent them. Boudin's wife Jean greeted guests after the meeting.

Miami strikers win 'T-shirt victory'

BY JEFF MILLER

MIAMI — Eastern strikers here won an important victory for their strike and for democratic rights January 29. Metro-Dade police stopped evicting unionists wearing strike T-shirts from the airport terminal.

A newly issued T-shirt, sporting the slogan "Machinists on strike — Please don't Fly Eastern or Continental" in English and Spanish was a particular target of the cops.

The red shirts had become very visible in the airport. Many striking members of International Association of Machinists Local 702 wore them while walking around inside the terminal.

Police began evicting anyone wearing the shirt from the terminal on January 25. A striker wearing a "No Lorenzo" T-shirt was also ordered out. He was told that even wearing a strike button would be in violation of the ban.

Police said that T-shirts bearing "strike related slogans" are "in effect picket signs" and violated a Metro-Dade Aviation Department rule.

Many strikers point out that the new police interpretation of a 1975 ordinance is aimed at limiting the visibility of the strike. It is directly related to the impact of the union's call for a boycott of Eastern. The airline has been losing more than \$2 million a day as a result of plummeting ridership since the strike began.

Outraged by the ban, 40 strikers and supporters organized a challenge to it on January 28. The event was organized to welcome back fellow striker Rick Walker, due to arrive on a flight that day. The group gathered outside Concourse D in the terminal to welcome him home. Everyone held signs reading, "Welcome back Rick."

Many wore the banned T-shirt. Others had on shirts reflecting their membership in the A. Philip Randolph Institute, anti-apartheid organizations, and unions such as the Transport Workers Union and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees.

After waiting half an hour, the police moved in. They told those wearing the banned shirts that they had to leave the terminal. Some protesters complied while others took their shirts off or turned them inside-out and continued to wait.

Soon all the major news crews arrived.

One bare-chested striker wrote on the other side of his welcome sign, "The police won't let me wear my shirt. Do you want to know what it says?" As passengers stopped to find out, he unfolded the shirt to show them. The police ordered him not to show the shirt.

Other airline workers, especially TWU members at American Airlines, were supportive. Several offered to wear the banned T-shirts to and from work in the airport.

When Walker arrived wearing the banned T-shirt, he was met by cheers and hugs.

The event received good coverage on the 11 o'clock news on two of the network chan-

nels and was played again the next morning.

That day lawyers for the police stated they had made a mistake in their interpretation of the rule. The shirt was not banned, they said, only picketing in the terminal with the shirt on.

A group of 10 strikers went into the terminal wearing the T-shirts to test their victory. They walked around the whole terminal twice, then went up to a policeman. Pointing to their shirts, a striker asked, "What are your orders?"

The cop replied, "After yesterday, I don't know, and I don't care anymore. It's fine with me."

Jeff Miller is a member of IAM Local 702 and a striking Eastern worker.



Miami Machinists, on strike at Eastern Airlines, beat back police efforts to stop them from wearing strike T-shirts inside the airport terminal. Above, mine union members on strike at Pittston coal company, along with Eastern strikers, led the labor contingent in Miami's King Day march January 15. Frank Ortis, president of striking IAM Local 702, is at left with glasses. Charles Bryan, president of IAM District 100, which represents all Eastern strikers, is at center in white shirt.

Nicaragua leader on E. Europe, Cuba

In a recent interview Nicaraguan Vice-president Sergio Ramírez commented on a range of political topics. The interview, which has attracted attention in Nicaragua and internationally, first appeared in the Managua opposition weekly *La Crónica* and was reprinted in the progovernment daily *El Nuevo Diario*.

Some of the vice-president's comments on political developments in Nicaragua are quoted in the two-part series on the elections in that country, published in this issue of the *Militant* and the one of February 2. Below we are printing an excerpt from the interview in which Ramírez discusses developments in Eastern Europe and Cuba.

Translation is by the *Militant*.

Question. Are the changes in Eastern Europe affecting the relations of cooperation that these countries have had until now with Nicaragua?

Answer. It is too early to know. Nonetheless, I think that there are some factors that must be taken into account.

These countries are not turning to the right. They are not lining up with policies of the United States. They are not becoming pro-U.S., nor are they imitating the U.S. life-style.

A little while ago I read an interview in the *New York Times* with one of the leaders of the forces of renewal in the German Democratic Republic [GDR — East Germany]. It concerned a novelist who said that this is the last chance the GDR has to avoid being swallowed up by McDonald's.

That is a very succinct way of putting it, and he explains things very well. It means that they are not rejecting socialism. Instead they want to add to it the democratic component. But they don't want to become part of those countries whose economies feed on the exploitation of other countries.

They assume that socialism is a better system than capitalism, but of course with properly organized internal democratic participation.

On the basis of these preliminary points, we can look at what the future relations will be between these countries and Nicaragua.

In the GDR, when great masses of people came out into the streets of Berlin and Leipzig, there were groups that raised slogans in favor of Nicaragua.

They even sang a rock song composed here in Nicaragua by a very important rock singer in the GDR. The song, called "Seek the People," has lyrics that go, "Little Nicaragua, don't send us your coffee, don't send us your bananas, don't send us your sugar, send us your face turned toward the people."

Of course this song was outlawed in the GDR. But right after the changes, the song began to be played on all the radio stations.

One must also take into account that the youth, the intellectuals, and the people who have gotten involved in changing the internal course of the countries of Eastern Europe have always been aware that in Nicaragua there has always been a struggle for a different kind of social change.

For that reason I think that the people who are now taking charge of the government in those countries are not going to adopt a hostile stance toward Nicaragua. One can perfectly well envision relations with them like those we have with Sweden, a deeply social-democratic country.

Relations with Sweden

I would call our relationship with Sweden strategic, because they believe in what we are doing. As a result, their cooperation is generous, energetic, firm, and committed, even to the point of having convened a recent conference of donors and having offered their

country as the site.

Sweden's cooperation with Nicaragua can be seen everywhere here, in the cultural sphere as well as in production. In short, there is a deep identification between us.

There is nothing to make me think that a similar relationship cannot develop with the GDR, Czechoslovakia, or Poland. This will be especially true if those governments — the new leaders of those countries — understand the reality of the poor countries and don't fall into the selfishness that characterizes the capitalist countries.

I recently read a report on Lech Walesa's visit to Venezuela. At the end of the visit Walesa said, "Now I understand the Venezuela that I was never taught about, the poor and abject Venezuela."

That statement in the mouth of a man like Walesa, whom they have tried to make look like a pro-U.S. and right-wing leader, shows that he has great compassion for the situation of the poor countries.

That gives us an indication of how the Eastern European leaders will handle their relations with countries like Nicaragua. Frankly, I am not worried.

Affect on Cuba

Q. Do you think the changes in Eastern Europe will affect the Cuban political system?

A. That is a complicated question. It must be kept in mind that Cuba has always been part of Comecon [Council of Mutual Economic Assistance] and a strategic ally of the Soviet Union.

In contrast, Nicaragua has never been part of Comecon and has never had a centralized economy that would have permitted such participation. Nor were we ever a military ally of the Soviet Union in the sense that Cuba has been historically.

Moreover, the changes that are occurring in Eastern Europe, and even within the Warsaw Pact — going so far as to issue an official declaration affirming that the intervention in Czechoslovakia was a reprehensible error — are very profound.

These changes also imply a reorganization of their international relations. The ruble will be transformed into a convertible currency, and the market will have more influence in the regulation of economic life.

Without a doubt these changes will affect Cuba. If not, Cuba will be all alone, defending what Fidel considers his principles.

I believe that he believes very strongly in his principles. He said during one of his most recent speeches that Cuba could be all alone in defending its socialism.

Cubans protest provocations

Continued from front page

centered his remarks on the challenges before the Cuban working class in the face of imperialist threats and the possibility of major changes in Cuba's trade agreements with countries in Eastern Europe.

This is "one of the most uncertain and confused periods internationally that we have known in these years of revolution," he said. The CTC congress is taking place in the midst of "confusion in the progressive camp, in the camp of truly democratic ideas, socialist ideas, and revolutionary ideas. The imperialists are not confused. The capitalists are not confused. They know exactly what the stakes are at this moment in the history of humanity."

With regard to Cuba's imports of vital technology from countries in Eastern Europe, Castro said, "We have no guarantees in 1990 and total uncertainty for the years 1991 to 1995."

Cuba's "economic relations with the Soviet Union have not been affected very much thus far," he added. He went on to express his view that Soviet aid to Cuba could be endangered either by openly anticommunist currents in the Soviet Union or by "nationalist movements of every type, which could put

the territorial interests of the Soviet Union at great risk."

The imperialists, said Castro, "talk euphorically about how we're going to end up isolated, alone; how we're going to have big problems."

Allies

But Cuba also has many allies, he continued, especially in Latin America, "because objectively Cuba is the first trench of the independence of Latin America."

And Cuba is prepared to defend itself against all possible forms of U.S. aggression, a total blockade, or direct invasion. "Cuba's friends around the world should know that our people will be able to resist whatever the circumstances. The revolution will not be overthrown in Cuba, socialism will not be overthrown in Cuba!"

"Here we're not ashamed to speak of Lenin. While others are taking his name off streets and parks and uprooting statues of Lenin, Marx, and Engels, here we're building them, and we don't build them out of marble, or bronze, or steel. We build them with our revolutionary conduct, our heroism, our stance of dignity, our deep convictions, raising more than ever the banners of Marxism-Leninism, of socialism, and of communism."

Farm workers step up California organizing

BY GREG McCARTAN

"Farm workers themselves have been trying to get organized," said Dolores Huerta. "They are no longer afraid of being deported."

Huerta, the First Vice-President of the United Farm Workers (UFW), explained in a phone interview that the effects of the Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 have started to become apparent in California's \$16.6 billion agricultural industry.

Some 700,000 of the 1.3 million farm workers who applied for permanent residency under a special provision of the immigration act are from that state.

"This represents about half of the total number of applicants under the act," said Luis Torres, general counsel of the Commission on Agricultural Workers set up under the immigration act.

These workers plant, weed, water, and harvest crops and tend orchards and vineyards.

No longer threatened with deportation and facing worsening conditions in the fields, farm workers have stepped up their attempts to organize unions.

"There have been more union elections this year than I've ever seen," an official of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) recently told the *New York Times*.

The number of requests filed by union organizers seeking to sign up members in the fields rose from 56 in 1988 to 158 in the first 10 months of 1989.

One big victory for the union came last May at Furakawa Farms, a strawberry company north of Los Angeles. Some 500 workers won representation by the UFW.

Huerta, who has played a big role for many years in drives to organize farm workers in the state, explained the victory came partly as a result of a California Supreme Court ruling holding that sharecroppers are employees, not independent contractors. Furakawa had been able to block UFW organizing efforts for several years on that basis.

The ruling affects some 20,000 other farm workers in the state. The president of the Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties told the *Times* the decision is "quite a burden for farmers," since they now must pay the minimum wage, workers compensation, and disability insurance and comply with the same child labor laws and regulations that govern other wage workers.

"Although we won the election in May, we still haven't been certified," said Huerta, the bargaining agent for the workers.

Furakawa, like hundreds of other employers, have tied the union up in court, stalling the certification process. Some, Huerta explained, simply change their name and con-

tend they don't have to negotiate with the union.

At a big tomato farm in Stockton, 1,000 farm workers struck for three weeks last August seeking a five-cent-an-hour raise. Their case too is now tied up in court by the company, Huerta said.

The UFW won another election at Dan D. Packing, a cauliflower and broccoli operation. The Teamsters and the Independent Union of Agricultural Workers have also won elections recently.

"The employers don't have to bargain with us until the ALRB certifies the election," Huerta pointed out. "The ALRB is working for the employers," because they refuse to certify the union after the elections.

Growers with which the UFW currently has contracts are "doing everything they can to not sign new contracts," Huerta continued. "They fired workers, sometimes a whole crew," in order to weaken the union.

The union recently filed suit against the Dole company for conditions it has forced on workers. The union, certified at the company since 1981, has been unable to force the company to sign a contract. Dole has been paying workers \$2.65 an hour. Moreover, as many as 100 workers were living in a three-bedroom house, Huerta said.

Labor surplus, declining wages

When the immigration act was announced, the UFW lobbied to get farm workers included, Huerta said. A special provision of the bill allowed anyone to apply for residency who could prove they had worked in the fields for 90 days in the 12 months ending May 1, 1986.

Because of the large number of applicants, 40 percent of the growers surveyed in 1988 expected a shortage of labor during the 1989 season. They thought many newly legalized workers would find other employment.

But now "there is a tremendous oversupply" of legal workers in the fields, Huerta explained. The growers have seized on this situation to lower wages and impose harsh working conditions. "The growers just tell us that 'there is a surplus of workers and we don't have to increase wages.'" In the heavily agricultural Salinas Valley, wages have fallen from \$7 an hour in 1984 to \$5.50 an hour.

On the other hand, legalization has led to a rise in the number of formal complaints and lawsuits filed against employers.

The UFW now has 30,000 working members and 6,000 "associate members" — farm workers not currently working at an organized farm. The upturn in union activity has increased the total number of companies under contract with the UFW but, "it is the big employers, with the large work forces, who are really trying to push the union out," Huerta concluded.

other issue is behind the company's actions. Union member Wayne Smith was the first to be singled out and fired for refusing to take the drug test. He was also one of four workers who had spoken to FBI agents allegedly investigating reports of toxic waste dumping by Northwest Pipe.

As early as 1986 union members had presented evidence of the dumping. The Environmental Protection Agency was contacted but until the FBI showed up, union members knew of nothing being done about it.

The three workers who spoke to the FBI in addition to Smith were also fired; one was laid off out of seniority for "lack of work," and the other two were fired for an alleged shipping error. The union contends the firings of all the workers interviewed by federal agents are not coincidental but the result of victimization.

Since the strike began on January 2, the union has been campaigning to expose the toxic waste dumping practices of Northwest Pipe as part of its effort to build strike support.

The strike remains 100 percent strong despite a National Labor Relations Board ruling upholding the drug-testing policy.



Militant/Steven Fuchs

Farm workers in 1987 protest against worsening conditions of labor in the Salinas Valley where wages have dropped from \$7 to \$5.50 an hour.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

GREG McCARTAN

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, Canada, and New Zealand, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression.

During February, Black History Month, a number of Pathfinder's titles on Black history are featured in bookstores across the United States. Pathfinder bookstores, located in 45 cities in seven countries, will also be putting a special focus on the range of titles published by Pathfinder, which together make a considerable contribution to the understanding of Black history and its place in the history of working-class struggles and current politics. The addresses of the bookstores are listed on page 12.

During the month of February the column will focus on news about Pathfinder's publishing contributions to Black history.

The Jan. 15-21, 1990, issue of *West Africa* carries a review of *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*. The magazine focuses on news from West Africa and has a worldwide distribution.

Reviewer Simon Heap says Sankara's "dogged determination to transform the world around him pervade every page of this highly informative and thought-provoking book."

Sankara led the revolutionary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso from 1983 until his assassination in 1987.

"The subjects covered range over a wide spectrum: from his attacks on apartheid, Zionism, corruption, racism, imperialism and neo-colonialism, to his views on the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, and his calls for female emancipation, self-help, more education, and a return of power into the hands of the Burkinabe people," he adds.

Several new promotional pieces have been released by Pathfinder for use by local distributors and book chains. A set of 11" x 17" photographs of Malcolm X reproduced from *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, can be displayed on tables, in windows, or featured inside a store. With a general rise in interest in his ideas, and the film clips of Malcolm in the first segment of the current TV series "Eyes on the Prize II," the photos can be an aid in advertising the 10 different works by and about the revolutionary leader carried by Pathfinder.

A camera-ready two-sided flyer, "Books on Black History from Pathfinder," is also available. It features 10

books in English, two issues of the magazine *New International*, and five Spanish-language titles. The Cuban-made video *Cuba & Angola: Response to the South African Escalation*, is also offered at a special price of \$45. The gripping three-hour documentary relates the 1988 defeat dealt to the invading South African army at Cuito Cuanavale in Angola.

The five Spanish-language titles are the pamphlet *Habla Malcolm X*; *Habla Nelson Mandela*, a book of speeches by the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress of S. Africa; *La revolución granadina 1979-83*, a pamphlet featuring a speech by Maurice Bishop, the leader of the Grenada revolution; *Discursos escogidos de Maurice Bishop*, a book published in Cuba and distributed by Pathfinder that contains Bishop's main speeches during the revolution; and *Sudáfrica: la revolución en camino*, a pamphlet containing an article on the revolutionary struggle to overthrow apartheid written by Jack Barnes.

The South African government has hinted that it may soon release the central leader of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela. Mandela has been in prison for more than 25 years, and the campaign to free him has been backed by individuals and organizations internationally, as well as by some governments.

As a result, the number of orders for the collection of speeches and writings by Mandela in Pathfinder's *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life* has risen in recent weeks. This volume was put together by the London-based International Defence and Aid for Southern Africa.

Through the struggles of the 1940s and '50s, adoption of the Freedom Charter, repression by the apartheid regime, launching of the armed struggle, and the treason trials of leaders of the mass movement in the 1960s, Mandela's writings document each stage of the fight from the point of view of a leader of the struggle.

The book also contains several statements Mandela released from prison over the last 20 years, including "I Am Not Prepared to Sell the Birthright of the People to Be Free." This statement rejected the regime's offer in 1985 to release him if he "unconditionally rejected violence as a political weapon."

The Pathfinder fund drive in Canada surpassed the \$9,500 goal by \$1,800. The funds, raised from November 15 to December 31, will mostly go to cover the costs of setting up two new Pathfinder bookstores in the country — one in Montréal and the other in Vancouver.

Boilermakers strike against firings for refusing drug test

BY K.C. ELLIS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Protesting the firing of 18 workers for refusing to take drug tests, union and nonunion production workers struck Northwest Pipe & Casing Co. here last month.

The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local 72, which represents the 130 workers at the plant, has been under attack since 1985 when the company filed for bankruptcy and threatened to close down. The employer demanded the workers give up 25 percent of their wages and some of their medical benefits and holidays. Subsequently, the company was able to enforce an open-shop contract.

Despite its increased profits during this time, Northwest Pipe has continued in its attempts to drive out the union. The union views the drug-testing policy imposed in December as an example of the company's constant efforts to undermine the right of the union to negotiate job security, workers' rights, and working conditions.

While the strike was provoked by the drug-testing incident, Robert Plympton, business agent for Local 72, says he thinks an-

FLORIDA

Miami

Defend Mark Curtis! Banquet and rally. Speakers: Penny Gardner, president Dade County National Organization for Women; Chris Kirchner, teacher at Jackson High School; Roland Rolle, president A. Philip Randolph Institute; representative of Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 3. Banquet, 6 p.m.; rally, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Sponsor: Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

What Is Behind the Soviet Crackdown in Azerbaijan? Speaker to be announced. Sat., Feb. 3. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

The Pittston Coal Strike: A firsthand report. Speaker: Jeff Powers, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers Local 174, just back from tour of Virginia coalfields. Sun., Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA

Austin

The Fight Against Antilabor Disruption: The Case of the Workers League. Speakers: Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party; Henry Zamarrón, member United Auto Workers Local 2125. Sun., Feb. 4, 7 p.m. 407½ N Main St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

The New Stage in the Eastern and Pittston Strikes: Solidarity Can Bring Victory. Panel of strike leaders. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Haiti: Against the State of Siege! Speakers: Ben Dupuy, editor *Haiti Progrès*; Robert Dees, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Itself — Nothing to Fear. Showing of video on the Pathfinder Mural produced by Mary Virginia Brooks and Kate O'Mara. Also the *Pathfinder Mural Video*. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 464 Bergen. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (718) 398-6983.

Manhattan

What's Behind the Soviet Crackdown in Azerbaijan. Speakers: Amir Jamali, Socialist Workers Party; Don Rojas, former press secretary to slain Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

During Black History Month...

All programs sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum except where indicated.

ALABAMA

Birmingham

"Eyes on the Prize." Video showing from the first TV series, followed by discussion. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. For more information call (205) 323-3079. **Behind the Selma School Boycott: The Fight for Equal Education.** Panel of speakers followed by discussion. Sat., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Black History Month Events of Baltimore Militant Labor Forum. All programs held at Pathfinder Bookstore, 2913 Greenmount Ave at 7:30 p.m., preceded by dinner at 6 p.m. (Feb. 18 event at 4 p.m.) Donations: \$2 each program, \$3 for dinner. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

The Untold Story Behind Glory: A Working-Class History of the Civil War. Speaker: Edwin Fruit, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 846. Sat., Feb. 3.

The Fight Against Racism in the 1990s. Fri., Feb. 9.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

The Victory in Namibia. Speaker: Hafeni Hatutale, Midwest representative of South

West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia. Sat., Feb. 3, 7 p.m. Community Christian Church, 4601 Main. Preceded by 5 p.m. reception at Pathfinder Bookstore, 5534 Troost. Sponsors: American Friends Service Committee; K.C. Anti-apartheid Network; K.C. Black United Front; Militant Labor Forum; others. For more information call (816) 444-7880 or 931-5256.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Black History Month Series. Events held at Pathfinder Bookstore, 2219 E Market St. at 7 p.m. Donations: \$2.

Freedom Struggle in Namibia and South Africa. Panel of speakers and excerpts of Cuban documentary *Cuba and Angola: Response to the South African Escalation*. Sun., Feb. 4.

The Fight for Civil Rights Yesterday and Today: How Working People Smashed Jim Crow. Panel discussion, including representative from Women of Color, N.C. A&T University. Sun., Feb. 11.

OREGON

Portland

Malcolm X: Revolutionary and Internationalist. Film and speaker. Sat., Feb. 17, 7:30. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Events held at Pathfinder Bookstore, 9 E Cheltenham Ave. at 7 p.m. Donations: \$2. For more information call (215) 848-5044. **Blacks in U.S. Wars.** Sat., Feb. 3. **The Civil Rights Movement: What It Was and What It Won.** Sat., Feb. 10. **Malcolm X: Evolution of a Revolutionary.** Sat., Feb. 17. **South Africa: The Defiance Campaign.** Sat., Feb. 24.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

The Fight Against Apartheid in South Africa. Speakers: Dave Salner, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 8319; others. Sat., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Celebrate the 78th Anniversary of the African National Congress of South Africa. Speakers: Lindiwe Mabuza, chief representative of the ANC to the U.S.; Gabu Thugwana, deputy editor of *New Nation*. Cultural presentation. Sat., Feb. 10. Program, 7 p.m.; reception, 9:30–10 p.m. First Congregational Church, 10th and G sts. NW. Sponsors: South African Women's Day Committee, ANC. For more information call (202) 543-9433.

Panama: The Intervention Continues. A political-cultural presentation. Film *The Fifth Frontier*. Report from Panama. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. Casa de las Américas, 104 W 14 St. For more information call (212) 675-2584.

New York City

Beyond the News. Hosted by Don Rojas, former press secretary to slain Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop. Every Wed., 7–7:30 p.m. WBAI 99.5 FM.

OREGON

Portland

El Salvador: Repression and Resistance. Speaker: Pedro Cruz, U.S. representative of Salvadoran trade union federation FENASTRAS, former general secretary of Salvadoran hospital workers union. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 284-2067.

How to Fight Antilabor Disruption Campaigns: The Case of the Workers League. Speaker: Brian Williams, Socialist Workers Party, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 188T. Sat., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 284-2067.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

'One Day Longer Than Frank Lorenzo': The New Stage in the Eastern Strike. Speakers: Frank Planinac, president International Association of Machinists Lodge 1044 and Eastern strike coordinator; others. Sun., Feb. 11, 5 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

Four Classes on In Defense of Socialism.

Based on the book by Fidel Castro. First class Mon., Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Houston

The Fight Against Police Brutality. Speakers: Ray Hill, producer "Prisoner Program," Radio KPFT; others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Defend Indian Treaty Rights! Panel of activists in recent protests against the National Coalition on Federal Indian Policy, an organization pushing for the breaking of Indian treaties. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$4. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Defend the Pathfinder Mural and Artistic Freedom. Speaker: Sam Manuel, former director Pathfinder Mural Project. Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

BRITAIN

Cardiff

The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis. Fri., Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 0222-484677.

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Heart-breaking — According to Exxon, its alleged cleanup of the Alaska oil spill cost an asserted \$1.38 billion, shrinking its 1989



Harry Ring

profits down to a meager \$3.8 billion.

Most likely story of 1989 — "In this city's poorest neighborhoods, artillery shells and machine-gun fire

leveled the homes of the poorest inhabitants and destroyed the meager possessions of thousands, but it lifted their spirits and gave them hope." — The *Boston Globe*, the day after the U.S. invasion of Panama.

Israel, beacon of progress — Mohammed Shahada, an Israeli Palestinian, was on a TV dating game show where a single woman interviews three hidden bachelors and chooses one for a date. Thinking he couldn't win as an Arab, Shahada gave his name as Wolfson. When this came out he was arrested on charges of impersonating a Jew.

Every little bit helps — It's not the bundle he brought back from

Japan, but Ron will pocket \$60,000 for a rap at the *Financial World* magazine's annual dinner.

Safety net — A study of the sham of Britain's social fund tells of a woman nine months pregnant and sleeping on the floor. The fund denied her a loan to buy a bed because her health was not at risk. An elderly couple, one of whom is disabled, was denied a loan to replace a broken stove. They were told they could eat out.

Progress report — In 1992 Wellington, Florida, will phase out its system of electing the board of supervisors on the basis of one vote per acre of property. They're going

to try out the system of one person, one vote.

The free-market way — For the first time, *Playboy* is on East Berlin newsstands. The issue features the first East German woman to pose nude for the mag. Meanwhile, the Hungarian Socialist (previously Communist) Party hired Frank Mankiewicz, adviser to U.S. capitalist politicians, to promote its candidates for parliament.

Touch and go — Employees at New York's Chemical Bank leaked word that 300 people in the consumer division will be fired in a move to improve profits by cutting costs. And, perhaps, to help finance

Chemical's ad campaign featuring the slogan, "The Human Touch."

Goofy Gucci — With a keen nose for bargains, the *New York Times* salutes Gucci's "less expensive" outlet shop. Admittedly "not the prestige items sold in the Fifth Avenue boutique, but there are fun items." Like, you can walk out laughing with a cashmere polo shirt, originally \$925, now \$325.

But everything's fine — In the year's first sale of a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, the tab was \$390,000. The record price for a seat, \$1.15 million, was obtained Sept. 21, 1987 — 28 days before the crash.

W. Virginia miners battle to stop union-busting

Continued from front page

back. Holbrook recruited scabs for the coal boss in 1984-85 when the UMWA struck the company's mines throughout southern West Virginia and Kentucky.

Judge sends in federal marshals

In Dehue unionists and nearby residents began setting up daily picket lines last summer to keep the nonunion Rum Creek tippie from receiving coal deliveries.

Massey responded with violence. On August 15 two women on the picket line were hit by a company truck. Four days later, Roy Blankenship, vice-president of a UMWA local on strike at one of the Logan County Pittston mines, was shot in the shoulder when Holbrook's men opened fire on union pickets at Pittston's Elkay mine up the road from the prep plant. The Elkay picket shack was shot up and then destroyed with an end loader.

Despite these violent assaults on the strikers, and sweeping antipicketing court injunctions obtained by Massey, the union picket lines held firm.

In December Massey went into court and got U.S. District Judge Dennis Knapp to forbid pickets from blocking the way into the prep plant. The company and the big-business media stepped up an already shrill campaign to smear the strikers as violent and out of control.

The company called for U.S. federal marshals to be sent into Dehue to enforce Knapp's injunctions. Knapp obliged, and on January 22 federal marshals arrived at the Rum Creek prep plant.

Scabs plow into strikers

Under the guard of the marshals, Massey had the bridge to the plant cleared of union barricades built of logs, brush, and old appliances. Workers replaced this with their cars and trucks. The scab coal haulers plowed ahead, repeatedly ramming into the strikers' vehicles and smashing them up. Two women sitting in one of the trucks were injured.

A new barricade was built by strikers overnight, but the scab trucks bulldozed their way through the following day. State police on the scene, who did nothing to stop the trucks, arrested UMWA officers Howard Green and

Bernard Evans for violating Knapp's injunction. They were released on \$10,000 bail.

On January 24 hundreds of strikers and supporters returned to the prep plant. This included strikers from coal companies throughout the area and retirees, women, and youths from the Dehue hollow.

Cars were again parked on the bridge, but federal marshals ordered tow trucks to haul them away. No tow truck driver from the area would assist the marshals, who eventually found drivers from 100 miles away to move the strikers' cars. Even then the strikers convinced them not to take the cars out of town.

With no vehicles on the bridge the pickets blocked the roadway themselves when coal trucks arrived. They tried to stop the trucks by jumping on top of them, but the scabs refused to slow down. The lead driver fired a shot out his window. Federal and state police, who later claimed they were on the bridge protecting pickets, stood away from the confrontation. When the trucks were inside the plant they moved onto the bridge and forced the pickets to disperse.

Pickets clubbed, arrested

The pickets resisted leaving and shouted at the police. Cora Ballard, a well-known strike activist, was clubbed by a marshal and fell, hitting her head on a rock. She was later taken to Logan General Hospital with a concussion. (Ballard had helped save the lives of two scabs last fall when their van went off the road into the flooded Rum Creek. She jumped into the water to get them, risking her own life.)

When the trucks returned, pickets again blocked the bridge and, although they couldn't stop the trucks, an angry confrontation with the marshals followed. Marshals responded by arresting UMWA member Richard Hendricks for violating a court order limiting pickets to 15. Already outraged by the attacks by marshals and scab drivers, pickets gathered around Hendricks to make sure he wasn't being hurt by the cops. They demanded to know why he was being arrested.

When retired miner William Lowe protested Hendricks' arrest, he was arrested himself by a marshal. State troopers with drawn clubs attempted to surround the marshals and the two arrested pickets.

Although Lowe said he was willing to walk without resistance, one marshal kept trying to twist his arm behind his back. "What did I do? I didn't do anything!" Lowe said. Pickets remained, determined to protect Hendricks and Lowe. They repeatedly told the marshals not to hurt the pickets, but the marshals and troopers continued to drive the crowd back by force.

Cecelia Szucs, a strike supporter and wife of a miner who brings food to the picket lines three times a week, said she was "bodily slammed to the ground" after being rammed in the chest by a marshal and would have fallen but for the people surrounding her.

Bethel Purkey, a UMWA local president in the area, worked his way into the crowd. "Our people can walk," he said, "They don't have to abuse them." Lowe was then arrested and thrown into the van with Hendricks. A third miner, Larry Ellison, was later taken off the picket line and charged with assaulting a marshal along with Lowe.

Three more coal trucks entered and left the tippie.

On the next day, January 25, the number

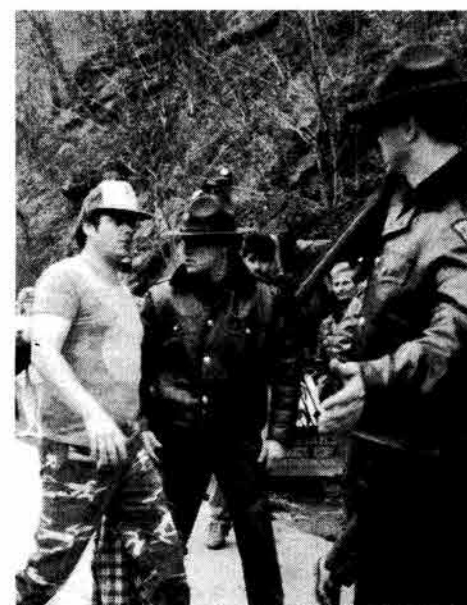
of federal marshals in Dehue tripled to 15. But miners didn't try to stop the trucks, instead taking a day off to discuss what to do next. Massey continued to run coal into the plant, but one miner said he had no idea how Massey would get the processed coal out since the railroad already refused to pick it up.

On January 26 union miners from throughout District 17 and District 29 in West Virginia responded to a UMWA mobilization and converged upon Dehue. Some 1,000 miners joined Dehue pickets and marched to Massey's prep plant. The road was completely blocked and no attempt was made to run coal.

"We're going to win this battle," said UMWA member Roger Lawson. "If it takes more people, we'll get more. It takes solidarity to stop the flow of coal. We want to get all union men back to work."

UMWA District 17 President Bob Phalen explained that people get tired of seeing the abuse and mistreatment day after day of union members while the company and its thugs are held unaccountable for their actions. "Whenever injustice is afflicted on our brothers and sisters we are going to eliminate it," he said.

After the January 26 mobilization ended and miners left Dehue, Massey began running coal again on January 29. Pickets were advised to obey the injunctions and scabs



Militant/Cecelia Moriarity
Miner under arrest by federal marshal and state police.

began running the prep plant.

A discussion is going on among miners and supporters in Dehue as to what is needed to stop Massey. A layer of miners feel that only by mobilizing other miners, unionists, and supporters, as was done on the 26th, can Massey be stopped.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 25¢

Feb. 8, 1980

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Government officials have mounted a campaign to sabotage the upcoming February 2 anti-Klan march here. Their offensive is aimed at creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation around the civil rights demonstration.

The action will protest the murder of five anti-Klan activists, members of the Communist Workers Party, on a November 3 demonstration here. The police, who had given the racist killers the march plan, disappeared from the scene shortly before the Klansmen and Nazis opened fire.

Police intimidation tactics were successful in forcing cancellation of one anti-Klan demonstration scheduled last November to protest the killings. But they have not been able to prevent the February 2 march from gaining wide support. Hundreds have turned out to hear Rev. Ben Chavis who is touring the state to rally support.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Feb. 8, 1965

Militant staff writer Harry Ring interviewed Malcolm X on WBAI-FM, a New York radio station, Jan. 28, 1965. Below are excerpts from two answers.

Malcolm X. I have been traveling and my scope has broadened. For one thing, I believe in the religion of Islam which automatically teaches us the brotherhood of man. Whereas,

as a follower of Elijah Muhammad, I said that I believed in the religion of Islam but his teaching or version of it was not based upon the brotherhood of man. It was against people just on the basis of their color.

But my beliefs now are 100 percent against racism and against segregation in any form, and I also believe that in the religion of Islam, as I now understand it, that we don't judge a person by the color of his skin, but, rather, by his behavior, by his deeds.

* * *

It's a problem anytime the United States can come up with so many alibis not to get involved in Mississippi and to get involved in the Congo and involved in Asia and in South Vietnam. Why that, right there, should show our people that the government is incapable of taking the kind of action necessary to solve the problem of black people in this country. But at the same time she has her nose stuck into the problems of others everywhere else.

We see where the problem of Vietnam is the problem of the oppressed and the oppressor. The problem in the Congo is the problem of the oppressed and the oppressor. The problem in Mississippi and Alabama and New York is the problem of the oppressed and the oppressor.

The oppressed people all over the world have the same problems and it is only now that they're becoming sufficiently sophisticated to see that all they have to do to get the oppressor off their back is to unite and realize that it is one problem — that our problems are inseparable. And then our action will be inseparable. Our action will be one of unity and in the unity of oppressed people is actually the strength, and the best strength, of the oppressed people.

FSLN focuses on foes' U.S. ties in Nicaragua elections

Continued from Page 8

pied by workers accusing the owners of fraud and decapitalization gave rise to expropriations," Carrión told the FSLN's *Barricada*. "In other cases it was considered necessary to buy property if the owners weren't exploiting it adequately."

The result, he continued, is a jumble of state property that "is not necessarily coherent." In some cases continued government ownership is "difficult to justify."

Asked if this implies more steps toward "privatization," Carrión replied, "The word 'privatization' has a pretty strong political and ideological connotation everywhere, so it wouldn't be the happiest term for the search we are soon going to undertake."

Nonetheless, he repeated, "I do not think the state should continue administering everything that it is responsible for right now."

Protest threats against Cuba

The attack with machine-gun and cannon fire by the U.S. Coast Guard on a Cuban merchant vessel, after attempting to board and search it, is a serious aggression against Cuba. Despite several protests from the Cuban government, Washington ordered the assault in international waters "with the clear intention of sinking" the ship, a report by the official Cuban news agency said.

A broad public campaign to defend Cuba is needed now to protest this further escalation of provocations and attacks against the Caribbean country by Washington. The protests must also counter recent right-wing mobilizations in the United States in support of this anti-Cuba drive.

Such a campaign opposing U.S. government moves can be effective. It would link up with the mobilizations of the Cuban people who have repeatedly shown their determination to remain a sovereign, free, and socialist country refusing to buckle under Washington's dictates.

The U.S. government and right-wingers — like the 1,000 counterrevolutionary Cubans who protested outside the Cuban UN mission last week — feel some wind in their sails since the invasion and occupation of Panama in December.

Despite widespread condemnation of its action by Latin American governments, Washington is emboldened by the success of the invasion and the blows it has dealt to working people in Panama and in the region. It has pressed ahead in the region to assert its military, economic, and political domination.

Much of this offensive has centered on Cuba.

Since the invasion of Panama, stepped-up aggression against Cuba has included the following acts:

- The Cuban embassy in Panama City has been surrounded by U.S. troops and Cuban diplomatic personnel have been detained, harassed, and physically threatened.
- The arrest in Panama and jailing in Miami of Gen. Manuel Noriega has been used to mount a campaign slan-

dering Cuba and Cuban President Fidel Castro with the charge that they play a major role in the flow of drugs into the United States. The *Wall Street Journal* editorially suggested the shooting down of Cuban air force planes which it alleges are protecting drug traffickers.

- An aircraft carrier and a nuclear-powered cruiser were stationed off Cuba's territorial waters in January.
- Four Cuban soldiers were murdered in Angola by the U.S.-backed UNITA terrorists.
- Counterrevolutionary Cubans and other right-wing forces are organizing anti-Cuba demonstrations in several U.S. cities, calling for the overthrow of the Cuban government.

By mounting an effort protesting these attacks and responding to the anti-Cuba propaganda campaign, defenders of Cuba will also be extending their solidarity to fighters all over the world.

Washington focuses its fire on Havana because the Cuban people and their government defend countries oppressed and exploited by imperialism; extend humanitarian and material aid to countries around the world; and unstintingly champion the struggles of workers and farmers for liberation.

The Cuban revolution stands as an example to millions worldwide as the way to throw off the ravages capitalism and imperialism have visited on working people internationally.

This is why Washington expends so much effort in pressuring, threatening, and attempting to intimidate the Cuban people.

It is also why all supporters of the Cuban revolution and those who reject Washington's arrogant claims to Cuban soil and sovereignty should redouble their efforts, demanding that the U.S. government keep its hands off Cuba and halt its anti-Cuba drive, and countering the right-wing demonstrations in support of Washington's campaign.

Celebrate Black History Month

We not only see the importance of having an understanding of things local and things national, but we see today the importance of having an understanding of things international, and where our people, the Afro-Americans in this country, fit into that scheme of things, where things international are concerned. . . .

But when you find a person who has a knowledge of things of the world today, he realizes that what happens in South Vietnam can affect him if he's living on St. Nicholas Avenue, or what's happening in the Congo affected his situation on 8th Avenue or 7th Avenue or Lenox Avenue. . . .

We don't think of ourselves as a minority, because we don't think of ourselves just within the context of the American stage or the American scene, in which we would be a minority. We think of things worldly, or as the world is; we think of our part in the world, and we look upon ourselves not as a dark minority on the white American stage, but rather we look upon ourselves as a part of the dark majority who now prevail on the world stage. And when you think like this, . . . you approach your problem as if odds are on your side rather than odds are against you.

— From a Jan. 24, 1965, speech reprinted in *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, Pathfinder Press.

These excerpts from a speech by the revolutionary leader Malcolm X given in New York City point to why workers, farmers, students, and others should utilize February — Black History Month — to learn more about the Black struggle — and its role as part of the fight of working people worldwide for emancipation.

Black History Month began in 1926 as Negro History Week. Initiated by Carter G. Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., it has become a month when lectures, programs, classes, and articles, as well as the promotion of books, are devoted to aspects of Black history.

Raised in a large farm family, and a coal miner for a time, Woodson wrote a number of books, including *Mis-Education of the Negro*.

"If a race has no history, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world," Woodson wrote, "and it stands in danger of being exterminated." Woodson launched the educational week as a way to combat the extensive prejudices against Blacks, as well as to counter the lack of knowledge and self-confidence of Blacks.

But, Malcolm noted that over the years Negro History Week itself evolved into something different. It became a time, he said, when "they give us the impression . . . that we were cotton pickers all of our lives. Cotton pickers, orange growers, mummies and uncles for the white man in this country — this is our history when you talk in terms of Negro History Week."

In his 1965 speech Malcolm documents some of the historic achievements and contributions of Blacks in culture, science, warfare, and in struggle.

Following the advances made by the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s and a series of student strikes in the late 1960s, Black history courses were won at many colleges.

It took that powerful movement to reassert and expand on Woodson's initial purpose of Negro History Week. By the mid-1970s so many activities were being planned during Black History Week, as it was called by then, that the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc. officially expanded the week to a month.

February 1990 marks the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X and the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the sit-in by Black students at the whites-only lunch counter at Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Today, fighting workers, those standing up against racist attacks, and others fighting for social justice can find rich lessons in the battles that make these and other dates historic markers in the fight for Black rights.

This is especially true — and can be more deeply appreciated — in the midst of fights like the Eastern strike and miners' resistance, which have a momentum that is beginning to affect the thinking of much broader layers of working people. The history of the Black struggle, whether in the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, or elsewhere is a central part of, and cannot be separated from, the struggles by working people as a whole.

Blacks have waged a centuries-long battle against oppression. This is true both in nations under imperialist domination and within countries where Blacks are oppressed because of their skin color.

The lessons of this struggle are an aid to all working people because these fights and revolutionary movements have strengthened and helped unify the working class. Moreover, these movements have produced some of the finest leaders of working people internationally.

It is in gathering, researching, printing, and distributing books and pamphlets containing the speeches, interviews, and writings of these leaders and documenting important battles by Blacks in the United States and internationally, that Pathfinder makes an invaluable contribution to Black History Month.

In the works of Thomas Sankara, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, and others, the voices of revolutionaries speaking to and respected by millions of fighters can be heard, studied, discussed, and emulated.

These voices help give greater confidence to those in the heat of battle today by helping them to see that they are part of the "majority now prevailing on the world stage" and that the "odds are on our side." These works point the road toward the future for everyone.

For the next four weeks the *Militant* will be giving special coverage to this rich historical legacy, focusing on reviews of Pathfinder books, events at Pathfinder bookstores, and Pathfinder's promotional efforts around Black History Month.

The freedom fight on the home front in World War II

BY DOUG JENNESS

In his autobiography Malcolm X described how he got out of the army during World War II. When he received his draft orders in 1943 he pretended he was crazy right up through his physical examination. Finally sent to the psychiatrist's office at the induction center, he whispered in the ear of the doctor, "Daddy-o, now you and me, we're from up North here, so don't you tell nobody. . . . I want to get sent down South. Organize them nigger soldiers, you dig? Steal us some guns, and kill up crackers!"

"That psychiatrist's blue pencil dropped," Malcolm later recalled, "and his professional manner fell off in all direc-

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

tions. He stared at me as if I was a snake's egg hatching, fumbling for his red pencil."

While more ingenious than many, Malcolm was not unusual among a layer of Black youth who didn't want to join Washington's segregated army to fight in a war they sensed was not in their interests.

Patriotism was fueled by government declarations about fighting a war for freedom and democracy. But 13 million Blacks in the United States didn't have much of either one. And one only had to look around to see that Washington was supporting military dictatorships in Latin America and the Caribbean and attempting to suppress colonial revolts throughout the world.

In fact, the U.S. government's role in World War II, as it had been in World War I, was contesting with other imperialist powers for a redivision of the world. The aim was to increase the sources of raw materials, arenas for investment, and spheres of influence for the capitalist ruling families in the United States.

The talk about a war for democracy was designed to hide these reactionary aims. But it also spurred many Blacks to demand some freedom for themselves.

During the war years a fight emerged in which many Blacks refused to permit their demands for equality to take a back seat.

One of the key battlefields was job discrimination in basic industry and government employment. In those days these were areas shut off to most Blacks. The employers' need for workers to keep their plants humming at a time when millions of young workers were being drafted created an opening to break through some of the discriminatory barriers.

In 1941, a few months after the draft law was adopted, a march on Washington was called by A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union to demand fair employment.

The March on Washington movement and a multitude of other struggles received momentum from the advances made by the labor movement as a whole. During the massive upsurge of the 1930s, millions of workers were organized into industrial unions. And for the first time many of the discriminatory barriers against Blacks in the unions were broken down.

Two victories in the spring of 1941 were particularly important in giving Blacks and their supporters in the labor movement more confidence to press their demands. They were the strikes at Ford Motor Co. and Bethlehem Steel that led to union organization for the first time at both companies.

At Bethlehem, Black workers were in the forefront of the strike at the plant in Lackawanna, New York, near Buffalo, which spearheaded the victorious drive to organize the big steel company.

The Ford victory was especially significant because the auto magnate had hired a layer of Black workers and attempted to cultivate them as an antiunion bulwark in the plants. But this effort failed when Blacks, in their great majority, joined whites in the strike and handed Ford a resounding defeat.

The March on Washington, scheduled for July 1941, was canceled when President Franklin Roosevelt issued an executive order barring discrimination in government jobs and plants with military contracts.

Calling off the march undermined the momentum of the struggle. Nonetheless, battles took place in plants all across the country as Blacks fought to use the executive order to get better-paying jobs in industry. Other struggles — sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, freedom rides on segregated buses, fair housing demonstrations, and antilynching protests — also took place.

Another major front in this "war for democracy" at home was the U.S. military, which was as segregated as schools, restaurants, and bus stations in Mississippi. Thousands of Blacks were arrested and court-martialed during the war, either framed-up for violence initiated by racists or for resisting racist abuses.

The *Militant* carried extensive coverage of the struggle for Black rights in World War II, which has been collected and reprinted in the Pathfinder book, *Fighting Racism in World War II*. It's well worth reading today.

Unity proved key to winning union in Kansas City

BY GARY STONELAKE

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The workers at the Armour Foods meat-processing plant here recently showed the bosses that they can't always have their way. In late December we voted 87 to 60 to bring the United Food and Commercial Workers Union into the plant. This victory

UNION TALK

came after several attempts at gaining union recognition, where prounion workers saw the union lose by as little as five and 10 votes.

In 1983 Armour was purchased by the giant food conglomerate ConAgra. The company was soon reorganized as nonunion. Unionized plants were closed down and the next week opened with no union.

This assault on the workers at Armour was part of an overall offensive by the packinghouse companies in an attempt to squeeze more profits out of workers and to drive down the value of our labor. Workers' pay was slashed and the work force drastically cut, while the production line speed was significantly increased. This resulted in more production at less cost to the company.

The whole of the meat-packing industry was restructured along these lines and there was little organized resistance until 1985 when the workers at Geo. A. Hormel & Co. in Austin, Minnesota, decided to fight for their union and their

dignity. The Hormel strike inspired others, and this is when the UFCW began to reorganize unions at Armour's plants.

During the organizing drive at the Kansas City plant — called "low-key" by both the company and the union — the bosses resorted to scare tactics and outright lies to keep the union out. They held private meetings to discourage workers who they thought could be swayed. Supervisors selectively circulated antiunion literature to workers on the line. And they highlighted portions of other Armour union contracts, completely taken out of context, hoping to give the impression that "you don't need a third party coming in here."

Finally, on the day before the election John Miller, president of Armour Foods, arrived just in time to advise the workers not to "take a chance" with the union. With 80 percent of the plant signed up on union authorization cards, the prounion workers and the union itself were confident of a victory. In addition to the number of signers, we had learned some important lessons from the previous, unsuccessful attempts to organize. This was decisive.

Perhaps the most significant lesson was overcoming divisions within our ranks. In the past the company had successfully manipulated the language and cultural differences between Korean-born workers and English-speaking workers at the plant.

This time, however, English-speaking workers attempted to win their Korean coworkers to the organizing drive. Many came over to the union drive and some became leaders of it.

Following the victorious vote for the union, many work-

ers at the plant are talking about continuing to organize and sign up those who voted no. There's also confidence that the workers who had signed cards, but then voted no, can be won to the union.

The need for unity and worker solidarity has become even more pressing following the election. The company has conducted a systematic campaign of harassment and intimidation, testing the new union. Two workers were fired, including an outspoken union activist, and two were suspended.

These attacks, coming one week after the union victory, were viewed as an attempt to undermine the union's confidence that it could defend its victory. They sparked widespread anger. UFCW organizers received many phone calls about what could be done, and workers constantly confronted supervisors.

As a result, three of the jobs have been won back. The worker still out has been a consistent union fighter for the six years she has worked at Armour. Many people see this firing as an unfair labor practice by the company, and a petition in her defense is being circulated throughout the plant.

As the fight continues, the slogan "United we stand, divided we fall," has taken on more meaning at Armour Kansas City.

Gary Stonelake was a member of the UFCW organizing committee at Armour Kansas City.

LETTERS

Argentina protest

The article on Brazil by Selva Nebbia in the January 26 *Militant* includes very useful information on the latest economic blows suffered by working people in Argentina. Just six weeks ago, I was able to see firsthand the effects of these blows.

During my two-week stay, the exchange rate for the austral went from 1,000 per \$1 to 3,800. Banks and other financial institutions closed for a week to "reorganize" and to give the government of President Carlos Menem time to put together a "workable" economic policy.

The uncertainty and fear generated by this latest episode of economic chaos manifested itself with lines outside banks extending for many blocks and widespread rumors that if the "problem" wasn't solved soon, the military would take power.

On December 22 some 10,000 people marched on the U.S. embassy in Buenos Aires demanding that the United States get out of Panama. Among the many banners and placards in the demonstration, one sign captured the mood about the economic crisis. It read, "U.S. out of Panama — and our economy!"

W. Jungers
Los Angeles, California

Best paper

I am interested in getting the *Militant*. I saw your article regarding the way the United States attacked and killed the innocent people of Panama. That's something I didn't know, something the U.S. capitalist media didn't even talk about.

That is how I came to the conclusion that the *Militant* is the best newspaper in our country.

A prisoner
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Racist frame-up

Darryl Hunt, a 24-year-old Black worker from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, is free on bail after spending more than five years in jail. He is the victim of a racist frame-up. He was convicted of the 1984 rape and murder of a young white woman, Deborah Sykes. While in jail, he was also framed and convicted for the 1983 slaying of Arthur Wilson.

Last May the state supreme court overturned the conviction in the Sykes murder because of improperly used hearsay evidence, particularly that provided by Hunt's then 14-year-old girlfriend who has since recanted her testimony. The Wilson murder conviction was overturned

by an appeals court because of the trial judge's errors in instructing the jury.

The county district attorney's office plans to retry Hunt in the Wilson murder and is reinvestigating the Sykes murder, holding open the option of retrying Hunt.

Hunt's 1985 trial and conviction in the Sykes case provoked a cry of protest in the Black community in Winston-Salem. Hundreds participated in marches and rallies. The frame-up began to unravel as the support for Hunt mounted.

Hunt reaffirmed his innocence at a news conference after his release.

Despite death threats against members of his defense committee since his release, Hunt's supporters pledged to continue the fight until he is cleared of all charges.

Mike Fitzsimmons
Greensboro, North Carolina

Palestine coverage

Enclosed is my check for a renewal subscription.

Thanks to the *Militant* and Harry Ring for keeping readers of the paper apprised of the foulness that still goes on in Palestine. Since before the United States' fearless invasion of Panama, there has been no word on the struggle of the Palestinians — at least not in the *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*. The *Star* does occasionally run some little snicket back where most readers would not find it unless they were looking for it.

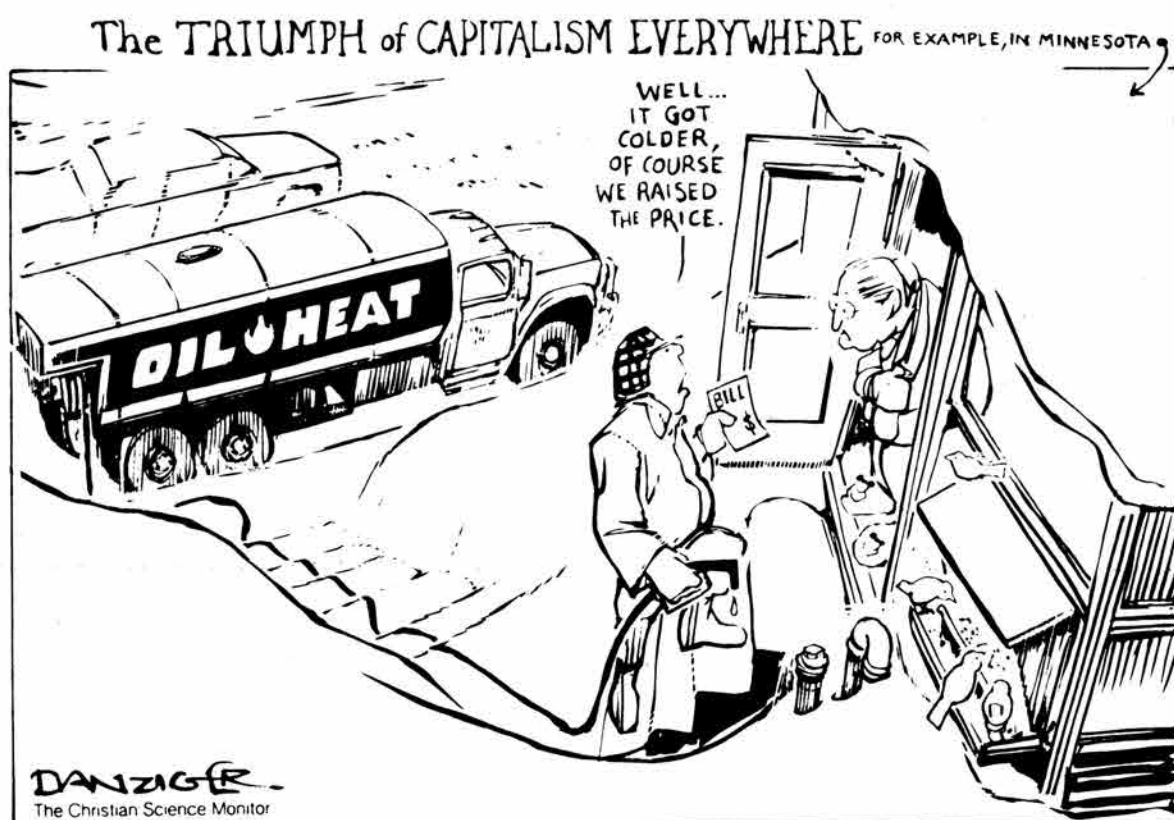
Patricia Maynard
Minneapolis, Minnesota

John Brown's raid

I enjoyed the article about Eva Hamlin Miller and her painting of John Brown on the Pathfinder Mural. However, I wanted to point out two misconceptions repeated in most accounts of the 1859 raid at Harper's Ferry that are set straight by W.E.B. DuBois in his biography of Brown.

The number of antislavery volunteers who followed Brown into battle is usually put at 20, but was in fact closer to 50. News dispatches and later histories chose to ignore the Black slaves among Brown's guerrilla force. The lower figure squared better, then and later, with a portrayal of Blacks as the passive objects of white crusaders.

It is also taken for granted almost universally that the raiders aimed to spark a slave insurrection. In fact, the object of the raid was a well-stocked federal arsenal at the foot of the Appalachian mountains. Had they succeeded, the abolitionists planned to withdraw into the hills



and, from their strongholds, mount raids on plantations as they had done before in Missouri.

Southern shrieks of "Insurrection!" were meant to fan white fears. The uprising's "failure" was used as proof that Blacks were content on the plantation and that John Brown was a lunatic.

But the slaveowners didn't hang the abolitionist heroes for being crazy. As DuBois pointed out, "The failure of the Harper's Ferry raid does not prove it a blunder from the start."

Steve Marshall
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Malcolm X's death

Malcolm X's death had grave consequences and may have frustrated Black political opportunities in America. His assassination lamed New York Blacks in the political world for more than 20 years.

On the day of his death he was ready to launch a political strategy that would have put Blacks in chief administrative positions around 1967 or 1968. The Dixiecrats used a similar strategy in 1948 by siphoning off enough votes to deny either major party the power to take office, but it didn't work because they were only Democrats acting like a separate entity.

But Malcolm X concocted an independent party plan. Unfortunately it never got off the ground. It would have carried much pull.

The new book edited by Bruce Perry [*Malcolm X: The Last*

Speeches, Pathfinder, 1989] will most definitely become a controversial topic to students on Malcolm X and his revolutionary concepts because it hints at this question. It's a book many have long waited for.

If anyone were to write a dissertation on why it took New York so long to elect a Black mayor, I recommend they take into account that the captain of the ship was eliminated Feb. 21, 1965.

Eric Penn
Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania

Prisoner fund

I wish to extend my gratitude to the Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund for allowing those incarcerated to receive your newspaper.

Although I am the only woman here at the Albion Correctional Facility that I know of who receives the paper, it is well-read by many of the other inmates. This allows for prisoners elsewhere to receive subscriptions.

Thanks on behalf of myself and many others for keeping us informed on what's really happening in the world.

A prisoner
Albion, New York

Cointelpro

I would like to receive your newspaper. I worked with your group in Indianapolis when there was a Pathfinder bookstore in the city. As a Black activist, I was involved with the FBI Cointelpro operation and recently became aware that the *Mil-*

itant was one of the first to expose this illegal program. Is it possible for me to receive those back copies? I already have the book *FBI on Trial*.

Sad to hear of the death of constitutional rights lawyer Leonard Boudin. What a loss!

A prisoner
Westville, Indiana

Editor's note: The book *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* published by Pathfinder is an in-depth look at the 1960s and '70s covert government program. It contains material revealed in the Socialist Workers Party suit against FBI spying and harassment, much of which first appeared in the *Militant*. It is available for \$8.95. The Pathfinder book *FBI on Trial* is \$9.95. Both can be gotten at bookstores listed on page 12.

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

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.

'Organize more support for Cuba'

Cuban diplomat Arbesú addresses tribute to José Martí

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — Washington's increased hostility to Cuba is a challenge to supporters of the revolution to "organize more public solidarity in defense of Cuba," explained José Antonio Arbesú. Arbesú is the chief of the Cuban Interests Section, which represents the Cuban government in the United States. He was addressing the 150 people who attended a January 26 celebration at Casa de las Américas here marking the 137 anniversary

of the birth of Cuban national hero José Martí.

Two days later 100 supporters of the Cuban revolution gathered at the Central Park South statue of Martí to pay tribute to the Cuban independence leader, who was killed in 1898.

Over the past month the weekly protests by right-wing Cuban exiles at Cuba's United Nations mission have grown larger and more aggressive. On January 28, hours after the Central Park event, 1,000 counterrevolutionary Cubans massed in a two-block-long

picket line in front of the Cuban mission, which is in midtown Manhattan.

The chanting throng included students and youth, along with families. A string of men and women in their 30s and 40s with bull-horns led the crowd in chanting slogans against the Cuban revolution. Many came from northern New Jersey's large Cuban community.

Some placards at the picket line alluded to developments in Eastern Europe claiming "Castro, you're next." Many others demanded a "plebiscite" on the island to oust the government. Right-wing "José Martí events" were held in Newark, Passaic, Elizabeth, and Union City, New Jersey.

Referring to these weekly protests, Arbesú said, the reactionaries, spurred by the "triumphalist" propaganda of the Bush administration, want "to conquer the streets of this city."

They must be shown by Cuba's partisans, Arbesú added, that "the streets are ours."

"There is no reason for any optimism about a favorable change in Cuba-U.S. relations," explained Arbesú.

The dispatch of U.S. warships to Colombia and the presence of a U.S. aircraft carrier near Cuban waters represent a clear warning of new dangers for the hemisphere, Arbesú said.

The Cuban diplomat cited the murder of four Cuban soldiers in Angola by the U.S.-financed UNITA mercenaries as a particular element of heightened tension between Washington and Havana. Following the murders, the Cuban and Angolan governments temporarily suspended the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the African country.

TV Martí

Should Washington follow through on plans to activate TV Martí for broadcast into Cuba, Arbesú said, reiterating his government's stance, it will face an "energetic response" in protest of such a "violation of Cuban sovereignty and international law."

Arbesú suggested the misnamed TV Martí, should be titled "TV Narciso López," after the early 20th century Cuban who favored Washington's annexation of the island. "José Martí was the first Latin American to clearly articulate that imperialism was our enemy," Arbesú said.

Martí's antimperialist legacy was the theme of the Central Park event organized by partisans of the Cuban revolution on the occasion of the anniversary of his birth.

"The best homage to José Martí," said Víctor Toro from the Coordinadora Latino-



Militant/Margrethe Siem
Some 100 supporters of the Cuban revolution gathered in New York January 28 at the Central Park monument to José Martí, leader of the 19th century Cuban struggle for independence.

americana, one of the sponsors of the action, "is to struggle in defense of Cuba."

Marshall Garcia, executive vice-president of Local 1199 of the hospital workers told the gathering, "On behalf of the working people not only here but around the world, we pay tribute to a great man, one of the great humanists and spokesmen for all of mankind."

Among the other speakers were representatives from Casa de las Américas, an organization of Cubans in the United States who support anti-imperialist struggles; Comité Pedro Albizu Campos; and the Socialist Workers Party.

U.S. Coast Guard fires on Cuban cargo ship

BY SELVA NEBBIA

On January 31 the U.S. Coast Guard, authorized by the State Department, opened fire in international waters on a Cuban cargo vessel. The Coast Guard claimed the attack was part of its law enforcement program to stop vessels suspected of carrying drugs.

The U.S. ship *Chincoteague* fired 300 rounds from an M-60 machine gun and 130 rounds of 20-mm cannon fire against the *Hermann*, a Cuban-chartered freighter staffed by a Cuban crew of 11. The freighter was on its regular run from the port of Moa in Cuba to Tampico, Mexico, carrying a load of chrome.

U.S. government officials said they obtained permission from officials of the recently installed Panamanian government to search the Panamanian-registered charter. But when they asked to board the ship, the captain refused to allow the Coast Guard to search the vessel.

"Coast Guard spokesmen in New Orleans said they had no information that the vessel, the *Hermann*, was carrying drugs," according to a report in the February 1 *Washington Post*.

Two hours before the attack, the Cuban government informed Washington that the freighter was under Cuban jurisdiction and the Cuban captain was under orders to resist boarding. Authorized by the U.S. State Department, the captain of the *Chincoteague* gave the order to open fire on the *Hermann* in the early hours of the morning.

In a telephone interview on February 1 Ariel Ricardo, the press attaché at the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., explained, "We have sent the U.S. State Department an energetic protest over this incident."

"We consider it a violation of international norms and law, and an act of aggression and provocation against our country," said Ricardo. "Moreover, we do not recognize the U.S. has any right to consider itself the po-

liceman of the Caribbean.

"On various occasions, the Cuban government has proposed to the United States to establish cooperation between the two countries with respect to drug trafficking," said the Cuban diplomat. "The U.S. administration has refused this offer. If such cooperation had existed, this type of incident, that can have very serious consequences, could be avoided."

Although hit at least twice, the *Hermann* was able to steam into Mexican territorial waters to Tampico.

The attack on the *Hermann* is the latest and most serious of Washington's acts of provocation against Cuba. Emboldened by its invasion of Panama, and with 20,000 U.S. troops still occupying that country, the Bush administration has stepped up its military threats and provocations.

On January 14 the Cuban ambassador to Panama, Lázaro Mora, and three other Cuban diplomats were detained for one and a half hours by U.S. soldiers at a roadblock across from the Cuban embassy in Panama City. The reason given was that the Cubans had refused to let the soldiers search their car. This was the third such incident targeting the ambassador since the December 20 invasion.

Also on January 14, some 70 supporters of the U.S. occupation forces staged a demonstration in front of the Cuban ambassador's residence in Panama and painted anti-Cuban slogans on the wall. The demonstrators threw rocks and other objects over the wall that encircles the residence. They used megaphones to abuse Panamanian refugees inside and the Cuban diplomats.

BY SELVA NEBBIA

"Panama today is a police state, a prison," Esmeralda Brown told the 75 people gathered for a "Speak Out/Teach-In About the U.S. Occupation of Panama" in St. Louis, Missouri, January 27.

Brown, a Panamanian activist in New York who has been involved in organizing protests against the U.S. invasion, continued, "My country is occupied by a foreign force."

"We should demand the U.S. give an accurate count of the Panamanian dead," Brown said. "They massacred my people. My reports are 5,000 dead. Yet the media here only shows the wealthy community that supported the invasion, not the poor who resisted it, some of whom died."

"The issue is not drugs," explained Brown. "The U.S. wants to maintain its control of the canal with a compliant government in Panama."

Brown concluded her remarks by urging those present to become involved in protests against the U.S. occupation of her country. "This is important for all of Latin America," she said. "Is Nicaragua next? Is El Salvador next? Is Cuba next?" Brown noted that Wash-

"The United States wants to maintain its control of the canal."

ington has been stepping up its slanders against Cuba.

The meeting, sponsored by a coalition of groups and individuals, heard messages from St. Louis Alderman Ken Jones and solidarity and peace activists.

On January 20 in London some 600 people picketed the U.S. embassy, calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Central America.

Tony Benn, Labour Party member of Parliament, in his speech to the demonstrators referred to the resolution adopted by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party which calls upon the British and U.S. governments to withdraw all forces from Central America and pay compensation for the destruction caused.

The picket marched to the Salvadoran embassy where a wreath was laid in memory of

Héctor Oquellí, a Salvadoran opposition leader recently murdered by a death squad in Guatemala. The demonstration was repeatedly cheered by the mainly immigrant workers from the hotels, restaurants, and shops that lined the route.

There were participants and banners from the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign, the El Salvador Solidarity Committee, the Colombian Solidarity Committee, the Labour Party, the Communist League, and a number of Turkish groups. The Britain-Cuba Resource Centre handed out copies of Cuban President Fidel Castro's speech given after the U.S. invasion.

A week earlier a meeting was organized in London by New International Forums to protest the U.S. invasion of Panama. The speakers included Víctor Amaya, the representative in Britain of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador, and Alan Summers, on behalf of the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign.

Jim Rogers and Kim Kleinman from St. Louis and Joyce Fairchild and Pete Evans from London contributed to this article.

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