

Cuba defends sovereignty as Washington gears up TV war

U.S. hands off Cuba! Stop TV aggression!

Every day I am in danger of giving my life for my country and for my duty—because I am aware of this duty and have the spirit to carry it out—in order to prevent the United States, in time, with the independence of Cuba, from spreading over the West Indies and falling with that added might on the lands of Our America. All I have done to this day and shall do hereafter is to that end.

—Written in 1895 by Cuban national hero José Martí, a leader of Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain.

In an outrageous and provocative attack on the sovereignty of Cuba, the rest of Latin America, and the entire Third World, Wash-

EDITORIAL

ington began illegal broadcasts of "TV Martí" into Cuba on March 27.

The project is the latest in a series of provocations by Washington aimed at creating confrontations with Cuba, whose determination to go forward in constructing a socialist society and defending revolutionary principles stands as an example for the toilers of the entire world. The commitment of Cuba's working people and government to communism sticks in the craw of the U.S. rulers.

On TV Martí broadcasts, Washington's version of the "news" will be padded with rock videos, game shows, reruns of U.S. TV shows, and recycled sports programs. A three-month trial run is now underway at a

Continued on Page 18

Castro denounces TV Martí as 'adventure'

BY SETH GALINSKY

HAVANA, Cuba — Calling the U.S. government's transmission of TV Martí an "adventure," Cuban President Fidel Castro announced at an April 3 press conference, "We are going to defend the sovereignty of our country no matter what the consequences."

Cuba is not fighting just for itself, but for Latin America and the Third World, Castro said. Many governments have condemned the United States because they see the broadcasts as a precedent that could be used against them.

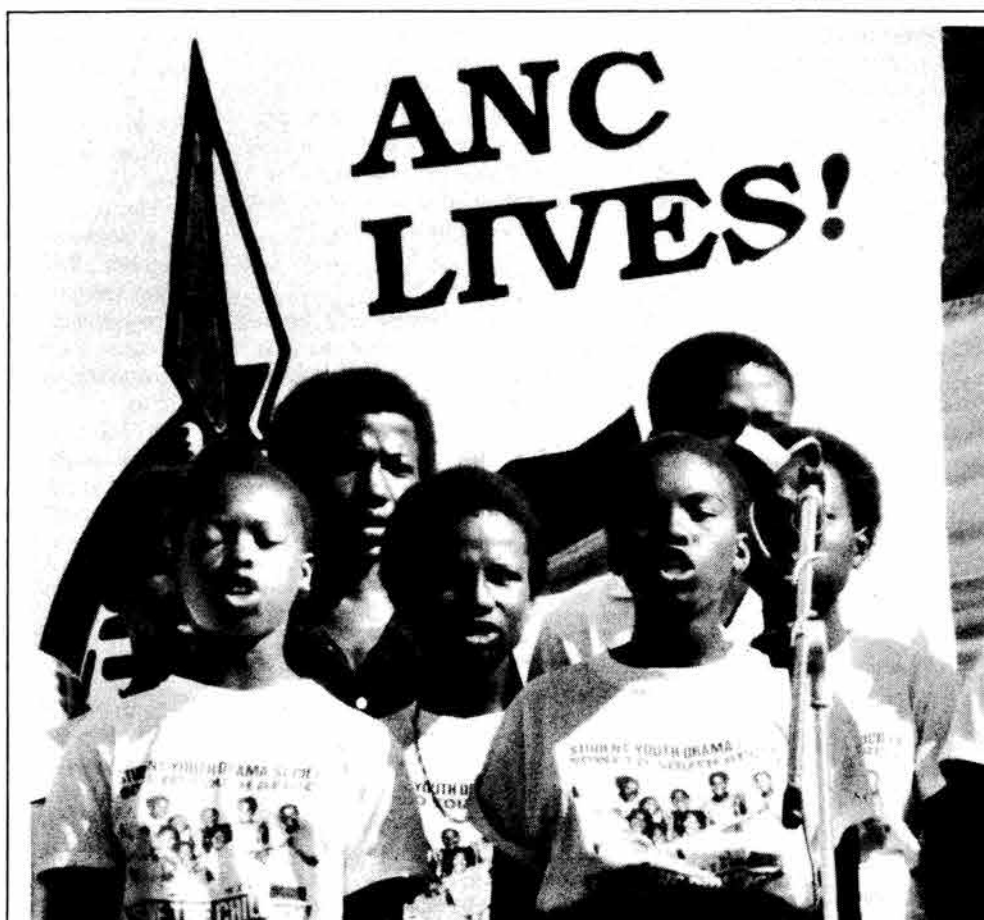
One hundred and ten reporters flew to Havana from many countries to cover the news conference, including 53 U.S. reporters from 22 publications and broadcast stations. They were joined by 126 Cuban and foreign journalists stationed here. The news conference was broadcast on Tele Rebelde the following night.

TV Martí, a U.S.-government financed station whose purpose is to promote opposition to the Cuban revolution, began broadcasting on March 27. It uses the same frequency as Cuban Channel 13.

Reporters were given a tour of the facilities near Havana that have blocked the illegal broadcasts since they began. On April 2 the Cubans succeeded in jamming the transmission after just 35 seconds from its start. Communications minister Manuel Castillo Rabosa calls the attempted broadcasts the U.S. government's electronic Bay of Pigs, recalling the failed U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba in 1961.

When asked by a reporter from the Spanish

Continued on Page 12



Militant/Margrethe Siem

The African National Congress is fighting for a government that guarantees "to every individual, irrespective of color, creed, sex, religion, or class, certain basic human rights," ANC leader Walter Sisulu told a rally in Lenasia, South Africa. See page 10. A youth group (above) provided entertainment at the rally.

ANC calls off gov't talks to protest killings by cops

BY GREG McCARTAN
AND RICH PALSER

BISHO, Ciskei, South Africa — Deputy President of the African National Congress Nelson Mandela announced to a mass rally here that the ANC had suspended talks with the apartheid regime planned for April 11.

Mandela told the 100,000 gathered for the April 1 rally, "Yesterday I spoke with [South African] President de Klerk and told him that the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress has instructed me to tell him" the meeting had been "suspended in protest of the killing of our people in Sebokeng."

Six days earlier, police armed with shotguns, tear-gas guns, and pistols blockaded the march route of 50,000 residents of Sebokeng and Evaton townships. The peaceful demonstration was held to protest high rents and poor housing in the group of townships south of Johannesburg called the Vaal Triangle.

Suddenly and without warning, the police opened fire on the township residents, killing eight and wounding hundreds more.

In his speech, Mandela said he told de

Continued on Page 17

Eastern strikers keep up pressure

BY SUSAN LaMONT

A new stage in strikebound Eastern Airlines' long slide downhill was reached April 3, when its unsecured creditors voted unanimously to reject the airline's latest offer to repay its \$980 million debt at a rate of 25 cents on the dollar. The creditors committee also voted to ask the bankruptcy court overseeing Eastern's financial affairs to appoint a trustee to run the airline until the sale of its Latin American routes is completed, and then to sell the airline.

In addition, the committee recommended that no more funds to keep Eastern operating be released from the escrow account where proceeds from sales of the airline's assets are held, until a trustee is appointed. The company is planning to seek \$80 million more from the fund.

All these proposals must be approved by the bankruptcy court in order to be implemented.

On March 30 Eastern President Philip Bakes, seeking to dissuade the creditors from taking such action, warned that the airline was in a "meltdown" situation. Thousands of travelers had canceled reservations in the past week, he said, and the airline's vendors had

begun to demand payment in cash.

Many of the 8,200 International Association of Machinists (IAM) members who have been on strike at Eastern for 13 months were pleased by the news of Eastern's deepening financial crisis. Since the March 27 announcement by Bakes that the airline expected to lose \$330 million in 1990, reports

about the air carrier's condition have gotten gloomier by the day.

"Now is the time to keep the pressure on," said the IAM's March 28 strike bulletin. "Our strike, the worldwide solidarity of labor, and the widespread support from the conscience of caring people have put Lorenzo on the

Continued on Page 7

Cops attack British poll tax march of 100,000

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — More than 100,000 people marched through central London March 31 to protest the introduction of the poll tax into England and Wales. The Community Charge, as it is officially termed, is a regressive head tax that will replace the previous method of funding local government.

The demonstration was broadly based, largely youthful, and attracted a layer of Britain's growing army of homeless people — all of whom are required to pay the tax.

The demonstration overflowed Trafalgar Square at a rally addressed by Labour members of Parliament (MP's) and representa-

tives of the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, the coalition that organized the protest.

At the end of the rally police, concerned at the number and determination of the marchers, launched a violent assault. The ensuing battle turned into a full-scale riot that lasted well into the evening, moving into the nearby theater and shopping district of London's West End. Scores of storefronts were shattered and cars overturned and destroyed. Cops arrested 339 people, 227 of them demonstrators who were from the ages of 17 to 25.

Police blamed the violence on what they termed a "small group of troublemakers."

March organizers asserted that the responsibility lay with "anarchist groups" and then police "over-reaction." The London *Sunday Times*, however, placed responsibility for the initial violence on the police. "It started as mounted police tried to clear a small crowd," the paper reported, "some sitting in the road near the gates of Downing Street [the prime minister's residence]. Police, hemmed in against shop fronts by demonstrators, were forced to withdraw, but regrouped and charged back into the crowd."

The organizers have revealed that the police reneged on an agreement that if any

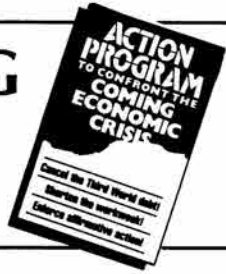
Continued on Page 8

Socialists to launch 1990 campaigns in 23 states

The Socialist Workers Party will field candidates in 23 states and Washington, D.C., during 1990. They will be running for U.S. House of Representatives and Senate as

Cuba from the governor's mansion and the White House are a crime against us," Floyd explained at a Miami Militant Labor Forum. Her Republican opponent, Gov. Robert

CAMPAIGNING FOR SOCIALISM



well as a number of state and local offices. So far, candidates have announced in Alabama, Florida, Minnesota, New Jersey, Utah, and West Virginia.

At the center of these campaigns will be the defense of revolutionary Cuba, getting the word out about the battle for socialism being waged there. Candidates will get this message out to fighters on the Eastern picket lines, in the coalfields, in working-class communities, and on the campuses.

"We have a special responsibility," Florida SWP gubernatorial candidate Jackie Floyd said, "to defend those who are the furthest down the road in dealing with the problems that the worldwide capitalist system rains on working people — and that's Cuba."

"The avalanche of lies against

Martinez, is the architect of a commission headed by right-wing Cuban exiles to study the impact on Florida of an overturn of the Cuban revolution.

"The lies against Cuba are intended to keep the truth from us, to hamper our ability to learn from our brothers and sisters there," Floyd said. She pledged her campaign to get out the truth about the advances of the Cuban revolution and to explain the stake of all working people in defending those gains.

SWP candidates will be campaigning in support of the unfolding revolution in South Africa and against U.S. intervention in Central America, helping deepen solidarity with the Eastern Airlines and Greyhound strikes, along with other labor battles. They will join in the fights for abortion

rights and against racist attacks.

To these struggles, socialist campaigners bring a program of action for the working class, aimed at unifying working people internationally to fight for their common interests. The *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* explains the catastrophic consequences for working people around the globe of the drive for profits by the employers.

The Action Program proposes three campaigns for working people to help forge unity in the face of this deepening crisis:

- for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay to create jobs and a sliding scale of wages to protect working people from inflation;
- for enforcement of affirmative action and other measures to bridge the gap between Black and white, and female and male workers;
- and for cancellation of the Third World debt, which spells disaster for millions in the semicolonial countries.

The Action Program was issued as a response by socialists to the October 1987 stock market crash. Since then, evidence has continued to mount that what capitalism holds in store for working people is a devastating depression in the years ahead.

In the past year more working people in the United States have become involved in fights. Eastern strikers, coal miners, Greyhound workers and other unionists, and

those inspired by the Cuban revolution and the advances in southern Africa, will be more receptive to the program of the socialist candidates today than ever before. The Action Program, along with the *Militant* and other socialist publications, will be an even more effective weapon in their hands.

To get a copy of the *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, send \$1 (English or Spanish edition) or \$2 (French edition) to Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

In Alabama, New Jersey, Utah, and West Virginia, socialist campaign supporters are currently petitioning to get the SWP candidates on the ballot. On March 24 the Newark, New Jersey, SWP headquarters was alive with activity as campaign supporters launched their drive to sign up new readers of the socialist press and to get 3,000 signatures for the party's candidates — Don Mackle for U.S. Senate, and Georges Mehrabian and Jane Harris for Congress. The New Jersey ticket also includes David Hurst who is running a write-in campaign for mayor of Newark.

Several campaigners rode buses to Washington, D.C., to take part in the demonstration against U.S. intervention in Central America. Others, campaigning in downtown Newark, met students from the city's high

schools who had participated in a walkout by 500 students from seven schools earlier in the week. The students are protesting newly announced cuts in education funding and the lack of Black, Latino, and Asian studies programs.

Senate candidate Mackle, a garment worker, joined in the discussion with these fighters and with a Continental Airlines flight attendant, who signed a petition after stopping to discuss the fight against racism. Mackle also joined a picket line of Greyhound strikers. He pointed out that "more and more, we all face a 'reign of terror' like the one Frank Lorenzo unleashed against Eastern Airlines workers, not just here but around the world." The Action Program helps to explain where these attacks come from and outlines a course for fighting back, Mackle said.

Campaigning in East Orange, one team netted 150 signatures and sold two copies of *Nouvelle Internationale*, two subscriptions to *Lutte ouvrière* and one to the *Militant*, and several copies of the Action Program. "Our literature table focused on the socialist press and a few books and pamphlets on Cuba, South Africa, and Malcolm X," one team member explained.

Mike Italie from Newark, New Jersey, and Kathryn Crowder from Miami contributed to this column.

W. Virginia socialists appeal ballot law to high court

BY LINDA JOYCE

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Robert Bastress, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer and counsel for the Socialist Workers Party, announced March 28 the filing of an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court challenging West Virginia's restrictive election laws.

At a news conference here, Bastress explained, "West Virginia is one of the most difficult states in the union to get on the ballot. This appeal marks a new stage in the 10-year-long effort to break the Republican and Democratic stranglehold on the elections."

The SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, Dick McBride, said that his party, "along with other supporters for an open ballot, have chipped away at the state's burdensome restrictions since 1980. Every time we fight, we win. We've beaten back some of the most restrictive regulations."

"Last November," he said, "the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down West

Virginia's undemocratic provision that said that signers of our nominating petitions intended to vote for our candidates."

"This was an important victory," McBride said. "But it is not enough." The circuit court also upheld some important obstacles to winning ballot status, he said.

In the Supreme Court appeal, the SWP is fighting to end the requirements that signatures be gathered on two separate petitions: one to get on the ballot, and one to waive hundreds of dollars in filing fees.

The suit also challenges the undemocratic provision that requires petitioners for independent candidates to advise potential signers that they lose the right to vote in the Democratic or Republican party primary elections if they sign the petitions. As the law currently stands, anyone signing the independent nominating petition is disenfranchised. They are barred from voting for the hundreds of other candidates for other offices in the primary.

The suit demands that the court allow petitioning to be done after the primary election, as it is in other states.

McBride, who is challenging incumbent Jay Rockefeller in the election, emphasized, "I want the chance to bring working-class ideas to workers — the idea that we can rely on ourselves, not just on a union level, but on a political level."

The socialist candidate will be participating in the April 7 protest in New York demanding "U.S. hands off Cuba." The progress made over the 31 years of the Cuban revolution, McBride explains, is confirmation of the successes that can be registered when workers and farmers rely on their own power.

Petition drive on

He explained that campaign supporters in West Virginia are currently petitioning for a spot on the ballot. The requirement is 6,400

signatures and the socialists plan to turn in well over that amount by the May 7 filing deadline.

Another 3,650 signatures are needed by April 9 to waive the filing fee, and the SWP candidates plan to turn in as many signatures as possible toward that requirement.

So far 4,500 signatures have been collected on the nominating petitions and 3,600 on the waiver petitions through the efforts of campaigners in coal-mining areas, at plant gates, door-to-door, on the job, and at shopping centers.

Campaign supporters are introducing everyone they meet to the *Militant* and other socialist publications, the best place to get an understanding of the program of the SWP candidates. On Saturday, March 31, 12 people who met campaign supporters decided to subscribe to the *Militant*. In addition, 10 copies of *An Action Program to Confront the*

Continued on Page 9

'For news from Cuba and on the rectification process, I turn to the *Militant* every week. It gives me information I need to defend the Cuban revolution and take its example to working people.'



BRIAN ADAMS

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Cuban diplomat speaks in New York

'I am convinced that socialism in Cuba is there to stay,' says Adlum

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK — TV Martí, the fight against racism in Cuba, the rectification process, and Cuba-U.S. relations were some of the topics taken up by Clinton Adlum, the first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., during two talks he gave here on March 30 and 31.

Sponsored by the solidarity organizations, the Venceremos Brigade, Casa de las Américas, and the Antonio Maceo Brigade, the meetings took place at the Harriet Tubman school in Harlem and at Casa de las Américas.

"It is quite clear that today there is a concerted effort to say the worst things about Cuba," said Adlum during his presentation in Harlem. "One of the means by which the Cuban revolution has been attacked viciously is with regards to race relations in Cuba."

Legacy of racism

The Cuban diplomat pointed to the legacy of racism that exists in Cuba and the steps that have been taken by the revolutionary government since 1959 to overcome it. "One of the first measures taken by the revolution was to stamp out discrimination due to gender and to race," Adlum noted.

"Cuba has eliminated each and every institution, each and every condition that made racism prosper in the past," said Adlum. "When we attacked illiteracy, for example," he explained, "we eliminated one of the factors used very successfully to discriminate against Blacks, because their economic situation was such that the majority of illiterates were Black."

Today, regardless of your color or gender you have access to free education in Cuba,

as well as free health care, Adlum noted. Contrary to what existed in the past, today there are no whites-only beaches or clubs in Cuba. Jobs are open to all regardless of race. Discrimination is prohibited by law, he added.

"What we still have is prejudice," Adlum said. "And with regards to prejudice, many things are being done today." You cannot just change from being a racist today to not being one tomorrow. It takes education and personal efforts to accomplish this, he said.

A lot has also been said about the relatively fewer number of Blacks occupying leadership positions in the Cuban Communist Party, Adlum pointed out.

"In 1986, at the third congress [of the Communist Party], when Fidel Castro read the report to the participants," Adlum noted, "he said that efforts have to be made to guarantee an adequate representation in leadership bodies to reflect the ethnic composition of the country."

"From then on, every time there is an election, political work is done to assure that gradually these inconsistencies are eliminated," said the Cuban diplomat. As a result, "we have made gains but we still have further to go on this."

TV Martí

At the Casa de las Américas meeting, attended by 130 people, Adlum read the statement by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemning Washington's violation of Cuban sovereignty through the broadcasts of TV Martí.

The statement was published immediately after the first transmissions of TV Martí were



Clinton Adlum

Militant/Janet Post

successfully jammed by Cuban technicians on March 27.

"Based on the traditional arrogance of the U.S. government towards the nations of the Third World," Adlum pointed out, "can there be any doubt that there is a possibility of aggression?"

Cuba "cannot run the risk of expecting anything other than this. We will not be another Panama."

"Should we wait until one morning we see the planes coming down and the ships, and they invade us?" said Adlum. "No, we are very well prepared and are taking on all the necessary measures to guarantee them [U.S. troops] an adequate reception should they come."

Many of the questions asked during the discussion period focused on Cuba's rectification process, which Adlum had mentioned in his talk.

"Socialism cannot be constructed with the same mentality with which you construct capitalism," said Adlum. "It requires a new way of thinking. It requires each person to be in permanent solidarity with the people with whom he interacts."

But "the construction of socialism has a serious problem," he pointed out. "You decide to construct this new society with a man who comes from a capitalist society who has a different mentality."

In capitalist societies, "the moving force is the need to get money," said Adlum, "because everything you need you have to get with money: educate your child, a house,

guarantee your retirement, health care." But in Cuba these things are provided for by society, he said, and money is not the moving force.

"In Cuba there is a profound conviction of the importance of society as a whole," Adlum said. "And therefore man in his everyday activity is capable of doing that which he does not do just because he is going to get so many dollars, or cruzeiros, or pesos. He does it for the satisfaction of contributing to the well-being of society."

This is, for example, what motivates thousands in Cuba to volunteer for internationalist missions, he said.

Adlum pointed to the "strong ideological formation" necessary to create a "new man" capable of building socialism. Ernesto Che Guevara was very clear on this question, Adlum explained. "Che was convinced of the need of this ideological work. He would not propose something he was not capable of doing. He would not call on others to do things that he would not do himself."

Restoration of voluntary work

Through the rectification process "we have successfully restored voluntary work," Adlum said.

Voluntary work is being done not only in construction of new, badly needed housing, but in other industries and in agriculture as well, the Cuban diplomat explained.

During the process of rectification, Adlum stated, "We discovered some horrible things." There were people whose life-styles had nothing to do with socialism, he said, some of whom are in jail today.

"There were times, for example," Adlum explained, "in the midst of our transportation crisis, with bus stops full of working people trying to get home from work and having a hard time getting a bus, the son or daughter of some high government or party official would be passing by in a nice car. There is nothing wrong with having a nice car, but under our circumstances this was an offense against our society."

Adlum was asked his opinion on the changes taking place in Eastern Europe.

"Some are saying that socialism has failed," he responded. "The ones who have failed are those who have embarked on the construction of socialism and have not constructed it correctly."

"I am absolutely sure that the cause of socialism is going to triumph," he continued. "If I were not sure, I would not be sure of our socialism. And I am profoundly convinced that socialism in Cuba is there to stay."

"I am convinced that what we are constructing is a higher form of democracy, a society where human values are much higher than the values which prevail in the societies where what prevails is exploitation," Adlum said. "Since I am absolutely sure of this, I am absolutely sure of the future of socialism in my country and the success of socialism in the world, despite all that is being said."

'Hands Off Cuba' protest on April 7 gains support

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — Hundreds of New Yorkers, joined by delegations from across the country, are set to march here to protest Washington's escalating provocations against Cuba. The most recent is the start-up of test broadcasts of TV Martí.

In response to the "U.S. hands off Cuba" protest, ultra-right Cuban exile organizations plan a counterdemonstration the same day. They have received permits allowing them to assemble two blocks north of the protest march departure point at 43rd Street and Broadway.

The confrontationist aims of the rightists were captured in the front-page, banner headline of the April 2 *Noticias del Mundo*, "The affront will not be permitted," with the sub-heading, "A call to stop the Castroists." Under a photograph, taken during one of the anti-Cuba demonstrations here in February, showing an effigy of Cuban President Fidel Castro being jabbed with sticks, the caption read, "Scenes like this will be repeated next Saturday."

The "U.S. hands off Cuba" demonstration, called by the 60-group coalition of the same name, will end up in front of the Cuban mission to the United Nations at 38th Street and Lexington Avenue.

National message campaign

A national message campaign has urged New York Mayor David Dinkins to insure the right of demonstrators defending Cuba's sovereignty to hold their action peacefully and to deter the rightists from their stated aim.

Among those sending messages to the mayor were David Dyson of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, Miriam Thompson of United Auto Workers Local 259, Rev. Herbert Daughtry, Jeff Perry of the Mailhandlers Union, and numerous political activists across the country.

A news conference to announce the protest and reject the confrontationist threats of the Cuban exiles was held on City Hall steps April 5.

Coalition organizers plan to mobilize 300 marshals for march security, among them unionized hospital, telephone, and city work-

ers, along with striking members of the International Association of Machinists at Eastern Airlines at La Guardia Airport.

These forces will be augmented by South African youth and members of the African National Congress — a contingent of whom will be leading the march, Latin Americans, Palestinians, and Afro-American, peace, and political activists who are assuming responsibility for security.

Campus meetings building the protest have been held at Hunter College and Hofstra University, along with student organizing efforts at City, Brooklyn, and Hostos colleges and the New School for Social Research.

Harlem feeder march

A feeder march from Harlem has been built by leafleting more than two dozen high schools in the Black community.

Listener-financed radio station WBAI has regularly broadcast news of the march.

Cuba solidarity activists in Washington are mobilizing supporters to come to New York. They held a picket line of 40 people outside TV Martí offices April 3, receiving national and local media coverage.

Protests and forums in support of the April 7 action are being held in many cities.

In Seattle, an April 7 protest against TV Martí called by a dozen local organizations is being built by activists from Portland, Oregon, to Vancouver, Canada.

A delegation from Miami of prorevolution Cubans, Cubans who support normalized relations between Washington and Havana, and trade unionists, is flying in for the New York protest.

Sentiment among working people who are Cuban in northern New Jersey has been one of "general opposition" to U.S. intervention, says Rich Ariza, a U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition activist who works in the Post Office.

About 400 of Ariza's 2,100 coworkers are from Cuba. He has widely distributed leaflets for the April 7 march. This has been received by "mostly friendly reactions, leading to discussion," says Ariza, who has worked as a mailhandler there for five years. This response "has been a surprise," he says. "There have been no threats."

NEW YORK

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Curtis fight needs to be promoted, Cuban writes

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, serving a 25-year prison term in the 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

at the High Institute of Arts in Havana, Cuba, wrote the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. "It's very important to tell everyone in all the world how the federal agents and the U.S. government treat their own citizens. So, Mark Curtis' case needs more militant promotion and denouncing in all countries. I want to offer you my efforts to distribute information about Mark in the Cuban mass media, so my people

tives of the New Zealand Meat Workers Union, Trade Union Education Authority (TUEA), Latin American community, Amnesty International, New Labour Party, Distribution Workers Union, and Labourers Union.

Roger Middlemass, president of the NZMWU, spoke about how law is viewed in New Zealand. If someone is arrested, then many people see them as guilty. If they are convicted, then they are definitely guilty in most people's minds. There are prime examples, he said, of unfair trials in New Zealand — the classic example being that of Arthur Allan Thomas. He was convicted of murder and served time. He was released and pardoned because certain evidence was never allowed to be presented at his trial.

Mike Farrell of the TUEA said that many unionists in New Zealand had strong memories of the visit to New Zealand by Curtis' wife, Kate Kaku, and her commitment to correct the injustices done to Curtis. Some \$40 was raised at the meeting

to help Kaku and other supporters take Curtis' fight to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland.

Supporters of Mark Curtis who are members of the NZMWU were able to show *The Frame-up of Mark Curtis* February 28 at the union's national conference.

The video, shown at lunchtime, was introduced by union President Middlemass, an endorser of the Curtis campaign. He briefly outlined the case and explained that the campaign for Curtis was a "truly international one."

Among those who viewed the video were other union officials who are also endorsers of Curtis' fight. They included Paul Wintringham, an organizer of the West Coast branch of the NZMWU; Merv Taylor, president of the Canterbury branch; and Dave Sinel, president of the Ocean Beach Freezing Workers Union.

Some \$60 (US\$35) was donated

to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in a collection after the video. A few days before the conference, Curtis supporters in Christchurch received a \$20 (US\$12) donation from Dave Sinel and five other Ocean Beach workers in response to an appeal for funds.

Readers who wish to write Curtis should address their correspondence to Mark S. Curtis #805338, Box B, Anamosa, Iowa 52205. Prison regulations require that the sender's full name and address appear on the upper left hand corner of the envelope and that senders sign their name in full at the end of the letter. Only correspondence from the noted sender is permitted. Greeting cards are permitted, but are not to exceed 8 1/2" x 11".

Helen O'Neill from Christchurch and Dion Martin from Palmerston North, New Zealand, contributed to this week's column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311 USA; 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*.

"Yesterday I got an issue of the *Militant* from February 9, and I read about the unjustified jailing of Mark Curtis," Abelardo Mena, a professor

know about the violation of human rights inside the United States. I will do all the best for Mark. We shall overcome!"

About 20 people saw the video produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle, *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*, at a meeting in Palmerston North, New Zealand, on February 22. At the meeting were representa-

Interview with Curtis by 'Perspectiva Mundial'

Luis Madrid is editor of the Spanish-language monthly, *Perspectiva Mundial*. His interview with Mark Curtis was published in the magazine's April 1990 issue. It appears here in abridged form. The translation is by the *Militant*.

Perspectiva Mundial was earlier among the publications denied Curtis at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory at Anamosa because of undemocratic restrictions on literature in languages other than English.

Since the interview was conducted, Curtis has been moved from Level III to Level IV.

Curtis is continuing to fight his frame-up on gambling charges, and the appeal to the Iowa Department of Corrections is still pending. You can aid in this fight by protesting to Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E. 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309 USA; and to John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 USA.

Copies of messages and any reply from prison authorities should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311 USA.

BY LUIS MADRID

ANAMOSA, Iowa — Those who govern the United States "have sought to block by every means possible any suggestion that in this country there could be a frame-up or violations of human rights."

"The fact is that there has rarely been any real investigation on human rights in the United States by any body, including the United Nations. Any break in that brick wall is a big step forward."

This is how Mark Curtis put it during an interview at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory here on March 2. Curtis was referring to the impact of a trip by several leaders of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to Geneva, Switzerland, to attend the 46th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar appointed María Francisca Ize-Charrin, a UN human rights officer, to follow up on an appeal sent to Pérez de Cuéllar by Curtis about his case. (Curtis' appeal was reprinted in the February 23 *Militant*.)

"It is a big step forward for the hundreds and thousands of other individuals and groups who have asked the United Nations to become involved in the issue of human rights in this country," Curtis said.

"In two more days it will be two years since my arrest," Curtis pointed out. "But, instead of withering away or being forgotten, my case is gaining even more support than before."

Curtis, 31, is a packinghouse worker, unionist, and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa. He has been a member of the Socialist Workers Party for more than a decade and was national secretary of the Young Socialist Alliance.

He went to work at Swift/Monfort in Des Moines, Iowa, at a time when workers in the meat-packing industry were beginning to resist attacks by the bosses on union rights and working conditions. On March 4, 1988, after attending a meeting in defense of 16 Mexican coworkers and one Salvadoran who had been arrested at Swift by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Curtis was arrested by local police. He was charged with burglary and the rape of a young Black woman.

"The police do not have the right to question you without your consent if you do not have a lawyer present. This is your right," Curtis explained. "I refused to have any discussions with them."

"They became agitated, angry. One of them said, 'You're one of those Mexican-lovers, just like you love those coloreds.'"

Beaten by police

Then, Curtis said, the police became violent, throwing him to the floor and beating him. They shattered his cheekbone.

Curtis was put on trial in September 1988. "I was not allowed to present some very crucial evidence in my defense," he recounted. He could not, for example, mention the beating by police or present documents showing that he had been targeted for investigation by the FBI for his involvement in the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.

He was convicted and sentenced to 25 years in prison. He has been held at Anamosa since December 1988. Currently he works part time in the prison soap shop.

For Native Americans, Blacks, and other union and political activists, the UN commission action in his case, Curtis said, "is a very positive blow." It helps "those people as well to break out of the blockade of information about their cases."

"Human rights violations in the United States are not just on the individual level. The rights of whole peoples have been violated in this country."

Native Americans, for example, "are seeking redress from hundreds of years of broken treaties," Curtis explained.

Curtis described the response of other inmates to the initiative in Geneva, pointing out that, besides the coverage in the *Militant*, there was an article in the *Des Moines Register*. "People were all excited and asked me all kinds of questions about what this means and would this lead to an investigation of the prison."

"I explained that this didn't just happen. Part of the success is because so many prominent individuals have become endorsers of my defense campaign and because mine has

already become an internationally recognized case."

Others in the prison, the activist explained, "don't just see it as Curtis' thing. They are interested in knowing what's happening and they hope the best for my defense campaign because in a way it rubs off on them — the inspiration, the enthusiasm. They are glad when a reporter talks to me about the circumstances in here, because they don't have that chance."

"It's not because they don't want it or they're undeserving of it," Curtis explained. "It's simply because — like everyone else — they're workers, poor people, and the system doesn't care about them."

Mandela release

The release of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison was also a topic of discussion at Anamosa, and cause for celebration.

The news of his impending release came the evening of February 10, Curtis recalled. "Everyone was talking about it in the morning. People wanted to watch him walk out of that prison, but the guards wouldn't allow it."

"But I did get back to the cell house just in time, by luck, to see him give his speech at the Cape Town City Hall. There were a number of other inmates watching TV, and the crowd grew as the speech went on. We were just in awe as we watched him speak."

That afternoon, Curtis got together with several friends — some Cubans and a Salvadoran. "We had seen everybody dancing and cheering in the streets of South Africa," he explained. "We can't dance and cheer here. But we can, and did, go get a pizza and soda pop, and we had a little party."

"People talk about politics a lot in here." This occasion gave rise to discussion on the role of Cuba in southern Africa — "especially about the defeat of the South African armed forces in Angola by Cuban and Angolan troops and the subsequent pullout of South Africa from Namibia," said Curtis, "and the power that a small country like Cuba can have in world politics when it takes the side of the oppressed and the exploited."

"Most people did not realize that this is why Cuban troops were in Africa. Many did not even know they were there," he noted. "So they were pleased to hear that and were interested in finding out more about Cuba."

Curtis explained his views on Cuba. "I was there in 1981 and have read a great deal about the Cuban revolution. I think it was a tremendous step forward."

"Cuba is the first line of defense for working people in this hemisphere," he said. "They have taken political power there and used it to move towards socialism, to defend the interests of the workers and small farmers in that country, and to assist the international working class anywhere they can."

Racism, same as outside

"Racism is another topic that constantly comes up," Curtis said. "Many things here

are exactly the same as on the outside, beyond the walls. For example, there are different places where the boss will promote racism here. There are shops where there are no Black workers. Black workers are discouraged from working in them."

Curtis emphasized the importance of being able to get information on world events. The authorities had prohibited him from receiving the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* and the French-language magazine *Lutte ouvrière*, claiming they posed a security risk. Last July, following a broad international campaign, Curtis began receiving them and, a few months ago, began to get *Granma Weekly Review* from Cuba.

Nevertheless, there still exist restrictions on receiving mail in languages other than English and on the right of prisoners to freely share information.

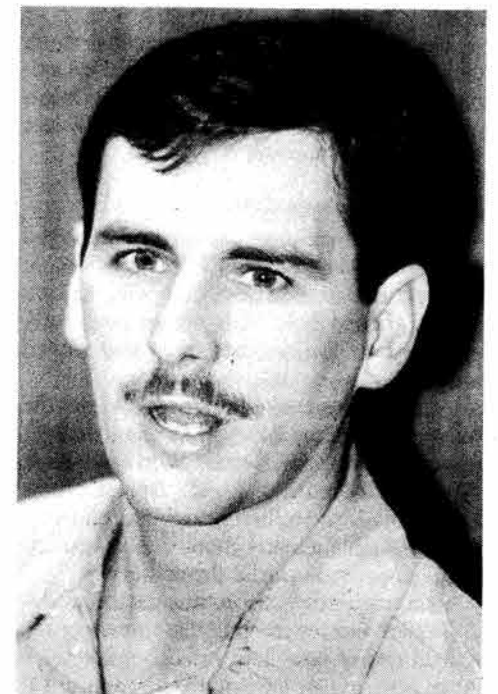
The prisoners face other obstacles in advancing their education. For example, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization — a vehicle for organizing recreational, cultural, and political activities that has functioned in the prison for years — bought \$50 of books a year ago. Among them were the writings of Mandela, Maurice Bishop, and Malcolm X, and some titles on Cuba.

Six months elapsed before the books were released to the group, and then only for restricted use. "We could have the books, but almost no one could read them," Curtis said. "There was a ban on the books."

It took another half year, and a pressure campaign, to have the books placed permanently in the central library. "Now they're enjoyed by everyone here," Curtis said. "But it took a year, 12 months."

Curtis has written for the *Militant* on various topics.

Continued on next page



Militant/Luis Madrid
Mark Curtis discussed his continued political activity in prison.

Mass mobilizations by Québec students protest tuition hikes

BY MARC-ANDRÉ ÉTHIER
AND GARY WATSON

MONTREAL — "Stop the fee hikes! Education is a right! Money for schools, not for the corporations!"

These are the slogans of a massive province-wide mobilization of Québec students against government-proposed tuition fee hikes.

Tens of thousands of Québec's 400,000 university and CEGEP (junior college) students are participating in strikes, demonstrations, mass meetings, and occupations. On numerous occasions they have been confronted by riot-equipped cops.

When 250 students attempted to occupy the Montréal Stock Exchange on March 20, they were punched, kicked, and hit with chairs by traders on the floor. One demonstrator was hospitalized as a result. The action ended when the riot squad arrested more than 180 of the students.

In response to this attack more students have rallied to the fight. A meeting of more than 500 at the CEGEP Vieux Montréal denounced the "police repression," and called for the "dropping of all charges against our comrades." Representatives of faculty and support staff unions expressed their solidarity.

Demanding the right to demonstrate "whenever and wherever we wish," students have occupied offices at the Montréal Chamber of Commerce, demonstrated at Montréal's City Hall, and have organized rush-hour marches and sitdowns at major intersections and bridges. During these actions thousands of motorists and pedestrians have received leaflets explaining the students' demands. Leaflets have also been distributed door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods.

These actions follow the Québec government's announcement that tuition fees will be increased by approximately 130 percent over the next two years.

These hikes aim to roll back an important victory won in 1968. At that time massive student strikes forced the government to freeze tuition fees. Tuitions in Québec — at an average of \$540 per year — are today among the lowest in Canada.

On several occasions in the past 10 years the provincial government has attempted, without success, to "unfreeze" the fees.

The government's drive against the students is part of a broader effort to slash social

services. This attack on students comes just months after a confrontation with government hospital workers and nurses. The provincial government is fully backed by the federal government in Ottawa, which in its February budget slashed transfer payments to the provinces by millions of dollars. These funds were to have gone to education and other services.

The Québec government admits that the rise in fees will mean at least a 5 percent reduction in the student population.

The central demand of the students is that the freeze remain in effect. They have proposed that 1 percent tax on the profits of all corporations be levied to pay for education. Such a tax could raise \$800 million while the new fee scales project only \$85 million in revenue.

A Québec Employer's Council spokesman declared, "We don't have the means to train 200 philosophers a year. It is better to graduate managers and technicians who cost less to society."

On March 30, 4,000 students from across the province marched on the National As-



Militant/Monica Jones

March 30 protest in Québec City drew 4,000 students from across the province. Students' main demand is for tuition fees to remain frozen, as they have been since 1968. "The thaw" — unfreezing the fees — "a d... elitist measure," reads one student's sign.

sembly in Québec City. In response to appeals from the students, motorists honked their horns in support of the demonstration.

Education Minister Claude Ryan, who has threatened to resign if the fee freeze is not ended, refused to speak to the demonstrators. Instead the government responded with 100 riot cops who, batons swinging, charged into the demonstrators near the doors of the Na-

tional Assembly. The students responded by pelting the cops with snowballs. Two students were arrested.

Marc-André Éthier is a student activist at the University of Montréal. He and other students are due to appear in court May 2 on charges stemming from their participation in the struggle.

'PM' interviews Mark Curtis in prison

Continued from previous page

ious developments in the prison. He explained that as a result he had just "received a letter from the warden, where he alleges that I have quite a number of inaccuracies in my articles."

Censorship in prison

"Yesterday I was brought up to the administration office," he continued. "I was told that, based on the alleged inaccuracies in the *Militant*, I would not be allowed to speak at the MLK Jr. Organization celebration of African-American History Month on Sunday unless I submit my speech in written form."

"I pointed out that I have spoken many times without violating any institution rules, without advocating violence, any illegal activities, or even using profanity. I explained that this was a very dangerous road to begin going down, because it concerns constitutional rights that I have not lost since coming to prison."

"They are constantly trying to narrow the rights that we do have in here," he said.

The day after our interview, Curtis refused to submit a written text of his remarks to the authorities and they prohibited him from speaking at the event.

In fact, Curtis said, it was the warden who recently became the center of attention for making erroneous statements to the media. "He alleged that there was an upsurge in gang activity in the institution. This could not be any further from the truth," the imprisoned activist emphasized.

"The newspaper article that contained his statement listed seven different gangs that were supposedly in the prisons in Iowa, including the Viceroy, Mexican Mafia, and others."

"This has been greeted with disbelief, outrage, and derision by inmates here," Curtis said. "Most people believe that this is an attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the public to justify further limiting our democratic rights, open up more prison space, and impose more restrictive measures against prisoners in general."

Curtis pointed out that many of his co-workers were worried. "There are several Chicano workers. They are very much concerned that their chances for parole or consideration for some kind of release will be jeopardized now by statements like this."

Gambling frame-up

In mid-February Curtis was transferred from Level V — where he had been for several months — to Level III. The transfer meant the loss of certain privileges, such as use of the phone, access to a tape recorder, and most importantly, the right to carry out his duties as the elected secretary of the MLK Jr. Organization.

"On January 28 I was asked to give a shakedown," Curtis explained. "When I say asked, it's not exactly the same thing as an ordinary request. You're expected to comply when you're asked to do something."

"So I was asked to give a shakedown, which is basically a body search," he said. "After that, I went on my way."

About 11:00 p.m. that night Curtis was accused of having dropped a piece of paper during the search, which was said to prove he had gambled on the Super Bowl football game.

"I did not have this piece of paper or any other gambling paraphernalia in my possession," Curtis stated. "It's really outrageous. And inmates here see it as an attack because of my political activities."

Curtis has appealed the gambling frame-up to the state Department of Corrections. His first appeal was denied by Assistant Warden John Sissel on February 15, resulting in the move to Level III.

The restrictions placed on prisoners do not represent "an absolute shut door," Curtis said. "I and others plan on defending our ability to exercise our rights. We will not be deterred from that."

"The biggest help is informing people outside the prison about what the situation is," he said.

"I want to ask your readers to continue to follow my case, to do whatever they can to help fight, not just for my democratic rights, but for the rights of other people in the United States — not just as an act of sympathy or altruism, but in defense of their own rights, which are threatened."

"An injury to one is an injury to all — anywhere around the globe," Curtis concluded.

Before returning to the soap plant, Curtis extended his hand to me, saying confidently, "Venceremos!" (We will win!)

How Malcolm X handled anti-Semitism at Detroit meeting

The anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X, shot down in Harlem on Feb. 21, 1965, has sparked a lot of discussion about the revolutionary leader and his legacy for today's fighters. Meetings took place in many cities during February — Black History Month — to honor Malcolm and discuss his ideas.

In a February 25 *New York Times* opinion column, "Young Lions, and Old" — about the release of Nelson Mandela from prison — the 25th anniversary of Malcolm's assassination was mentioned. In response, *Times* reader Richard Rosenthal wrote a letter to the editors published in the March 9 issue of the paper about "an unknown moment from the life of Malcolm X that I think should be entered on the public record."

"In 1963 or 1964, I attended a meeting of the Young Socialists Club at Wayne State University in Detroit at which Malcolm spoke," writes Rosenthal. He describes how Malcolm dealt with a person in the audience who launched an anti-Semitic "harangue."

"Malcolm listened," Rosenthal says, until the tenor of the remarks was clear and then "ambled to the lectern." The writer quotes Malcolm as saying, "I suspect our moderator today is Jewish and I won't put him in the position of silencing you. So I will. Now shut up and sit down."

Appeals heard in Puerto Rico activists' case

BY TIM CRAINE

HARTFORD, Conn. — Within the last month, two important appeals have been heard in the case of the Puerto Rican independence activists known as the Hartford 15.

The government prosecution against the Hartford 15 began with their arrests in 1985 and 1986 on charges stemming from a 1983 robbery of a Wells Fargo depot in West Hartford, Connecticut. Pretrial hearings revealed a massive, illegal surveillance operation by the FBI against the independence movement.

The two appeals involve the question of whether illegally obtained evidence may be used in court against the defendants.

On February 28 the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in the case of nine defendants who have not yet been tried. The prosecution's case against them consists largely of tapes of conversations made by the FBI during the investigation. Yet, contrary to federal statute, government agents failed to

seal some of these tapes immediately following the expiration of the court order authorizing electronic surveillance.

For one set of tapes, the delay was 82 days; for another, 118 days. Federal District Judge T. Emmet Clarie ruled that these tapes may not be submitted into evidence. His ruling was upheld by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. The U.S. government has asked the Supreme Court to overturn that ruling.

In their argument before the Supreme Court, attorneys for the Puerto Rican activists explained the stakes in this case. If the government prevails, the safeguards written into the 1968 statute regarding wiretapping will be gutted. Government officials will be encouraged to flout the sealing requirement, which was designed to minimize the danger that tapes might be tampered with.

A decision on this ruling is expected in June or July, with a trial for these defendants

starting sometime next fall.

The other appeal, to the Second Circuit Court in New York, by four defendants already tried and convicted, was heard on March 15. Leonard Weinglass, attorney for Juan Segarra Palmer, who was sentenced to 65 years in prison, argued that the rule excluding tapes should be extended to the many tapes used against his client, which the FBI also failed to seal within the proper time period.

After a seven-month long trial, in which the tainted evidence was admitted, Segarra along with Antonio Camacho Negrón, Roberto José Maldonado Rivera, and Norman Ramírez Talavera were convicted in April 1989 in Hartford. One defendant, Carlos Ayes Suárez, was acquitted. The 15th defendant, Luz Berrios Berrios pleaded guilty to a lesser charge and is still serving a five-year sentence.

IAM leader urges strikers to seek AFL-CIO aid

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines March 4, 1989, in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

can arrange to speak before union meetings and ask locals to adopt one or more of the striking Machinists by pledging a regular, monthly contribution until the strike is over, Bryan explained. Such regular "adopt a striker"

in Fort Collins, Colorado. "We did not feel it appropriate to support your company given the actions of Mr. Lorenzo with respect to the Eastern Airlines strike," the ABA wrote. The March 1990 issue of the IAM's paper, the *Machinist*, reports that the March of Dimes charity has also canceled a marketing deal with Continental.

Frank Lorenzo, the head of Eastern's parent company Texas Air, has been trying to polish his image by having Continental — also owned by Texas Air — become the "official airline" of all sorts of projects and groups.

The Board of Directors of the YWCA of Greater Atlanta informed Eastern on March 14 that they would not use Eastern to fly or send mail until the strike is resolved.

The Department of Pediatrics of East Tennessee State University has also canceled all flight reservations on Eastern. Festus Adebajo, chairman of the department, wrote to Lorenzo to inform him of the department's decision, made "in solidarity with the employees of Eastern and Continental Airlines and with concern about the safety of equipment and competence of personnel."

Two Eastern strikers — Skipp Kerekes from Seattle and Jack Kill from Portland, Oregon — recently teamed up to visit several union

meetings and strike picket lines in the Portland area. They spoke to several hundred workers at meetings and rallies of seven different unions, including striking Greyhound workers, the Machinists' local representing United and Northwest airlines workers, and Boilermakers on strike against Northwest Pipe & Casing Co. for arbitrary firing of workers for union activity and refusal to submit to drug testing.

"We must make a strong stand on the picket line," Kerekes told 35 Pulp and Paper Workers union members at a meeting in St. Helens.

Some 35 workers from nine unions picketed the Eastern and Continental ticket counters at the Portland airport March 17 from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m., when Eastern has an outgoing flight. Unionists plan to hold biweekly Saturday morning airport picket lines.

In New Zealand, where support for the Eastern strike is growing, the National Council of the Engineers Union — the counterpart to the IAM in that country — has voted to send NZ\$10,000 (US\$5,000) to the Eastern strikers. The Engineers Union has a membership of 53,000, which includes mechanics, baggage handlers, and ramp workers at the airports.

Engineers Union District Secretary Jim Butterworth, from the Auckland branch, sent a circular to

members at the Auckland airport that explained the issues in the Eastern fight and urged members to give generously to a collection for the strikers' food bank. He also called on workers to support the boycott of Continental Airlines, which flies to New Zealand. "It is essential," the letter said, "that we try to support our American brothers/sisters in their battle."

IAM Local 796 from Alexandria, Virginia, at Washington National Airport, recently started a strike outreach bulletin to keep strikers and supporters informed about the local's activities, including solidarity with the striking Greyhound workers.

IAM Local 712 at Bombardier-Canadair in Montréal, passed a resolution in solidarity with the Eastern strikers on the occasion of the year's anniversary of the strike. "Like thousands of unionists, we support your determination to stand up to Lorenzo," the resolution said. Local 712 organizes 3,000 production workers at the Bombardier-Canadair airplane factory.

Brian Williams from Portland, Oregon; Annette Kouri from Montréal; and Peter Bradley from Auckland, New Zealand, contributed to this column.



SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, April 4, the strike was in its 397th day.

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

IAM District 100 President Charles Bryan recently sent a letter to all Eastern strike coordinators, urging striking locals to contact AFL-CIO central labor bodies in their areas to begin organizing regular monthly contributions from AFL-CIO-affiliated union locals.

Representatives of striking locals

contributions can help sustain strikers, now heading into their 14th month on the picket line, and make it possible for locals to budget for ongoing strike operations.

Such an "adopt a striker" program has already been tested successfully in Miami, Bryan said. The AFL-CIO Executive Council's February 22 statement urging all affiliates to give added financial assistance to the Eastern strikers was attached to Bryan's letter.

Almost every day, the IAM's strike bulletin reports support for the union's fight from some new quarter.

The March 16 bulletin notes that the American Birding Association had rejected Continental's offer to become the "official airline" of the ABA's 1990 convention, to be held

Workers at United discuss union-backed buyout

BY MAUREEN COLETTA AND PATTI IYAMA

Some 25,000 members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at United Airlines are expecting to vote soon on the multimillion-dollar concession contract being proposed by the IAM officialdom in exchange for an employee buyout plan for the airline.

Officials of the Association of Flight Attendants, representing 12,700 workers, and the Air Line Pilots Association, with 6,300 members at United, are also backing the plan.

IAM, AFA, and ALPA officials are proposing five-year contracts with no-strike clauses and wage cuts, as opposed to the normal three-year contracts at United. Altogether, concessions from Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots would total \$2 billion over five years.

The proposed pact between the IAM and the company includes: a six-year no-strike clause, continuing the year after the contract expires; a 3.7 percent wage decrease in the first year for A-scale (top wage) employees, which will "snap back" to current rates in the remaining four years, resulting in no wage increase over the life of the contract; an increase of 2.5 percent the first year and 4 percent the second year for B- and C-scale employees with a more even increase in the pay progression from B and C scale to A scale; a more favorable policy of transfers between job classifications; an increase in pension benefits; and a "guarantee" of no layoffs due to subcontracting. In exchange, the IAM, AFA, and ALPA, through an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP), would own 75 percent of United's stock.

The buyout plan is virtually identical to the collapsed ALPA-management buyout deal of last October. Since the debt the company will incur with the new deal is less than the earlier plan — \$3.8 billion, as compared to \$6.8 billion — the concessions being pressed on United employees are somewhat less drastic: \$2 billion over five years, as opposed to \$1.5 billion over three years.

IAM officials oppose 1st plan

Last fall the banks, the ALPA-led buyout group, and the UAL directors were surprised by the deep-going opposition of IAM members to concessions and the IAM's campaign to stop the buyout. Seeing that a major source of funds to repay the loans needed to buy the airline — concessions from the Machinists — was unlikely to materialize, the bankers withdrew backing. The deal collapsed Octo-

ber 13, triggering the sell-off of United stock and the second largest one-day drop in stock prices in Wall Street's history.

Despite the deal's collapse, however, ALPA's lawyers and advisers received \$58.7 million in fees from the UAL board.

In the previous buyout bid, IAM Vice-president John Peterpaul said the union would fight for significant wage increases rather than accept "the most ludicrous transaction we have ever seen." Although financing for the current buyout plan remains uncertain, IAM officials have been pushing this contract as "the lesser of two evils."

Talks are continuing with the UAL's board of directors, who have threatened to sell off assets such as gates, equipment, and the highly profitable Pacific routes unless the Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots accept the plan. Many workers see this as a choice between accepting the concessions in the buyout plan or losing their jobs.

Most IAM members at United don't like the proposed contract, although opinions are

divided on whether the union should go along with it. As one cleaner in Philadelphia explained, "I'm against concessions. But we don't have a choice. We'll lose everything if a financier like Davis buys the company and sells off assets." At least with this plan, "the unions will own the company," he said. Speculator Marvin Davis made an earlier bid for the airline.

Mechanics at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, however, point out that the three unions will have only four representatives out of 15 on the board of directors and will therefore not control much. "And until we pay off the debt, the banks will really own United and decide what to do," said one mechanic.

IAM members at Kennedy are also questioning whether they really want to "own" the company. Some of the most outspoken opponents of the proposed ESOP are workers who were already forced to participate in ESOPs at Eastern or Pan American airlines, where individual workers lost thousands of dollars.

California Eastern strikers welcome miners

BY JOEL BRITTON

LOS ANGELES — Eastern Airlines strikers in California got a boost recently with the visit by two United Mine Workers of America representatives to Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Roger Nelson, director of Logan County Camp Solidarity in West Virginia, teamed up with Eastern strike leaders in Los Angeles during the week-long tour in early March. Dave Collins, president of UMWA Local 1971 at a Logan-area Pittston mine, did the same in the Bay Area.

Nelson and Collins participated in the March 3 activities in Los Angeles and San Francisco marking the year's anniversary of the strike at Eastern. "We learned we couldn't do it alone," Collins told the San Francisco Eastern strike rally, referring to the broad support won by the Pittston miners during their 11-month strike, which ended in mid-February.

Collins spoke on behalf of the UMWA at the memorial meeting held in Redding, California, March 7 for a Greyhound striker who was killed a few days earlier on the picket line in that Northern California town.

Both Collins and Nelson walked the Grey-

hound strikers' picket lines a number of times during their visit.

Activists from the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers also helped organize the miners' tours. Collins and Nelson spoke to a large meeting of the Chevron refinery unit of OCAW Local 1-547 near Los Angeles, along with Eastern strike leader Eddie Croft. Many Chevron workers — preparing for the expiration of their contract — wore camouflage T-shirts with "OCAW/UMWA, No Retreat/No Surrender" on the back. Wearing camouflage was a symbol of the Pittston strike and it is now emulated by other unionists. Dozens of OCAW members joined the March 3 Eastern strike rally at Los Angeles International Airport.

The UMWA leaders also met with a number of OCAW district and local officials and union activists. Interest in meeting the miners was heightened by recent moves to revive efforts to merge these two energy industry unions.

Eastern strike leaders Joe Mos and Eddie Croft of Los Angeles shared the platform with Nelson at many of the union meetings he spoke to.

Some of the deepest divisions over the deal are between A-scale and B-scale workers. Most A-scale workers at Kennedy, whether mechanics, ramp workers, or cleaners, are against the proposed contract. With the cost of living rising 4 percent or more every year, their wages will drop at least 24 percent over the life of the contract.

B- and C-scale employees are more favorable to the contract because of the wage increases they are to receive and the continued provision that they will reach A-scale in five years. Some A-scale mechanics at JFK have mounted a campaign to convince the B-scale mechanics that they should also vote no on the contract.

Many Machinists at Kennedy are also opposed to the deal because of the six-year no-strike clause. "It's crazy. We won't have any teeth at all," said one cleaner.

IAM Local 1776 member Maureen Coletta is a cleaner at United Airlines in Philadelphia. Patti Iiyama, also a cleaner at United, is a member of IAM Local 1322 in New York.

Nelson joined the picket line at La Mode, where workers are on strike, fighting for recognition of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. He also met with ILGWU fighters at Sea Fashions, where a recent strike had ended in success for the union.

Nelson also spoke to a meeting of the Los Angeles Student Coalition, a leading organization in the city's anti-apartheid movement. Nelson and Croft spoke to the "Welcome home, Nelson Mandela" rally March 11.

Striking Machinists from San Francisco International Airport, Bob Stellato and Jeff Betancourt, joined Collins at many of the miner's Bay Area meetings.

Collins and an Eastern striker met with United Auto Workers Local 2244 members from the NUMMI assembly plant in Fremont. UAW members there recently sold 700 "No Lorenzo" buttons.

At a large meeting of Longshore union delegates in San Francisco, Collins received a standing ovation. "I'm not a professional speaker, but when someone sets out to destroy my union, I become a professional fighter," Collins told them.

Strikers keep up pressure

Continued from front page
ropes and we must keep him there. Hold that line and don't give him an inch."

Frank Lorenzo, chairman of Eastern's parent company Texas Air Corp., spearheaded the union-busting drive at Eastern that forced the Machinists to take strike action on March 4, 1989.

Eastern filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy five days later. The airline's operations were virtually paralyzed for the next four months by the Machinists strike, backed at that time by Eastern pilots and flight attendants. The airline began increasing its flights in July and has been trying to rebuild as a smaller, non-union carrier.

Although Eastern has been able to attract passengers with its rock-bottom fares, support for the strike and concern over safety problems have kept many passengers away, including the business travelers needed to generate sufficient income. Travel agents — nervous about selling tickets that might not be honored if Eastern goes under — have also been steering passengers to other carriers.

Having lost a record \$852 million in 1989, Eastern has been living off proceeds from the sale of its assets, including the Northeast corridor shuttle, gates and equipment in Philadelphia, and more. It is currently trying to finalize sale of its Latin American routes and other assets to American Airlines for \$471 million. The sale was approved by the bankruptcy court on March 29; approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation is still needed.

After presenting a bankruptcy reorganization plan on February 22 that called for repaying its creditors at a rate of 50 cents on the dollar, Eastern announced a month later that it could not meet that commitment. After Eastern lowered its offer to 25 cents for every dollar, the creditors committee decided to seek appointment of a trustee to sell the airline.

The unsecured creditors include jet engine manufacturer General Electric, Boeing Company and Airbus Industrie — which make planes, Eastern bondholders, the IAM, Air Line Pilots Association, and Transport Workers Union, which represents flight attendants. ALPA and TWU officials ended backing for the Machinists strike last November.

Pension fund short

Other financial problems are also haunting Eastern. The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., the federal agency that oversees pension plans, has filed a \$1.1 billion claim in bankruptcy court due to a shortfall in the carrier's pension fund, the IAM reports. On March 26 IAM Airline Coordinator Bill Scheri testified in Congress that Texas Air

had "borrowed" \$180 million of Eastern's pension funds for other purposes.

Eastern has recorded a damage rate for January 1990 that was 150 percent higher than the rate for the same month last year, costing the airline millions. Damage by maintenance and engineering scabs jumped 700 percent. An internal Eastern memorandum obtained by the IAM points to the poor training and high turnover of scabs hired to do ramp work as a big factor in the jump. In Atlanta, for example, 3,500 people have been trained for 900 ramp jobs in the last six months.

Confidence in Eastern's safety practices was also not helped by the April 1 reports that a pilot who tested positive for cocaine use last July was kept flying. "It was a clerical error," said an Eastern spokeswoman. The pilot was fired March 20.

The April 3 IAM strike bulletin reported that Continental, also owned by Texas Air, is getting deeper in debt and selling more assets in order to stay solvent. Eastern's creditors agreed to the airline's February 22 reorganization plan only after \$180 million in Continental assets was put up to back the plan.

'Stand up to Lorenzo'

Strikers in many cities have continued to reach out for support, following the successful anniversary picket lines and rallies that took place around the country to celebrate one year on the picket line March 3-4.

In Miami more than 150 Eastern strikers

and other unionists turned out for the first "Stand Up to Lorenzo" weekly expanded picket line on March 30. Strikers covered the employee entrances and parking lot gates where scabs enter and leave work. A dozen striking Greyhound workers were also on hand, along with other unionists. Three postal workers unions will be guests at the next expanded picket line April 6.

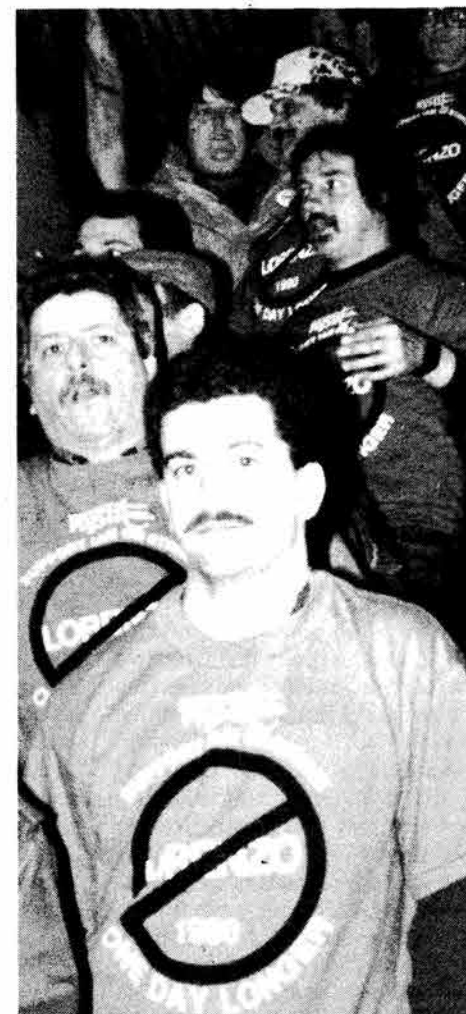
On March 31 some 200 strikers and supporters from other unions held a "walk-through" at New York's La Guardia Airport, the first time such an action has been held inside the terminal there. Despite a heavy police presence, strikers walked through the terminal, drawing interested stares from passengers and smiles and waves from other airline workers. The walk-through started quietly, but as the line neared the Eastern ticket counters, chants of "Union yes, Lorenzo no!" grew louder and louder.

Expanded picket lines are planned by strikers in Philadelphia and Detroit for April 14.

On April 3 Frank Lorenzo — traveling unaccompanied — arrived at Boston's airport to catch the Trump Shuttle to New York. Eight strikers — who had received a tip that Lorenzo would be there — confronted the Texas Air boss as he sought to scurry into the terminal.

"You're going down," the strikers shouted. "We're going to bury you."

Striking Eastern Machinists Jeff Miller from Miami and Maggi Pucci from Boston contributed to this article.



Militant/Mark Satinoff
March 31 "walk-through" at New York's La Guardia Airport drew 200 strikers, supporters. Other airline workers inside terminal were glad to see strike remains strong.

Machinists dealt blow at Trump

BY SUSAN LaMONT

In a blow to the International Association of Machinists, the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association has won a union representation election among mechanics at the Trump Shuttle. Results of the voting, which took place earlier in March, were announced March 29. The vote was 68 for AMFA, 18 for the IAM. Mechanics at Trump's operations in New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C., took part in the election.

AMFA, which currently has no union contracts with any airline, is a company-minded outfit that specializes in raiding operations against the IAM. Their stock-in-trade is to promote AMFA as an association for "skilled" aircraft mechanics who, they say, could do better for themselves by not being in the same organization as unskilled ramp workers and cleaners.

Fleet service workers at Trump, who do ramp and cleaning work, remain in the IAM.

"Workers in fleet service were disappointed with the outcome of the vote," said Trump Machinist Yvonne Perez-Grajales, who works at New York's La Guardia Airport. She explained that the Transport Workers Union, representing flight attendants, had begun negotiations with Trump for a new contract, and the IAM would do so shortly. AMFA will now be bargaining for mechanics.

"This is a bad time to be divided," Perez-Grajales noted. "Borman, Lorenzo, and Trump — they all tried to divide us up." Frank Borman headed up Eastern Airlines before Frank Lorenzo bought the carrier in 1986.

The New York-Boston-Washington, shuttle was bought from Eastern last spring by gambling and real estate speculator Donald Trump. Until the shuttle restarted operations under Trump, the workers who went to work at Trump were on strike at Eastern.

On June 7, 1989, the pilots and flight attendants who had been hired from Eastern's work force reported to work at Trump. Assuring strikers that Trump was a "friend" of the unions, IAM officials ordered the Eastern strikers' picket line taken down at the shuttle and told IAM members who had been hired to report for work that day — despite the lack of a signed contract with Trump. It took several weeks for a new contract to be finalized, one that ended up including a number of union-weakening provisions.

An aspect of AMFA's approach to Trump mechanics is to attack the Eastern strike, reports La Guardia Eastern strike leader Emie Mailhot. AMFA could have gotten the mechanics out of the strike by cutting a separate deal with Lorenzo, AMFA supporters say.

'Least active' voted AMFA

Jerry Oliveira, a Trump aircraft mechanic at Washington National Airport, was angered by the vote. "AMFA was brought in by one or two guys soon after Trump restarted the shuttle. It's a con-artist operation — all they have is associate members. They don't have any dues-paying members anywhere."

"The people who voted for AMFA were the least active in the union," he continued, "those who never went to a union meeting or walked the picket line. 'You're a professional,' the AMFA supporters told the mechanics."

The Machinists "assumed there wasn't going to be a vote," said Oliveira, and so they didn't campaign to convince the mechanics to remain in the IAM. Oliveira is vice-president of IAM Local 796, which also includes Washington, D.C., Eastern strikers.

"Trump is ecstatic that AMFA won the vote," Oliveira added.

Hugh Brady, an Eastern striker at La Guardia airport, explained that leaving the IAM would hurt the Trump mechanics. "This is a bad move for them," he said. "Now they're very small. They don't have a large organization like the IAM, and they'll be under the control of Trump. After what they've done, who in the labor movement will support them? Trump could ask them for a 50 percent pay cut, and what could they do? If they refused, they could easily be replaced."

"This vote hurts the Eastern strike too. Not only have the mechanics left the strike — they've left the union. It's like a slap in the face to the strikers," said Boston Eastern striker Maggie Pucci. "This outcome wasn't inevitable. We need to begin working now to convince the Trump mechanics that their future lies with other airline workers and they should be part of the IAM."

Greyhound blocks talks with strikers

BY SUSAN LaMONT

As the strike by 9,000 workers against Greyhound Lines Inc. entered its second month, the company continued to block negotiations with the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Branding the striking drivers, cleaners, mechanics, and clerks as "terrorists," the company charges that the ATU is to blame for incidents in which shots have been fired at scab-driven buses. On March 31 the driver of a Southeastern Trailways bus taking a Greyhound route was shot and wounded near Nashville, Tennessee. Three days later another Southeastern Trailways bus was shot at near Louisville, Kentucky.

Greyhound chairman Fred Currey says the company will not reopen talks until a week has gone by without a shooting. Last week, the company put up a \$100,000 bounty for information leading to the conviction of those allegedly responsible for the shootings. Negotiations broke off March 18.

ATU leaders have repeatedly explained that the union opposes violence and is not responsible for the shootings. ATU Local 1613 Executive Board member Joe Semmes, said after the March 31 incident in Nashville, "This shooting last night leads me to believe it is outside work and not related to any of our unions whatsoever." The driver who was shot, Semmes added, "is a member of the same labor organization we are."

Meanwhile, strikers continue to be har-

assed and injured by scabs and cops on picket lines around the country. One striker, Bob Waterhouse, was killed March 3 in Redding, California, by a scab-driven bus. In New York, striker Mack Watts was seriously injured on the Port Authority bus terminal picket line March 29. Another striker was arrested there March 31 after being chased by a scab driver armed with a knife. The scab was also arrested.

"The sheriffs escort the scabs in over here," explained striking driver Gordon Rawlings recently while on picket duty at the Philadelphia Greyhound terminal. "I was hit twice when I was on the line. One time, as a bus was pulling in, the sheriffs decided to take a break. The driver hit me and forced me back, then hit me two more times, while the cops watched in their Bronco."

In Kansas City, Missouri, striker Larry Butler was arrested for "disobeying a direct order" while picketing the bus station with 100 other unionists March 30. The next day striker Brent Cole was arrested, along with Butler and his wife Judy after they were assaulted by the manager of the bus station restaurant. Judy Butler was roughed up by the cops and had to be hospitalized for six hours.

Strike support grows

Support for the walkout, which began March 2, is growing. Rallies are set for April 6 at bus terminals around the country.

On March 26 seven students from the Black Student Union at Miami Dade Community College-Wolfson campus — located across the street from the bus station — joined the strikers' picket line in Miami. The BSU is encouraging students — who frequently ride Greyhound — to support the strike, explained BSU President Joseph Shafey.

Striking Eastern Airlines Machinists joined Greyhound strikers in Washington, D.C., at their picket line March 29 and 30. A March 29 rally for the Greyhound workers, cosponsored by the Metro Washington, D.C., AFL-CIO, drew 100 unionists, including Teamsters and Seafarers.

In Louisville, Kentucky, members of the pipefitters, electrical workers, auto workers, and Teamsters unions swelled the Greyhound strikers' picket line April 1. Members of ADAPT, a group advocating rights for the disabled, were also on hand. "Our group has been supporting the strikers around the country because the ATU supports the Americans with Disabilities Act in Congress," said ADAPT member Anne Sautel. Some 30 disabled people also picketed the Greyhound ticket counter in New York April 1.

Richard Gaeta from Philadelphia, Bronson Rozier from Louisville, Michele Yellin from Miami, Kevin Shay from Kansas City, and Susie Winsten from Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

New coalfield reader: 'We're a Scargill family'

BY PETE CLIFFORD

SHEFFIELD, England — Since the seven-week circulation campaign began March 17 to win 7,500 new readers to the socialist press, sales teams have been traveling

Mineworkers President Arthur Scargill for slain NUM members David Gareth Jones and Joe Green, killed during the 1984-85 strike. He told the team he considered the paper a serious one and would urge

of workers on a given job operation) at the Hatfield mine near Doncaster. They had attempted this at two other mines as well but were beaten back by strikes. Dave Douglass, NUM lodge delegate at the Hatfield mine, told team members, "it was apparent that the whole purpose was to avoid the union."

Union members at Hatfield called a meeting and 700 miners turned out and voted to strike. "Traditionally in the Doncaster area," Douglass explained, "if a strike is not resolved in a week, miners at the other Doncaster mines will strike in solidarity." He said the Doncaster area had supplied the biggest number of pickets during the 1984-85 strike but that the government had tried to break the unity since then.

After a week on strike rank-and-file pickets began visiting the other six Doncaster mines and won immediate strike solidarity action. The government responded by issuing court injunctions immediately. "The irony," said Douglass, "is that the government and employers are gloating over strikes and protests in Eastern Europe but here one judge can outvote 700 men."

In the end, miners in all 17 mines in South Yorkshire stayed off the job and, although plans were in the works to end the strike, British Coal backed off their demands at Hatfield.

Throughout South Yorkshire miners' union activists told the sales

teams they felt stronger from the fight.

NUM under attack

Another highlight was the discussion in the coalfields around the attacks the NUM is under today. Media allegations charge that the union received money from Libya during the 1984-85 strike and that NUM leader Scargill and others misused union funds. The team prepared a leaflet with an article on the slander campaign reprinted from the *Militant*, which was well received.

Alan Bailey, NUM branch secretary at Armthorpe told the *Militant* that his union had sent a letter to the national headquarters as a "vote of confidence in the union leaders." During the strike he said he would have "collected money from anywhere to alleviate the hardship."

He believes the union is under attack because of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's "problems with the economy and the poll tax." He reported a contingent of 30 miners from Armthorpe planned to join a London demonstration against the poll tax.

The *Militant* sales teams ran into similar stories of support for poll tax protests in many mining villages. Near Doncaster in Askern 150 miners had joined a protest picket line the previous week.

The highest sales have been from

working-class communities and shopping areas. "We're a Scargill family here," declared a miner's wife near the Bentley mine as she signed up for a subscription.

In a housing community near the Sunnyside mine, outside Rotham, a miner bought a copy, saying he had seen it earlier in the day at the union office and liked the look of it.

Three of the new subscribers, including the NUM branch at the Hatfield mine, took advantage of a special offer: a *Militant* subscription, *New International No. 5* featuring "The Coming Revolution in South Africa" by Jack Barnes, and *The Struggle Is My Life* by Nelson Mandela for £10.

The *Yorkshire Miner*, published by the NUM in the area, carried a three-page supplement in the March issue featuring an interview with a South African mine union leader. Pete Naylor, NUM branch secretary from Manton, told the team he was organizing support in his mine for South African miner "Lucky" Mornanga, who is on death row.

The sales teams have also met workers from other industries at plant gates and in communities. In the next few weeks teams will visit the coalfields of Lancashire, Durham, South Wales, Staffordshire, North Yorkshire, and Nottinghamshire.



GETTING THE MILITANT AROUND

through Britain's coalfields to introduce the *Militant* to coal miners.

The teams spent the first two weeks in the South Yorkshire area where its 17 mines were at the center of the national 1984-85 miners' strike. *Militant* supporters — rail workers, engineering workers, and a U.S. steelworker — visited 16 pitheads (portals) as well as working-class neighborhoods and shopping areas in the region. Miners and their families purchased 154 copies of the *Militant* and nine subscriptions. The biggest pithead sale was at the Bentley mine near Doncaster — 11 miners picked up a copy of the paper at three shift changes.

Among the first to get a copy of the *Militant* was a miner who had seen the paper the previous weekend at a memorial rally in South Kirkby addressed by National Union of

his union lodge to get it.

At the Treeton mine near here a young miner stopped to buy a copy, telling team members he had been jailed for six weeks for picketing during the 1984-85 strike. He was interested in coverage on the Pittston coal strike. While on vacation in Florida last year he had traveled to Pittston miners' Camp Solidarity in Virginia and wanted to follow the fight of U.S. miners.

Recent wave of struggle

At each mine team members visited the NUM offices to meet and talk with union leaders. Many NUM officers discussed the recent strike wave through the South Yorkshire coalfields.

In early March, without union agreement, the government's British Coal tried to impose a change of manning (a reduction in the number

Bougainville rebels win cease-fire in S. Pacific

BY BOB ANDREWS

SYDNEY, Australia — A cease-fire between the Papua New Guinea Defence Forces and the fighters for the Bougainville Revolutionary Army went into effect early last month, ceasing hostilities in what had become the deepest military conflict in the South Pacific.

Bougainville, an island with a population of 150,000, is part of Papua New Guinea, a former colony of Australia granted independence in 1975. It is the site of the largest open-cut copper mine in the world, the major share of which is owned by the Australia-based mining multinational Conzinc Riotinto Australia (CRA).

The mine was opened in 1972 under the former colonial administration and has long

been a source of resentment for the indigenous people of the island. In recent years traditional landowners, led by Frances Ona, a former employee of the mine, have raised the demand for the equivalent of US\$10 billion in compensation for the mine's impact on the environment and subsistence economy of the region. They seek a renegotiation of the Bougainville Copper Agreement under which landowner trustees receive a mere one-quarter of 1 percent of the mine's revenue.

In November 1988, after their demands for compensation were rejected, the landowners began to wage a war of sabotage to close the mine. As police and military action by the PNG government escalated, the rebels revived old demands from the time of independence — for secession from Papua New Guinea, and possible incorporation into the neighboring Solomon Islands. In 15 months of armed conflict more than 100 people have been killed, with the most serious clashes taking place in January this year.

Production at the mine ceased last May, hitting not only CRA's profits, but the PNG government's revenues as well. Bougainville copper provided up to 50 percent of PNG's export revenue and up to 20 percent of the government's budget. Severe austerity mea-

sures have been introduced in PNG since the mine was closed.

The Australian government, in response to the threat to both CRA's investment and the stability of its neocolony, has provided growing military support to Papua New Guinea on top of its regular training of the PNG armed forces. Four Australian army Iroquois helicopters were sent to Bougainville where they were flown by "civilian" pilots from Australia and New Zealand. An Australian army rapid deployment force was kept on alert at Townsville in northern Australia, ostensibly to help evacuate Australian civilians if the conflict had escalated.

Some 700 PNG troops were sent to Bougainville to impose a state of emergency during which 4,000 people were placed in internment camps and more than 13,000 more displaced, fleeing into the jungle. The troops have been widely condemned for brutalizing prisoners. Church leaders in Bougainville began to speak out against human rights abuses by the army.

In January the Bougainville Revolutionary Army was able to launch some of its biggest actions of the war in response to an offensive by PNG troops. And the use of Australian army helicopters in the offensive began to draw protests and opposition in Australia.

Since the cease-fire came into effect, PNG troops and police have been withdrawn from the island, leaving police functions in the hands of the BRA forces.

Cops attack poll tax protesters in Britain

Continued from front page

sitdown occurred, other marchers would be allowed to pass by them. Instead, the police prevented this, sending in cops on horseback who flayed demonstrators indiscriminately. At another point, police vans were simply driven into the crowds. When demonstrators responded, "25ers," cops in full riot gear, charged into the crowds.

Home Secretary David Waddington (the minister of the interior) endorsed the police account and mainly blamed the Labour Party for refusing to discipline the 30 MP's who have publicly stated their refusal to pay the tax. Labour MP Roy Hattersley denounced the home secretary for bringing in what he termed "party politics." At the same time he called for unity between what he termed "all democratic forces" and called for "stiff and exemplary punishment" for those arrested.

The new poll tax, which went into effect in England and Wales on April 1, was introduced in Scotland a year ago. It replaces the previous system that taxed households on the basis of the value of their property with a head tax on all adults 18 years of age and over. Everyone in a local area will be charged the same amount regardless of their income.

The size of the demonstration and the furor that it caused reflects not only deep-seated opposition to the inequity of the poll tax but a more general stiffening of resistance against the attacks of the government on working people, especially the deep cuts in social benefits.

The demonstrators demanded "Don't pay! Don't collect!" — the latter demand aimed at urging local government bodies controlled by the Labour Party not to collect the poll tax.

Labour MP, Tony Benn, speaking at the rally, called for "unity between payers and nonpayers alike." The poll tax, he added "is unjust, undemocratic and unacceptable. The opposition to it is so powerful that we can defeat it if we stick together." He added that the demonstration would have been a million strong if it had been supported by the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party.

New York 'Daily News' contract negotiations continue past deadline

NEW YORK — Talks between the New York *Daily News* and the Allied Printing Trades Council, representing the 10 unions at the paper, continued as contracts expired at midnight March 30.

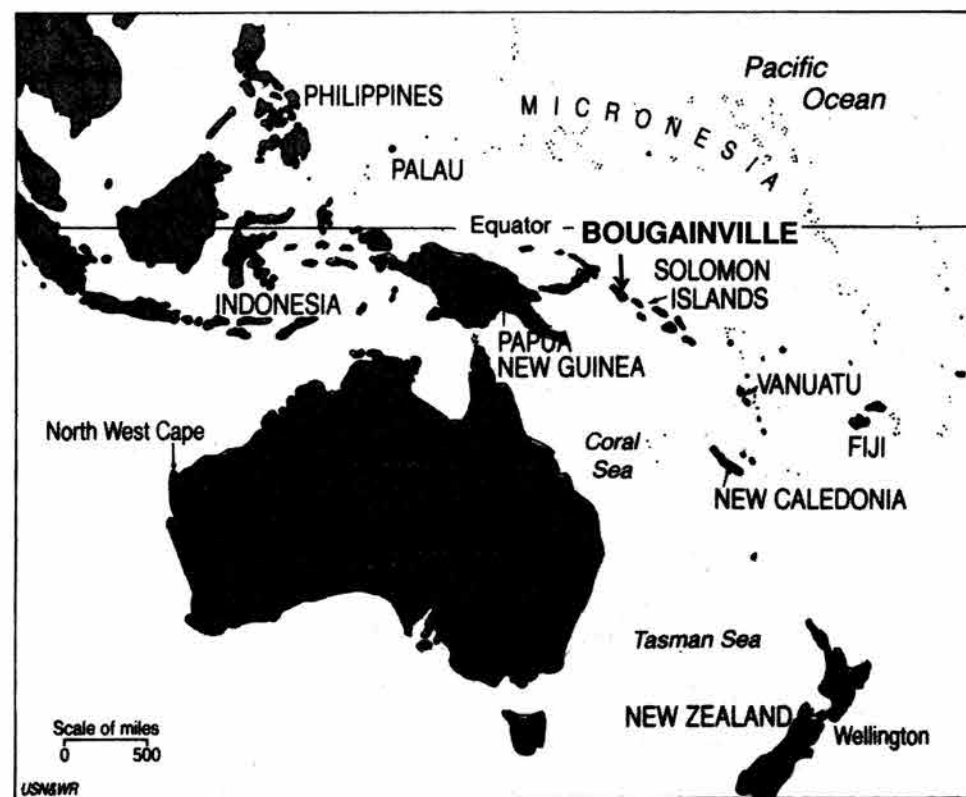
The *Daily News*, owned by the Tribune Co. of Chicago, is pressing the unions for major cuts in wages, pensions, and vacations, as well as work-rule changes and work-force reductions. *Daily News* publisher James Hoge has said that payroll expenses must be reduced by 25 percent.

The *News* has set up a scab newspaper site in Secaucus, New Jersey, for use in the event of a strike, and begun advertising for scab drivers, mailers, pressmen, and reporters.

Six of the 10 unions in the council have authorized strikes. Leaders of the International Typographical Union, which has a no-strike pledge as part of the "lifetime" job guarantees negotiated in earlier contracts, have said ITU members will cross picket lines in a strike.

On March 28 the mailers' union proposed a six-year contract with 6 percent annual wage increases. In January the *News* had proposed a one-year contract with a wage freeze and no-strike pledge.

While union officials have reiterated that they want to avoid a strike, many union members fear the company will declare an impasse in negotiations and lock out the unions.



Target week to give drive needed push

BY RONI McCANN

With four weeks left in the seven-week international circulation campaign to win 7,500 new readers to the socialist press, supporters around the world face the challenge of getting on schedule and in position to achieve the goals of the drive by May 5.

Preparations are being made now for a special target week, called for April 14-21. During a target week supporters of the socialist press redouble their efforts to win new readers.

A sales team will hit the road in Iowa and South Dakota April 14, introducing the *Militant* to working people at packinghouse gates, airports, Greyhound picket lines, in farming communities, and on campuses. In Canada supporters will be traveling in the eastern region, selling the press to workers in the timber and paper industries, in the fishing and fish-processing industries on the Atlantic Coast, and in the coal mining area of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia.

Supporters in West Virginia reorganized their petitioning effort to place socialist candidates on the ballot in order to put selling

Militant subscriptions at the center of the campaign. This has helped lead to more subscriptions. Petitioners sold 16 *Militant* subscriptions in the last four days.

Pittsburgh supporters spent the last week getting the word out on the tour of Cuban economist and author Carlos Tablada. Sales at the University of Pittsburgh, a miners' day parade, a festival on Central America and the Caribbean, and a forum protesting racist attacks on campuses netted 18 new subscribers. Four people attending meetings to hear Tablada signed up to subscribe to the *Militant*.

In Miami at a meeting to hear one of the daughters of South African freedom fighter Nelson Mandela, seven persons decided to subscribe to the *Militant*, one to *Lutte ouvrière*, and another purchased a copy of *New Internationalist*.

The best results in Miami are from sales on the job. Two supporters at a plant in Coral Springs have sold four *Militant* subscriptions, exceeding their goal. Seventeen workers in the Machinists and steelworkers unions have purchased subscriptions or magazines so far.

On Eastern Airlines picket lines and at



Militant/Jane Roland

Greensboro, North Carolina, Eastern Airlines strike event March 4. Sales to strikers are part of action plan needed to reach out, win new readers.

strike activities, supporters of the *Militant* are expanding their efforts.

"The *Militant* is the only place strikers can get a discussion on our fight," said Ernie Mailhot, a Machinists Local 1018 strike leader from New York's La Guardia airport.

Mailhot explained he will be stepping up his efforts to win new subscribers. Already several fellow strikers have renewed subscriptions on their own, underscoring for Mailhot the increased opportunities to circulate the paper.

Farm meet calls for fight

BY PRISCILLA SCHENK

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — More than 100 farmers, students, Native Americans, and union and political activists from across the United States and Canada gathered in this suburb of Minneapolis on March 9-11 to discuss the crisis facing working farmers and the next steps in the farmers' fight.

The leadership meeting was called by the North American Farm Alliance (NAFA) and marked the beginning of the organization's efforts to organize a membership base in rural areas.

"They've created an atmosphere in this country that there is no farm crisis," Merle Hansen, president of NAFA told the conference. "We have to make a national issue of this." Since 1945 more than 4 million family farmers have lost their land.

Ed Marks, executive director of NAFA, reported that the national board adopted three goals for 1990. The first is to participate in introducing a bill before Congress supporting the rights of Black farmers; second, to launch an action campaign of speaking, demonstrations, rallies, and other activities to draw attention to the farm crisis; and third, to build and develop membership groups in local areas.

John Zippert from the Federation of Southern Cooperatives reported on the Minority Farmers' Rights Bill. "The Federation/Land Assistance Fund and other groups have been working on a legislative strategy to provide affirmative action and more equitable treatment of Black and other minority farmers and landowners." The bill seeks to "stem the tide of Black land loss," Zippert explained.

"The year 1910 was the high point of Black

land ownership in this country, when Blacks owned over 15 million acres," he said. "Despite other progress our nation has made in civil rights, today the remaining 50,000 Black landowners possess less than 4 million acres." Zippert estimated land loss for Black farmers at 300,000 to 500,000 acres per year. Sponsors of the bill hope to have it discussed as part of the 1990 Farm Bill.

Ideas for an action campaign were discussed at several workshops and conference sessions. Daryl Ringer, a farm activist from Kansas, proposed setting up a speakers' bureau and joining with other organizations on key local issues.

An April 7 concert in Indianapolis called Farm Aid was pointed to as an opportunity to bring the farm crisis to national attention. Hansen proposed that NAFA call for the resignation of Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Vetter and to "greet him with picket signs wherever he goes."

Plenary sessions discussed the involvement of rural women, the environment and agriculture, and building coalitions and alliances with workers and organizations in the cities.

An International Association of Machinists member on strike at Eastern Airlines addressed a session of the conference. The striker was well received by participants, who saw the importance of connecting the struggles of workers and farmers.

Other organizations with members at the meeting included the Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Rural Vermont, Minnesota Farm Advocates Program, Wisconsin Farm Unity Alliance, and the National Farmers Union of Canada.

W. Virginia ballot fight appealed

Continued from Page 2

Coming Economic Crisis were sold.

Speaking inside the cavernous state capitol rotunda, McBride told reporters that undemocratic election laws like those in West Virginia "demonstrate the hypocrisy of the current U.S. government. The Bush administration and Congress send thousands of people, like Jimmy Carter, to meddle in the elections of sovereign countries like Nicaragua. But we can't have a free and democratic election in West Virginia!"

Ed Cabbell, a historian and civil rights activist from Morgantown, West Virginia, added his support at the news conference as a person interested in democratic rights for all.

After the conference, McBride and SWP candidate for state treasurer Maggie McCraw presented West Virginia Secretary of State Ken Hechler with a copy of the U.S. Supreme Court lawsuit against him.

The next day, a news conference was held in Morgantown where coal miner and SWP candidate for state attorney general Clay

Dennison spoke. He said that the "laws of West Virginia are used against working people and the unions. My experiences in the fights of the United Mine Workers are that working people need to get into politics."

ACLU attorney Bastress again fielded dozens of questions about the suit, and Wilbur Jenkins, West Virginia University professor, lent his support.

There was broad media coverage of the two press conferences: four TV stations, several radio stations, both wire services, and the major dailies in Charleston and Morgantown covered the conferences.

John Anderson, former member of Congress and a 1980 independent presidential candidate, sent a message.

The Rainbow Lobby, an independent non-partisan citizens' lobby, also sent a statement of support.

SWP candidates urge that support and funds for the appeal to the Supreme Court be sent to Fair Ballot Appeal Fund, c/o West Virginia Civil Liberties Union, Box 1509, Charleston, W.Va. 25323.

Subscription Drive SCOREBOARD

DRIVE GOALS		Total		Militant		New Int'l		Perspectiva Mundial		Lutte ouvrière	
Areas	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Miami	200	54	27%	110	37	40	13	30	1	20	3
Newark, NJ	385	93	24%	210	33	95	40	65	13	15	7
Des Moines, Iowa	160	36	23%	123	27	15	9	20	0	2	0
Los Angeles	400	87	22%	210	39	75	9	110	39	5	0
Boston	190	38	20%	125	26	25	2	30	9	10	1
Brooklyn	340	67	20%	200	38	60	18	60	9	20	2
Philadelphia	160	31	19%	108	11	25	17	25	2	2	1
Seattle	140	27	19%	108	17	15	0	15	10	2	0
New York	500	93	19%	280	42	95	25	110	23	15	3
Omaha, Neb.	110	21	19%	80	16	15	1	13	4	2	0
Greensboro, NC	115	21	18%	90	18	15	1	8	2	2	0
Pittsburgh	140	25	18%	113	20	20	1	5	4	2	0
Chicago	280	45	16%	185	17	45	23	45	3	5	2
Washington, DC	145	22	15%	100	14	20	0	20	8	5	0
Twin Cities, Minn.	210	31	15%	162	18	30	11	15	1	3	1
San Francisco	220	31	14%	150	21	30	2	35	8	5	0
Atlanta	165	21	13%	117	10	30	11	15	0	3	0
Houston	145	18	12%	98	13	20	3	25	2	2	0
Kansas City	105	13	12%	78	6	15	7	10	0	2	0
Baltimore	150	17	11%	112	13	25	1	10	3	3	0
Portland, Ore.	100	11	11%	75	11	13	0	10	0	2	0
Oakland, Calif.	185	20	11%	120	19	25	0	35	1	5	0
Austin, Minn.	75	8	11%	53	6	10	0	10	2	2	0
Detroit	250	20	8%	200	18	30	0	15	2	5	0
Price, Utah	75	6	8%	53	4	10	0	10	2	2	0
Birmingham, Ala.	150	11	7%	123	10	20	1	5	0	2	0
Cleveland	110	8	7%	78	8	20	0	10	0	2	0
Salt Lake City	190	13	7%	138	12	30	0	20	1	2	0
St. Louis	200	9	5%	162	7	25	1	10	1	3	0
Charleston, WV	115	5	4%	88	3	20	2	5	0	2	0
Phoenix	85	3	4%	53	3	10	0	20	0	2	0
Morgantown, WV	150	5	3%	113	4	30	1	5	0	2	0
Cincinnati	7	0	0%	7	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Las Vegas, Nev.	12	1	8%	12	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other U.S.	-	19	-	-	18	-	-	-	1	-	-
U.S. TOTAL	5,964	930	16%	4,034	560	953	199	821	151	156	20
AUSTRALIA											
	50	9	18%	25	9	8	0	15	0	2	0
BRITAIN											
Manchester	74	18	24%	50	8	20	10	3	0	1	0
London	162	34	21%	105	26	30	7	25	1	2	0
Sheffield	107	13	12%	65	11	30	2	10	0	2	0
Cardiff	59	7	12%	40	7	10	0	7	0	2	0
Other Britain	-	6	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
BRITAIN TOTAL	402	78	19%	260	58	90	19	45	1	7	0
CANADA											
Vancouver	115	36	31%	75	30	20	1	15	2	5	3
Montréal	170	52	31%	65	16	20	7	45	8	40	21
Toronto	190	38	20%	120	25	30	6	30	6	10	1
CANADA TOTAL	475	126	27%	260	71	70	14	90	16	55	25
FRANCE											
	35	21	60%	5	2	5	10	5	2	20	7
ICELAND											
	41	11	27%	35	8	3	2	2	1	1	0
NEW ZEALAND											
Christchurch	55	22	40%	45	21	6	1	3	0	1	0
Wellington	70	28	40%	54	27	11	0	4	1	1	0
Auckland	100	22	22%	80	19	15	3	4	0	1	0
Other N. Z.	14	0	0%	10	0	4	0	-	-	-	-
N. Z. TOTAL	239	72	30%	189	67	36	4	11	1	3	0
SWEDEN											
	76	12	16%	45	6	5	0	25	6	1	0
PUERTO RICO											
	20	5	25%	2	3	1	0	16	2	1	0
Int'l teams	155	0	0%	75	0	25	0	50	0	5	0
Other Int'l	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
TOTAL	7,457	1,269	17%	4,930	784	1,196	248	1,080	185	251	52
DRIVE GOALS											
	7,500			4,950		1,200		1,100		250	
TO BE ON SCHEDULE											
	2,143	29%		1,414		343		314		71	

Indian Congress rallies in South

BY GREG McCARTAN

LENASIA, South Africa — "This is a historic day. This is the first time the organization that is going to lead our people to freedom is being introduced to us here. And that is the African National Congress!" said a leader of the Transvaal Indian Congress in opening a rally of 10,000 here.

The day-long event in this Indian community began with performances of traditional African and Indian dance and song.

In an interview prior to the rally, Firoz Cachalia, press officer of the Transvaal Indian Congress, said the day's events and the speeches by the ANC leaders are important because "the unbanning of the ANC makes it possible for us to start to rebuild the legal structures of the ANC within the country."

Banned by the apartheid regime in 1960, the ANC has had to function as an underground and exile organization. Other anti-apartheid organizations and coalitions arose, which support the ANC and the Freedom Charter, the guiding document of the liberation struggle.

The Transvaal Indian Congress, for example, is an affiliate of the anti-apartheid coalition, the United Democratic Front.

With the ANC now unbanned, these organizations are discussing the best way to reorganize the liberation movement inside South Africa. The mass rally here was organized so activists could hear the thinking of the ANC leadership on such questions.

The membership of the Lenasia Youth League, Women's Congress, and Student Congress is primarily Indian, "but this is an unfortunate result of apartheid," Cachalia explained. "The policy of these organizations is clearly nonracial and open to all."

Two high school students, both members of the Lenasia Student Congress, were excited about the day's events. "We have been fighting for the ANC to be able to have an office and operate openly," said Mohammed Vally. Sunta Nlego agreed and added, "We need to educate people more and let them know about the Freedom Charter."

Longtime leader

Ahmed Kathrada, one of the main speakers at the rally, was welcomed by cheers and chants of "Viva!" A longtime leader of the Indian Congress and the ANC, Kathrada was released from prison with Walter Sisulu and other ANC leaders late last year.

"Lenasia was forced upon the people as a result of the evil policies of apartheid, a diabolical policy of apartheid which sought to crush the economic life of the Indian community," Kathrada said in his address.

The ANC leader explained that the Indian people residing in Lenasia had been forcibly removed from Johannesburg and that "under the Group Areas Act the government has destroyed many, many established communities in South Africa."

The Group Areas Act was adopted in 1950. One of the cornerstones of the apartheid system, it is still in force today. The legislation set up segregated areas in cities, towns, and the countryside for residential living, commercial activity, and industry. Lenasia is just one example of how residential areas across the country are divided into "white" cities, and separate Indian, Coloured, and African towns.

While those classified by the apartheid regime as Indian and Coloured enjoy some rights not held by those classified as Africans, together all three groups constitute the oppressed Black population. Blacks make up 85 percent of all people in South Africa.

There are 1 million Indians. Many are descendants of indentured laborers brought from the Indian subcontinent to work on the sugar plantations.

While Lenasia is economically better off than most African townships, every Indian, like most of the Black population, has a social and legal status that denies them equality with any white person — no matter how rich or poor.

"One of the aims of apartheid," Kathrada told the rally, "was to keep the different sections of the people in South Africa apart from one another, so that they do not know each other." The regime "went out of its way to sow suspicion and hatred of one another."

Scoring the regime's attempt to pin the blame on the ANC for unrest throughout the country, Kathrada explained the unrest "is a direct result of the policies of apartheid. Until apartheid is abolished," he said, "this type of unrest will continue."

'Join the ANC'

The ANC stalwart concluded by encouraging "people who are present here and all over South Africa to join the ANC in their thousands to strengthen this organization because this is the only one that will lead our country to a free, nonracial South Africa."

The United Democratic Front's publicity secretary, Patrick Lekota, told the rally, "Since before 1910 the masses of our people demanded of the whites in South Africa that there could never be a future unless that future was a common one, guided by a government that represented Black and white alike."

The decision by the regime to take steps toward such a future represents a victory of the struggle against apartheid, he said. "We are still ready to say to white South Africans, 'We have not lost confidence in your capacity to search for a common future,'" he said to loud cheers.

Lekota challenged the anti-apartheid fighters at the rally to "not wear the colors of the movement like a crown but to strengthen the movement on a daily basis by winning new men and women to it."

Sisulu addresses rally

The Lenasia rally was one of the many such mass meetings being held across the country. Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Kathrada, and other ANC leaders released from jail have addressed hundreds of thousands at such events over the past few months.

Sisulu told the Lenasia rally, "You, like the vast majority of Africans and so-called Coloureds, have been subjected to one of the most inhuman systems of oppression and exploitation. And it is our common experience of inequality, poverty, race discrimination, humiliation, exploitation, and violence that have brought our people and their political organs into fighting unity."

The Freedom Charter, adopted by a broad conference in 1955 and championed by the ANC, declares, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people." The ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations

demand the Group Areas Act and other such legislation be scrapped.

Government figures have repeatedly defended maintaining "group rights" in the country. In an interview with the *Sowetan*, de Klerk rejected one-person, one-vote because "it would not protect the rights of minorities," meaning whites. He stressed that each group had to keep its "own history, tradition, and origins."

In addition, the government recently announced with great fanfare a new budget in which more funds are made available for education and housing for Blacks. A South African finance minister said, "Yes, we are taking from the rich to give to the poor." He added, "That is the only way to fight the African National Congress and socialism."

Sisulu argued against both of these government initiatives. "It is strange," he said, that those who have persistently failed to satisfy the rights of the majority for centuries are the first to call for the protection of

minority or group rights.

"It is surprising that when we do not even enjoy the most basic democratic rights today, we are asked to give certain guarantees to those who rule over us."

The ANC "rejects forthrightly the notion of group rights," Sisulu said. He explained that de Klerk advances these proposals in order to "prevent the full democratization of our society. They talk about 'group rights' so that some of their economic and social privileges could be left intact."

The ANC is fighting for a government that guarantees "to every individual, irrespective of color, creed, sex, religion, or class, certain basic human rights." These include, he explained, the rights to "freedom of speech, association, expression, organization, and movement." These rights are denied the vast majority in South Africa today.

"We are talking about bringing under strict control the major monopolies, financial institutions, and mines." Only in this way will enough resources be generated to "cater for

Sharpeville massacre

BY GREG McCARTAN

THABONG TOWNSHIP, South Africa — Heavily armed South African police blocked this township's main road with yellow security vans and trucks, halting a march of several hundred trade unionists.

The members of the South African Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers Union had marched from a nearby industrial park to participate in the local commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre. On March 21, 1960, 69 peaceful demonstrators were killed

Located on the outskirts of the "whites only" city of Welkom, the area is in the heart of the mining industry in the Orange Free State. Gold mines, in which tens of thousands of miners work, surround the city.

Thabong Youth Congress

The rally, organized by the Thabong Youth Congress, was addressed by student, union, and community leaders. The students, on strike at the seven local schools, participated in large numbers. The strike was organized to press for the release of 11 anti-apartheid activists detained by the local police nearly two weeks ago. Most are student activists and members of the Youth Congress. Hundreds of other activists have also been detained around the country after a crackdown announced by the minister of law and order, Adriaan Vlok.

The rally also marked the first day of a boycott of white-owned businesses, an action aimed at freeing the detainees. Normally busy stores stood nearly empty in shopping centers around the city. The decision to begin the boycott was taken by a committee made up of students, unionists, and community leaders after the students began their strike. The "crisis committee" also called a two-day work stoppage for the following week if the detainees were not released.

Millions strike on 30th anniversary

The 1960 Sharpeville massacre marked a line drawn in blood by the regime in its attempts to consolidate the apartheid system. Following the massacre, 22,000 people were detained and the Unlawful Organisations Act was passed. The act was used to outlaw the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress. The ANC launched the armed struggle against the apartheid government shortly thereafter.

On the 30th anniversary of the massacre, millions of workers in major cities such as Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Durban did not report for work. Press reports indicate the cities were virtually shut down.

In a township near Johannesburg the ANC held a rally of 50,000. Addressing the event, ANC leader Walter Sisulu paid tribute to "our heroes who paid a heavy price for freedom."

March 21 is "a day we will never forget, when our people were killed in cold blood," he said. "We should insure that this massacre never happens again."

In some areas police fired on crowds at commemoration events. In one city 49 were injured when police used bird shot, tear gas, and rubber bullets to disperse a rally.

Here a member of the National Union of Mineworkers was killed by racists who attacked Blacks outside a shopping area. The miner, Mnikelo Ldamse, lived in a hostel at a local mine. When he and his fellow hostel dwellers and union members learned of an attack taking place they marched to the union office. Upon their return to the hostel, the union steward said, "other Blacks at the shop there were beaten and punched and kicked.

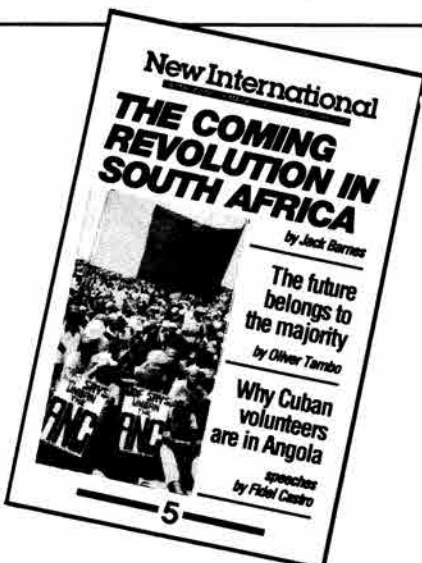


Militant/Margrethe Siem
Students rally in Thabong township to press for release of 11 anti-apartheid activists detained by local police.

by police in Sharpeville, near Johannesburg, during a protest against pass laws. The laws controlled the movement of Africans in the country.

In this year's observance, the unionists were allowed to proceed following negotiations between the police and union representatives.

Arriving at the community center here, the union members packed in the hall, which was already filled with 2,000 singing students and other township residents. The rally was the start of an eventful day in the township.



This issue of *New International* focuses on the revolutionary struggle in South Africa, its impact throughout southern Africa and worldwide, and the tasks of opponents of apartheid in the labor movement internationally.

The feature article, *The Coming Revolution in South Africa* by Jack Barnes, discusses the national, democratic revolution to overthrow the South African apartheid regime and establish a nonracial democratic republic.

Also included:

- The Freedom Charter
- The Future Belongs to the Majority, a message by African National Congress President Oliver Tambo
- Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola, three speeches by Cuban President Fidel Castro

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the most basic needs of the oppressed, working people," Sisulu said.

Blacks need housing, as hundreds of thousands are homeless and are forced "to live in squatter camps," he pointed out. Sisulu said nationalization was also needed to provide education, medical attention, and other social welfare facilities for all.

"We must unite to build one nation, in one South Africa," he added.

To press forward its demands and to establish a publicly functioning mass organization inside the country, the ANC has begun to open regional offices. These offices will accept membership applications and begin organizing local ANC branches.

Sisulu called on "South Africans of Indian origin — as I do to all oppressed people — to join the ranks of the ANC."

"I say without fear of contradiction," he concluded, "that the ANC is the voice of the oppressed. It is the strength of the exploited. It is the future of all South Africans."



Transvaal Indian Congress and African National Congress rally of 10,000 in Lenasia, South Africa. Longtime leader of Indian Congress and ANC, Ahmed Kathrada, called on all to "join the ANC" in their thousands.

Militant/Margrethe Siem

e marked, detentions protested in Thabong

Unfortunately, this comrade of ours was caught by the thugs and killed."

The steward said Ldamse was a loyal and disciplined member of the NUM who dedicated his life to the struggle of the African people. The miner was from the Transkei homeland."

Later that evening the crisis committee met to hear a report from a delegation sent to Cape Town to speak with Vlok. The delegation's purpose was to "secure the unconditional release of our comrades," said Pakamisa Mafuna, who was part of the delegation. The meeting also assessed the next stage in the campaign to free the detainees.

The delegation reported that Vlok prom-

ised the detainees would be released and allowed to return home. Upon hearing the news, some in the meeting urged the students to go back to school. Since the victory had been won, they said, the students must now return to their classes in order to continue their education.

The student leaders explained that when they decided to strike they pledged they would not return to their classes until "we had seen the detainees with our own eyes." While they could ask the students to return to school, most would refuse, they said.

A representative of the NUM suggested that another meeting be held the following day to see if the detainees were in fact released, at which point the student strike could

be assessed. The meeting agreed not to ask the students to end their strike until then.

The committee then pledged to support any union action calling for the arrest of those responsible for the killing of Ldamse.

A victory scored

At the end of the meeting an announcement was made that the detainees had arrived in the township. A cheer went up and the meeting was concluded.

The next morning students from all seven township schools came together and held a mass victory march. They circled the police station and went up and down the township's streets. At an impromptu press conference, the detainees gathered at a church and spoke

with the Militant.

"Two weeks ago the security police came by our homes and told us we were being taken under the security regulations. No reason was given for our arrests," said Erant Tsimatsima, a Thabong Youth Congress member.

In prison the detainees went on a hunger strike demanding their freedom. One had to be taken to a hospital.

Another of the detainees said the boycott was effective "because some whites were against our detentions. The boycott helped pressure others to see that we were released."

The victory "is due to the support of the people of Thabong" concluded another detainee. The released leaders then went to greet and address the student celebration.

Township leader: 'Mass organizations on offensive'

Y RICH PALSER

ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP, South Africa — Residents of this Black township in northern Johannesburg are supporting 400 striking workers of the PUTCO bus company. The workers struck demanding the dismissal of the bus depot's divisional manager because of his racist remarks and antiunion attitude.

Though the manager has now resigned, the strike continues. Workers are demanding they be paid for the time they were on strike.

Residents of Alexandra township rely almost entirely on bus and minivan taxis for transportation to and from work. The strike means they must rise early for work, wait in long lines for taxis, and run the risk of notice being served for arriving late to work. Despite this inconvenience, support for the strike is solid.

"We had a meeting of the residents and the workers," community leaders Mzwanele Mayekiso and Paul Tshabalala explained. "The workers explained their problems to the community. The community said: Your problems are our problems."

A petition was drafted and handed to management and a boycott of PUTCO buses called. To try and undermine that support, management took out a half-page advertisement in the March 16 Johannesburg Star.

Mayekiso and Tshabalala are both executive members of the Alexandra Civic Organisation (ACO), which is part of the anti-apartheid coalition, the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Lack of accommodation

Alexandra township has a population of around 200,000 living in an area of just over two square miles. No electricity, hot water, or flush toilets have been provided for most of the residents. The government also refuses to provide other basic services. Walking around the dirt streets and yards — a common open area shared by a group of shacks — we came across piles of uncollected garbage and pools of stagnant water. "The basic complaint of our people is lack of accommo-

dation," Mayekiso said. "A whole family of 12 may live in one room."

Like other Black townships scattered around the major cities, Alexandra came into being as a result of Africans being forced off the land into rural areas by the apartheid regime. Deprived of any means of making a living, many moved to urban centers seeking work. There they were housed in barrack-like single-sex hostels, sleeping in bunks eight or 10 to a room. "The people said: We can't live like animals; we have to stay with our families," Mayekiso said. "Most of them erected shacks. At that time it was a challenge to the white government. That is how the townships came into being."

Under laws such as the Group Areas Act, the apartheid regime has created white-only cities surrounded by Black, Coloured, and Indian townships throughout the country. Today the influx continues from the rural areas, including immigrant workers from as far away as Mozambique.

"There are people coming from the rural areas who don't have residency rights," Mayekiso said. "The Black local authorities [the township governing bodies set up by the apartheid regime] see them as aliens who are not supposed to stay in the townships. But they have to, so they erect shacks."

There are now two types of shacks in Alexandra: official corrugated iron "houses" and the unofficial makeshift shacks built by the people themselves. In one "unofficial" yard we were introduced to Joseph, a member of the yard committee. He told us that when they first built their shacks, there were no toilets and only one tap. They organized and won hessian-screened bucket toilets and now have three taps on either side of the yard. The drainage, however, still consists of an open gutter running through the yard.

The ACO, although officially launched in December 1989, first came into being as the Alexandra Action Committee in 1986. The group began organizing committees of residents in each yard (consisting of around 15 families), who in turn elected delegates to a

block and then street committees.

"We were prompted to have these grassroots structures by problems that were experienced by our people," Mayekiso said. "First of all, people had problems paying the rents and, secondly, with high unemployment in the township and the crime rate." More than half the residents are today unemployed.

"Our target was to form the ACO in August 1986, but unfortunately all our activists were detained, including ourselves, under the state of emergency that was declared in June 1986."

Mayekiso spent two years in prison during the state of emergency. He, along with other leaders of the Action Committee, was charged with treason, subversion, and sedition. The allegations centered on the establishment of "organs of people's power" — popular mass organizations in the township through which the community was organized.

Challenge to authorities

"The government felt it was a challenge to its authority, that the setting up of these organs actually undermined the government. To a certain extent it was true, because the government wasn't addressing the people's problems."

During that period the police repression in the township grew. "There were massacres, police killing our people here in Alexandra. We had two mass funerals in 1986," Mayekiso said.

Those on trial for treason were acquitted in April 1989. They saw the trial as an attempt to intimidate and isolate the leadership from the people of the township. While the community leaders were in prison, the regime built some new housing. "But the ordinary workers can't afford it," Mayekiso explained. The authorities "built flats but wouldn't rent them. They made people buy them. Their strategy hasn't solved anything. After our release the people said: Now you are back, the struggle must continue."

In December 1989 the ACO was finally

formed. Yard, block, street, and area committees feed into the executive committee. The leadership body also includes delegates from the large men's and women's hostels located in the township. A Women's Congress, Youth Congress, and Student Congress have also been formed, and all four organizations are affiliated to the UDF.

Back on the offensive

The people's organizations are now back on the offensive. They are fighting government plans to privatize houses, hostels, and flats. The ACO is waging a campaign for "affordable housing for all." The community is also demanding that those serving in the Black local authority town council resign.

Mayekiso believes that building strong community organizations is an important part of combating agents of the regime who spread rumors and instigate fighting in the townships. In nearby Katlehong a war between rival taxi associations has erupted, resulting in the death of scores of people. Fighting has also broken out in several other townships.

"At first the violence wasn't politically motivated. But of late we feel that there is a motive behind it — to undermine steps taken by our movement, the African National Congress, to have a political settlement that is negotiated with the regime," Mayekiso explained.

Often rumors are spread by agent-provocateurs that hostel dwellers are about to attack other township residents. When this happened in Alexandra last week, the ACO organized meetings with the residents and then with the hostel dwellers and made it clear that no such attack had been planned. The ACO is also working towards having a single taxi association in the township.

"The release of our leaders and the unbanning of the organizations has mobilized our people very much. Many people felt that the release of Mandela meant freedom to them," Mayekiso said. "But it doesn't mean freedom. We still have a long ways to go."

Fidel Castro denounces TV Martí

Continued from front page

news agency ACAN-EFE if the dispute could turn into an armed conflict, Castro replied, "Anything can happen. When we look at how absurd all of this is, we have thought perhaps the United States is seeking a pretext for a military confrontation."

"We are not looking for a fight," the Cuban leader stressed. "But we will not be intimi-

dated."

This is not the first time the U.S. government has illegally broadcast over Cuban airwaves. In 1985 the Reagan administration began Radio Martí, an AM station. In protest the Cuban government suspended an immigration agreement with the United States signed a few months earlier, but has not interfered with the broadcasts, which still

continue and can be heard throughout the island.

In response to questions about what actions Cuba plans to take, Castro stated, "We reserve the right to respond if the broadcasts continue," referring to both Radio and TV Martí.

If the U. S. government transmits over Cuban airwaves, then Cuba has "the right to also broadcast to all of the territory of the United States," he said.

"We have no desire to disrupt U. S. radio stations," Castro added. "But we did not create this problem. We cannot allow the United States to broadcast to us forever, while we do not broadcast to them."

Reporters raised wide-ranging questions. The correspondent from the Mexican daily *Excelsior* said that "progressive forces in Mexico" were concluding that Castro was losing prestige and was retrograde. She asked him to comment.

"Does the empire exist or not?" Castro replied. "What do these progressive Mexicans say? Against whom does the U.S. empire focus all its force, all its hostility, all its threats, all its machinery?"

"Against Cuba and no one else," Castro stated. "If at any time in all of its history Cuba deserves respect, recognition, and admiration, it is now more than ever."

Referring to the Mexican journalist's comment that Castro appeared "tired and disappointed," he replied, "Those who are disappointed or tired out are those who at one time considered themselves progressives."

"What does it mean to be progressive today?" he asked. "To be on the side of Cuba? Or on the side of the United States?"

Those who criticize Cuba would be better off "deepening their own ideology and recognizing the contribution Cuba is making to the revolution at this special moment."

'Cuba is a symbol'

In the midst of a difficult situation in the world, "today Cuba is the symbol of resistance, revolutionary principles, and the defense of socialism," Castro continued.

"There are confused people," he added. "But you have to ask yourself: What is progressive that is left in these people?"

A West German TV reporter asked what connection existed between Washington's attitude towards Cuba and the events in Nicaragua and Panama.

"The government of the United States is euphoric, not just because of what has taken place in Eastern Europe," Castro said. "They feel like they own the world."

The "dirty" war against Nicaragua, the invasion of Panama, and the events in Eastern Europe have all served to strengthen the Cuban people's consciousness, he said. "We have learned that a revolution cannot make concessions to its enemies, because that is the road to surrender."

"For a revolution to be strong and invincible it must be authentic," the Cuban president continued. "Nobody gave us the revolution. Nobody loaned it to us, nor was it imported. We made it ourselves. That's why you shouldn't mix us up with any other political process."

Castro went into more detail on Panama. There did not exist a revolution in Panama, he noted. "It was a nationalist struggle. They were demanding their right to the canal and to remove the U.S. troops."

The leaders in Panama were professional military men, Castro explained. They had a "totally mistaken strategy. If they had had a revolutionary philosophy and experience, combat would still be occurring there."

Revolutions change things, Castro said. "And the deeper the revolution, the stronger it becomes."

Near the end of the press conference, Castro was asked by a Spanish reporter if Cuba's policy of resistance to imperialism at all costs was "suicidal?" Wouldn't it be better to be "flexible?" he asked.

'Wave of pessimism'?

A reporter from Mexico spoke of a "wave of pessimism" and a certain "political earthquake" in reference to Eastern Europe and the defeats in Panama and Nicaragua. "Who will be left standing after all of this?" she asked.

"With the changes in Eastern Europe," Castro replied, the imperialists "hope to transform the socialist countries into new capitalist countries. This will not be easy."

"To create capitalism," he said, "you need

not only capital, but capitalists, businessmen." Castro pointed to Poland and described the strong disagreements between Solidarity leader Lech Walesa and Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki as "almost a war." At the same time, he said, resistance to their policies is breaking out, noting a strike at the Gdansk shipyard. "Now there is a new solidarity, Solidarity-80," he said, "which accuses Walesa and the government of carrying out an austerity program that the people will not stand for."

"This is a very interesting phenomenon," Castro noted. The imperialist "first world" has made building capitalism in the socialist countries their number one priority, he stated. "We will see what comes out of all of this."

Castro predicted that the "triumphalism" of imperialism will be short-lived.

He pointed to uncontrollable inflation in Latin America, malnutrition, rising illiteracy, high rates of infant mortality, and the millions of abandoned children roaming the streets.

"Capitalism is not going to solve these problems. It has no future," he stated.

There is no need for pessimism, Castro concluded. The underdeveloped nations are a seething volcano. "The people are going to respond to all the problems they face," he said. "Once again the revolutionary and progressive movements will raise their heads and their morale."

Meeting in Iceland celebrates book by Fidel Castro

BY OTTÓ MÁSSON

REYKJAVÍK, Iceland — Cuban leader Fidel Castro's writings were celebrated here last month at a meeting sponsored by the Pathfinder bookstore and the Cuba-Iceland Friendship Association.

Pathfinder Press in New York has published a collection of four speeches Castro gave at the time of the 30th anniversary celebration of the 1959 Cuban revolution. Under the title *In Defense of Socialism*, the book takes up central questions faced by the Cuban revolution now, including the tasks of improving, developing, and defending socialism in the face of new challenges.

It was to discuss Castro's ideas that 50 people — industrial workers, students, a group of child-care workers planning a study tour to Cuba, and supporters and readers of the *Militant* — attended the event, which was addressed by five speakers.

Amado Rivero, head of the Havana-based Nordic section of the Cuban Institute for Friendship Among the Peoples, emphasized one of Castro's themes in the book. The rectification process going on in Cuba since 1986 shows, Rivero said, "how it is possible within our system to better the conditions of the people without resorting to the methods and style of capitalism." He pointed out that the book contains the key texts in the struggle today to build socialism in Cuba.

Central to the rectification process is deepening the role of Cuba's working people in the revolution and the reestablishment of voluntary labor as a means to overcome urgent social needs like day care and housing. Bjartmar Jónsson, a young Icelandic worker who had participated in a Cuban voluntary work brigade last year, expressed his admiration for the Cuban revolution, telling the audience, "Every politically conscious person in the world has to know about Cuba."

Pritz Dullay of the African National Congress office in Copenhagen, Denmark, spoke of the role of the Cuban revolution in helping bring about the current advances in the freedom struggle in southern Africa. "The Cuban people," he said, "have extended material, financial, and moral support to our struggle." He pointed to the thousands of young Africans who have been educated in Cuba, many of them from the now independent country of Namibia.

Also speaking at the event were Reykjavík Pathfinder bookstore representative Grétar Kristjánsson and Catharina Tirsén, a representative of the publisher's outlet in Sweden. Tirsén related how the most recent work brigade of Swedes to Cuba had invited a young Cuban woman to conduct a speaking tour of Sweden. Hundreds turned out to hear Rosita Gonzáles, convincing her that the Cuban revolution was not isolated.



Trabajadores/Jorge Paez

Demonstration in Havana on February 1 to protest U.S. attack on Cuban ship

Panama after U.S. invasion

Continued from Page 15

"Here we are letting the oppressor come into our country and congratulating them for invading us."

"I think the invasion was a necessary evil." "Maybe the means were not the best, but the end was good." "Now the U.S. forces will have to stay to finish what they have begun." "It was the only way to normalize things in this country." These were some of the comments made by other students.

"We have to admit that many people here saw the invasion as a good thing," said Luis Amaya, general secretary of the labor federation CTRP in Colón. "Under the old regime, for example, state workers were not paid on time, sometimes 20 or 30 days would go by before they got their paychecks. Anyone who spoke against the government would get a call and would be threatened."

Amaya and a group of trade unionists from Colón gathered at the CTRP hall on March 9 to discuss the current situation facing working people there and their opinions on the invasion.

"I believe that is the reason why on December 20, people did not take to the streets like they did on January 9," continued Amaya. "Though people were armed they did not use their arms against the U.S. invaders because they were resentful of the government." On Jan. 9, 1964, massive protests favoring Panamanian sovereignty took place in the Canal Zone. U.S. troops killed 23 Panamanians on that date.

"But by now many are lamenting the invasion," said Amaya. "Because all that was accomplished was the replacement of a social layer that was governing the country with an elite that represents the privileged classes here."

"I believe that the end of the invasion was a political one," explained Humberto Blandón. "They wanted to impose on us a docile government that would answer to the eco-

nomic interests of the U.S. empire. They want to use Panama as platform from which they can dominate and control the area of Central America and the Caribbean."

Blandón is the vice-president of the Oil Workers Union in Colón. The union organizes the workers at the Panama Refinery, the only enterprise in the country dedicated to the processing and sale of oil products. The oil is refined for Texaco. There are 500 workers at the plant; 306 are members of the union. Blandón is an operator at the plant.

While there have been no firings at the refinery, oil workers have joined others to protest the unfair firings of public workers and of the workers at the Port of Cristóbal. Sixteen workers were unjustly fired from the port following the invasion.

"We expect firings to take place here as well," Blandón said, "because we understand that while yesterday's government was not for the workers, today's government is less so. This government follows the orders of the United States to a greater degree and will attempt to break those unions that have maintained a fighting and independent position."

"What we face here is a confused people," explained the oil workers' union leader, "but we are filled with optimism, because the Panamanian people who applauded the invasion for reasons of confusion and frustration, tomorrow will be demanding that their problems be solved. And I see no way that these problems will be resolved."

Panama faces the same problems that are faced by the rest of the world, said Blandón, "the same problem faced by Guatemala, by Nicaragua, by El Salvador. We have a noose around our necks: the foreign debt."

"People in Panama asked for a change and they got it," Blandón pointed out. "But given the arrests, the firings, and what is coming ahead, they will rise up again. And if on December 20 they only bombed some neighborhoods like El Chorrillo, next time they will have to bomb the whole city, the whole country, and kill us all."



Cuban economist and author Carlos Tablada speaking in Toronto, 1989.

Eastern striker welcomes Cuban author to Pittsburgh

BY STEVE MARSHALL

PITTSBURGH — A Machinists union official on strike against Eastern Airlines gave Carlos Tablada "a warm welcome to this country" on the first day of his speaking tour of the United States.

Tablada, a Cuban economist and author, launched his six-week tour April 3 with public forums at colleges in Pittsburgh and Edinboro, Pennsylvania. He is the author of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, published in English by Pathfinder.

Frank Planinac, president of the International Association of Machinists Local Lodge 1044, told the crowd of 140 at the University of Pittsburgh that he has "learned some things about Cuba." He gave examples of Cuba's emphasis on health and education, which demonstrate "the respect they have for their people."

"These are people who believe in and practice solidarity with other people," said the unionist. "And Cuba's role in Angola, defeating the racist South African army, is something other people should support and learn from."

Planinac closed his greetings with a dual appeal that drew loud applause: "End the blockade of Cuba!" and "don't fly Eastern or Continental!" Planinac was one of five Eastern strikers at the meeting.

Tablada's appearance in Pittsburgh was hosted by a dozen organizations, including the Democratic Socialists of America, National Lawyers Guild, Pathfinder Bookstore, Thomas Merton Center, and several campus groups and departments.

Dennis Brutus, a South African poet who chairs the university's Black studies department, opened the meeting with a welcome to the school. Greetings were read from city council member James Ferlo. Mark Ginsburg, director of the Institute for International Studies in Education, introduced the Cuban speaker.

After his talk on Guevara and the fight for socialism in Cuba today, Tablada fielded questions from the audience.

Have the events in Eastern Europe made Cuba more vulnerable and isolated? he was asked. Tablada explained that Cuba's principled internationalism has earned it respect throughout the world, from the Soviet Union and Africa to the United Nations, where Cuba was recently elected to the Security Council by the largest vote in UN history.

Other discussion topics included Cuban immigration to the United States, Cuban President Fidel Castro's tenure and the nature of democracy in Cuba, the extent of Cuba's dependence on trade with the Soviet Union, last summer's trial of corrupt military and government officials, and the current rectification process taking place in the country.

Earlier in the day Max Azicri, a Cuban-born professor at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, introduced Tablada to 70 people at a meeting there. Two television stations

and a daily paper from nearby Erie covered Tablada's visit.

Participants in the two meetings bought eight copies of Tablada's book on Guevara.

The next stop on the Cuban author's tour will be Washington, D.C. There the tour will open with a breakfast briefing on Capitol Hill April 5 with congressional aides and staff. Later on that day he will give a talk at the Institute for Policy Studies.

On April 6, following a talk at American University, there will be a reception and a public meeting for Tablada at the Washington Peace Center.

Tablada will then head for Los Angeles (April 8-14); Price (April 16) and Salt Lake City (April 17), Utah; San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area (April 18-22); Greensboro, North Carolina (April 24); Chicago (April 26); Boston (April 27-May 1); western Massachusetts (May 2); and New York (May 6-13).

'All I could see of TV Martí were gray lines,' Tablada says

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK — When Cuban economist Carlos Tablada arrived from Havana at the Miami airport at midnight March 30, he and other passengers from Cuba were immediately approached by seven or eight reporters. "They wanted to know if I had seen TV Martí," Tablada explained in an interview in New York on April 1. TV Martí, the anti-Cuban U.S. station, attempted to broadcast for the first time on March 27.

'Press was bewildered'

"I told them yes I had turned on my TV at dawn, because I usually get up very early in the morning," explained the Cuban economist, who is in the United States for a 12-city tour. "Then they asked me what it was that I saw on the screen. Much to their bewilderment I told them that all you could see were horizontal gray lines and there was no sound."

"I explained to them that, from what I had read in the Cuban press, on the first day that the United States began sending the TV Martí signal, it took the Cuban engineers only 10 minutes to focus in and jam the transmission," Tablada pointed out. "On the second day it took only six minutes, and on the fourth day — the day before my departure — it took only three. The third day — from what I have heard — the United States had problems with the balloon and did not transmit at all."

TV Martí is deplorable

"I think that this transmission of TV Martí is truly deplorable," he said. "It goes against all the concepts of human rights because no country has the right to occupy the broadcast airspace of another."

Tablada explained that Cuba has 13 channels, and the channel used by TV Martí is already taken up by Tele Rebelde, one of Cuba's two national television networks. Cuba Visión is the other national network.

Washington says one of the reasons for

launching TV Martí is to better inform the people of Cuba, the Cuban economist explained. "In fact, Cuban television broadcasts more foreign programs than are shown on U.S. television," he noted. We show programs from 26 different countries. Almost 70 percent of our programming is foreign.

"Last year alone, we showed 288 U.S. films," Tablada explained. If they want to, he said, "Cubans can even watch Walt Disney cartoons."

Cuban television has been open to signing contracts with U.S. television networks for further programming, said Tablada. "We already have signed a contract with CNN network. I watch a CNN news program, for example, called 'World Reports.'"

"Another cause for indignation," Tablada continued, "is that they have used the name of our national hero José Martí to name the

'TV Martí is deplorable because no country has the right to occupy the broadcast airspace of another.'

station. You see, Martí was the first of the anti-imperialists the world has known. In his writings he stated that one of the reasons he was fighting for Cuba's independence against Spain was to prevent the United States from taking over Cuba and the rest of Latin America."

250,000 thousand books

Tablada is the author of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, published in English by Pathfinder last year. First published in Havana in 1987, 250,000 copies of the book have been sold so far in Cuba. Editions of the book have also been published in Spanish in Argentina and Mexico and in Italian. Editions of the book in Portuguese, Russian, and French are to be published soon, Tablada said. And there are plans to put out the book in Czech, Bulgarian, and German.

Tablada explained that when he first wrote the book on Guevara's economic thought, the audience he had in mind were the people of Cuba and its youth. "I felt that perhaps the book would also be valuable in other socialist countries as well," he said.

But given the popularity the book has had in Latin America, Tablada pointed out, "I realized that Che's ideas are very relevant for Latin America, and also for the world as a whole."

"I think that the book will be of great interest in the United States as well," said Tablada. "It will help people here — not only in the academic circles, but among workers also — to understand the reality of the Cuban revolution."

"I think this is especially important given the defamation campaign that is being promoted against Cuba today," explained Tablada. "For instance, the U.S. media has said little about Fidel Castro's recent visit to Brazil. There he received a great welcome and was interviewed by all the TV networks."

"Fidel even had to stay in Brazil longer than planned because of the many invitations he received to speak from religious groups, trade unions, and other organizations. He was invited to visit Rio de Janeiro by the governor of the state and by business organizations. Yet the people of the United States heard nothing of this."

"Washington says Cuba is isolated in the world, but that is not so," continued Tablada. "They don't want the people of the United States to see what is really happening in Cuba. That is why my tour and the book on Guevara's economic thought can help the people here to understand how we think and what we are doing."

Tablada's tour opened in Pittsburgh on April 2 and will continue until May 13.

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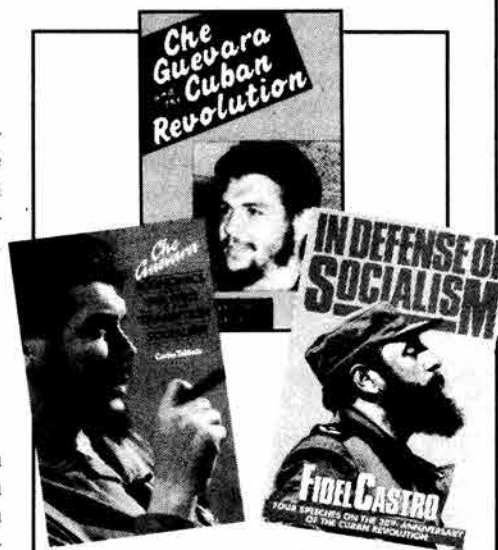
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Millions challenge bureaucratic rule demanding justice, democratic rights

BY PETER THIERJUNG

(First in a series)

Unleashing decades of pent-up anger and frustration, millions across Eastern Europe took to the streets in the closing months of the 1980s. Under the banners of little-known opposition coalitions and fronts, they defied decrees, truncheons, and bullets.

They demanded justice and democratic rights and asserted their dignity. Each protest revealed greater determination and confidence. Demonstrators laid siege to the regimes of the Stalinist parties that had lorded over them through bureaucratic decree and totalitarian rule since the 1940s.

The 1980s began with the massive worker-led revolt in Poland which involved farmers, students, and many other sectors of society. It was answered with repression and martial law. But by early 1989 the Polish government was forced to retreat and draconian restrictions on democratic rights were lifted. This action showed that the crackdown had failed to break the militancy of the working class and that the Communist Party-led regime could no longer rule as before.

A few months later in October, protests of hundreds of thousands emerged across East Germany, shattering the domination of the Socialist Unity Party and toppling the party's upper echelons. Within weeks the momentum spread to Czechoslovakia, where daily marches culminated in a November country-wide protest strike and quickly forced CP bosses from office.

By the end of December, an armed popular uprising answered the bloody and fierce repression of the hated Ceausescu regime in Romania. The revolt won support in the army, split the army's high command, smashed the feared political police — the Securitate, and shattered the Communist Party. Once captured by rebel forces, the tyrant and his wife were swiftly tried and executed.

Today, in five Eastern European countries where capitalism was uprooted after World War II — Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania, the Stalinist parties' monopoly on power has been broken. Hundreds of thousands of members have left the CPs.

In Bulgaria, where the CP retains power, mass protests have forced important concessions for democratic rights from the regime.

Across Eastern Europe the rights to speak, associate, organize, protest, and travel freely

have gained ground. Parties and organizations independent of the Stalinist parties' grip have been legalized. The formidable political police apparatuses that pervaded everyday life have been dealt blows.

In Bulgaria the government was forced to reverse policies that denied the Turkish minority their customs and religious rites and required Turks to take Slavic names. In Romania, barbarous laws criminalizing abortion and birth control have been lifted.

As censorship and border restrictions have been loosened, the Stalinist-led regimes' enforced isolation of working people from the world has begun to break down. Freedom for artistic, academic, and political expression has opened up. Numerous crimes of the CP-led regimes — from their forced collectivization of agriculture to their larceny and corruption — are being brought to light and condemned.

The protests in Eastern Europe have involved a broad front of social forces, including significant support from working people. The leadership of the actions has come from among professionals, artists, writers, religious groups, and other middle-class layers, including Communist Party dissidents.

While working people have not generally played a leading role in these actions, for the first time in decades they have the opportunity to begin to engage in political activity in defense of their own interests and to begin establishing links with working-class fighters in other countries.

Claims to communism a fraud

For decades the Stalinist parties of Eastern Europe claimed to be building communism. But the struggle in those countries to conquer rights already won by working people in many capitalist "democracies" has exposed this fraud. The subsequent actions by the various Communist Parties to recoup lost ground and members has confirmed this.

Across Eastern Europe these parties, or important sections of them, are shedding their pretense to being communist. Instead they now tend to present themselves as social democratic-like parties, tracing their continuity to the history and traditions of the European socialist movement prior to World War I, the October 1917 Russian revolution, and the founding of the Communist International. Many of them renounce communism as utopian. They advocate much more exten-

CLUW named Jackie Stump, UMW District 28 International Executive Board Member, as labor leader of the year, for men; the award for women went to the Daughters of Mother Jones. Recently, some members went to a CLUW event in Illinois and while there picketed at the Greyhound terminal in Chicago.

Sauls also discussed the recent frame-up attacks on the National Union of Mine-workers and its leaders in Britain. She will be sending a message of support to the NUM. Sauls had been part of a delegation from the UMW to the NUM's 100th anniversary celebration in June 1989. A delegation from Women Against Pit Closures, an auxiliary of the NUM, had visited the Pittston miners two years ago, at the beginning of the Pittston fight.

Jeanne Fitzmaurice is an underground miner at a Peabody mine near Blacksville, West Virginia, and a member of UMW Local 1570.

Daughters of Mother Jones remain active supporting miners' union

BY JEANNE FITZMAURICE

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Members of the Daughters of Mother Jones, an auxiliary of the United Mine Workers of America set up during the recent strike against Pittston Coal Group, have remained active since the Pittston strike ended February 19.

They are an integral part of the Southwest Virginia Support Group, which is hosting the 12th National Conference of Women Miners, to be held in Norton, Virginia, on the weekend of June 22-24.

In a telephone interview, Edna Sauls, a member of the group, outlined some recent activities.

On March 24 a group of 20 members went to Roanoke, Virginia, to picket with Greyhound strikers. Bus union members were quoted on local TV that the visit by the Daughters of Mother Jones really picked up their spirits.

On March 31 the whole group went back to Roanoke for an awards banquet sponsored by the Coalition of Labor Union Women.



Hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovaks joined marches to demand democratic rights. Millions participated in a countrywide protest strike November 27.

sive use of capitalist market mechanisms in the nationalized economies as the solution to the failure of bureaucratic planning and economic management.

Despite the attempts to refurbish their image, these political parties have been overwhelmingly rejected by voters in Hungary and East Germany. In the March 25 elections the Socialist Party of Hungary only mustered 10 percent of the vote. It was formerly known as the Socialist Workers Party, which was closely aligned with Communist Parties in other countries. The East German Socialist Unity Party, now called the Party of Democratic Socialism, had received about 16 percent of the vote in March 18 elections. In both cases the former ruling parties were trounced by procapitalist parties.

Shunted aside in parliamentary elections last June by Solidarity representatives, the Polish United Workers Party was dissolved at a January congress. Afterward delegates split and formed competing parties along social democratic lines. Polls taken show that even the larger group would receive less than 5 percent of the vote if elections were held today.

New parties, coalitions

The shattering of the CPs means the privileged bureaucratic castes that economically and politically dominate these countries are having to maintain their position through new parties, coalitions, and governmental forms.

Developments similar to these have begun to unfold in other countries where capitalism has been abolished and Stalinist parties have dominated.

The League of Communists, which is composed of Communist Parties from six constituent republics and has dominated Yugoslavia for more than 40 years, splintered in January. With elections slated in some republics this month, opposition groups are expected to displace some of the CPs. To shore up the central government and combat nationalist ferment, the prime minister has appropriated emergency executive powers.

In Mongolia, where a socialist revolution overturned capitalism in the early 1920s, top CP officials have been forced from office. On March 23, after four continuous months of protests, the Mongolian parliament abolished constitutional provisions which had guaranteed the CP a monopoly hold on power.

Nationalist revolts in the USSR

Growing popular discontent and nationalist revolts have erupted in many of the Soviet Union's 15 republics. Spurred by mushrooming support for independence-minded nationalists, Soviet troops occupied Azerbaijan at the beginning of the year. At the end of March, Mikhail Gorbachev, exercising greatly increased presidential powers, turned his fire against proindependence forces in the Baltic republics. Using economic, political, and military pressure, Gorbachev has tried to get Lithuanian nationalists to retract their declaration of independence. Estonia's parliament has voted in favor of independence, and Latvia has petitioned the Kremlin to open talks on independence.

In local elections March 18, nationalists

and opposition groups won decisive victories in the Soviet republics of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. A coalition called Rukh captured about a third of the seats in the Ukrainian parliament and was swept into office in a number of key cities. More than 52 million people live in the Ukraine, a fifth of the Soviet Union's population. A fifth of Soviet industry is located there as well.

Opponents of the CP also swept into office in municipal bodies in Moscow, the Soviet Union's capital, and in Leningrad. In March the Soviet legislature voted to drop Article 6 of the Soviet constitution, repealing the CP's political monopoly.

The capitalist media and imperialist politicians euphorically hail the blows working people have dealt Stalinism in Eastern Europe and developments in the Soviet Union as the collapse of communism and the triumph of capitalism. This would only be true if the Stalinist "Communist" parties had anything to do with communism. But they do not, and the popular protest movements that have swept Eastern Europe have dealt a blow to that illusion.

In the next few issues of the *Militant*, we will take a closer look at these important events, the history behind them, and their meaning for working people around the world.

Next week we will examine the October 1917 Russian revolution, where a genuine communist party unified and led working people to power, established the first government of workers and farmers in history, overturned capitalist property relations, and laid the foundation to build a socialist society. We will take a look at who the communists were, what they stood for, and what policies the new soviet government followed.

(To be continued.)

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Panama three months after U.S. invasion

A reporter's notebook on recent discussions with unionists, students

BY SELVA NEBBIA

PANAMA CITY, Panama — Several months after the December 20 U.S. invasion of Panama, working people here are still talking about it and how it affects their lives. While several thousand of the more than 27,000 U.S. troops that participated in the invasion have left, the 12,000 U.S. military forces stationed permanently in Panama remain, as well as some of those brought in especially for the attack.

Panama remains an occupied country. By midnight the streets of Panama City are deserted until 5 a.m. the next morning when the nightly curfew ends. U.S. armored vehicles manned by members of the Panamanian Public Forces and U.S. soldiers roam the city streets.

One of the TV channels you can tune in is the English-language U.S. armed forces channel. Messages for the U.S. troops stationed in Panama flash across the screen. Following a March 3 bomb attack on a city nightspot frequented by U.S. soldiers where one U.S. soldier was killed and several wounded, the message that regularly came on the screen warned military personnel not to congregate in groups and to stay away from night clubs.

"Things aren't so bad as they were during the first few weeks after the invasion," explained a young woman working at a beauty salon. "Back then you would see groups of five or six armed U.S. soldiers marching up and down the street all day long," she said, pointing to Avenida Europa, one of the city's main avenues.

On March 9, 230 U.S. troops joined 486 Panamanian troops and police in a five-neighborhood raid, arresting 736 people in what was called the "Rescue of tranquility under democracy." Armored vehicles blocked neighborhood streets and passersby were searched. "Every U.S. soldier that participated in the operation," reported the March 10 issue of the Panamanian daily *La Prensa*, "was protected with bullet-proof vests, while the Panamanian soldiers lacked such protection."

A country of 2.3 million people, burdened by a foreign debt of \$3.8 billion and more recently by an economic blockade imposed by the United States in 1988, Panama faces added economic hardships as a result of the destruction caused by the military attack and by the economic dislocation.

Thousands in Panama City, for example, were left homeless after their dwellings were flattened by U.S. bombs on the eve of the invasion here. Three months after the invasion, final figures on the death toll have not been made public.

"Since December 20, human life here has no value," said Celia Sanjur during a March 5 interview in Panama City. "And it continues to be that way." Sanjur is the editor of the monthly magazine *Diálogo Social*.

A wave of land occupations have taken place in the country's major cities. U.S. troops and Panamanian forces have been sent in to remove homeless families who have taken over empty lots in Panama City and Colón.

"We don't want demagogic and fictitious housing plans," said Damián Pérez González. "We want immediate and short-term solutions to our problems." Pérez is a leader of those occupying land.

Refugees of El Chorrillo, the neighborhood hardest hit by the U.S. bombings where some 13,000 were left homeless, have staged several protests — including two marches blocking the Bridge of the Americas — demanding housing and compensation for their losses.

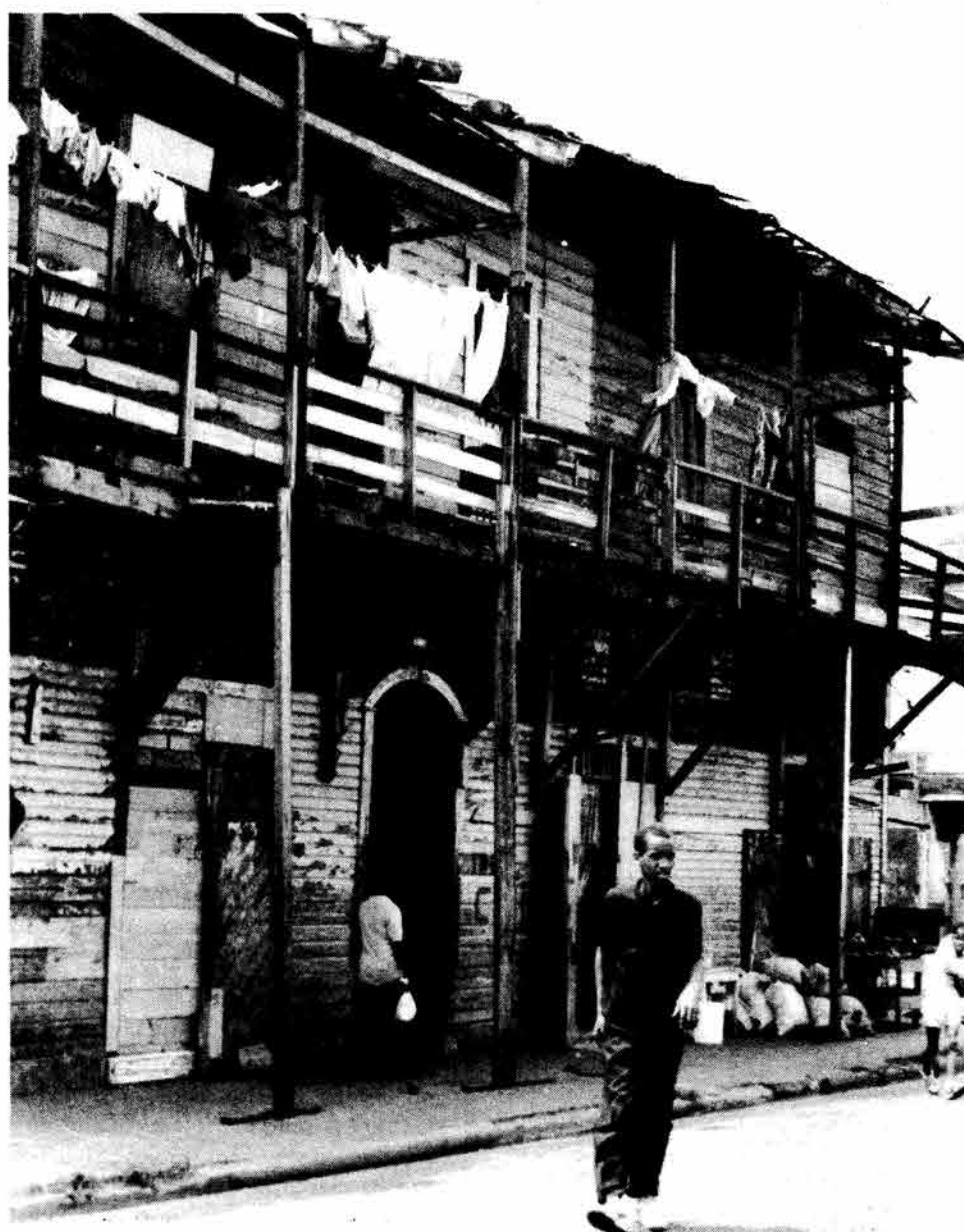
On March 5 several unions and union federations called a press conference to protest the effects of the U.S. invasion on the labor movement. Héctor Aleman, president of the public workers federation FENASEP, explained, "Back in 1987 unemployment here stood at around 8 percent, but after the U.S.-imposed economic sanctions against us in 1988, it went up to 15 percent.

"And after the invasion unemployment shot up to over 35 percent. In places such as Panama City, the capital, and the province of Colón, there are areas where unemployment stands at 50 percent to 55 percent."

"If we add to this the policy of massive

layoffs of workers in the public sector being promoted by the current government," continued Aleman, "the situation is chaotic, with growing insecurity for Panamanians. So far,

and in Colón explained that the U.S.-installed government headed by Guillermo Endara is making moves to "decapitate" the country's trade unions. Located on the Caribbean coast,



Militant/Selva Nebbia

A typical Colón street. On March 8 some 700 marched in this city to demand an end to unjust firings and compensation for loss of homes during invasion.

some 4,000 public employees have been fired from their jobs." FENASEP with 100,000 members is the largest labor federation in Panama.

The firings are carried out in violation of existing labor rights, explained the FENASEP leader, with no respect to seniority, no severance pay, or respect for rights of maternity. Under the Panamanian Labor Code, women workers are entitled to six weeks paid maternity leave prior to and after the date of childbirth, and cannot be fired during their pregnancy or up to a year after giving birth.

Public workers have carried out actions protesting the firings. On March 8 some 30 public employees staged a sit-in at a Panama City church. "We are here to protest against the persecution of state workers," said Anel Rodríguez. "We are demanding an end to the firings and that those who have been dismissed be rehired."

"It's been more than two months since the invasion," said Rodríguez, "and many who thought the invasion was the solution to our problems are now having second thoughts."

"There is talk of privatizing several state enterprises," Aleman pointed out. On January 22 the state-owned Air Panama, for example, was shut down pending the signing of a sale agreement with a private concern. Two U.S. companies have made offers to buy the government airline.

Since the closing of their workplace, the 319 Air Panama workers have been staging protests demanding operations be resumed.

In the days following the invasion, hundreds of Panamanians took to the streets and went through stores, taking with them appliances, food, clothing, and other merchandise. Most of the businesses closed their operations for several weeks, laying off hundreds of store workers. Many stores were damaged and have still not opened for business.

Many trade unionists both in Panama City

Colón is Panama's second largest city.

"As trade unionists we are worried about the fact that while boasting of being for justice, democracy, and freedom the current government is attempting not only to take back the gains workers in Panama have won throughout years of struggle," said Carlisle Simpson, "but to also smash the unions altogether." Simpson is a leader of SUNTRACS, the construction workers union.

"In the case of our union," Simpson said, "the minister of labor has named a new union executive committee that it hopes will better be able to carry out its policies against the workers. This was done undemocratically over the heads of the membership."

Simpson explained that the bosses organized in the Panamanian Construction Chamber plan to slash wages for construction workers. If they succeed in carrying out their plans, skilled workers, such as carpenters, plumbers, and electricians, would have their wages reduced from \$2.15 an hour to \$1.25, while laborers would be cut down from \$1.60 to \$1.10 an hour. There are 4,000 unionized construction workers in the province of Colón, he pointed out.

"We are not going to allow the government to play around with what we have conquered with so much mourning and pain," explained the SUNTRACS leader.

On March 8 some 700 people participated in a march in Colón to demand the rehiring of all those who have been unjustly fired, an end to the firings, compensation to the war refugees for the loss of their homes during the invasion, and publication of the exact figures on the number of dead and disappeared victims of the bombing of the former Coco Solo garrison in Colón.

The march was organized by community, student, religious, and human rights organizations, as well as the committees of those fired in the private and public sectors and several trade unions, including FENASEP. "This was the first time people have dared to take to the streets here since the invasion. We

think it was a big success," said Simpson.

On March 5 the University of Panama opened its doors after being closed and occupied by U.S. troops following the invasion. Young people milled around the campus getting ready to restart classes.

"U.S. troops out of Panama" and similar messages condemning the invasion were painted on the walls and on signs around the campus, signed by a number of different student associations and groups. There is no one student organization that encompasses representatives from the different groups.

Students seemed willing and open to discuss what they thought about the U.S. invasion of their country.

"I was really scared by the invasion," explained Marielos, a 20-year-old journalism student. "But I think that it was a good thing that they got rid of Noriega," she added.

"The country has been totally destroyed," Marielos said, "but we trust that the government and the Yankees will pay for what they damaged. It is their responsibility."

"I think that the responsibility for what happened belongs to both the Yankees and to the military," interrupted Fernando, a history student. "They are to blame but the only party that was hurt is the people. I agree we had to get rid of Noriega, but I think the price we paid was too high."

"After all it is the United States that is responsible for creating the dictatorships in Latin America in the first place," added Fernando.

"I feel very hopeful with the new government," said Marielos. "Things are going to get better for us. Fernando is a pessimist."

"You know I support this government," Fernando interrupted. "But I just don't think that things are all that simple. I doubt, for example, the aid for reconstruction the U.S. is promising will ever come true."

"I think the invasion was the best way to get rid of the dictator," said a young high school teacher. His friend, next to him, also a teacher agreed and added, "Now what we need is economic aid."

Francisco, a student of economics, did not think the invasion was good. "I don't think the invasion was the best way to get rid of the dictatorship. I think Panamanians ourselves should have gotten rid of him, as was done in Chile, in Nicaragua."

"I can imagine what people in Latin America must think of us," continued Francisco.

Continued on Page 12

From Pathfinder

Panama The Truth About the U.S. Invasion



- Articles from the *Militant* by Cindy Jaquith and Don Rojas
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ALABAMA Birmingham

The Eastern Airlines and Greyhound Strikes: New Stage in Today's Labor Struggles. Speakers: Saul Neville, committeeman, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1493, on strike against Greyhound; Michael Drake, member International Association of Machinists Local 1690, on strike against Eastern. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA Los Angeles

Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism in Cuba Today. Speaker: Carlos Tablada, Cuban economist and author. Sat., April 7. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. First United Methodist Church, 1010 S Flower St. Donation: \$3. Sponsors: Pathfinder Bookstore, Broad Movement in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Comité El Salvador, Venceremos Brigade, Pledge of Resistance, others. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA Miami

The Fight for Socialism in Cuba Today: Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Rosa Garmendía, Young Socialist Alliance, member International Association of Machinists Local 1126, just returned from Cuba. Translation to Spanish, French. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA Atlanta

U.S. Hands Off Cuba! Speakers: Fanon Che Wilkins; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd fl. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

Haiti Today: Working People Struggle for Freedom. Speaker: Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 14. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd fl. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS Chicago

U.S. Hands Off Cuba! Speakers: Maya Ruiz, Guatemala en Lucha; Roberto Rey, West Town community organizer; John Votava, Socialist Workers Party, member Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308; Walter Urroz, Casa Nicaragua. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 829-6815.

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U.S. Hands Off Cuba! Panel discussion. Sat., April 7, 7 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsors: Militant Labor Forum, Central America Solidarity Coalition, Latin America Solidarity. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

St. Louis

U.S. Government TV Martí: Attack on Cuban People. Speaker: Mary Zins: Socialist Workers Party, member United Mine Workers

of America. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

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Pollution Kills: How Can Working People Defend Themselves? Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

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"Out of the Ashes." Exhibit of photographs of Triangle Shirtwaist fire and political drawings of the time. Tuesdays through Fridays until June 8, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 97 Orchard St. For more information call (212) 431-0233.

Bailemos/Let's Dance. Fri., April 13, 9 p.m.-2 a.m. 300 W 43rd St. Donation: \$10. Sponsor: Venceremos Brigade. For more information call (212) 349-6292.

Tear Down the Korean Wall! U.S. Troops Out of South Korea! Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Militant staff writer. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

New York City

Behind the News. Radio program 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.

OHIO Cleveland

Pro-Choice Action Day. Sat., April 7. Assemble Cleveland State University, Euclid and E 22nd 1 p.m.; march 2 p.m. to Public Square for 2:30 rally. Sponsor: March for Women's Rights; Lambda Delta Lambda, CSU. For more information call (216) 234-3499.

OREGON Portland

Eastern, Greyhound, & Georgia Pacific Strikers Speak Out. Speakers: Jack Kill, member International Association of Machinists on strike against Eastern Airlines; Greg Matley, secretary-treasurer Amalgamated Transit Union, on strike against Greyhound; Don Frost, vice-president Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers Local 13, on strike against Georgia Pacific. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

TEXAS Houston

Why Capital Punishment Should be Eliminated. Speakers: representatives of Prisoners Program and Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

The Palestinian Struggle Continues. Speaker: Sarah Ryan, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Solidarity with Eastern and Greyhound Strikes. Speaker: Al Glover, strike coordinator for International Association of Machinists at Eastern; Mary Selvas, Socialist Workers Party, member IAM Local 517. Sat., April 21, 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

The Greyhound Strike. Speaker: member, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1384 on strike at Greyhound. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism in Cuba Today. Speaker: Carlos Tablada, Cuban economist and author. Fri., April 6. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Washington Peace Center, 2111 Florida Ave. NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsors: Pathfinder Press, Washington Peace Center, Pledge of Resistance, D.C. Venceremos Brigade, Washington Office on Haiti. For more information call (202) 797-7699. Tablada will also speak Thurs., April 5, 5-7 p.m., Institute for Policy Studies, 1601 Connecticut Ave NW.

BRITAIN Cardiff

TV Martí: U.S. Government's TV War Against Cuba. Fri., April 13, 7:30 p.m. 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 0222-484677.

London

Solidarity with the Eastern Airlines Strike. Speaker: Paul Davidson, member Amalgamated Engineering Union. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 01-928-7947.

Sheffield

The Birmingham Six and the Fight for Democratic Rights. Speaker: Jo O'Brien, Communist League. Wed., April 11, 7:30 p.m. 2A Waverley House, 10 Joiner St. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call (0742) 729469.

CANADA Montréal

No to Tuition Hikes! Support Students' Struggle! Speakers: Marc-André Éthier, student Université de Montréal, member Young Socialists; other students. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

Toronto

Canada's Racist Justice System. The Case of Donald Marshall. Speakers: Dudley Laws, Black Action Defence Committee; Roger Annis, correspondent for *Militant* in Nova Scotia. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W, Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

Hands Off Cuba! Political and Cultural Celebration, 29th Anniversary of Playa Girón. Speakers, greetings from special guests, film showing of *The Uncompromising Revolution*. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. Harbord Collegiate, 286 Harbord (3 blocks west of Bathurst). Donation: \$3. Coordinated by Committee for Defense of Sovereignty and Self-determination for the Peoples.

Help sell Mandela's autobiography

The *Militant* and Pathfinder Press are on a campaign to sell thousands of copies of the book *The Struggle Is My Life* by African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, and the Spanish-language *Habla Nelson Mandela*. The books are a collection of speeches and writings by the South African freedom fighter. They are being sold along with the magazine *New International* No. 5, which includes "The Coming Revolution in South Africa" by Jack Barnes.



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SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10. Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Army vs. Major Houlihan — Army recruiters are using a 12-minute video to cope with the shortage of military nurses. Col. John Blake complained, "Television programs like M*A*S*H* have mistakenly given people the impression that an army nurse's job is very hard and possibly dangerous."



Harry Ring

Order in the orders — The Vatican directed religious orders to put novices through psychological tests to screen out those who haven't conquered their homosexual tendencies, reports the British *Guardian*. And novices who attended co-educational schools are to get heavier teaching on "perfect chastity."

Safety first — In the year since the *Exxon Valdez* poured 11 million gallons of oil on the Alaskan coast, there have been 10,000 other spills with a total volume that may be twice as great, reports the Wilderness Society.

Self-indicated — Trout and salmon have been wiped out or severely

affected by acid rain in a third of the lakes and rivers in Scotland and neighboring British areas. That's according to a study by the Central Electricity Generating Board and British Coal, which are responsible for 70 percent of the sulphur dioxide emissions that cause acid rain.

Tax reform — Ninety percent of U.S. taxpayers are shelling out more than they did before 1978. But the richest 1 percent is paying an average of \$82,000 a year less.

Helps balance the budget — Last year nearly 18 million taxpayers got IRS letters erroneously demanding added payments and penalties. Confused and intimi-

dated, taxpayers forked over \$7 billion they didn't owe, according to *Money* magazine.

Nothing sacred? — Manischewitz, the matzoh biggie, was indicted, along with unnamed coconspirators, for acting in concert each year to hike matzoh prices on the eve of the Passover holiday.

Sushi, anyone? — Sewage-contaminated sea water is a growing health menace, according to a recent UN study on the state of the world's oceans. In one extreme case, a harmful virus survived for 17 months in sewage-polluted marine sediments.

Right-to-survive movement — In Congress, 41 House members are reported switching to support Medicaid funding of abortions for low-income victims of rape and incest. One of those who jumped ship, Rep. George Hochbrueckner (D-N.Y.), explained, "I've become more sensitive to the issue."

They're into both green movements — New York's Chemical Bank is recycling some 600 tons of its waste paper. (It uses 4,000 tons of high-grade paper a year, the equivalent of 60,000 trees.) Besides helping to save the planet, an official explained, the bank saves on carting bills and makes money selling the waste to recyclers.

ANC calls off gov't talks to protest killings by cops

Continued from front page

Klerk "the action of the police against defenseless people was a situation we would not tolerate."

"If the government talks about negotiations on the one hand, and then massacres our people on the other — that we can never accept," he added, to cheers and cries of "Viva!"

The talks between the ANC and the government were to have discussed steps the government must take to "create a climate for negotiations," in which top government ministers, central leaders of the ANC, and a range of other prominent political figures were slated to participate.

'Threshold of liberation'

"Your heroic struggles have fundamentally changed the face of South Africa," Mandela told the enthusiastic crowd. "We stand at the threshold of our liberation."

Mandela pointed to the struggle in the nominally independent "homeland" of Ciskei as an example of the important battles taking place today against central aspects of apartheid. Many in the crowd had participated in mass mobilizations in recent months against the autocratic rule of Chief Lennox Sebe. A coup, led by Brig. Gen. Oupa Johua Gqozo, toppled Sebe in late February.

Mandela said, however, that the "harsh realities of apartheid" are still part of the everyday life of Blacks in South Africa. "The state of emergency is still in force. State violence continues against our people in many parts of the country." Death squads and "vigilantes are still running rampant throughout our country. Political prisoners are still in jail."

Noting that political meetings — "both indoors and outdoors" — had been banned, he added, "There is no free political activity in the face of violence against our people." The situation does not "create the conditions for negotiations."

The brutality of the police action in Sebokeng was reported by various march participants to the Johannesburg *Star*.

"There was a volley of shots," one witness said, "then silence. The police started laughing. The crowd seemed frozen for a second; then they started screaming. They turned and ran."

One of the injured was Mkhulu Katledebe of the Vaal Student Congress. "I was in the front of the crowd," he explained. "We were listening to the report back from our leaders. Suddenly we heard shots and the next thing I was running. Then I fell. I woke up later in the hospital." He said the police treated the demonstrators "like animals."

As the marchers fled, police went into Sebokeng township. More residents were wounded as police continued the attack.

In neighboring Boipatong, a similar march was stopped by police from leaving the township. "We decided to go back into the township and hold a meeting in the Dutch Reformed Church," explained marcher Johannes Mohlokoane. "Before we reached the church, police fired tear gas at us. Our marshals went to tell them that we were not fighting. It looked like they understood, but a few meters away all hell broke loose. They started firing." Mohlokoane was injured in the thigh, hip, and hand.

As the day wore on, residents in the Vaal townships began to fight back against the



Militant/Margrethe Siem
Nelson Mandela addresses a Johannesburg concert that celebrated his release from prison.

police assault. By evening the council buildings at Sebokeng and Lekoa were ablaze. The police barred reporters from Sebokeng, stating that emergency regulations prevent reporters from entering areas of "police action." By the following evening the death toll had risen to 14 and those injured to nearly 2,000.

The march was part of a day of action, including a mass stayaway from work and schools, demanding rent reductions, an end to evictions, an end to the private sale of houses, and the building of new and better housing. At Sebokeng, the residents were demanding the township council resign.

Soweto march attacked

Just two days before the Sebokeng massacre, the police attacked a march of 10,000 in Soweto, organized by the Soweto Civic Association. The protest demanded the unification of the Soweto township and Johannesburg City councils, better housing, and an end to the privatization of council services. As they marched to present their demands at the Soweto town council buildings, the police opened fire with tear gas and bird shot, injuring 100. Similar police attacks took place in Witbank, Klerksdorp, and Potchefstroom the previous week.

Responding to the events at Sebokeng, Ronnie Mamoepa, Transvaal publicity secretary for the United Democratic Front — a broad anti-apartheid coalition — said he believed that some members of the police force were "trying to derail the negotiating process" by attacking peaceful protest actions. About the government's claim that the ANC cannot control its supporters Mamoepa said, "It is difficult for us to convince people to act peacefully when they are being attacked by police who do not respect their right to protest."

In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation, Minister of Law and Order Adriaan Vlok said, "The police are really trying their level best not to kill people." Saying the government "is not responsible for the violence," Vlok called the Sebokeng police massacre "an unfortunate incident. I am sorry it happened."

In an attempt to shift the blame for the police violence and the suspension of the talks onto the ANC, government officials

claimed that divisions within the ANC leadership, not the Sebokeng killings, were behind Mandela's announcement. "The ANC is just not ready for talks," one senior government spokesman told the Johannesburg *Citizen*.

In a speech to the ruling National party youth, de Klerk said, "The loss of life is regretted." He added that the massacre "should not stand in the way of discussions."

Attacking the protest actions around the country, he said, "Large masses of people proclaiming extreme positions in our streets promote polarization and violence. What we need is reconciliation and good will."

Threatening the liberation movement, he added, "If certain elements on the left and on the right continue their present course of violence and lawlessness, the government will be obliged to use the full weight of its power to restore law and order in an unprejudiced manner."

A leader of the liberal Democratic Party backed de Klerk's condemnation of the suspension of the talks. Zach de Beer said, "While the shooting at Sebokeng was a deplorable episode, it can be no excuse for breaking off talks."

Right to assemble, demonstrate

The ANC National Executive Committee said that it would review the suspension of talks within five days. "The people have the

right to assemble and demonstrate in support of their demands," said a statement released by the ANC leadership body. "We claim this as an inalienable right, not as a favor conceded by the regime at its discretion."

The ANC called upon the South African authorities to "make an explicit and open commitment to peace in the country by taking demonstrative action to bring the perpetrators of this violence to justice with all deliberate speed."

At the Bisho rally Mandela said, "We have noted President de Klerk's sincerity" about negotiations and promoting fundamental change in South Africa. Given the conditions in the country, he called for "the anti-apartheid struggle to intensify."

"We call on the international community to apply all possible pressure for the dismantling of apartheid," he stressed. The fight to bring an end to apartheid "through negotiations and other forms of struggle must involve the ordinary masses of our people. Every man and woman must shape the future of a non-racial, democratic South Africa."

Mandela explained, "Increased repression can only increase the crisis of the apartheid government. The ANC is committed to peace. We have made our commitment clear to the regime and to the world through the Harare declaration," which "offers the only genuine road to negotiations and peace" by calling on de Klerk to "meet our reasonable demands."

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

April 11, 1980

Omega 7 [the terrorist arm of publicly functioning ultraright Cuban exiles] has declared it still intends to murder Raúl Roa, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations.

Roa escaped death March 25 when a bomb planted under his car fell off before detonating. According to New York police it was powerful enough to blow up a city block.

The April 1 New York *El Diario* reported it had received a "communiqué" from Omega 7 declaring it had "sentenced to death the ambassador of Communist Cuba."

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The death toll from the "Palm Sunday Massacre" in San Salvador is still rising. Reports reaching here indicate that from 50 to 100 persons were killed when elements of the Salvadoran armed forces and right-wing paramilitary groups attacked a crowd of half a million persons who had gathered outside the Metropolitan Cathedral on March 30 for the funeral of slain Archbishop Oscar Romero.

The massacre began at 11:40 a.m. when a grenade or bomb was thrown from a balcony of the National Palace, adjacent to the large plaza outside the cathedral. Snipers in uniform or civilian dress fired from the upper floors of the Palace. Panic swept the crowd, which was made up mostly of workers and peasants who had traveled from all parts of El Salvador to pay their last respects to the religious leader who had given voice to their demands.

THE MILITANT

Published in the interests of the Working People
April 12, 1965 Price 10c

The following is from a statement by Jack Barnes, then national chairman of the Young Socialist Alliance, on the eve of the first mass demonstration against the war in Vietnam.

If you feel the urgency of stopping the U.S. war of atrocity in Vietnam, you should join and build the April 17 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam. Young and old, student and nonstudent, are being urged by the organizers of the march to pitch in to make this the largest and most effective demonstration possible.

Growing numbers of Americans are expressing doubts about the war and desire a peaceful solution. A powerful march on Washington demanding an end to this war now will help mobilize that sentiment into a movement that, if it becomes powerful enough, can stay President Johnson's hand.

Students for a Democratic Society, the organizers of the march, report that thousands of students are planning to converge on Washington from every major campus in the East and Midwest. Women Strike for Peace and other peace organizations have endorsed the march and are working to build it.

The fact that SDS is calling for an immediate end to U.S. aggression in Vietnam assures that the action will be in heartening contrast to many previous peace demonstrations which were weakened because the leaders proceeded on the mistaken notion that if they watered down the purpose of the action they would win broader support for it.

Hands off Cuba! No TV Martí!

Continued from front page

cost of \$7.5 million. The two-year cost of the project is \$40 million.

Washington is attempting to broadcast TV Martí over one of Cuba's two national television stations, *Tele Rebelde*. The transmissions are sent from a huge U.S. Air Force balloon, floating 10,000 feet above the Florida Keys.

In defending itself against Washington's electronic aggression, the Cuban government points out that the TV Martí project violates a raft of international laws and treaties. By moving ahead with transmissions, Washington tramples on United Nations treaties and conventions, the Organization of American States charter, and the International Telecommunication Union Convention. In 1982 both the Cuban and U.S. governments signed an international treaty that stipulated normal TV transmission wavelengths are for domestic use only.

Cuban communications minister Manuel Castillo Rabosa has aptly labeled TV Martí an electronic Bay of Pigs, comparing it to the 1961 U.S.-backed invasion that was crushed by the Cubans in 72 hours.

In taking steps to block TV Martí broadcasts, Cuba is not just fighting for itself, President Fidel Castro explains, but for all Third World countries. If the U.S. government gets away with TV Martí, it will set a precedent to be used against other countries and peoples struggling against imperialist domination.

The seriousness of Cuba's commitment to force an end to Washington's interference in Cuban internal affairs was underscored by Castro's April 3 Havana news conference and the tour given reporters of the equipment to jam TV Martí. "We are not looking for a fight," Castro explained. "But we will not be intimidated."

The use of Cuban national hero José Martí's name for this vile project is a special affront to the Cuban people. But it is not the first time Martí's name has been so smeared by Washington.

First came Radio Martí, a U.S.-government propaganda project begun in 1985 under the United States Information Agency. In response to "this downright act of provocation," as the Cuban government termed it at the time, Cuba made the difficult decision to suspend the accord on immigration it had concluded with Washington a few months earlier.

Despite unflagging support from the Reagan and Bush administrations and bipartisan financing from Congress for both projects, there are some in U.S. ruling circles and elsewhere who are raising questions — both political and practical — about TV Martí.

Radio Martí director Ernesto Betancourt recently resigned over a dispute with Jorge Mas Canosa, who envisages himself as an architect of a "post-Castro" Cuba. Mas Canosa heads the anticommunist Cuban-American National Foundation, which has close ties to the U.S. Republican Party, and is chairman of the advisory board to both

Radio Martí and TV Martí. The *Washington Post* and *New York Times* in recent editorials voiced concern that the two projects — instead of maintaining a facade of "objectivity" and thus some credibility — were becoming more and more closely identified with Mas Canosa's wing of the Cuban anticommunist groups based in the United States.

The National Association of Broadcasters also opposes TV Martí on the grounds that it cannot be made to work technically, is taking money away from other projects, and invites retaliation from Cuba, which can respond to TV Martí's continued broadcasts by interfering with U.S. radio frequencies in 30 states. "We think TV Martí is a dumb idea," said Michael Rau, an association vice-president.

As a result, U.S. President George Bush went to the broadcasters' convention in Atlanta on April 2 to reiterate his support for TV Martí and urge the broadcasters to "stand for freedom" by doing the same.

To cover up TV Martí's patent illegality, Washington claims it is needed to better inform the Cuban people about world events. Although Washington has worked overtime for more than 30 years to spread lies and slanders about Cuba, it arrogantly claims that its TV Martí will be "objective."

Cuba already gets all kinds of programming from other countries, including from the United States, and the government is looking to expand ties with U.S. television networks. That is not the question.

Washington is violating Cuba's right to regulate its own telecommunications in order to prove such an attack can be carried out — and to try to set up an incident that could lead to further attacks, including a possible "surgical strike" on Cuba's transmitters.

The sovereignty of Latin America was dealt a heavy blow with the U.S. invasion of Panama and the recent election of a pro-U.S. government in Nicaragua. This has emboldened Washington to press ahead with its campaign to isolate and attack Cuba, including the decision to start up TV Martí. Also encouraging the U.S. ruling families is the international clamor for "capitalism" and "democracy" coming out of the break-up of the Communist Party-dominated regimes in Eastern Europe.

But U.S. imperialism's triumphalism is built on sand. Far from opening a future of stable development, capitalism has already dragged hundreds of millions of people in Latin America, Asia, and Africa into misery. With the inevitable economic downturn that lies ahead, conditions for a majority of humanity will only worsen.

Unionists and other working people, students, political activists, supporters of democratic rights, and all those who defend the right of countries under the thumb of Washington to control their own affairs have a big role to play — especially in the United States — in calling a halt to TV Martí. The April 7 "Hands Off Cuba" demonstration in New York shows the growing potential to build such a movement in defense of Cuba's sovereignty.

Join our drive for new readers!

The international seven-week circulation campaign to win thousands of first-time readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *Lutte ouvrière*, *New International*, and *Nouvelle Internationale* is behind schedule. A big effort is needed over the next several weeks to reach our goals by May 5.

Preparations are being made to take full advantage of the special April 14–21 target week. During the eight-day effort, supporters of the *Militant* will be hitting the road on sales teams and stepping up the circulation of the paper.

Hundreds of packinghouse workers, students, and others in the Midwest will be introduced to the *Militant* at their plant gates, in the countryside, and on college campuses by a team of supporters set to travel through Iowa and South Dakota. *Militant* supporters will be crossing eastern Canada selling the paper to fishing-industry workers, miners, and students.

A successful target week can generate momentum for the sales drive so we can take advantage of every opportunity to sell subscriptions and win new readers. Supporters can get on a real campaign footing and put a sales operation into gear that includes:

- big Saturday sales every weekend — fanning out to working-class communities, picket lines, subway stops, and street corners;
- widely circulating the *Militant* at actions in solidarity with the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and in defense of Cuba;
- selling *Militant* subscriptions while collecting signatures to get socialist candidates on the ballot;
- winning new readers among workers, youth, and others interested in finding out more about Cuba as part of publicizing meetings of touring Cuban economist and author Carlos Tablada;
- signing up coworkers who need the *Militant* as they discuss the big political questions facing our class.

Over the past couple of months the pages of the *Militant*

have brought readers news reports from struggles around the country and internationally. From Eastern picket lines in Florida to the British coalfields, from Panama and El Salvador to South Africa, our reporters have been there, getting the facts.

Over the next weeks readers can expect equally important and attractive coverage including reports on the progress and momentum of the "Hands Off Cuba" campaign, firsthand reporting from Cuba, and statements and speeches of leaders of the Cuban revolution.

Featured will be eyewitness coverage from South Africa as correspondents Greg McCartan and Rich Palser and photographer Margrethe Siem continue to be on the scene in the bantustans and at the factory gates.

The *Militant* will have needed news and analysis from the strike centers and picket lines of the Eastern Airlines and Greyhound strikes and other labor fights, reports from our Managua bureau on the new Nicaraguan government and the unfolding struggles of working people in the cities and countryside, and a special weekly series on the crisis in Eastern Europe.

Thousands of new readers will want to sign up in the next few weeks to subscribe to the *Militant*. We know there is heightened interest in the paper today by the warm response it gets from strikers and other workers in struggle, miners involved in the coalfield resistance sparked by the Pittston fight, students at high schools and colleges, and activists fighting in solidarity with the masses in South Africa and Cuba.

The January-February renewal effort saw better-than-usual results — half of all renewals came directly from readers. This is reflected this week in our letters column.

We think this bodes well for winning thousands of new subscribers to the *Militant* and we urge all supporters of the paper to join in the campaign to make the international circulation goals on time.

Cuba's future: 'An eternal Baraguá!'

BY DOUG JENNESS

On March 15 Cuban leader Raúl Castro publicly presented the call for the Fourth Congress of the Cuban Communist Party to be held in the first part of next year. The date chosen for making the announcement was the 112th anniversary of the "Baraguá Protest," and the theme for the Congress and its preparations is, "The future of our country will be an eternal Baraguá!"

The Baraguá Protest is one of the moments in Cuban history that most symbolizes the will not to surrender under difficult, even seemingly impossible, conditions. It refers back to Cuba's first war of independence, which began in 1868.

In that struggle a broad range of social forces — peasants, slaves, artisans, and landowners, including slaveholders — united to get rid of Spanish colonial rule and establish an independent republic. Under the command of

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

Máximo Gómez, an army was assembled that scored some impressive military victories against the numerically superior Spanish forces.

One of the outstanding military leaders was Antonio Maceo, who was 23 years old when the war began. "Maceo, born of a poor family," Cuban President Fidel Castro noted in a speech on the 100th anniversary of the Baraguá Protest, "and, moreover, a black at a time when racial prejudice was very strong in our country, began to distinguish himself, in spite of the difficulties resulting from his background and the circumstances that prevailed in our society."

As the independence war neared its 10th year without victory, the human toll was mounting, supplies were running out, and the fight was internationally isolated.

Moreover, sharp class divisions got in the way of carrying out the war, including launching an effective invasion of western Cuba, which was decisive for victory.

An invasion from the Eastern provinces where the guerrilla fighters were strongest was vigorously pressed by Gómez. He also proposed placing Maceo in a key role in this military offensive.

But the proposals assumed that thousands of slaves in the western provinces would join the struggle and seek liberation. The slave-owning landlords supporting the independence movement strongly opposed this and blocked effective backing for a serious invasion.

In February 1878 virtually all the political and military leaders in the independence struggle agreed to surrender to the Spanish authorities. In exchange all slaves in the insurgent ranks were freed and an amnesty was granted for those charged with political offenses during the 10-year war.

Maceo was not consulted about this pact, which was agreed to in Zanjón. At the time it was being negotiated, he was scoring a couple of his most impressive military victories of the war.

When the Spanish commander came to Maceo's camp in Baraguá in March to discuss the pact, the young freedom fighter rejected it because it did not grant independence to Cuba. Then one of Maceo's aides asked the Spaniard, "Since you claim that you can't grant independence, why don't you promise to free the slaves?"

"This gives the [Baraguá] Protest an importance that quite possibly the bourgeoisie did not put enough emphasis on in the past," Castro noted in 1978, "limiting themselves to the question of independence and disregarding the political aspect of the Protest, in spite of the fact that slavery was the most important social problem of that time."

After an eight-day truce, Maceo issued a proclamation calling on the people in Oriente Province to continue supporting the struggle for independence and abolition of slavery. The armed struggle was resumed.

Maceo was soon forced into exile and the war ended. But he later returned to fight in the war of independence launched in 1895. He was killed in battle the following year.

Throughout Cuba's revolutionary history the inspiring example of Maceo's refusal to surrender has been a rallying cry at many difficult moments.

Today, the country's communist leadership is again calling on this heritage. "Nowadays the imperialists are plotting a worldwide Zanjón Pact," the call to the Fourth Congress states. "They think they are witnessing the final and irreversible crisis of socialism. Blinded by their triumphalist euphoria, they assume that Cuba, apparently isolated in its geographical proximity to the United States, will not be able to resist and will have to surrender."

"They are lying in ambush," the call states, "waiting for the slightest crack to move against our nation and thereby bring to fruition one of their dearest imperial dreams: crushing the Cuban revolution, liquidating its example, and dominating forever the people who dared to challenge them."

"This is the moment to take a stand," the declaration stresses, "like Antonio Maceo in Baraguá, to say 'No!' We will not renounce the revolution, socialism, Leninism, and internationalism."

New tax rip-off of workers in Canada and Britain

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — January 1 the Canadian government will begin collecting a new 7 percent federal sales tax, called the goods and services tax (GST). It will jump the cost of just about every purchase, from a Big Mac to a haircut to a pair of shoes. Only basic groceries, prescription drugs, and rent will be exempted. This tax comes on top of sales taxes in the country's 10 provinces that average about the same as the new federal tax.

Workers and working farmers will be hit more severely than the wealthy by the new tax and are up in arms against

AS I SEE IT

it. The Canadian Labour Congress and the New Democratic Party are part of a broad campaign that demands "Ax the tax, kill the GST."

In Britain, huge demonstrations are rocking the ruling Conservative Party of Margaret Thatcher, which has just imposed a poll tax for municipal services. Every adult person on the voter rolls will be taxed a flat rate by each municipal government. This replaces a property tax that varied according to the assessed value of houses or other property.

This head tax may be upward of £350 (US\$570). A working-class family with two parents and a couple of children over 18 still living at home in a tiny house may be forced to pay well over \$2,200 with this new tax. On the other hand, a fabulously wealthy couple with a huge mansion with no children would pay considerably less.

Both these tax schemes have a common thread. They are efforts by the ruling capitalist families to use their hired politicians and the government to redistribute social wealth. They aim to decrease the real wages and living standards of

workers, unemployed workers, and working farmers and increase the profits going to themselves.

Cuts in real wages have come in the form of wage concessions and speed-up over the last decade. But they have also come in the form of "tax reforms" that lower the purchasing power of workers and farmers.

In the imperialist countries, the so-called tax reforms have raised the tax burden on working people and lowered it for the wealthy.

A favored form of this tax assault has been a shift away from income taxes, whose rates rise progressively with higher incomes, toward consumption taxes. These include sales taxes; excise taxes on gasoline, tobacco products, and liquor; customs duties; bridge and highway tolls; and in Europe, so-called value-added taxes.

Virtually all of the wages or farm income of working people is spent on items that can be taxed, while the wealthy owners of industry can save, invest, and protect a big chunk of their income from such taxes. The net effect, unless we fight to win cost-of-living adjustments in wages and benefits in order to maintain our income in the face of rising costs, is lowered living standards for our class and its allies. It means greater social and economic power for the capitalists.

Only a minor and diminishing part of tax revenues are returned to working people in the form of education, health, and other social services, a "social wage" that benefits the working class and its allies. These are the items in government spending that the capitalists have targeted first.

Some reactionary business forces attempting to capitalize on the opposition against higher taxes organize a "taxpayers' revolt" to demand bigger cuts in social spending.

The lion's share of government expenditures go to the banks and other wealthy holders of federal bonds in the form

of interest payments, to the war industries, to the police, the courts, and prisons that enforce and protect the capitalist property system, and to giant subsidies to big business.

Whether taxes come from the obvious deductions from our paychecks, or arbitrary price increases in the form of sales taxes, or a cut of corporate profits — they all originate in the value workers and working farmers produce and are all part of the surplus that the capitalist class takes from us.

Union officials in Canada are calling the anti-GST tax movement the Campaign for Fair Taxes. But a campaign for "fair taxes," just like a campaign for "fair wages," assumes that the capitalist profit system can be reasonable and fair. It would mean that workers would be helping to maintain the social and economic power of a class that not only oppresses and exploits them, but which plays no productive or necessary role in society. Working people produce the wealth. What's fair about a handful of ruling rich appropriating much of it to live in obscene luxury or control economic growth while most struggle just to survive?

Every class-conscious worker in Canada or Britain should be part of the fight to abolish the GST and the poll tax. Especially important is to fight against the effects of procapitalist "tax reforms" by demanding wage increases. This should include increasing the minimum wage, unemployment insurance, and welfare payments to the level of union rates, and for full cost-of-living protection of wages as well as pensions and other benefits. Such demands can unify the working class in the fight to defend its living standards.

In the course of such battles there can be discussions on the need to abolish all consumption taxes like the GST and the poll tax, and on property taxes that especially hit working farmers. All taxes on working people should be eliminated and the taxes on the capitalist exploiters increased.

LETTERS

Need youth column

As a member of the Young Socialist Alliance, I would like to see a page or column in the *Militant* dedicated to youth. Many young people are exposed to the revolutionary ideas of the paper.

I know the *Militant* expresses the views of rebel youth in the United States. But young people who purchase subscriptions or single copies of the paper see little or no reference to the YSA.

I believe a column or "youth page" is necessary in the coming tumultuous period. The *Militant* is the only weapon we have now.

D.J.
Chicago, Illinois

Mariel Cubans

I am a Mariel Cuban. I came to this country in the 1980 boatlift at the invitation of the U.S. government. I was granted immigration parole by the U.S. government.

Through an error I committed in this country that resulted in a criminal conviction, I lost my immigration parole. I have paid for my mistake and am now paying for it again as an Immigration and Naturalization Service detainee.

I cannot be deported to Cuba because of U.S.-Cuban relations. The INS says it has to detain me because I might commit another crime in the future.

The review procedures set up by the INS are unfair. Those detainees who were in detention during the Oakdale/Atlanta riots in 1987 have been promised a one-time review of their cases by the Justice Department. Close to 50 percent of the INS decisions in those cases are being overturned. But those who came into detention after 1987 will not get this review.

I beg you to take a close look at the INS detention policy of Mariel Cubans and do what you can to change it.

A prisoner
El Reno, Oklahoma

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.

Readers send in comments with renewals

Every week the *Militant* sends letters to readers whose subscriptions are about to expire urging them to renew. The letters offer subscribers special discounts on the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and advertise the Pathfinder pamphlet *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.

Contacting every reader by mail is one way the *Militant* appeals to those who took advantage of the paper's introductory offer, inviting them to become long-term readers. During the nine-week international circulation campaign that ended Nov. 12, 1989, supporters of the socialist press won 7,163 new readers to the *Militant*. Since then, 503 have decided to renew their subscriptions.

Often when readers send in their renewals, they enclose a brief note or jot down comments and suggestions in the space provided on the back of the renewal letter. Below are some of their recent comments.

* * *

Thank you for the *Militant*. It's objective, informative, and a pleasure to read. Keep on going strong!
H.A.
Pasadena, California

Good work! My husband and I appreciate so much your commitment.
C.W.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Environment

I really enjoy reading the *Militant*. It's the only paper I've seen that gives in depth reporting on important labor battles. I would like to see more stories done on important environmental conflicts.

Profit motive capitalism and the environmental well-being of this planet have irreconcilable differences — differences that must be addressed because of the ozone depletion, greenhouse effect, rape and plunder of the world's ancient forests, and outright poisoning of the rivers and oceans.

I am an environmentalist wood worker and I see a great deal of conflict building up over the timber issue and releases of dioxin



Militant/Arthur Hughes
Sales at the national abortion rights demonstration in Washington, D.C. November 1989. During the fall international circulation drive that ended November 12, supporters of the socialist press sold 7,163 subscriptions to the *Militant*. Of those, 503 have renewed their subscriptions. Many readers send in comments and suggestions with their renewals.

into rivers. Let's hear more!
G.L.
Sutherlin, Oregon

Eastern Europe

The *Militant* does an excellent job. I would like to see more in-depth articles on the political forces in the USSR and Eastern Europe, especially within the working class. Also, more news and analysis of social and economic problems here in the United States with a lot of factual background.

A.K.
Berlin, Connecticut

More analysis of the events in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The revolution in Romania deserves particular attention. Thanks.

T.Q.
Kodiak, Alaska

Please consider a series of articles detailing in depth the historical circumstances that led to the creation of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe shortly after World War II. At this time of heightened interest in Eastern Europe, engen-

dered by the collapse of these regimes, many people might find such a series informative. I, for one, feel that there is a gap in my knowledge concerning the subject.
J.S.
Chicago, Illinois

Consider a story on . . .

I like the *Militant*. Before my very eyes I can see and suppose there are millions of dollars being spent from the earthquake fund here in Santa Cruz. There are a lot of holes in the stories I read in the local rag (*Sentinel*). Someone should do a story here in Santa Cruz: "Capitalist ripoff of the poor."

L.E.
Santa Cruz, California

I first got the *Militant* for the coverage of Pittston. I would appreciate follow up on how miners and families are adapting to their changing situation.

S.L.
Brunswick, Maine

Would like more coverage on Panama after the invasion. What

is the United States doing? What are the Panamanians doing? What is going on down there?

Keep up the wonderful work.
S.G.
Corvallis, Oregon

How about an article about East St. Louis — the corruption in government and the racist attacks — and what it would take for a small Black city to survive?

Love your coverage of Eastern Europe and especially loved your analysis of the fall of the workers' and farmers' government in Nicaragua.

Keep up the good work!
D.R.C.
St. Louis, Missouri

I am a Black working-class woman and I find your coverage of weekly events to be indispensable. I am especially looking forward to your reports from South Africa and on the domestic Black liberation struggle.

D.M.
Berkeley, California

Class solidarity

This weekly stands four-square for international working-class solidarity; and whether it's miners in West Virginia, railroad workers in South Africa, or ambulance drivers in England, you folks cover the beat.

One suggestion — what about covering job actions and organizing drives for pink-collar working people like nurses, teachers, secretaries, etc.? These sisters are often on the lowest rung of the income and status ladder in the United States and deserve attention because of the exploitation and abuse they are subject to as a result of their class affiliation and their gender.

You do a wonderful job. I am thinking of canceling my *Chicago Tribune* subscription; only the baseball scores hold me captive!

R.F.
Rolling Meadows, Illinois

The *Militant* is a very enlightening paper. I shall continue subscribing to it.

P.W.
Jamaica, New York

Nicaragua Coke workers strike, voice resentments over privilege

BY SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Workers at the state-owned Coca-Cola bottling plant here went on strike for a day to win back the job of a well-liked supervisor. The successful job action also allowed workers to express built-up resentment at privileges enjoyed by management.

On March 21 production supervisor Mauricio Blanco was fired by the plant manager for being "disrespectful." Blanco called together a meeting of workers in his department. He said he was being axed for raising charges of corruption and misappropriation of goods. Production workers shut down the bottling line and called on their coworkers to also stop work and demand that Blanco be rehired.

Workers locked the factory gates and put up signs protesting "the unjust firing of compañero Mauricio Blanco." The plant manager, Carlos Vega, was not allowed in.

"Vega is a dictator," mechanic Manuel Velázquez said. "We're going to stay out until Mauricio is reinstated and Vega is fired."

'Lot of opportunists'

Francisco Ruiz, a 22-year-old war veteran and member of the Sandinista Youth, added, "Vega says he's a Sandinista. The problem is that there are a lot of opportunists who have taken advantage of the revolution to enrich themselves."

One worker, who supported the pro-Washington National Opposition Union (UNO) in the recent elections, stated, "This is not a political question. It's a labor matter. Mauricio is honest and hardworking and then they just go and fire him for no good reason."

During an assembly attended by most of the factory's 650 employees, local union officials, representatives of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), and Blanco all tried to convince the workers to end the strike.

Daniel Reyes, union president and supervisor of mechanics at Coca-Cola, told the workers, "This union is not going to support an illegal strike. Besides, we have already lost a day of production. Who does this hurt the most? The workers."

"The Ministry of Labor has declared that this strike is illegal," added CST representative Manuel Gutiérrez.

From the crowd someone shouted out, "So what can they do to us even if it is illegal?" Gutiérrez responded, "That means the leaders can be fired. Both sides need to be flexible."

"What are they going to do, fire us all?" someone asked.

"We're staying here until Mauricio is back," another worker added.

"We want Vega to explain his actions," several said.

The assembly ended with the agreement that Vega would come to the factory the next morning to answer questions from the workers.

Reinstated

At a packed meeting on March 23, Vega announced that even though firing Blanco had been justified, he would be reinstated "in the interest of maintaining the unity of the workers."

Vega defended himself against charges of corruption. While admitting to using company carpenters and electricians, as well as company paint, to fix up his home, he stated he had paid 11 million córdobas for the services and materials and would soon pay another 11 million.

"There is nothing wrong with this," the director said. "My actions were authorized and an accepted practice. I did not steal anything. Everything was paid for."

Vega's explanation did not satisfy the workers. Tomás Corea took the floor to object. "If a truck driver here loses an empty bottle, he gets charged for it, plus a 17 percent fine.

"How is it possible that the company buys materials, then loans them to the director, and lets him pay months later, but workers can't get a loan to take their child to a hospital?"

"And while you're answering these questions, why don't you tell us about the birthday parties the directors celebrate at the best restaurants and hotels?" Corea asked, to loud applause.

"We are exploited," another worker said. "It's not right that the directors have all kinds of privileges."

After two hours of discussion, Mauricio Blanco took the floor and called for an end to the job action. "Let's go back to work and set a new record for production," he said.

One worker continued to demand the removal of Vega and a complete change in the administration. CST leader Gutiérrez responded, "Many criticisms have been raised here that must be taken seriously. But Vega has to give an accounting when the new government takes



Assembly of striking Coca-Cola workers. In one-day action they won reinstatement of well-liked supervisor who was fired by management known for its corruption.

office. We can't disrupt things now."

As soon as the meeting was over, workers went back to their jobs.

"We achieved our objective of winning

back Mauricio's job," Roberto Martínez stated. "We're quite satisfied. As for the rest of our demands, we'll have to see as we go."

Teachers strike before UNO takes office

BY SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Forty-five teachers at the Ramiro Goyena high school here staged a three-day strike they hoped would spark similar actions at other schools. The strike was ended when it did not spread.

During the partial stoppage, teachers on two of three shifts at the school taught classes for half the regularly scheduled times. They were demanding higher wages.

Teachers are poorly paid relative to some other sectors of the working class. In May 1989 several thousand members of the teachers' union, ANDEN, went on strike to demand wage increases and improved benefits. While most teachers did not join the action, it received widespread sympathy.

Leaders of the teachers' union, and of the Sandinista Workers Federation, and the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) accused participants in last year's strike of being counterrevolutionaries or being manipulated by right-wing parties. After a week most of the strikers were back at work.

President Daniel Ortega granted some improvements in wages and benefits at that time and promised to consider further wage increases.

Teachers at Goyena explained why they decided to go on strike now even though they did not join in the stoppage last May.

Referring to the victory of the National Opposition Union (UNO), a pro-U.S. capitalist coalition, over the FSLN in the February 25 elections, Yadira Cisneros said, "We don't know what's going to happen with the new government. If we don't win some improvements now, who knows what's going to happen when Doña Violeta takes office? We have to establish a precedent." She was referring to Violeta Chamorro, who becomes president on April 25.

'Tired of promises'

Edgard Ruiz, a leader of the action who supports the FSLN, stated, "This is a historical problem that goes back to the times of Somoza." Anastasio Somoza was the dictator overthrown by the FSLN-led revolution in 1979.

"What we want is a fair wage," Ruiz said. "We are tired of promises that are not carried out."

On March 21 several hundred teachers and school administrators from Managua, including those on strike at Goyena, attended a demonstration organized by ANDEN. Many of those present were members of the FSLN.

Guillermo Martínez, ANDEN national president, presented the teachers' complaints in writing to Education Minister Fernando Cardenal. "We have fought for many just demands and they have not been totally satisfied," Martínez told Cardenal. "We understand the difficulties the government has had with the contra aggression and the U.S. economic blockade."

Martínez said teachers were demanding a substantial wage increase, improved retirement benefits, and approval of a law regulating the teaching profession. The teachers wanted the measures adopted before April 25. "We know that on February 25 a new stage was opened and that we must be prepared," he added.

"You can be confident that President Ortega will take these proposals and immediately study them," Cardenal told the crowd.

As Cardenal started leaving, Ruiz and other teachers from Goyena attempted to hand him a petition listing their demands. Cardenal said he had another appointment and had to leave. But Ruiz demanded an immediate answer.

Other participants viewed the action by the teachers from Goyena as a disruption. They began yelling at Ruiz, accusing him of being with UNO and of trying to form a parallel union.

'We are for ANDEN'

Ruiz stood his ground and tried to argue his point with the other teachers. "We are for ANDEN," he said. "We are against an independent union."

Concerned that their actions had been misunderstood, Ruiz invited ANDEN leader Martínez to visit Goyena the following day.

The meeting turned into a debate between members of the Sandinista Front who op-

posed the strike and strike supporters, some of whom support the FSLN, and some of whom do not.

One teacher objected to accusations that the teachers at Goyena were reactionaries because they were on strike. "Our stomachs are not right or left," he said, "just hungry."

Julio Madrigal, an FSLN supporter, criticized the strike for hurting the students. "Right now we are in a transition period," he stated. "We have to turn over the country to the new government and guarantee stability. We need to continue to work to insure the demobilization of the contras and to help win international economic aid for the new government."

"We can't ask for an excessive pay increase," Madrigal added. "We have to realize that the contra aggression and the economic blockade caused these problems and we can't solve them overnight. Everybody suffered because of the war."

Yadira Cisneros disagreed. "It is false to say that everybody suffered equally from the effects of the war," she told the meeting. "Many people did quite well. Doctors make over 20 million córdobas a month plus all the little perks. The army was granted a 100 percent pay increase last month. We are also professionals who deserve a raise."

"We have exhausted every means of struggle," she stated. "It's time they paid attention to us."

Martínez, while saying that the decision on the strike was up to the teachers, asserted, "Strikes by teachers and health workers never get public support anywhere in the world."

After everyone had a chance to speak, Ruiz proposed that the teachers at Goyena and the national leadership of ANDEN "maintain better communication to avoid incidents like the one the day before."

He also proposed that teachers at Goyena reaffirm their support for ANDEN and that a statement clarifying that participants in the strike were not counterrevolutionaries be issued.

By an overwhelming majority those present voted to end the strike.