

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba at United Nations
denounces U.S. embargo

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Sanctions on Yugoslavia not in workers' interests

BY GEORGE BUCHANAN

The U.S. government is joining with those of the European Community (EC) to place economic sanctions on Yugoslavia and promote a resolution in the United Nations Security Council calling for an oil embargo. The EC is also threatening to send troops to Yugoslavia in the guise of "peacekeepers."

The EC has banned Yugoslav textile imports, ended Yugoslavia's privileged trade access to the European Community, and dropped the country from an aid program for Eastern Europe.

The sanctions, adopted by the EC November 8, followed the Serbian government's refusal to accept a peace plan drawn up by an EC-sponsored conference on Yugoslavia.

The plan proposed that Yugoslavia become a loose association of republics with a single currency, and no internal border changes except by mutual agreement. It stipulated that forces from other countries be responsible for "peacekeeping" in disputed areas, and that Kosovo and Vojvodina, now part of Serbia, regain their status as autonomous provinces. The Serbian regime in Belgrade demands that Serbs living outside Serbia be able to vote to incorporate the regions where they live into Serbia.

The sanctions, aimed against the republic of Serbia, will affect other republics as well. Commercial and other agreements, such as the EC's aid package, were made with the government of Yugoslavia and not individ-

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Federal army troops carry victim in Croatian city of Vukovar, now reduced to rubble. EC and U.S. sanctions will only increase hardship of Yugoslav working people.

Challenge to labor movement posed by Duke vote

BY GREG McCARTAN

The widespread publicity and the hearing received by Republican candidate for governor of Louisiana David Duke highlight the growing political polarization and class tensions in U.S. politics.

Duke centered his campaign on anti-working-class proposals, including opposition to affirmative action, social programs for unemployed workers, and school busing. He posed as a champion of middle-class layers of society affected by or worried about the impact of the economic crisis.

NEWS ANALYSIS

"Politics as primal scream," a "bizarre governor's race," the "politics of unreason," and "a searing political drama," are some of the ways the big-business media described the campaign. But far from being a side show, the issues Duke posed in the election, the failure of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party to provide any answers to the questions he raised, and the extent of support he won, signal an important challenge to the labor movement: how to fight Dukeism?

Duke lost the November 16 election to Democratic candidate and former governor Edwin Edwards by a 39-to-61 percent margin.

The governor's race captured nationwide attention because Duke used to be a grand wizard of the Klu Klux Klan and later formed a white supremacist organization called the National Association for the Advancement of White People.

These political associations are what the major media, business officials, President George Bush, and other Duke opponents focused on when calling for a vote against the Republican candidate.

A conservative Republican

Duke publicly disavowed his tie with the KKK, calling it a "youthful indiscretion." His main political themes are not outside the bounds of those promoted in conservative Republican and some right-wing Democratic circles.

He asserted he was a "born-again" Christian and infused many of his public speaking engagements with fundamentalist terminology.

The New Orleans *Time-Picayune* reported that, while conceding defeat to Edwards, Duke told a rally, "We have begun to heal the liberal welfare system that is causing crimes and drugs."

"Middle-class families have difficulty affording children of their own right now and yet we are financing a very high illegitimate birthrate," he stated at a rally during the campaign.

Saying affirmative action measures discriminate against whites, he repeatedly claimed that "when you take a test for the Post Office in this country right now and you're white, you're very likely to have your test score dropped 15 or 20 points, and if you are a minority you are liable to have it raised

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1 out of 10 in U.S. relies on food stamps

BY GREG McCARTAN

The extent to which sections of the working class have been driven to the knife-edge of poverty was again confirmed last week: one out of every 10 people living in the United States now relies on food stamps to put food on the table.

August figures show an increase of 3 million over the same month last year. Some

23.6 million Americans now receive food stamps, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

Two days after releasing the report, the federal agency proposed new rules to tighten eligibility requirements for the program.

To qualify under current rules recipients can have assets worth only \$2,000, excluding

their homes. If they own a car the value is not counted unless it is more than \$4,500. For a family of four, income cannot exceed the federally defined poverty level, of \$1,117 a month.

Government outlays per person are not generous: 65 cents per meal is allotted for a person eating three meals a day.

Under the new restrictions recipients would have to sell off items they own above the \$2,000 limit. Certain deductions for costs of shelter would also be changed. Homeless people who pay more than \$93 a month for shelter would not receive credit for the costs unless they come up with documentation of their payments.

The number of working people eligible for the food stamp program has steadily risen since the early 1970s. At that time 2 percent of the population received them. In the 1980s

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Los Angeles unionists rally to keep health-care benefits

BY SAMAD YEREVANI

LOS ANGELES — "No contract, no work!" "No raise, no work!"

These were among the dozens of slogans shouted and chanted by 2,000 cheering, excited county workers demonstrating at the county board of supervisors building. The main issue in the contract dispute is medical coverage and whether workers' families or only the workers themselves are covered.

"I work hard for my money," one demonstrator said. "But the county doesn't treat me right."

"I'm ready to strike any time," she added. "It won't make it any worse than it is now."

"My income has dropped," she said. "I won't be able to meet my expenses. This is a real hardship for me, and I'm not the only one. All these people here are my evidence."

The demonstrators came from every part of the county in buses chartered by Local 660 of the Service Employees International Union.

Hundreds of unionists packed the supervisors' meeting, demanding speedy approval of their demands. Many, who could not get into the crowded meeting hall,

picketed and rallied outside.

The November 12 one-day strike was called to pressure the county board of supervisors to seal an agreement reached by union and county negotiators. Union officials said this was necessary because the government had reneged on a previous agreement after they called off an earlier one-day walkout.

On the eve of that work stoppage, the county had agreed to pay for medical coverage for workers and their families. After the walkout was canceled, they asserted they had agreed only to pay for the workers, not their families.

Union officials said wages are not an issue, even though the county has proposed no increase for the coming fiscal year and a tiny one for the following year.

Following the meeting of the board of supervisors, Local 660 general manager Gilbert Cedillo said that while the supervisors had not voted on it, he was satisfied with their assurance that the agreement would be ratified. He told workers to return to their jobs.

The local's 22 bargaining units represent

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Political polarization and rising class tensions in North America

The world capitalist crisis,
Stalinism, and the fight for
socialism

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Congress overturns antiabortion gag rule

Bush veto expected; Pennsylvania law challenged in Supreme Court

BY GREG McCARTAN

Both houses of the U.S. Congress have passed measures overturning the "gag rule" imposed on family planning clinics by the U.S. government.

A 72-25 vote in the Senate November 7 followed a 272-156 vote in the House. The House tally fails to meet the two-thirds margin needed to override an expected veto by President George Bush.

The congressional action comes in response to a Supreme Court ruling earlier this year. The Court upheld a 1988 Reagan administration order barring doctors and counselors at 4,000 clinics that receive federal funds from discussing abortion with women or telling them where they can get an abortion or abortion counseling. Moreover, the directive encouraged doctors to discuss with their patients carrying the fetus to term and getting the baby adopted.

Prior to the votes the White House circulated a letter designed to deflect some criticism of the rule. In it Bush explained the regulation does not interfere with a doctor-patient relationship or mean the word "abortion" cannot be mentioned during counseling.

The debate on the gag rule comes amid

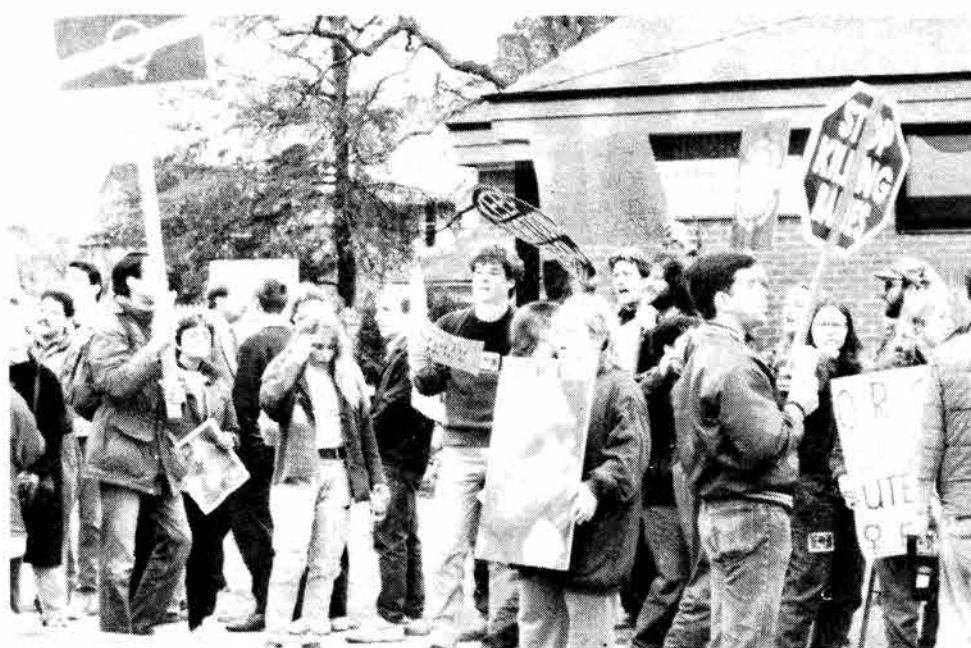
growing political polarization in the United States. The issue of abortion rights has become one of the flash points around which the ability of the capitalist class to press its anti-working-class offensive is being fought out.

Character of assault

Right-wing forces have concentrated on street actions aimed at shutting down clinics that provide abortions. Recognizing the gains these forces can make if such mobilizations go unanswered, youth and other defenders of abortion rights have begun organizing successful countermobilizations against the rightists.

State governments continue the main line of attack on abortion rights: the persistent whittling away at young and working women's access to safe abortions. Over the past two years some 600 bills have been introduced in state legislatures containing measures to restrict abortion rights and access to birth control.

Several organizations have asked the Supreme Court to review a Pennsylvania law that has been on appeal since 1989. One of the most restrictive bills in the country, the measure was upheld in a federal appeals court



Militant/Karen Ray

Youth defend Rhode Island clinic against rightist attack November 2

at the end of October. The Pennsylvania ruling builds on a 1989 Supreme Court decision giving states the right to impose restrictions on abortion.

The bill mandates a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking abortions and requires that a doctor inform them about the development of a fetus and "alternatives" to abortion. The court struck down a third part that stipulated women must notify their husbands before seeking an abortion.

Is *Roe v. Wade* dead?

Top officials of Planned Parenthood, the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), and the American Civil Liberties

Union (ACLU) are pressing for a quick Supreme Court review of the law. At a November 7 news conference in Washington, D.C., each raised the specter of the imminent reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling decriminalizing abortion.

"Powered by the Bush White House, the long-term anti-choice strategy is on the verge of being realized," a statement by NARAL executive director Kate Michelman said. "The right to choose is about to be taken from women and handed to the government. For the first time in history, the loss of a fundamental right has gone from inconceivable to the inevitable."

ACLU representative Kathryn Kolbert issued a statement that said: "Some may argue that asking the Supreme Court to review *Roe* is a risky endeavor, one that may accelerate the inevitable demise of women's constitutional rights of privacy. But for the women of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware that right has already been lost."

Faye Wattleton, President of Planned Parenthood, took a similar tack. "If the Supreme Court erodes the protections of *Roe*, or eliminates them in one sweep of moralistic fervor, Americans will face an avalanche of full-scale, state-by-state battles, in which women's lives hang in the balance."

Planned Parenthood and the ACLU jointly filed the petition, asking the high court to "make clear its intentions on abortion."

Simply taking these statements at face value raises the following question: If the leaders of these organizations are convinced the Supreme Court will overturn *Roe v. Wade*, why ask for an expedited review of the Pennsylvania case?

Statements issued by the organizations point to the fundamental issues posed in the fight to defend abortion rights. "Without the protections guaranteed by *Roe*, we face a society in which not only women, but all of us, are likely to experience increasing government intrusion into the fundamental liberty, privacy and autonomy of the person," ACLU president Nadine Strossen said in a press release.

Right to privacy

Underpinning the *Roe* decision of 1973 is the constitutional right to privacy: the right of every person not to have his or her personal life and associations subject to government scrutiny or control. The courts had been forced to recognize this right through the struggles of working people, including the massive civil rights movement and the fight

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Striking Colorado miners win union support

BY BUDDY BECK
AND DAVE SALNER

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Two striking members of United Mine Workers of America Local 1799 from Craig, Colorado, recently came here to explain the stakes in their struggle against Cyprus Minerals. Cyprus is demanding that the miners, who work in one of the nation's most hazardous industries, assume an increasing share of medical insurance costs.

Delbert Archuleta and Mike Knez spoke to 125 union members at four locals of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union November 6 and 7 and also met with local labor officials.

In May Cyprus forced the 160 workers at Empire mine in Craig on strike. Archuleta explained that Cyprus's last offer could cost each miner more than \$20,000 in "out-of-pocket" expenses for health care over the next five years.

Cyprus is also gutting the benefits of widows of miners at Empire mine, where six miners were killed in separate incidents since the mid-70s.

Archuleta pointed out in his talks that Cyprus made big profits from the 2.2 million tons mined at the Empire mine last year. They could afford decent medical coverage for the workers but are using health care costs as an excuse to bust the union, he said.

Cyprus is using coal from the nearby Twentymile mine, which is nonunion, to cover the contracts that the Empire mine used to fill. The biggest customer, Public Service of Colorado, is collaborating with this strikebreaking strategy. The UMWA has won a hearing from some of the Twentymile miners, who take union leaflets at the mine entrance.

Most coal companies operating under UMWA contracts in the western states have continued 100 percent health care coverage. Cyprus is carrying out a probe to see if the UMWA can be pushed back to conditions that are actually inferior to those of some of the nonunion mines.

Teams of UMWA Local 1799 members have spoken at many union meetings in the Denver area. This was the first of several planned visits to Salt Lake City. Archuleta and Knez said the local planned to broaden its appeal for solidarity from unionists until it has won a base of support that can be effective in countering Cyprus's greed. Donations, which will be used for the food bank and strike relief, should be made to the Cyprus Miners Relief Fund, 2029 West Victory Way, Craig, CO 81625.

ANC youth congress starts Dec. 9

BY DEREK BRACEY

The African National Congress Youth League will hold a relaunching congress December 9-12 in Kwa-Ndebele, South Africa. It will be the first gathering of its kind in the history of the Youth League, which, like other antiapartheid groups, was banned from 1960 until February of 1990.

Approximately 1,500 delegates from 14 regions will participate in the congress. Other individuals and groups from South Africa and around the world will attend as observers.

The official congress theme will be "Youth in the vanguard of united mass struggle for peace, freedom and democracy."

"High on the agenda of the conference will be our programme of action in support of an Interim Government and a Constituent Assembly, mechanisms of transition to democracy in our country," states a letter from Rapu

Molekane, the Youth League's secretary general, and Lyndall Shope-Mafole, secretary for international affairs, announcing the congress. "The role of our youth as well as its input in the political agenda of our country will therefore be central in the deliberations."

Another major discussion at the congress will center on the political violence that has claimed more than 10,000 lives since 1984. "As we prepare for the congress the conditions for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in our country are far from being conducive," the letter continues. "Violence, orchestrated by the state through its many assassination machineries, has claimed the lives of more than 1,000 people since 1991 started."

"Our congress will also look at ways and means at the disposal of the Youth League to end this systematic murder of our people by opponents of our struggle."

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NY rally supports Curtis defense fight

BY FRED FELDMAN

NEW YORK — "In a way Mark Curtis reminds me of Nelson Mandela. Curtis is important to me because he has the fortitude to keep up the fight. This helps give me the strength to keep fighting," Venus Hannah told 100 people at a meeting held November 8 at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. Mark Curtis, a political and union activist, has now served more than three years in prison on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

Hannah has waged a stubborn one-and-a-half-year fight against police brutality since her son died in custody after being arrested and savagely beaten by Plainfield, New Jersey, cops, who claimed the youth hanged himself in his cell. She was a featured speaker at the meeting, which focused on Curtis's fight for parole and the upcoming trial of his suit against Des Moines city officials and police.

The suit stems from the cops' beating of Curtis, which followed his refusal to admit to a charge of rape about which he knew nothing. In a message to the meeting sent from the John Bennett Correctional Center, Curtis described the beating and noted that it was when the cops denounced him as a Mexican lover that he realized that he was being targeted in part for his defense of immigrant workers at the Des Moines, Iowa, meat-packing plant where he worked.

Hannah was one of several activists on the panel of speakers who expressed their views on the importance of the Curtis case at the meeting. The event was chaired by Derek Bracey, a leader of the Young Socialist Alliance, and Eloise Linger, a Curtis supporter from the New School for Social Research.

Curtis's fight strengthens other fights

"There are many other working people who have been framed up and brutalized by the cops because they stood up for their rights," stated Stu Singer, former coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. "Why do we campaign for Mark Curtis in particular? Because he is fighting and strengthening the fights of others. Because his fight brings together the fight of immigrant workers for their rights, the attacks on the unions, the interests of fighters for women's rights and racial equality, and everyone who fights today for justice."

"Is the frame-up of Mark Curtis a government conspiracy?" Singer asked. "No one knows. What we do know is that the prosecution has not proved its case, and that the facts of the case on every plane have supported Mark's denial of the charges." Singer called on fighters to learn or relearn the facts

of the case as the bedrock of the fight against the frame-up.

The next major step in the fight, Singer said, will be the November 25 trial of the suit stemming from the cops' beating of Curtis in jail. "Mark's suit needs the support of every victim of police brutality and every foe of police violence. A victory in this suit will be a victory for Rodney King in Los Angeles, Federico Pereira in New York, the Hannah family in Plainfield, and many more."

Maureen Holder, vice president of International Association of Machinists Local 2656, which organizes British Airways flight attendants, spoke about "why

unions need to take an active role in the Mark Curtis defense."

'Free Jimmy Tadeo, Free Mark Curtis!'

Rene Laya, a cofounder of Youth for Philippine Action, described the links he saw between the frame-up of Curtis and the attacks that working people in the Philippines have been confronting. "I am not surprised that there has been a countercampaign against the defense of Mark Curtis," he said, referring to the "attempts of the prosecution, some union officials, and others to support the frame-up and dissuade others from supporting Curtis."

Laya pointed out that the right-wing offi-

cialdom of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines had supported the arrest and imprisonment of Philippine peasant leader Jimmy Tadeo and the jailing of unionists associated with the May 1 Movement union federation. "Free Jimmy Tadeo! Free Mark Curtis!" Laya concluded.

The final speaker was Chris Hoepfner, a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. (Excerpts from his talk are printed below.)

The meeting also heard a message of support for Curtis from activists in Isfahan, Iran, who included a donation of \$176. In addition, \$502 was collected at the meeting to defray legal and other costs of the continuing fight.

'A frame-up rooted in crisis of capitalism'

The following are excerpts from the talk given by Chris Hoepfner, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, to the November 8 Curtis defense rally in New York City.

The political frame-up of Mark Curtis is not rooted in something exceptional about the Swift meat-packing plant; the city of Des Moines, Iowa; or Mark Curtis himself; but in the crisis of capitalism, which is forcing millions of workers from around the world to come to the United States.

The U.S. rulers, as their profit rates decline, are forced to go after our working conditions and wages. The bosses aim to pit workers against each other. Curtis was caught up in the middle of this offensive. He found himself in an industry whose brutality is notorious worldwide. And Curtis found himself saying, "No, we're going to act like human beings."

What happened to Mark Curtis didn't happen because of his ideas. It happened because of his deeds and his effective political work.

Union fighters today, regardless of the difficulties they've faced from past misleadership, are looking for ways to make their organizations into real unions. And they are simply saying what Curtis says: either we have a union of all the members or we have no union. Either the union reaches out and fights for justice against cop brutality, against imperialist war, for women's rights, against racism, or we have no unions.

Curtis stands for a layer of workers in this country who are unwilling to buckle under the pressure of the employer-government antilabor offensive. They refuse to accept as a necessary feature of life the cozy boss-business-union relationship of the past 45 years, and they fight back.

This is why Curtis is considered a "dangerous man" by the cops, courts, and the company.

There are those in the labor movement



Militant/Marc Lichtman
SWP leader Chris Hoepfner speaking at November 8 Curtis defense rally.

— especially among the top officialdom — who also see Curtis as a dangerous man. The Iowa State Federation of Labor, for example, passed a resolution last August denouncing Curtis. They state that he was not arrested because of any activities related to or supported by the Iowa AFL-CIO. This is true.

When Curtis spoke against the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] raid at the Swift meat-packing plant and he argued for union support for his victimized coworkers, the AFL leadership was absent from this fight. Many labor union tops consider immigrant workers as the problem.

Today, some union officials who claim to stand for Black rights, women's rights, and social progress, but who in fact orient politically to the rulers and their cops, have stepped forward to promote the victimization of Curtis. They have been aided by the Workers League, which poses as a socialist organization and has at its disposal big resources to publish literature against Curtis and the SWP.

This countercampaign, which is based on lies from the cops and Iowa city prosecutor, is now being cast by some union officials as a pro-labor stand. Many union officials share the anti-immigrant and pro-cop views of the employers and their government.

All labor defense campaigns, from Sacco and Vanzetti to the Rosenbergs, have faced opponents within the labor movement who align themselves with "their" bosses and "their" government. The Mark Curtis case is no different.

The goal of the prosecution and the cops has been to silence political activists, intimidate us, put limits on our ability to carry out politics. On that they have failed.

The rulers are compelled to draw the line against political activists because their system — capitalism — is in crisis. It breeds social explosions from protests against cop brutality to women fighting for the right to control their bodies against rightist thugs.

There was little we could do to force a fair trial for Curtis. And we can't by force of will get him out on parole either. We aim to maximize the political price they pay by exposing the frame-up. This also increases the space that Curtis has to keep doing communist work in prison.

They will not stop Curtis's fight from becoming the fight of workers all over the world. Fellow workers from South Africa to the Philippines have turned to Curtis as a brother, as one of them. Curtis's defense has become theirs. And every victory for Curtis is a victory for every other fight against police brutality.

LA unionists rally

Continued from front page

41,000 of the county's 85,000 employees. The union membership includes manual and clerical workers as well as social workers and other professionals.

The union demonstration came on the heels of big protests by other county employees. Recently, nurses waged a brief strike, mainly over job conditions. They returned to work after a court order was issued against them. They are fighting a series of inequities and scandalous job conditions which jeopardize their health and safety, as well as that of their patients.

On November 4, as many as 10,000 school teachers rallied outside the Los Angeles Board of Education headquarters to protest unilaterally imposed pay cuts.

Asserting that the district faced bankruptcy, the school board ordered a 3 percent wage cut for the district's 70,000 employees. Of these, 36,000 are members of the United Teachers-Los Angeles.

The board declared the pay cut retroactive to last July, which increases the wage loss to 4.5 percent. Including the previously ordered cuts, education employees face cuts of as much as 7 percent a year.

The board asserts the cuts are necessary because of the recession and the rejection at the polls of proposed property tax hikes earmarked for education.

At the demonstration, one angry teacher said: "They want us to fix what they messed up. This government spends billions of dollars for wars instead of using it for education or housing and public health. I'm against the cuts — especially school cuts."

Wichita activists host 'celebration of choice'

BY JOHN EVENHUIS
AND TED LEONARD

WICHITA, Kansas — "A Citizen's Celebration of Choice" is being organized here. Sponsored by Citizen Volunteers for Choice and Voices for Choice — a coalition of 24 organizations that support abortion rights — the event features speakers, workshops, and booths representing various pro-choice groups.

The event, scheduled for November 16, comes the day before Operation Rescue's "National Week of Rescue IV." Operation Rescue has issued a call for a nationwide week of blockades and pickets of abortion clinics, hospitals, and homes of doctors who perform abortions. The Wichita Rescue Movement has been organizing a handful of people on a daily basis to picket the clinics on Saturdays, and occasionally on a weekday some 40 to 75 demonstrations of rightists turn out.

The Pro-Choice Action League (PCAL) organizes clinic escorts to help patients in and out of the clinic while demonstrators hold signs supporting a woman's right to choose. Similar numbers to the demonstrations of rightists have been organized each day.

A fundraising banquet to honor Peggy

Jarman, spokesperson for PCAL, drew over 150 people October 26. The event also honored clinic staff and clinic defense volunteers who had helped defend a woman's right to choose during Operation Rescue's "Summer of Mercy," the mobilization of thousands that were organized last July and August in an attempt to close the Wichita clinics.

She told of the "enormous brutality to which women have been subjected, both psychologically and emotionally," by the actions of the rightists, who try to restrict medically safe abortions. She also described her harassment by the rightists, who salted her lawn, set off firecrackers in her yard, and followed and slandered her.

The rightists' provocative activities did not stop with the "Summer of Mercy." On the morning of November 2, with the temperature below 20 degrees, the gas was shut off to all three clinics that perform abortions. The local gas company had to visit each clinic to restore heat. One gas company worker suggested that they spray water on the rightists to keep the clinic open.

During the night of October 29 the words "Blood Mansion" were spray painted on the

garage door of the house where the PCAL office is located. The car of a PCAL full-time staffer that was parked in the driveway had "Baby Killer" daubed on it.

Two rightists attempted to impersonate clinic escorts October 30 by wearing the yellow uniform vests that identify them. While wearing the vest they attempted to advise incoming patients that the clinic was closed, but were caught before they could turn anyone away.

Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue, spoke at an anti-abortion fund-raiser here November 9 attended by 1,500 people. Terry said that the next phase in the attempt to shut down abortion clinics in Wichita would depend on local people. He especially appealed to young people to "pursue God's agenda," "to be aggressive, to be a battering ram" against the gates of abortion clinics.

As a direct response to the "National Week of Rescue IV," a local group, Religious Leaders for Choice, is organizing nightly discussions. According to an advertisement in the *Wichita Eagle*, the forums will deal with "a biblical view of abortion," "when does life begin," and "the separation of the church and state."

1,000 hear Cuban economist in California



Militant/Samad Yerevani
Carlos Tablada at University of California, Los Angeles, meeting.

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

LOS ANGELES — More than 1,000 people heard Cuban economist Carlos Tablada at five campuses during his four-day visit here. The meetings were sponsored and organized by faculty members and student groups at each of the colleges.

Author of the book *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, Tablada is a professor at the University of Havana. He is on a one-month tour of U.S. colleges and universities.

Some 250 people heard Tablada at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) and 300 attended a meeting for him at Los Angeles City College (LACC).

At California State University in Los Angeles, 125 students attended an afternoon meeting. A morning session at University of California-Riverside, attracted 125 people.

At Glendale Community College, several ethnic studies classes were dismissed and 350 students participated in two 50-minute sessions with Tablada.

Sponsoring campus organizations worked extensively to build the meetings and participated actively to ensure their smooth functioning.

The principal sponsors of the Cal State-Los Angeles meeting were the Latin Ameri-

can Studies Center, the Latin American Society and the Pan-African Studies Department. Co-sponsors at Glendale Community College were the Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) and the Ethnic Studies Department.

At UC-Riverside, the Latin American Studies Department was the main sponsor. The Student Organization of Latinos (SOL) was the principal organizer at LACC, along with the English Studies Department. At UCLA, student organizations, faculty members, and departments sponsored the meeting, as did the student paper, *La Gente*. The Latin American Student Association played the key role in publicizing this event.

A key organizer of Tablada visit was Prof. Carlos Ugalde. Head of the Ethnic Studies Department at Glendale Community College, he is the ALAS faculty adviser. Ugalde also chaired the UCLA meeting and participated in the one at LACC.

Cuba a 'jewel'

At Cal State-Los Angeles, Prof. Marjorie Bray, coordinator of the Latin Studies Department, chaired the gathering. She spoke of Cuba as "a jewel in the firmament of Latin America," declaring that the Cuban revolution had established an economy that "functions in the interest of the people."

Joined by Ugalde, Prof. Galust Mardirousian, cochair of the LACC English Department, chaired the meeting at that campus.

In his opening presentations, Tablada focused on deep problems that had developed in Cuba following a decision made in the mid-1970s to copy directly many of the economic management methods used in the Soviet Union.

"What happened?" Tablada asked. "What Che and Fidel had predicted. The economy became more inefficient, corruption appeared, and a bureaucracy began to grow."

Beginning in the mid-1980s, Tablada explained, the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba launched a process of rectification. This process began to challenge the privileges of a burgeoning bureaucracy, preventing Cuba from tracing the disastrous path followed by the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, he said.

At the different meetings Tablada usually restricted his remarks to about 30 minutes, allowing ample time for questions and discussion.

At UCLA, one student who had been in Cuba last year said he had met some young people who had never lived under capitalism and who — like their counterparts in Eastern Europe — had illusions about capitalist countries. What did the existence of youth such as these portend for the future of the revolution? he asked.

"This is partially a result of the [political] work we stopped doing when we started following the Soviet model," Tablada answered.

"I don't think the problem was that they never lived under capitalism," he added. Rather, for some years we were not developing a humanitarian culture. We stopped teaching our people through example.

"This is not the majority sentiment among Cuban youth. Some 53 percent of Cubans are less than 30 years old. Those young people are in factories, in universities, and in the army.

Confidence in youth

"I have a lot of confidence in the Cuban youth," Tablada stressed, adding that he lives in a typical neighborhood and has a lot of contact with young people.

"What we have to do is open more space to them — give them more power, so that they will develop themselves and develop a revolutionary plan that is more revolutionary than the one we are carrying out now.

"The Cuban youth are not the same as the youth of the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union. These are the youth who went to Angola and defeated the South Africans at Cuito Cuanavale," he explained, referring to the Cuban volunteer troops who helped crush the South African invasion of Angola in 1988. Some 160,000 of them have gone to Third World countries as volunteer workers. These are the youth who most raise the flag of Che Guevara, who demand of my generation that we deepen the revolution."

Another student questioned whether Cubans would not have fared better under capitalism than they have since the revolution.

"The capitalists are beginning the decade of the 1990s in a recession. They don't have

any solutions for their own workers, let alone workers throughout the rest of the world," Tablada replied. "The capitalists can't put forward a single country that has developed in the last thirty years what we have developed."

"At this time the only countries that could have an accelerated development — the newly industrialized capitalist countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore — are entering into crisis. Their levels of development are dropping, because they didn't develop an economy like we are developing. They developed an export-oriented economy without any domestic roots. It doesn't meet the needs of their people."

Capitalism brings poverty

Later Tablada elaborated further on the prospects for capitalism. Though Cubans confront a grave crisis — one that produces much daily irritation for everyone — in Latin America 260 million people live below the poverty line, he said, while not a single Cuban lives in such conditions of homelessness, hunger, and disease.

While Cubans look for a way out of the crisis, what does capitalism have to offer? Tablada asked. He pointed to Washington's failure to follow through on promises to provide even modest assistance to the U.S.-installed regime in Panama or to the current Nicaraguan government.

"What is the United States going to give us if they return to Cuba? Swedish capitalism? No, more likely the Haitian kind. Or the Puerto Rican kind."

While one "might meet some technocrats who think that by turning over to the United States some delicate part of their bodies they might save their heads, the Cuban working class, peasants, and students are very clear on this."

Finally, Tablada said, "We're going to hold on until revolutions arrive in other parts of the world to help us."

At the conclusion of the LACC meeting a young Salvadoran immigrant, who works in the garment industry, said he now understood how Che saw the problems with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. He said he hoped the lessons Che drew will allow the Cuban revolution to survive, avoiding the plight of those countries.

At each session there was no lack of questions. At UCLA, members of the audience lined up at a floor microphone for nearly two hours. When the meeting ended, there were still people waiting to ask their questions. It was similar at the LACC meeting.

At each meeting, there were several questions from Cuban emigres hostile to the revolution. But there was a reasoned presentation of views and an atmosphere of free discussion prevailed.

BY EMILY FITZSIMMONS
AND MARGRETHE SIEM

WASHINGTON, D.C. — About 70 students packed into a classroom to hear Cuban economist Carlos Tablada at the University of Maryland in College Park. After an introduction by Prof. Rhonda Williams from the African-American Studies Department and a brief presentation by Tablada, students engaged him in a lively discussion.

That same day, 1,000 students were demonstrating on campus against sharp budget cuts at the University of Maryland. Tablada explained that in Cuba education is free for all, including free textbooks and supplies.

At Georgetown University 150 students and others attended Tablada's talk. The event was sponsored by the Lecture Fund. In response to a question about the political impact on Cuba of the events in the Soviet Union, Tablada responded that the dissolution of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union "does not sadden me at all." The Soviet Union "had represented itself for years as socialist, when it was not," he said.

'Militant' Prisoner Subscription Fund

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

Socialists in Los Angeles organize to meet fund goals

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

With only four weeks remaining in the Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund drive, supporters around the country face a big challenge in organizing to collect the remainder of the \$163,480 that has been pledged.

If all pledges are paid in full by December 15, the \$150,000 fund will go 9 percent over the top. Every dollar raised over the goal will be put to good use in the effort to build the communist movement.

Los Angeles supporters are off to a good start in their campaign to get on schedule. In the past week they went from 50 percent to 64 percent collected on their goal of \$15,000. Fund supporters in several cities face a similar situation to the one in Los Angeles —

being substantially behind with only a few weeks left in the drive.

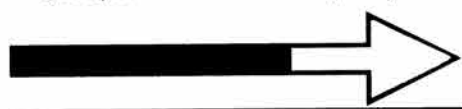
Harry Ring, who is very active in the fight for a successful drive in Los Angeles, explained in a phone interview that a group of fund supporters met to assess how much had been paid on each of the pledges and to discuss other possible individuals to approach about contributing. "What we did from there was simple enough," said Ring. "We tabulated how much each person should have paid to be on schedule in the drive. We gave everyone a call, letting them know about the campaign to catch up and the amount they needed to pay to be on time." With more than 50 pledges and several other prospects, fund organizers in Los Angeles had a lot of work ahead of them.

Ring said that they got "a very good response to the idea of getting on target," and that the political perspectives of the SWP and its activities played a big role in the way people responded. He added that the fight is still on and that Los Angeles now has a real shot at being paid up in full and on time.

Several readers of the *Militant* have joined the fund drive, sending in contributions from \$5 to \$100. One way the fund is put to use

1991 Party-Building Fund

Collected: **\$106,064** Goal: **\$150,000**



is enabling leaders of the Communist movement to participate in conferences and other political gatherings around the world. In December *Militant* editor Greg McCartan; Derek Bracey, Young Socialist Alliance national organizational secretary; and Mary Zins, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and member of the United Mine Workers of America, will travel to South Africa to attend the conference of the South African Communist Party and the convention of the African National Congress Youth League. They will be able to provide first-hand coverage for the *Militant* of the important events in that country.

Young Socialist Alliance members Will and Carol in Willimantic, Connecticut, sent a letter with the final payment on their pledge. "Keep up the good work," they said. "The total politicization of the fund meetings — as reported in the *Militant* (we were unable to attend) — keep our attention on what the fund drive is really all about: projecting communist politics in the fight to build a working-class leadership capable of establishing a workers' and farmers' government."

Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund

Area	Goal	Paid	% of Total
San Diego	2,000	1,890	94
Greensboro*	2,350	2,030	86
Atlanta	5,500	4,683	85
St. Louis	5,500	4,385	80
Baltimore	3,000	2,408	80
Newark	9,700	7,459	77
New York	16,300	12,305	75
Miami	2,400	1,788	74
Seattle	5,000	3,651	73
Omaha	3,000	2,200	73
San Francisco*	12,000	8,698	72
Detroit	8,500	6,040	71
Pittsburgh	5,500	3,620	66
Los Angeles	15,000	9,543	64
Boston*	5,500	3,500	64
Houston	4,800	3,000	62
Morgantown	2,800	1,719	61
Twin Cities*	9,160	5,001	55
Chicago	8,000	4,295	54
Salt Lake City	6,500	3,470	53
Des Moines	3,525	1,540	44
Washington, D.C.	6,000	2,605	43
Philadelphia	5,000	2,034	41
Cleveland	3,000	1,005	33
Birmingham*	6,500	2,089	32
Other U.S.	4,815	4,663	97
International	2,130	440	21
Total	163,480	106,064	71
Should be		114,705	76

*Indicates raised goal

I pledge: _____ \$1000 _____ \$500
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ Other to the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund.

Send checks or money orders to Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Victory in drive for new readers of socialist press

BY RONI McCANN

Supporters of the *Militant* won a real victory in the international circulation drive that concluded November 2 by introducing thousands of workers and young people to the socialist press.

Readers and supporters of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *L'Internationale*, and *New International* won 4,928 subscribers to the periodicals. They sold 1,546 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*—670 in the last two weeks. In *Militant* subscriptions alone, supporters topped the results of their previous sales campaign by 1,373.

In working-class communities, outside factory gates, on college and university campuses, at protest actions, and on the job, *Militant* supporters explained to fighting workers and youth the importance of reading the paper in order to understand the world today and effectively advance their struggles.

The success of the campaign shows the opportunities and space that exist in the working class for communists to carry out politics today in an organized and politically confident manner.

Big stakes in the campaign

Going into the drive, supporters of the *Militant* discussed the big stakes for the communist movement in setting goals and campaigning to meet them. They recognized the challenge in expanding their political influence and building long-term readership of the communist press, given the fact that they began the campaign handicapped by not having made circulation of the *Militant* central to their weekly political work over the previous months.

This meant supporters of the socialist press had to build up a base of interest among workers in their communities and on the job by using the *Militant* to engage in political discussion and sell single copies of the paper. Supporters in city after city report that they achieved their goals only by sharpening up what they discussed about political developments at home and abroad and by organizing the details of an effective subscription campaign. After an initial slow start, persistent attention to these twin efforts paid off in increased sales.

The fact that supporters of the socialist press came so close on many of the goals, most notably the *New International*, indicates the real fight it took to get the drive going. A September 27 editorial in the *Militant* correctly stated that "getting on a real campaign footing is what is needed to reach

Cops and military to check postal workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In an attack on workers' rights, the postmaster general on November 15 ordered extensive background checks of the 750,000 post office employees in the United States to determine who in the government's view is "prone to violence."

He also said he would review hiring procedures and would ask the police and military for help in screening post office job applicants.

This move comes a day after Thomas McIlvane, a former postal clerk, shot and killed four supervisors and then himself at the Royal Oak, Michigan, regional post office center. McIlvane had been accused of insubordination and fired by the post office.

During the past eight years there have been nine armed attacks against post offices by former employees, resulting in more than 30 deaths.

After the shooting, postal workers at the Royal Oak facility described the deteriorating working conditions to which they are subjected. They spoke of the harassment from management to work harder, including longer routes for letter carriers and less time to rest. Some complained about being "nickled and dimed over their time slips."

"Management pushes, pushes, and pushes and doesn't know when to quit. They don't know when someone is going to break," stated one postal worker.

In response to growing complaints by postal workers of management harassment, harsh discipline, and unjustified dismissals, the Postal Service has announced plans to conduct a nationwide survey of its employees.



Militant/K.C. Ellis

'*Militant*' on sale at Washington, D.C., rally for Puerto Rico independence.

our goals on time and in full."

Once supporters did this—including in cities such as Chicago and Houston that were substantially behind schedule—the numbers of new readers and sales of *New International* increased each week.

This reflects the openness of working people today to discussing the flash points in politics—the Clarence Thomas nomination, the David Duke election campaign, fights to defend abortion rights, protests against police brutality, the Atlanta Braves' "Tomahawk chop," and other issues—from a working-class point of view.

One report after another, that arrived in our business office from *Militant* supporters, described the interest and concern of workers about the deteriorating social conditions they face, the shaky economy, and the political turmoil in the world today as working people act in their own interests from the Soviet Union to Zaire.

Central objectives in the drive

Supporters of the socialist press were successful in achieving many of the central objectives they set for themselves during the international campaign.

One important goal was the organization of sales efforts every Saturday that involved all available supporters. Such team efforts kick off the week's political work in the most effective way, making Saturdays a springboard for the activity socialist workers carry out all week.

From Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles, *Militant* supporters reported that by organizing in such a way on Saturday, they not only got a good start in winning new readers each week but publicized the Pathfinder bookstores and brought interested people to the weekly *Militant* Labor Forum. The Saturday sales effort helped strengthen the entire range of propaganda institutions they maintain in order to bring socialist views to the widest layer of working people.

Supporters found that the way to be effective fighters and socialists is to use the socialist press when participating in political events. During the course of this drive supporters focused on areas around the Pathfinder bookstore and nearby working-class communities to build up a base of readers. This meant using the *Militant* to participate in and advance the discussion at rallies and meetings of farmers and striking workers, among those protesting police brutality or defending abortion rights, or at other demonstrations.

Many fighters in these struggles have come to depend on the *Militant* for on-going coverage.

One aspect of the victory scored in the campaign was that, as supporters stepped up their discussions about the U.S. class struggle during the last weeks of the drive, many workers in industrial unions were won as new readers.

In the United States socialist workers topped their goal by 4 percent, as compared to the spring sales drive when they achieved 99 percent of their targets. This time supporters in six U.S. unions made their national goal, as did communist workers in the metal workers union in Sweden, the auto workers union in Canada, and the food workers in New Zealand.

Supporters found that by using the *Militant* to initiate political discussions among workers and selling single issues of the paper, many coworkers decided to subscribe. These efforts help politicize the work of *Militant* supporters on the job and can now serve as a foundation to get out socialist ideas even more widely.

A highlight of the sales effort was the consistent work supporters of the *Militant* carried out on college campuses and high schools. The fact that well over 500 students subscribed to the socialist press in nine weeks shows the importance in reaching young people—often less tolerant of the injustices of the capitalist system and more open to doing something about it—with the revolutionary press.

Widely discussing and distributing the

'*Militant*' managing editor, new business manager named

BY GREG McCARTAN

The *Militant* has named George Buchanan as managing editor and Brian Williams as its new business manager.

Buchanan joined the staff last April and has put his journalistic skills to good use. He has written extensively on political developments in western Europe, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere.

Buchanan joined former *Militant* editor Doug Jenness last year on a three-week reporting trip to Korea and Japan, where they provided firsthand coverage of talks between the South Korean regime and the government of North Korea. At the negotiations the North Koreans raised their proposals for steps toward ending the imperialist-imposed division of the country.

As managing editor Buchanan will edit the paper when the editor is concentrating on other responsibilities—whether out of the office on reporting trips; working on circulation, business, or promotion matters; or preparing feature articles for upcoming issues. This editorial flexibility will help improve the timeliness and quality of the *Militant*.

Leaving the staff will be Roni McCann, who has been the paper's circulation director since January 1990 and assumed duties of business manager earlier this year. The international circulation of the *Militant* has posed new challenges to the paper's staff. McCann has helped to organize new shipping, pricing, and subscription mailing arrangements to insure that the paper gets delivered in the quickest way possible.

As readers of the *Militant* know, McCann is leaving the staff as supporters of the paper celebrate the completion of one of the most successful circulation campaigns in several years.

At the August convention of the Young Socialist Alliance, McCann was elected the organization's national secretary. As has been reported in the *Militant*, the YSA leadership has been kept busy by youth protests against police brutality and for abortion rights; discussions and debates on Cuba and South Africa; and by the interest that exists in

Militant among students and other youth is the best way to introduce them to the Young Socialist Alliance. Youth in a number of cities joined the YSA after first being introduced to revolutionary ideas through the *Militant*.

Supporters also crafted a new institution of circulation work: "callbacks." When someone is interested in subscribing but would like to read one issue first or does not have \$10 on hand, supporters ask that person to fill out a subscription blank, so they can get back with the potential subscriber later. Many new subscribers were won through consistent work along these lines.

To aid *Militant* supporters in their efforts, new subscription blanks with more information about the paper will be made available soon. This will be an aid in increasing the number of people who send in their own subscription or who are ready to subscribe when supporters contact them.

The number of people who requested to be contacted again increased in proportion to the number of single copies of the *Militant* that were sold. This points to the importance of regular ongoing sales and how the paper often sells itself. In fact, 210 readers sent in subscriptions directly to the *Militant* business office after reading at least one issue during the course of the campaign.

All of these gains in the circulation of the communist press reflect the potential to win a wider hearing among working people today and the capacity of the socialist movement to build on its success and regularize weekly sales of the press year round.

By continuing big Saturday sales efforts, consistently using the publications as the vehicle to participate in political discussion and debate, and reaching out to protests, strikes, and other struggles, supporters of the *Militant* can mount an even more successful subscription campaign the next time around—one where every goal is topped.

learning about and joining a revolutionary youth organization.

McCann will be leaving the staff in order to meet these challenges and help lead the New York chapter of the YSA.

Our new business manager will be Brian Williams. He joined the staff last August, moving from Price, Utah, where he was a garment worker and member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

Williams will remain a regular contributor to the paper. He plans to begin a business manager's column to keep readers up to date on circulation of the *Militant*.

Paying attention to the details and broad scope of the *Militant* as an international newsweekly is made manageable by the fact that all members of the staff carry out business, circulation, and promotional duties.

Argiris Malapanis, for example, does the invoicing and order processing for weekly bundle distributors around the world and handles correspondence with them. Derek Bracey compiled the weekly scoreboards for the recent circulation drive and organizes the weekly update of new and renewed subscriptions.

Before becoming business manager, Williams compiled the weekly information required for the second-class mailing of *Militant* subscriptions and organized to fill orders for *Militant* bound volumes. Seth Galinsky is in charge of correspondence with prisoners and updating subscriber lists of workers behind bars. Martín Koppel and Estelle DeBates have responsibility for several promotional aspects of the paper. Janet Post has helped each of the staff writers learn these essential skills.

Without weekly volunteers, circulation of the *Militant* would not be possible. Ethel Lobman now organizes all the data entry work, address changes, and handling of occasional problems that arise with the subscriptions. She works with a team of other volunteers who have entered into the computer each one of the more than 3,500 subscriptions bought in the United States and Canada over the last nine weeks.



Thousands in Barbados protest wage cuts, layoffs

Some 30,000 workers marched November 11 in Bridgetown, Barbados, to protest austerity measures by the government of Erskine Sandiford. The march launched a two-day general strike that closed most businesses, disrupted government operations, and reduced public transportation.

Sandiford's government announced the measures in September at the request of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in exchange for a \$58.1 million loan. The belt-tightening moves include an 8 percent wage cut and layoffs of 2,000 public sector workers, reductions in severance pay and unemployment benefits, increased taxes, and wide-ranging price hikes.

Some 3,000 government workers were laid off in October. In addition, 5,000 workers are facing job losses in the private sector.

Barbados, an island country in the Caribbean, has a population of 240,000.

An earlier march of 20,000 took place October 24. The demonstrations have been organized by the Coalition of Trade Unions and Trade Associations, a body that includes the Barbados Workers Union, the National Union of Public Workers, the island's two teachers' unions, and associations representing nurses, doctors, and other government workers. Leaders of major opposition parties, such as the Barbados Labor Party and the National Democratic Party, played a prominent role in the actions.

Besides demanding the reversal of the government's measures, the demonstrations turned into political protests against Prime Minister Sandiford. "Sandi must go, we say so," workers chanted at the November 11 march.

100,000 turn out in Germany to condemn anti-immigrant attacks

More than 100,000 demonstrators turned out in 30 cities in Germany November 10 to condemn a recent wave of anti-immigrant attacks. The largest rally was in Berlin, where a crowd of 50,000 gathered.

The marches took place during the 53rd anniversary of Kristallnacht, or Crystal Night, a night of anti-Semitic terror led by Hitler's fascists in 1938. Thousands of Jews were beaten, killed, or taken to concentration camps, and synagogues and Jewish businesses were destroyed. Neo-Nazi and other rightist groups had threatened to mark the anniversary with attacks on immigrants.

In the east German cities of Halle and Leipzig, fights broke out between rightists and demonstrators for immigrant rights. No other rightist attacks were reported that weekend.

The wave of racist attacks against immigrants reached a peak September 28 and 29 when rightist thugs in 20 towns attacked apartment buildings where immigrants live. Hundreds of such assaults have been recorded this year. In some incidents immigrants' houses and cars have been stoned and burned. Some immigrants have been killed.

There are about 5 million immigrants and refugees living in Germany out of a population of 80 million. The assaults occur at a time of massive economic dislocation in the eastern part of the country and amid calls by bourgeois politicians for curbs on immigration.

Headline stories in the news

Russia: On November 11 the Russian parliament reversed President Boris Yeltsin's order imposing emergency rule in the Checheno-Ingush ethnic region. Most of the 1.3 million inhabitants of the region, located in southern Russia bordering Georgia, are Muslim.

Checheno-Ingush declared its independence at the beginning of November. Thousands of people, including the region's national guard, took to the streets November 9 and prevented Soviet soldiers from imposing Yeltsin's emergency decree.

Argentina: President Carlos Menem, issuing an executive decree that circumvented Parliament, announced a package of economic measures November 1 dealing major blows to working people. The measures decree an end to collective bargaining agreements on an industry-wide basis. For 50 years unions had negotiated wages and working conditions with each industrial sector.

Do Pathfinder, SWP seek to monopolize Malcolm X?

BY DEREK BRACEY

A letter attacking the Socialist Workers Party, Pathfinder Press, and the *Militant* newspaper from a group called the Committee to Protect the Integrity of Brother Malcolm X has been circulating this fall.

The letter is headlined: "The Legacy of Brother Malcolm X is in Our Hands!! An Open Letter to The Socialist Workers Party's Pathfinder Press and Sister Betty Shabazz."

The group's accusations have been aired at several public meetings and have received some press coverage, including in New York's *Amsterdam News* and several radio talk shows.

The letter lumps together the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Pathfinder Press in what would appear to the reader to be a single entity.

S.E. Anderson and Preston Wilcox, the signers of the letter, state that Pathfinder is the SWP's "publication arm."

The letter states, "We call on all of our Brothers and Sisters who want to help in maintaining the integrity and revolutionary principles of Brother Malcolm X to join us in supporting a MORATORIUM on buying books and periodicals published by the Socialist Workers Party's Pathfinder Press and the *Militant* newspaper... until The Committee to Protect the Integrity of Brother Malcolm X determines that the problem has been resolved."

This amalgam of Pathfinder and the Socialist Workers Party is false. The Socialist Workers Party is a political organization that advocates the fight for a government of workers and farmers in the United States as part of the worldwide struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Pathfinder, on the other hand, is a publishing house based in New York that focuses on publishing the works of revolutionary leaders from around the world. The books it publishes contain the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and other leaders of the Russian revolution; revolutionary figures of the post-World War II period such as Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Maurice Bishop, and Nelson Mandela; and leaders of struggles by working people and the oppressed in the United States including Eugene Debs, Mother Jones, W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X, and leaders of the Socialist Workers Party such as James P. Cannon.

The main accusation in the "Open Letter" is that Pathfinder attempts to "franchise" Malcolm X by monopolizing the writings and speeches of the revolutionary leader.

Wilcox and Anderson say that the "Open Letter" is a response to a lawsuit filed in July by Dr. Betty Shabazz, the widow of Malcolm X, and Pathfinder against Writers and Readers, Inc., and Abdul Alkalimat.

In late 1990 Writers and Readers published a book entitled *Malcolm X for Beginners* authored by Alkalimat. The book reproduced substantial portions of works by Malcolm X previously published by Pathfinder without acknowledging the copyright to the material held by Shabazz.

The court action was filed in July 1990 after the failure of repeated attempts by Shabazz and Pathfinder to reach an agreement with Writers and Readers. The dispute was resolved in September before the suit came to court.

Championing views of Malcolm X

Before reviewing the charges against Pathfinder, it is useful to examine the letter's inaccurate statements about the Socialist Workers Party.

The committee's letter states that the SWP seeks to "financially profit [from] and politically usurp" the political legacy of Malcolm X. This is untrue.

Since 1962 the Socialist Workers Party, along with the Young Socialist Alliance, has championed the views of Malcolm X as a fellow revolutionary.

Malcolm X approached radicalizing young Blacks in the late 1950s and early 1960s with views no other leader of the Black liberation struggle was putting forward. He expressed uncompromising opposition to the racist oppression and degradation of Blacks. He refused to speak about himself as an "American," or about the U.S. government and armed forces as "our" gov-

ernment and "our" armed forces.

Malcolm explained why political support or subordination to the parties of the wealthy rulers of the United States blocks the ability of the oppressed and exploited to organize to fight in their own interests. He recognized the Democrats and Republicans as organizations of the racist and imperialist oppressors of people of color at home and abroad.

The revolutionary leader campaigned against the Jim Crow system of legalized segregation in the South, sought to instill in others a pride in the African roots of Black people, and advocated the right of self-defense against racist terror, including armed self-defense where necessary.

He stressed the need to look at political events in the United States "in the international context," identifying with the momentous struggles against imperialist oppression by toilers in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Pacific. In his talks, Malcolm frequently pointed to the examples of the mass upsurges and revolutionary battles in the Congo, Vietnam, Cuba, China, and South Africa.

Malcolm began presenting this revolutionary and anti-imperialist course while still a prominent spokesperson for the Nation of Islam in the early 1960s.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party



and Young Socialist Alliance were also taking the lessons of the massive social upsurges around the world to those fighting racist discrimination and segregation across the country. This included pointing to the example of the newly victorious workers' and farmers' government in Cuba.

It was in the same vein that the SWP quickly responded to the political perspectives developed by Malcolm X. SWP and YSA members, for example, joined efforts to defend members of the Nation of Islam from cop violence and victimization.

On April 27, 1962, seven members of the Nation of Islam in Los Angeles were shot, one fatally, in a cop rampage outside their temple. The police arrested 16 of their victims on false charges of "criminal assault against the police."

Malcolm was sent to Los Angeles to help the Nation members. He began to organize a broad campaign against the brutality of the police, drawing in many other forces who recognized the victimization for what it was. SWP and YSA members supported and helped publicize this effort. It was an early step toward collaboration with Malcolm X.

The Nation, however, abruptly halted the campaign shortly after it started, with no explanation.

At that time, the fighting leadership Malcolm represented was attacked by some other groups calling themselves socialist or communist. For example, in the August 1963

issue of *Political Affairs*, the theoretical organ of the Communist Party, U.S.A., James Jackson wrote:

"The Muslim organization, in general, and Malcolm X, in particular, are ultra-reactionary forces operating in the orbit of the Negro people's movement, with the strategic assignment to sow ideological confusion, to dissipate the organization energies of the Negro masses, [and] to promote divisionism within the Negro movement."

Malcolm X's perspective of drawing on the revolutionary action of the masses of Blacks, and his refusal to retreat from this course, culminated in his being silenced by Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad in late 1963. This led to his public break with the Nation in March 1964.

This same uncompromising course led Malcolm to publicly disavow many positions he had previously articulated while a spokesperson for the Nation. He rapidly broadened his assessment of the root cause of the problems facing Blacks and the oppressed around the world and the social forces capable of pushing the struggle forward.

During the last year of his life, in particular, Malcolm drew the lessons of why the imperialists had been suffering setbacks at the hands of the toiling masses in many parts of the world in the period since World War II. He sought to learn from the revolutionary leaderships of many of these fights and to emulate them. Malcolm drew these political conclusions in part from traveling to the Mideast and Africa in 1964.

As Malcolm's political views evolved, he sought to reach out for allies and work with other forces wherever he could.

At a meeting on May 29, 1964, Malcolm said, "We will work with anyone, with any group, no matter what their color is, as long as they are genuinely interested in taking the type of steps necessary to bring an end to the injustices that Black people in this country are afflicted by. No matter what their color is, no matter what their political, economic or social philosophy is, as long as their aims and objectives are in the direction of destroying the vulturous system that has been sucking the blood of Black people in this country, they're all right with us."

Among the organizations Malcolm began to collaborate with were the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance.

One example is an interview granted by Malcolm to two leaders of the YSA, Jack Barnes and Barry Sheppard, on Jan. 18, 1965. This is one of the last interviews Malcolm gave before he was assassinated the following month. Malcolm read and edited the final text of the interview, which was published in the March-April 1965 issue of the *Young Socialist*.

At the time of his assassination, the YSA and Malcolm were discussing a proposal for a nationwide campus tour by Malcolm that the YSA would organize in conjunction with other groups.

Role of the 'Militant'

The *Militant* newspaper, one of the targets of the "open letter's" call for "a moratorium," has campaigned for 30 years to present Malcolm X's views to a broad audience of fighting workers and youth.

While Malcolm X was alive, the *Militant* asked for and received the agreement of Malcolm X to print a number of his speeches in the newspaper.

In the introduction to the book *Malcolm X: A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography*, author Timothy Johnson notes, "The *Militant* probably provided the best, and least biased coverage of Malcolm, often reprinting the entire text of his speeches."

Malcolm encouraged others to read the *Militant*, including in his speeches at rallies of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, a group he helped form to advance the struggle of Blacks.

At the Militant Labor Forum on Jan. 7, 1965, he said, "The *Militant* newspaper is one of the best in New York City. In fact, it is one of the best anywhere you go today because everywhere I go I see it. I saw it even in Paris about a month ago; they were reading it over there. And I saw it in some parts of Africa where I was during the sum-

Continued on Page 13

Duke and challenge to labor movement

Continued from front page

15 or 20 points. I think when you take a test for a job or a promotion or a scholarship you should get what you score on that test. I think that is basic human rights."

Asked on the "Donahue" show if the Holocaust "is exaggerated by Jews," Duke replied: "Of course there were terrible atrocities in Europe and I condemn them and there were terrible atrocities as well in the Soviet Union. And, I oppose any oppression of people. The closest thing that I know to the policies of Germany in this country is the so-called affirmative action or quota system on the basis of race. They had quotas in Germany as well on the basis of race. I don't think you should have racial preferences."

At another debate he said, "You don't make up for past discrimination by putting new discrimination on people with these affirmative action programs and policies."

Duke also focused on reducing taxes for businesses and professional layers, and



David Duke on campaign trail

Stock market drops; Bush, Congress sign unemployment bill

The stock market took its fifth steepest plunge in history November 15 in reaction to continuing bad economic news and more evidence of an increasingly shaky banking industry.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 120 points, down nearly 4 percent in one day. The largest drop occurred in 1987 when the Dow index fell 508 points.

The previous day a string of reports indicated weaknesses in the economy: retail sales were down, average earnings fell, the number of people applying for unemployment rose, and auto sales were off 13.4 percent compared to the previous year.

Two specific announcements related to the banking industry also led to the sell-off: moves in Washington to restrict the amount of interest banks can charge credit card users and news that Aetna Life and Casualty Company expected an increase of \$1.3 billion in bad real estate loans.

The rapid plunge in paper values on Wall Street highlights the vulnerability of the stock market to partial shocks or recessions, events that could trigger a collapse of the banking industry.

Unemployment bill

The length of the recession and the number of people thrown out of work led the White House to give in to a partial extension of unemployment benefits. After months of wrangling between Congress and the Bush administration, both agreed on a measure extending benefits from 6 to 20 weeks, depending on the level of unemployment in a particular state.

Bush had said as recently as September that extending benefits was unnecessary because the economy was improving. Making additional weeks of benefits available, he said, would only encourage the unemployed to stay out of work.

The measure was approved 91-2 in the Senate and 396-30 in the House. Bush signed the legislation November 15.

reducing "big government."

"We need less government in Louisiana, not more government," he told the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry at a campaign forum with Edwards. "If we don't solve the problem of the rising welfare underclass in our state, I can guarantee you that your taxes will go up. Your tort problems will increase, the insurance problems will increase, and business will suffer."

A demagogue

Duke relies on such openly anti-working-class and racist demagoguery to advance his political perspectives. In hammering away in such a manner at these themes, Duke's campaign aroused deep opposition from many working people in the state, especially Blacks.

He picked up on many of the political stands taken by the Bush administration and advanced by others in the Republican and Democratic Party.

In 1988, Bush's election campaign used an advertisement that was cut from the same cloth as the Duke campaign of today. Bush supporters seized on the release of Willie Horton from jail to make a commercial showing Black prisoners being freed and, then, preying on society.

Duke also picked up on the Bush administration's campaign calling the recent civil rights legislation a "quotas" bill. This perspective was given legitimacy by the Democrats who made every effort to prove to Bush that there would be no aspect of quotas in the affirmative action legislation.

None could say that legislation that strengthens affirmative action does not have a quotas content to it. Because of endemic employer discrimination against women and oppressed nationalities, workers will attempt to use the measures in the bill to combat the racist and sexist practices in employment and promotion.

This is doubly true today when the wealthy employing class is attempting to deepen the divisions within the working class and drive down the value of all workers' labor power, especially that of women and people of color, in order to boost their sagging profit rates.

Mississippi governor

In addition to overlooking the similarities with Bush administration policies, the argument that Duke is an exception rather than part of the rightward shift in capitalist politics also ignores similar proposals advocated by others in the recent elections.

In Mississippi, for example, Republican candidate Kirk Fordice defeated incumbent governor Ray Mabus. Fordice, like Duke, focused on opposition to affirmative action and called for "workfare" to replace various welfare programs.

In the state of Michigan, Republican governor John Engler pushed a measure through the legislature that cut 83,000 people off the welfare rolls, especially all those considered "able-bodied."

Another indication of this rightward drift in bourgeois politics is the announcement by associates of Patrick Buchanan that the conservative Republican is getting ready to begin a bid for president. Buchanan served in both the Nixon and Reagan administrations.

Buchanan's sister said she was readying the campaign, whose message would be "America first — let's focus on America's problems now, and not the world's problems. Let's bring our attention home to our nation and reduce taxes and give people a chance to make a living out there."

No answer to Duke

The *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, big-business concerns, liberal groups, and some "socialist" organizations either openly advocated a vote for Edwards or called for the defeat of Duke at any cost — simply a backhanded way of encouraging an Edwards vote.

Because the labor movement did not have an independent working-class voice that championed proposals to advance the unity and interests of working people in the face of the economic crisis, most workers felt that voting for Edwards was the lesser of two evils. Of those who voted for Edwards, nearly 50 percent in exit polls said they did so because they didn't want Duke to be governor.

Edwards — the best the Democrats had to offer — joined with big business in raising the specter of massive job losses in the state if Duke was elected. His main response to Duke's attack on welfare payments was to defend how low the state's payments already are; women receive an additional \$11 a week for each of their children. "That's hardly an incentive to have a baby," Edwards told the *Times*.

Edwards lost the governor's race in 1987 after being tried twice in federal court on charges that while out of office he had earned \$2 million in a conspiracy to obtain and sell hospital and nursing home approvals.

Underlying the sharpness of the Louisiana campaign is a continuing economic crisis that is pushing up unemployment, driving larger numbers into poverty, and threatening the lifestyles of middle-class layers. Recent reports show that the big increase in the number of food stamp recipients now includes significant numbers of managerial and professional people who have lost their positions or small businesses due to the recession.

Results from the November 16 elections bear this out. Duke received the highest percentage of votes — 48 percent — from individuals with incomes between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year. Of working people with incomes below \$15,000 a year, 25 percent voted for Duke.

A contradictory situation has arisen as a result of these factors: despite the con-

tinued drive by employers and their government to lower the standard of living of working people, assault democratic rights, and weaken or break the labor movement, the working class and young people continue to resist, and, when pressed hard enough, wage defensive struggles.

Attempts to deepen the divisions within the working class go hand in hand with this offensive. The employers know that backward attitudes promoted and perpetuated by capitalism, such as racism, chauvinism, and sexism, keep workers from seeing that only by uniting in struggle can they defend their common class interests. This unity can be built despite differences in trade, sex, age, race, language, nationality, and religion.

As the economic crisis deepens, as events like the 120-point stock market drop November 15 show, some in the middle-class and privileged sections of the working class are attracted to radical right-wing solutions such as those put forward by Duke.

Gains won in struggle by working people — such as affirmative action, abortion rights, civil rights measures, and social welfare programs — all help break down the competition among workers that is inherent under capitalism. Because they strengthen the unity of the working class, these advances benefit all workers and are the only road toward waging effective struggles. Such unity is needed not only to defend past gains, but in the fight for political power.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

ARTHUR HUGHES

Pathfinder Press, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Pathfinder Bookstore in Stockholm, Sweden, which opened its doors a year and a half ago, was recently part of the "world's longest book table." The city library sponsored the event to inspire interest in reading, and to get into the *Guinness Book of World Records*. With 270 participating exhibitors having their tables end to end, the grand table ran 12 blocks along Drottninggatan, a thoroughfare in downtown Stockholm.

A big display of the Pathfinder Mural and a poster of Nelson Mandela attracted a lot of attention to the Pathfinder book display. The mural, painted by artists from around the world, covers a side of the six-story Pathfinder building in New York.

Those in the crowd of passersby who stopped at the Pathfinder book display also showed special interest in *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*. This Pathfinder pamphlet was put out in response to the crisis announced by the 1987 worldwide stock market crash. It appeared first in English and has since been translated into Spanish, Swedish, French, and Icelandic.

Workers in Sweden, especially immigrant workers, have been hard hit by an economic downturn that has left 3 percent unemployed and another 3 percent in government-run job retraining programs. The number of people out of work is double what it was a year ago and is headed for the highest rate since World War II.

Action Program sales have jumped in response to the uncertainty that working people face. Interest in the pamphlet is also fueled by the financial crisis in Sweden, where in October two of the largest banks showed record losses and one had to be bailed out at a cost of \$1 billion. The Pathfinder Bookstore has sold 76 copies of the pamphlet this year, 25 of them in September and October.

On a "best sellers" list that the bookstore compiles monthly is another Path-

finder title that has been translated into several languages: *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. It does well not only among workers whose first language is Swedish, but also immigrants who read Spanish, English, and Farsi. Another high seller is the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

Supporters of the bookstore get out hundreds of leaflets announcing its location and hours at events such as the city library-sponsored book fair as well as to workers in the auto, food-processing, and other industries. The results of such efforts were shown recently in sales to immigrant workers of *Nueva Internacional*, a Spanish-language magazine of Marxist politics and theory whose first issue appeared in October.

* * *

Pathfinder books are available on audiotape from Recording for the Blind, which now has 78,000 titles in its Master Tape Library. Forty of them are Pathfinder books that have been recorded by volunteers who have knowledge of the subject matter.

Included in the 40 are 5 books of Malcolm X speeches and 3 books by Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party who was also a leader of industrial union struggles in the 1930s. The tape library also includes *The Revolution Betrayed* and *My Life* by Russian Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky; two volumes of Pathfinder's documentary history of the Communist International in its early years; three books by Cuban revolutionary leaders Guevara and Castro; and *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Socialist Workers Party leader Jack Barnes. Issues 7 and 8 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, titled *The Opening Guns of WW III: Washington's Assault on Iraq*, and *Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism*, have recently been recorded. So has Carlos Tablada's *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*.

To find out how to establish borrower eligibility for Reading for the Blind, write to 20 Rozel Rd., Princeton, NJ 08540. Requests that RFB record a book to be included in the library can be sent to the same address.

Cuba's United Nations ambassador demands an end to U.S. blockade

On November 13 Ricardo Alarcón, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, addressed the 46th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Alarcón spoke under a point on the agenda devoted to the resolution entitled, "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba." It had been placed on the agenda at Havana's request.

Cuba decided not to call for a vote, citing the worldwide campaign by Washington to intimidate governments inclined to call for an end to the U.S. blockade. The General Assembly accepted Alarcón's request that the point be placed on the agenda at the 47th session next year.

The following are major excerpts from Alarcón's speech. In one section dropped for space limitations, the ambassador gives a brief outline of the long history of U.S. intervention in Cuba including military rule of the island in 1898 and again in 1901.

The translation to English is from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations.

* * *

Mr. President,

The item we are now considering is of vital importance for my people. It has directly to do, no more and no less, with the right to life, with the survival of a nation. It is also a problem directly affecting the purposes and principles enshrined in the [UN] Charter, and which impedes the normal development of international relations and is seriously detrimental to the legitimate interests of many states, institutions, and persons worldwide.

Everyone in this room knows it, and millions outside this room also know it.

I have here a collection of the different communications that the government of the United States has disseminated through the ministries of foreign affairs of many countries in which fallacious arguments go hand in hand with the most transparent threats. They all bear a clear message: Washington does not only have the intention of persisting in its illegal and criminal blockade against Cuba, but also aims to block its discussion by the General Assembly.

In those documents and in the August 21 statement by the State Department it is alleged that it is not a blockade, but simply an embargo. But, to the surprise of the reader, it is asserted: "A blockade implies that the United States is taking action to prevent other countries from trading with Cuba. That is clearly not the case."

In document A/46/193/Add.7 of September 12, 1991, we clearly demonstrated that the blockade is precisely that, a blockade

being carried out by Washington worldwide, extending its anti-Cuban laws, decrees, and regulations beyond its territory. In that document, received by the delegations two months ago, we quoted specifically a number of current U.S. provisions, which have been in force for years, demonstrating the extraterritorial extension of Washington's jurisdiction.

Allow me now to present to you some examples showing how the extraterritorial implementation of those provisions not only seriously damages Cuba but also affects the

"This item has to do, no more and no less, with the right to life, with the survival of a nation..."

interests of third countries and is a continuous source of international conflicts.

There are numerous cases of legitimate commercial agreements made with non-U.S. companies, which are not under the jurisdiction of the United States, but which could not be carried out because of express prohibitions from Washington.

I have here the relevant documents pertaining to each case. I will limit myself to mentioning the items whose export to Cuba was prohibited: ophthalmic eye drops, tires, hydraulic components, "V" transmission belts, kitchen kits for aircraft, electrical controls and regulators, materials for electric installations, electric accessories, heater components, wood-cutting tools, metal-cutting tools, iron connectors for electric installations, light bulbs, electric fuses, commercial kitchens, electric switches, shipping-related products, plastic resins, cellophane paper, water-treatment resins, materials for the production of telephone cables, glue for motor couplings, filters, medical literature, and soft drinks. As you can see, these are not at all "strategic materials."

Editorial Interamericana of Spain had been for years an important supplier of medical books to Cuba until 1991 when it was acquired by the U.S. enterprise McGraw-Hill, which prohibited all sales to our country and even the participation of its now Spanish subsidiary in the Cuban Book Fair. This transatlantic imposition of decisions taken in Washington makes the access by Cubans to medical literature even more difficult, and also leaves jobless some Spanish workers.

On instructions from its headquarters in the United States, the Pepsi-Cola company



UN photo 178393

Cuba's UN Ambassador Ricardo Alarcón explained how Washington's embargo against Cuba blocks trade in vital goods from many parts of world.

in Montreal decided in mid-May of this year not to abide by a contract it had signed for the sale of 28,000 boxes of soft drinks to Cuba.

Cuba and the Swedish company Alfa-Laval have had traditional commercial links. Nevertheless, last May that corporation canceled a sale contract it had subscribed with Medicuba. This operation was related to Swedish equipment, manufactured in Sweden by Alfa-Laval, that Cuba had been purchasing for years until the inquisitors in Washington found that one part of that equipment, a filtering membrane, was of U.S. origin.

In document A/46/193/Add.7 we listed a number of commercial operations for the purchase of medical and laboratory equipment and their spare-parts, all of them manufactured outside the United States by non-U.S. companies, that could not be carried out because of prohibitions by the U.S. Treasury Department.

I will not read this other document, but the least I can do is to mention it in this room where the Children's Summit met scarcely a year ago. Do you remember the promises made on that occasion to the children of the world? Did somebody say, then, that Cuban children were excluded from that promise? This document contains a list of spare parts, some of them very small and not at all costly. They have no "strategic" value and serve no military purpose. Their only use is in children's hospitals. We are not speaking about toys, but of parts indispensable to equipment for the treatment of children with conditions. These spare-parts have only one defect: they are of U.S. origin. I am certain that all U.S. embassies have a copy of this list, which explains why we face increasing difficulties in purchasing these products anywhere in the world.

Cuban children have other experiences with the blockade. In 1981 an epidemic of hemorrhagic dengue erupted in Cuba in circumstances which allow us to suspect its introduction from abroad. The U.S. authorities hindered our efforts to acquire the necessary products for the elimination of the agent of that epidemic which we could only find, after enormous effort and at a very steep cost, and in a distant market, notwithstanding the efforts in Washington of the World Health Organization. One hundred Cuban children paid with their lives for that episode of abominable cruelty.

In its efforts to illegally impose its policy of blockade in other countries beyond its jurisdiction, Washington has used pressure and interference through several means.

These acts of interference by Washington

exist in all countries and have multiplied in recent months. Abundant testimony of this fact has been reflected in the press, especially in Latin America.

The savage persecution against the Cuban nickel exports deserves special attention. In this real war that has been waged for more than 30 years against one of the main products of a poor and underdeveloped country, the government of the United States has achieved its main goals and has closed our traditional markets one after another. This has even implied the cancellation of duly subscribed contracts, some of them already being carried out by private and state-owned

"Washington aims to block discussion by the General Assembly of its blockade against Cuba..."

corporations of the countries that are the largest consumers of this mineral.

To achieve this the United States has used all methods, from the embargo of stainless steel shipments "suspected" of containing Cuban nickel, the imposition of a very strict control machinery in consuming countries, the demand of guarantees that no product exported to the United States contain Cuban nickel, to the threat and the extortion carried out by Yankee diplomats visiting one by one the nickel-consuming companies in several countries.

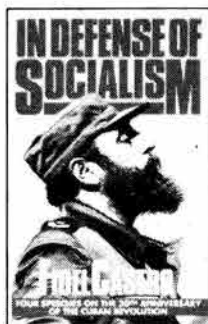
Now Washington is also demanding that those exporting sugar to the United States guarantee that the shipments sold to the U.S. market contain no Cuban sugar.

Another example of extraterritoriality is the U.S. attempt to completely ban the use of the dollar in any transaction regarding Cuba, even when it has no link whatsoever with persons or entities in the United States. By so doing Washington is interfering in the functioning of banks and financial institutions in third countries and restricting their activities even if they have no relation at all with the United States.

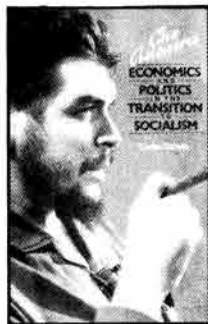
Mr. President:

What I have just described is the result of the extraterritorial application of the blockade provisions against Cuba presently in force. Obviously, this policy violates the Charter of San Francisco, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and a number of resolutions of this General Assembly. It runs counter to international law and not only

further reading from Pathfinder on the Cuban revolution



In Defense of Socialism. In these speeches Castro argues that progress is impossible on the basis of the dog-eat-dog competition of capitalism. 142 pp. \$12.95



Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism, by Carlos Tablada. Che Guevara saw political consciousness and control by working people as key to building socialism. 286 pp. \$16.95



Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism An exchange of views on the place of Che Guevara's perspective. 204 pp. \$10.

To order a copy of these publications or obtain a copy of the complete Pathfinder catalog, visit the bookstores listed on page 12 or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Please include \$3 for postage and handling for first title, \$.50 each additional title.

constitutes a criminal aggression against Cuba, but its practical application goes against the sovereignty of other states. It is thus a constant source of international conflict, ignores the most basic rights of the Cuban people, and harms the legitimate interests of others.

As if this were not more than enough, since last year the U.S. Congress has been considering legislative proposals aimed at intensifying and extending its economic, commercial, and financial blockade against Cuba. Some of them have already been integrated into legislation waiting for executive sanction. Their aim is to totally eliminate trade

“**The U.S. government has closed off our traditional nickel markets one after another . . .**”

with Cuba by subsidiaries of U.S. corporations in and under the jurisdiction of third countries. Almost all Cuban imports that would thus be prohibited are foodstuffs and medicines, as has been recognized in this document I am now showing you from the office that the U.S. government has entrusted with implementing the blockade. To achieve that objective, the United States would illegally and arbitrarily increase the extension of its laws to territories beyond its jurisdiction and would violate the sovereignty of other countries.

For that reason the embassy of Ireland in Washington, on behalf of the members of the European Community presented last year this note to the State Department, objecting to the proposed legislation.

One of its paragraphs reads: “The Community is still of the view that the United States has no basis in international law to claim the right to license non-U.S. transactions with Cuba by companies incorporated outside the U.S.A., whatever their ownership or control.”

We also recognize the value of the statement by the secretary of commerce of the United Kingdom last September, which I take the liberty of quoting: “It is for the British government, not the U.S. Congress, to determine the U.K. [United Kingdom]’s policy on trade with Cuba. We will not accept any attempt to superimpose U.S. law on U.K. companies. I hope the Congress will think long and hard before seeking to interfere with legitimate civil trade between this country and Cuba.”

Mr. President:

I have put before you a series of very concrete details, all of them based on documents and incontestable proof, clearly showing how the U.S. government is carrying out an illegal economic, commercial, and financial blockade against Cuba.

I think that no one can harbor doubts that this blockade is an international problem and that its consideration by the General Assembly is entirely legitimate. This assembly has the unavoidable moral and political obligation to contribute to an immediate end to a policy that, apart from being illegal, causes serious damage to a whole people.

It goes without saying that our intention in proposing this draft is not to put delegations in an uncomfortable position. But, put in the simplest terms, it is our duty to demand justice for Cuba and for its people and the necessary solidarity to achieve it. We will carry out that duty in this assembly and in other international forums.

We all know the exact nature of the obstacles facing this assembly in making a just decision on this issue. It has nothing to do with legal interpretations or semantic disquisitions.

The true “argument,” the only “argument” of the U.S. government is in this paper with which many of you are acquainted. I have a number of versions coming from different capitals. Allow me to read the paragraph that contains the only and true Yankee “argument”: “In view of your relations with them,

we could appreciate your going to the Cubans in an effort to have the resolution withdrawn. The Cubans should understand that their insistence that you support them threatens your good relationship with the U.S. The American Congress and people will be watching this important issue very carefully.”

We know to how many places in the world this clear and direct threat, showing the total lack of respect by Washington for the dignity and sovereignty of other nations, has been directed. We know what certain special envoys have said in a number of capitals. We know of the gross impertinence they have used in a number of meetings, even with heads of states of independent republics that they attempt to treat as if they were colonial possessions.

We also know that in more than one case, the threatening language has been compounded by suspensions of credit, interruption of bilateral projects, and other measures of pressure and reprisal. On all of this we also have totally documented proof that we prefer to keep to ourselves for the time being.

But, do we need more than this?

“The Cubans should understand that their insistence that you support them threatens your good relations with the U.S. The American Congress and people will be watching this important issue very carefully.”

U.S. attacks Cuba’s right to discuss blockade

BY SETH GALINSKY

UNITED NATIONS — Obviously annoyed with the Cuban campaign to bring the facts about the U.S. economic blockade of the island to the attention of the world, the U.S. mission to the United Nations issued a two-page reply November 13.

“The United States would have preferred not to speak out on the Cuban item because it deals with an essentially internal decision not appropriate for consideration” by the UN General Assembly, the mission said. “We believe that the resolution proposed by the Cuban delegation constitutes interference in the internal affairs of the United States.”

“Governments make decisions to initiate trade, to end trade, to adjust the terms of trade, to suspend trade and to restore trade based on national interest,” the U.S. mission said. “Should the General Assembly begin the practice of instructing countries that are not now trading with one another to begin doing so?”

The U.S. delegation claimed that “Cuban efforts to generate support for their draft on this subject were unsuccessful.” But the statement underscored Washington’s worry that Cuba has been making gains.

“Some delegations are concerned over Cuban claims,” the mission admitted, “that countries that refuse to cooperate with the embargo could be subject to U.S. retribution, that the embargo prohibits trade between Cuba and companies located in third countries.”

Embargo regulations allow U.S. subsidiaries in other countries to trade with Cuba if licensed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the U.S. mission noted. However, it neglected to mention the restrictive conditions that are imposed. The statement did not address Cuban ambassador Ricardo Alarcon’s well-documented exposé of the ongoing U.S. pressure campaign and the myriad regulations that are applied against companies and governments to block trade.

“The United States chooses not to trade with Cuba for good reasons,” the U.S. statement said. In effect the mission accepted Alarcon’s explanation of why Washington initiated the embargo in the first place: the revolutionary measures undertaken in Cuba to regain control of its industry and natural resources, and to free itself of U.S. economic domination.

“The government of Cuba expropriated millions of dollars in private property belonging to U.S. individuals and has refused to make reasonable restitution,” the mission complained, referring to the land reform and nationalization measures



Militant/Seth Galinsky
Child in Cuban hospital. As part of its blockade, the U.S. prevents the sale to Cuba of parts for medical equipment needed in children’s hospitals.

In its effort to hinder the international community from taking the necessary action, the U.S. government has launched a frantic and inordinate campaign of intimidation, threats, and pressure. In these circumstances the assembly would find it very difficult to

enacted in 1959 and 1960.

While the mission claimed that any discussion of the U.S. embargo of Cuba would be “interference in the internal affairs” of the United States, it has no such qualms about

fully exercise its responsibilities to objectively consider the draft resolution before it and allow each and every one to assume, in all freedom and without fear of reprisal, the most appropriate position.

Cuba firmly believes in international solidarity. Cuba demands it for its people because it needs it at present. But those sentiments, even in these times fraught with risks for our country, compel us to solidarize with and understand the difficulties that others would unjustly confront in maintaining a dignified position regarding this question.

Thus, Mr. President, I would like to officially communicate that my delegation has decided not to insist on putting to the vote the draft resolution contained in document A/46/L.20 during the present session of the General Assembly and that action on it be postponed for the next session.

Many governments, institutions, and individuals worldwide have demanded that an end be put to the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed against Cuba. We put our trust in their solidarity. We trust that their efforts will be multiplied and become even more powerful, contributing to create the appropriate conditions that would allow the General Assembly to make a just decision next year.

blatant interference in Cuba’s internal affairs.

The statement quoted from a speech by President George Bush calling on Cuba to hold “fully free and fair elections, under international supervision.”

U.S.-led forces leave radioactive waste from war in Middle East

BY DEREK BRACEY

At least 40 tons of radioactive and highly toxic waste, in the form of depleted uranium, remains strewn across the Gulf war zone in the Middle East, left by U.S. and British armed forces. A report by Britain’s Atomic Energy Authority (AEA) has warned that the waste threatens the long-term health of thousands of Kuwaitis and of cleanup teams from various countries.

The report states that the waste, from tens of thousands of spent shells, could pass into the food chain and water supply.

The uranium was used in armor-piercing rounds fired by U.S. aircraft, as well as British and U.S. tanks. The AEA estimates that 5,000 rounds were fired by U.S. tanks and that several tens of thousands of rounds were fired by U.S. aircraft.

The report, prepared in April, has never been officially released. A British newspaper, *The Independent On Sunday*, acquired the report and publicized it November 10. It estimated there is sufficient uranium to cause 500,000 deaths.

The AEA notes that the real danger comes from uranium dust that was created when depleted uranium shells struck armored vehicles. It explains that airborne particles that are inhaled could lead to “unacceptable body burdens.”

The AEA report included a recommendation that the British government should act quickly to clean up the uranium. The agency was particularly worried that unless this happened, it would create a damaging scandal for the British and allied governments. As the report put it, “The problem will not go away, and should be tackled before it becomes a political problem created by the environmental lobby.”

Despite this assessment six months ago, no action has been taken by London to clean up the British sector of the battlefield.

Cover-up of ‘friendly fire’ deaths

In another revelation of the military’s efforts to cover up the truth about what

happened in the war against Iraq, a series of articles in the New York *Newsday* reported on the battle at “Objective Norfolk.” This was the name given a group of three Iraqi defensive lines in southern Iraq. The February 26–27 battle is considered the largest nighttime engagement of tanks since World War II.

In six hours, 7,500 U.S. soldiers in 3,000 vehicles destroyed 160 Iraqi tanks and killed thousands of Iraqis who were trying to escape the fighting. Of 7 U.S. soldiers killed in the fight, 6 were killed by other U.S. soldiers, and 1 by Iraqi gunfire. The U.S. government waited until August 12, nearly six months later, to confirm this fact.

“Objective Norfolk” was occupied by forces left behind by the Iraqi military so as to block U.S. troops from attacking major Iraqi units that were fleeing to the north. Captured Iraqis explained that most of their officers had deserted them.

The U.S. goal in the battle was to stop the Iraqi retreat. Armored scouts located and caught up to the fleeing Iraqis, forced them to fight, and then called in three U.S. tank divisions to destroy them.

In the rush to kill the Iraqis before they could leave, several U.S. vehicles were destroyed by other U.S. tanks firing missiles and sabot rounds — two-foot steel darts tipped with dense depleted uranium and designed to tear through armor, also known as “Silver Bullets.”

In the most deadly of the three incidents of U.S. forces firing on each other that evening, one battalion launched an assault that destroyed five U.S. tanks and three Bradley Fighting Vehicles. This attack accounted for 5 of the 6 killed and for the 30 injured.

Three of the 17 confirmed “friendly fire” incidents took place in the assault on Objective Norfolk. Over the course of the war, of 46 U.S. soldiers killed in ground fighting, 24 — about half — were killed in so-called “friendly fire.”

One out of 10 in U.S. relies on food stamps

Continued from front page
the figure rose to 9 percent.

Some states record an even bigger jump in recipients than the national average. In Connecticut the number of households covered jumped by one-third last year; New Jersey by 17 percent; and New York by 12 percent.

Reports on the food stamp program confirm earlier figures on rising levels of poverty, a general decline in the standard of living among working people, and a growth in the unemployment rate.

Relentless assault

With the relentless assault on the standard of living and union organization begun during the 1974-75 recession, the employers have made significant inroads into the day-to-day conditions — on and off the job — faced by working people.

Despite the relative expansion of the capitalist economy for most of the 1980s, conditions for working people continued to deteriorate. As the figures show, many were driven to the point of being one paycheck away from being able to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities for themselves or their families.

Neither the liberal Democrats nor the trade union officialdom have offered any perspective to ameliorate the capitalist system's impact on workers.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported an additional fact: families with young children now make up at least one-third of all workers who are homeless. In several major cities families account for more than 40 percent of the homeless.

This adds up to some 100,000 to 200,000 children living on the street. Their average age? Six years.

The string of reports on poverty has given a slight impetus to legislation proposed by some in the Democratic and Republican parties, such as a bill adding \$1 billion to programs that address child poverty. Top Congressional members of both parties are also discussing providing some form of federal health insurance to the 34 million Americans who are not covered at all.

Reactionary propaganda

But along with these packages comes reactionary propaganda.

"It's inappropriate to declare Turks and

Kurds an emergency, and not our own children," Representative Patricia Schroeder said in support of the \$1 billion child poverty bill, referring to \$140 million allocated for Kurdish refugees in earlier legislation.

In discussions on a possible health-care bill, both Democratic and Republican lawmakers have said the \$1 billion allocated for subsidies to cover export of food to the Soviet Union this winter should be spent "at home" instead.

These claims dovetail with cries that the Bush administration is spending too much time with foreign affairs and neglecting issues on the domestic front as the economy deteriorates. Both of these lines of argument are dangerous for working people to accept because they offer no way forward out of the economic and social crisis.

Democratic office holders, or office seekers, try to paint U.S. foreign policy as something other than what it is: the extension of the same brutality practiced by the billionaire ruling families and their government against working people at home. They hope to make working people think about the good of "America" rather than identify with the interests of working people around the world.

They also perpetuate the myth that workers and others must accept the parameters of an ever-shrinking pot out of which government programs and wages come. They present a never-ending series of trade-offs: either extend food aid to the Soviet Union to help cover winter shortages or fund a minimal health care program for those living in the United States; accept wage cuts and layoffs or face the closing of factories; raise taxes on working people or cut city and state social services.

Along with these arguments come some more right-wing expressions of the political polarization evident in the United States today.

Blaming poor for own plight

Responding to recent studies showing the wide gap between poverty levels in the United States and those in Canada and several European countries, Douglas Besharov of the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., blamed the poor for their own plight.

The studies showed the obvious: a smaller percentage of people live in poverty in Canada and Western Europe because govern-

ments in those countries have better assistance programs.

"Liberals always say, 'Gee, if we could only do it as well as the Europeans,'" Besharov told the *New York Times*. "The problem is we don't have the same kind of poor people. Our problem is with poor people who don't work."

After government assistance programs are counted, the rate of poverty in the United States among elderly is four times that of Europe. For children the rate of poverty is three times higher in the United States.

Besharov also argued that women in Europe were under strong social pressure not to have children at a young age. These countries could therefore provide more money to single mothers.

Because "we are a freer society," he said, expanding services available to single mothers would simply result in larger numbers of young women having babies.

'Welfare underclass'

These arguments echo those advanced by conservative wings of the U.S. ruling class

and its spokespeople in the Democratic and Republican parties. Louisiana gubernatorial candidate David Duke raises the alarm of a "rising welfare underclass" that threatens the state's prosperity.

These forces not only try to turn the victims of capitalism into scapegoats for the social and economic crisis but advance prescriptions that would restrict democratic and civil rights as well, such as Besharov's threats against young women choosing to have children. Duke, for example, says that women who receive welfare and have children should receive cash payments if they submit to sterilization.

Rejecting this entire framework is the only way for the labor movement to break out of the rightward drift of capitalist politics today. The numbers living in — or a paycheck away from — poverty will continue to grow until the unions chart a course that draws the line at what working people can't afford to have happen to them, instead of continuing to accept the claims of "hardship" by the tiny handful of wealthy families.

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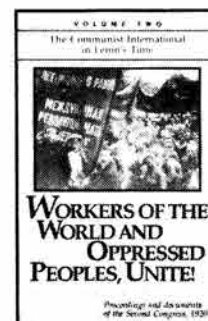
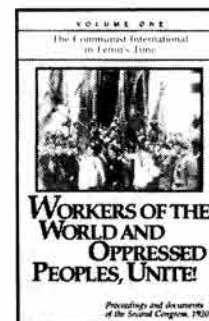
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OFFER EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 1991

Network forms to help defend rights of Nebraska airman

BY MELANIE WILLIAMS

OMAHA, Nebraska — After military authorities began attacking Airman Jason Coughlin for his political views, a broad network of concerned Nebraskans organized to defend his constitutional rights. The Omaha GI Free Speech Network was formed in early October and continues to grow as a result of the attacks on Coughlin's rights.

Coughlin, who is stationed at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, joined the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) in June. Shortly afterward the Air Force stripped him of his security clearance and his job as a computer programmer, in which he had maintained an excellent work record. The military then initiated a security investigation which they say might last a year.

Since Coughlin has always acted legally and within military guidelines, his supporters say these actions are an attempt to intimidate him and other GIs from exercising their constitutional rights as citizen-soldiers.

Mel Beckman, cochairperson of the Omaha GI Free Speech Network, said, "Probing and questioning the policies of one's own country is a mark of good citizenship, both for civilians and members of the armed forces. Those in authority who would deny this should be challenged."

This case has attracted broad support, because many view it as a fight for all democratic rights and link it to other struggles of the working class.

Since forming in October, the network has raised \$450 to continue the outreach campaign and help pay for Coughlin's attorney fees.

A leaflet appealing for funds and support was included in the Nebraskans for Peace newsletter and circulated to mem-

bers all over Nebraska.

Coughlin's political fight has received extensive coverage in the *Omaha World-Herald*.

As active participants within the network, members of the YSA have reached out to the community by setting up literature tables on campuses and speaking to students, professors, and coworkers about the attacks against Coughlin.

YSA members at the Hormel meat-packing plant in Fremont, Nebraska, discussed Coughlin's case with coworkers.

"I think the government's disciplinary action toward Jason shows fear and opposition to people who think and have different opinions," said Ben Meyer, a 20-year-old meat-packer who recently met Coughlin. "It is a slap in the face to him being lowered to a clerk after all the training he's been through. However, if he had devised a more efficient way to kill human beings, he would have been promoted."

Burt Morris, another Hormel worker, commented, "It's wrong that Jason's job was taken away from him because of what he believes."

Doug Lee-Regier, a leader of Nebraskans for Peace and a supporter of Coughlin's fight, said, "It is important for civilians to support GIs in this, because it has wide ramifications for both GIs and citizens in the struggle to defend free speech. We are heartened by the fact that there are GIs like Jason who are willing to counter governmental policies."

To receive more information about the Network or to send a contribution contact the Omaha GI Free Speech Network, c/o Mel Beckman, 3636 Lafayette, Omaha NE 68131. Checks should be made out to Omaha GI Free Speech Fund.

Many in ranks of Second International looked to revolution

(Fourth in a series)

Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!, recently published by Pathfinder, contains the full record of the Second Congress of the Communist International, held in Soviet Russia in 1920.

The *Militant* is serializing the introduction to the book by its editor, John Riddell. These excerpts are copyright © 1991 by the Anchor Foundation and reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

The section printed last week described the Soviet workers' 1920 victories in the civil war; labor upsurges in Britain, France, and the United States; and therise of national liberation struggles in Asia, to which the Comintern responded by organizing in Soviet Azerbaijan the Congress of the Peoples of the East, attended by nearly 2,000 delegates representing some 30 Asian peoples.

The international revolutionary upsurge generated forces that tore apart the fabric of the Second International. Following the war the Social Democratic parties had been initially strengthened by a new wave of recruits. These new members, however, were drawn in the main from the most exploited layers of the working class and were open to the revolutionary message of the Russian October. The great class battles of 1919 further radicalized the ranks of these organizations. The leaders of many Social Democratic parties came under intense pressure to take their organizations out of the discredited Second International and to establish relations with the Comintern.

Relaunched in February 1919 in Bern, Switzerland, the Second, or Bern, International largely disintegrated during the year that followed. The great majority of its larger affiliates, including the French, Italian, Polish, Swiss, and U.S. Socialist parties, the Norwegian Labor Party, and the USPD quit its ranks, and the Austrian Social Democrats refused to attend its 1920 congress. The two major organizations left to it were the British Labour Party and the SPD in Germany. By the time this International met in congress in Geneva, on July 31, 1920, it was clearly a minority force in the organized workers' movement.

Centrist leaders of the parties that quit the Second International took action to head off the strong membership push for joining the Communist International. They proposed to "reconstruct" the international Socialist movement through a coming together with the Comintern and its affiliates of all the parties that had quit the Second International.

The Comintern Executive Committee considered this a "futile endeavor" that would create an International "with no defined program, no firm policies, no hope of a future and no perspectives." Behind these moves, in the Comintern's view, stood the efforts of centrist leaders such as Longuet and Kautsky to lead their movements "back into the swamp of the Yellow Second International." A demonstration of the dangers of this course was provided by the experience of Hungary's Communists during the 1918-19 revolution there. Their fusion with the Social Democratic Party, undertaken in the absence of any strategic or programmatic convergence, had brought disastrous results.

With the Comintern opposed, no progress was made toward bringing Communist and centrist parties together in some common reconstructed organization. Rather than trying to stage a conference without Comintern participation, the French and German advocates of this course, under heavy pressure from their ranks, moved in May-June 1920 to deal directly with the Comintern by sending delegations to Moscow.

Prospects for international revolution

Opening the Second Congress, Zinoviev recalled his prediction, shortly after the International was founded, that within a year all Europe would be a Soviet republic. In mid-1920 this prospect of continentwide victory still seemed, if not quite so immediate, nonetheless close at hand. "More than a year has gone by," Zinoviev told the Second Congress delegates, and it was now clear that "in reality it will probably take not one year but

two or three for all of Europe to become a Soviet republic."

Zinoviev's statement reflected the assessment of many Bolshevik leaders in the first months after the International was launched. Given the paralysis of the bourgeoisie, it had seemed possible, as Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky later put it, that the workers' "chaotic, spontaneous assault" would mount in "ever-rising waves, that in this process the consciousness of the leading layers of the working class would become clarified, and that in this way the proletariat would attain state power in the course of one or two years."

By the time of the Third Congress, held in 1921, it was clear that these goals would not be realized. This shift was registered in the resolution on the world situation adopted by that congress.

Describing a postwar revolutionary movement "marked by an amplitude unequalled in history," the resolution explained that it reached "its greatest amplitude and highest intensity in those countries which had been involved in the war, and especially in the defeated countries" but spread "to the neutral countries as well. In Asia and Africa the movement arouses or reinforces the revolutionary indignation of the multimillioned colonial masses."

"This mighty wave," the theses concluded, did not "succeed in overthrowing world capitalism, not even European capitalism. . . . The first period of the revolutionary movement after the war . . . may be regarded by and large as terminated."

At the time of the Second Congress, however, such a judgment would not yet have been accurate. Revolutionary conditions were present in several European countries, and the outcome had not yet been decided by the clash of contending forces. Registering the setbacks that had occurred during 1919 and early 1920, the Second Congress considered that the main lesson from these defeats was the need to organize the revolutionary vanguard in combat-ready Communist parties.

The main force organizing and directing the Comintern congress was the leadership of the Communist Party of Russia. Three of its Central Committee members, Zinoviev, Radek, and Bukharin, were permanently assigned to help direct the Comintern's day-to-day functioning. Lenin and Trotsky also took an active part in its work and shared in many of its major decisions. The Communist Party of Russia served as the example that other parties strove to emulate. It supplied the International's only experienced and tested political leadership. Party members in Russia worked to draw the Soviet masses into the Comintern's activity through rallies and demonstrations, wide-ranging educational work, the collection of funds for the Comintern, and solidarity campaigns for workers' struggles in other countries.

The party in Russia sent a large delegation to the Second Congress, including a broad representation of its leadership. Many of these delegates had been nominated by party units organized in independent or autonomous national Soviet republics (such as those formed by Tatars in Crimea and on the Volga) and among Jewish people and the German



Humbert-Droz Archives
One of the delegates from central Asia speaking at Comintern congress.



Courtesy J. Humbert-Droz Archives, City Library, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland
Moscow, 1920: Contingent of militiawomen in demonstration of 400,000 that welcomed delegates arriving for Second Congress of Communist International.

national minority, or by organizations of party members (fractions) in trade unions.

The Communist Party of Germany

The Communist Party of Germany (KPD), the most authoritative of the revolutionary groups outside Russia, was hit during 1919 by the murder of its central leaders, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, and Leo Jogiches, and was driven underground. The party's Central Bureau sought to correct serious ultraleft errors in its policies, but ran into strong resistance in the ranks. The internal dispute came to a head at the party's October 1919 congress in Heidelberg. The Central Bureau proposed programmatic theses that endorsed Communist participation in bourgeois parliamentary elections and revolutionary work in reformist-led trade unions. The theses specified that those not in agreement with these positions must leave the party. The Central Bureau proposals were adopted by a 31-18 vote. A split was not fully consummated, however, until after the Kapp putsch, when the ultraleft forces opposed to this program founded the Communist Workers Party of Germany (KAPD). They took with them about half the membership of the Communist Party, including the vast majority of those in Berlin.

On learning the outcome of the Heidelberg congress, Lenin wrote the KPD leadership that "given agreement on the basic issue (for Soviet rule, against bourgeois parliamentarism)," unity was "possible and necessary." The breakaway group, in his opinion, contained "very gifted propagandists, inexperienced and young," whom he compared to the Left Communist grouping that had been led by Bukharin and Radek in the Russian party in 1918. In the spring of 1920 two delegations from the KAPD visited Moscow, and the Comintern Executive Committee utilized the occasion to try to heal the split. The committee asked the KAPD to take action against certain of its leaders who had publicly broken with Marxist views, to set up a joint committee with the KPD to take steps toward unity, and, finally, to send delegates to the Second Congress and accept the authority of its decisions.

As the list of delegates to the congress was being drawn up in mid-July, Bolshevik leaders proposed that the KAPD delegates be offered decisive vote. The central leader of the KPD delegation, Paul Levi, strongly objected. He presented the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia with an ultimatum that if the KAPD received voting rights, the KPD delegates would pack up and go home. The Comintern Executive Committee decided nonetheless, by a vote of 25 to 5, to invite the KAPD representatives with vote. Levi was joined in the minority by Marchlewski and Serrati. The two KAPD delegates, however, rejected the Comintern's invitation, citing their fundamental disagreements with the draft theses prepared for the congress.

The centrist USPD

The KPD, with about 66,000 members, was dwarfed in size by the USPD, which by the time of the Second Congress had some

900,000 members and had received close to one-fifth of the vote in the June 1920 Reichstag elections. Most of the revolutionary militants in the USPD's ranks, who had fought in the vanguard of the great strike wave and the armed resistance to the Kapp putsch, favored joining the Communist International. The party's centrist leadership divided into two currents, one that leaned to the class-collaborationist politics of the SPD and another that responded, although inconsistently, to revolutionary pressure from the ranks.

The December 1919 USPD congress in Leipzig failed to resolve these contradictions. It adopted a program that included formal endorsement of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it also approved a version of the proposal for unity of the Comintern and all centrist-led parties formulated by Artur Crispian, the main figure in the party's right wing. Crispian's ambiguously worded motion stated that the USPD would quit the Second International and join with other "social-revolutionary parties" and the Communist International in "a united proletarian International capable of action." Delegates then adopted an amendment to Crispian's motion, proposed by Walter Stoecker of the party leadership's left wing, which provided that, if other parties did not come in, the USPD should affiliate alone to the Comintern. Following the Leipzig congress, the USPD leadership wrote the Comintern Executive Committee and close to twenty Communist and Social Democratic parties, proposing an international conference.

The reply of the Comintern Executive Committee, dated February 5, unsparingly criticized the political record of the USPD leadership and underlined the damage to the German revolution for which this leadership was responsible. The Executive Committee rejected the notion of a new International combining the Comintern with centrist-led parties and proposed instead to negotiate with the USPD directly. The reply also stressed that the USPD must cleanse its leadership of those such as Kautsky who were apologists for the SPD's counterrevolutionary course and open opponents of the Russian October revolution. The Executive Committee pointed to the need for the USPD's revolutionary majority to fuse with the Communist Party of Germany.

The USPD sent a delegation to Soviet Russia composed of two representatives from its right wing, Crispian and Wilhelm Dittmann, and two from its left wing, Stoecker and Däumig. When the delegates departed for Moscow on July 13, they took with them a reply to the Comintern, unanimously adopted by the Central Committee, that firmly rejected the Executive Committee's criticisms of the USPD and its leadership as based on "insufficient knowledge" or "malicious distortion." The four delegates agreed to set aside their differences while in Moscow and take a united stand in defense of the Central Committee letter, the USPD program, and its organizational principles.

Gag rule reversed

Continued from Page 2

for women's rights.

Wattleton pointed out that numerous state restrictions come down the hardest on working-class and young women.

"How can a judge reason that it is not an 'undue burden' for a terrified and pregnant 15-year-old to either face an abusive parent or face a judge in an open court?" she asked, referring to laws requiring young women to notify their parents or a judge prior to having an abortion.

"How can a judge reason," she said in her statement, "that it is not an 'undue burden' for a poor mother who lives in a rural area to afford the expense of traveling 50 miles to the nearest family planning clinic for an abortion only to be told there is a 24-hour waiting period and she must make the arduous trip again the next day?"

The facts brought out in these press statements help demonstrate the high stakes in this question for the labor movement. But the reason behind the apparently contradictory tactics advanced by the three organizations lies in their pessimistic assessment of the possibilities of mobilizing massive opposition to the antiabortion drive and their confidence that capitalist state institutions and politicians will, in the end, save the day.

'Whims of majority'

"The Court is increasingly willing to defer to the whims of the majority," ACLU president Strossen said, "rather than fulfill its time-honored tradition of protecting the rights of the individual against the tyranny of the majority."

Aside from her highfalutin and anti-working-class attitude, Strossen's remarks fly in the face of poll after poll showing majority support for abortion rights.

Wattleton came at the same point from a different angle when she referred to Initiative 120, a measure that was on the ballot in Washington State's November 5 elections. It would protect a woman's right to abortion and access to contraceptives. The vote was so close that whether the initiative passed or failed is still uncertain. The vote totals reveal "that the deceptive tactics of antiabortion forces can confuse enough pro-choice voters to threaten the outcome of a pro-choice state initiative," Wattleton said.

To counter the "inevitable" decision by the court, said NARAL leader Michelman, "We must elect a pro-choice President or a veto-proof pro-choice Congress. We must elect pro-choice officials at every level of government." Her solution was echoed by the other organizations.

Estelle DeBates, national cochairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance, said in an interview that "mounting a fight against each and every attempt to roll back abortion rights is essential in order to defend *Roe v. Wade* and lay the basis for reconquering ground lost since the historic 1973 decision."

Pro-choice actions show way forward

DeBates has been involved in recent protests defending abortion rights in Wichita, Kansas; Boston; and New York. She pointed to the numbers of youth and working people who have turned out in these cities to defend a woman's right to choose abortion. This is the only road forward in the fight, she explained.

"Relying on Congress, the courts, or so-called 'pro-choice' legislators to defend our fundamental rights is a road to disaster," she said. "The right to have an abortion has not been lost and it is possible today to build the kind of mobilizations needed to counter government and right-wing assaults on women's rights."

"Arguing that either *Roe v. Wade* will be or has already been overturned can only help disorient those who do want to wage a battle today in defense of this right," the YSA leader said. "It gets off the political axis that has been needed for over a decade: to fight against each and every attempt to curtail working women's access to abortion as it comes up — state by state, city by city, and in the country as a whole."

DeBates urged the labor movement to join in building protests, rallies, educational events, and marches that can both answer antiabortion propaganda and raise the stakes that the ruling class must consider as it presses its assault.

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Celebrate the 74th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: Prospects for Communism Today. Speaker: Don Davis, Socialist Workers Party, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A. Sat., Nov. 23, 7 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

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The Russian Revolution — 74 Years Later — What Are the Prospects for Communism. Speaker: John Harris, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers Local 1596. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

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Open House. Video: *When I Think of Che*. Discussion led by Roni McCann, national secretary, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

David Duke and U.S. Politics Today. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C South Elm-Eugene St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Free Mark Curtis! Video: *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* followed by discussion. Sat., Nov. 23, 7 p.m. Rm. 423, Tangeman University Center, University of Cincinnati. Tel: (513) 221-2691 or 351-0015

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Cuba Today — Eyewitness Report and Slideshow. Speaker: John Langford, member United Steelworkers of America Local 8319. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

Sanctions begin against Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

ual republics.

The principal victims of the sanctions will be the working people of Yugoslavia, already suffering under a drastic economic decline. "The civilian population will carry the burden of these measures," commented Belgrade University economics lecturer Ljubomir Madzar.

The civil war, promoted by rival bureaucratic regimes in the republics of Serbia and Croatia to maximize their control over Yugoslavia's resources, continues to rage on. Yugoslav army forces have launched heavy assaults on the towns of Dubrovnik and Vukovar in Croatia. Vukovar, a predominantly Croat-populated town, has been reduced to near rubble by three months of bombardment. Some 11,000 adults and 2,000 children remain trapped there.

Croatian military advances in the Serb-populated region of Croatia near Vukovar have caused 20,000 Serbs to flee their villages. Since the fighting escalated in June, between 2,000 and 5,000 people have been killed, and 350,000 in Croatia have become refugees.

Inside Serbia, voices of opposition to the war are growing louder. Leaders of parties in opposition to the government of Slobodan Milosevic have accused the regime of "land

BRITAIN

London

The Russian Revolution: Its Accomplishments and Lessons for Working People Today. Speaker: Pete Holbourne, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Tel: 71-928-7993.

Manchester

The Middle East Talks and the Fight for Palestinian Rights. Speaker: John Barton, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 23, 7 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

Sheffield

The Russian Revolution: Its Accomplishments and Lessons for Working People Today. Speaker: Communist League. Sat., Nov. 23, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Vancouver

What Lies Behind NDP Wins in British Columbia, Saskatchewan Elections. Speaker: Margaret Manwaring, Communist League. Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Crisis in the Middle East: What Road Forward for the Palestinian People? Speaker: Maria Hamberg, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 23, 3 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St. Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

grabbing" in its military offensives and have openly called on Serbian troops to desert.

Antiwar protests have also occurred on the streets of Belgrade. At the first such protest, joined by 2000 people October 5, marchers chanted, "I don't want, I don't want, to march against my comrade, to march against my people." Petitions circulated among the demonstrators demanded a halt to the destruction of the Croatian port city of Dubrovnik and called for civilian control over the army.

Many among the crowd recalled their first demonstration, 25 years earlier, reported the Paris daily *Libération* October 7: "At that time they demonstrated for Vietnam." Those present vowed to demonstrate against the war every evening at 7 p.m. Playwright Slobodan Klajic explained, "The silent minority [against the war] can become a silent majority."

Libération also reported an incident in which 2,000 youths from the town of Valjevo who had been called up for the army returned home. Throwing aside their weapons they said, "This war is not our fight."

In the nearby town of Bogatic, peasants gathered outside the town hall shouting that they would not send their children to the slaughter. "Let those who got us into this situation go and get killed," they said.

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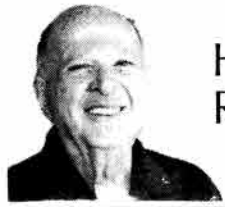
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SWEDEN

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

How open can you get? — The Reagan library has opened up 6 million of the 47 million pages in its archives. Of these, 4.8 million are



Harry Ring

unsolicited letters and White House responses. Members of the public can request to read them. Requests are subject to a 30-day review by the Bush administration.

Written on onionskin? — Some of the memos from presiden-

tial aides are available at the Reagan library. These include the celebrated, albeit short-lived, declaration of policy which, for school lunch purposes, defined ketchup as a vegetable.

Supports sincere ones — On the eve of the Louisiana elections, President Bush said David Duke was an "insincere charlatan."

Explosive issue — "It's almost like allowing them to subscribe to magazines on how to make homemade bombs." — A representative of Canada's prison guard "union" on a government decision to distribute condoms to federal prisoners.

Good idea — Canadian uranium miners suffer an abnormally high lung cancer rate. An industry spokesman explained that the uranium deposits are extremely rich and, therefore, highly radioactive. Responding to a government proposal for new limits on radiation exposure, another industry official said that if new limits were imposed, they might have to shut down.

"And so on" — Murderous brutality by the South African national police force has become so rampant that a police general has been assigned to take a look. The general explains that "zealous" questioning is a problem for cops everywhere. "Sometimes you know the person is

guilty," he said. "You just ask them questions, give them a few slaps and so on, and then you've assaulted them."

"And so on" (II) — The headline read: "PERU: Fear of police rises as force steps up criminal activities." A resident of Lima, whose daughter was shot to death in a cop hold-up, declared: "The only emotion a policeman here inspires is terror."

They're on the case — The head of a Peruvian parliamentary commission on violence said the police department has to be totally transformed. Such reorganization was already announced last July when drunken cops shot down a commer-

cial plane, killing 17 passengers.

Knees knocking at top — In a recent survey, 45 percent of executives polled said their biggest fear was losing a job due to a merger or takeover. This was down from 54 percent in a 1989 survey. Meanwhile, the number of execs who simply fear "being fired" jumped from 6 to 22 percent.

Thought for the week — "We should probably change the name of the national cancer program to the National Cancer Savings and Loan Program. That would make us eligible for billions of dollars in bailout funds." — David Korn, chairman, National Cancer Advisory Board.

Does Pathfinder seek to monopolize Malcolm X?

Continued from Page 6

mer. I don't know how it gets there. But if you put the right things in it, what you put in it will see that it gets around."

In addition, the Militant Labor Forum — a weekly meeting for political discussion organized by supporters of the *Militant* newspaper — provided a platform for Malcolm X. Malcolm spoke at Militant Labor Forums in April and May 1964 and again in January 1965.

Seeking a 'monopoly'?

Pathfinder Press is the particular target of attack in the open letter. In addition to the charge that Pathfinder seeks a monopoly on Malcolm X's political legacy, it accuses Pathfinder of "'franchising' Maurice Bishop and the Grenada Revolution, Thomas Sankara and the Burkinabe Revolution, Nelson Mandela and the South African Revolution, and all aspects of the Cuban Revolution."

In the publisher's foreword to *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, Steve Clark, editorial director for Pathfinder, explains where the works of Malcolm X fit into Pathfinder's collection of revolutionary works:

"Having long been an uncompromising fighter for Black rights and foe of Washington's imperialist policies abroad, Malcolm X went through a rapid political evolution to carefully thought-out anticapitalist and, then, prosocialist positions during the last year of his life. That process was cut short by his brutal assassination on February 21, 1965.

"This political evolution," Clark writes, "places the works of Malcolm X on Pathfinder's list of published writings and speeches alongside those of Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Maurice Bishop, Nelson Mandela, Thomas Sankara, and Carlos Fonseca.

"These leaders, too, each in their own particular way, traveled the road through hard-fought national liberation struggles to broader internationalist perspectives and revolutionary action. In doing so, they led millions of workers and farmers in changing the world."

Clark describes Malcolm X as the out-

standing representative of this pattern of the world revolution since World War II who emerged from the working class in the United States."

Following Malcolm's assassination, Pathfinder, then called Merit Books, contacted Betty Shabazz — his widow and heir to his estate — about the possibility of beginning a project to print Malcolm's speeches. Ever since, Shabazz and Pathfinder have collaborated to preserve Malcolm's literary legacy, publishing an accurate record of his interviews, writings, talks, and rally speeches.

In 1965 the first two pamphlets were produced: *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*, and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. Then came the books *Malcolm X Speaks* (1965), *Malcolm X on Afro-American History* (1967), *By Any Means Necessary* (1970), *Habla Malcolm X* in Spanish (1984), *The Last Speeches* (1989), and an expanded book edition of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* (1991).

Since 1986 over 250,000 copies of these books have been produced and distributed. Based on these efforts, Pathfinder is now working on a multi-volume edition of the collected works of Malcolm X. The first volume, covering February 1965, is due out next year.

In an interview Clark said, "preserving and making available the literary legacy of Malcolm X in this way provides young people and all who want to learn about Malcolm and emulate his example with the best record possible — Malcolm's own words."

The authors of the committee's letter say "Pathfinder Press is attempting to legitimize Bruce Perry." They seek to link Pathfinder with the views presented by Perry in his recently published book *Malcolm X: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America*. The book is published by Station Hill.

Pathfinder is the publisher of the 1989 book *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, which contains several speeches by Malcolm that Perry obtained in researching his own book.

As Clark explains in the publishers' foreword to *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, Pathfinder welcomed the opportunity to publish these speeches and interviews by Malcolm. It had previously not been able to obtain tape recordings of most of them. The new speeches make a substantial contribution to the knowledge of his political evolution during the last few months of his life.

Pathfinder, however, takes no responsibility for the political views of Perry or others with whom it has signed contracts to publish collections of writings by revolutionary figures. What readers will find in *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* are Malcolm's words, not the views of Bruce Perry about Malcolm. Moreover, as Perry himself notes in his brief introduction to the collection of Malcolm's speeches:

"Pathfinder Press has its political views and I have mine, which differ substantially. Pathfinder's political assessment of Malcolm is also different than mine. But one thing we do agree about is that Malcolm's views should be heard."

Referring to the dispute over *Malcolm X for Beginners*, the committee's letter decries the "use of bourgeois/racist law to crush our progressive use of Brother Malcolm's words." The legal action to protect the copy-

right on Malcolm's works, the letter said, is "designed to subvert our right to FREE SPEECH and to undermine our collective obligation to preserve, propagate and uplift his legacy."

Clark explained in the interview that, contrary to this charge, Pathfinder has never had the goal of preventing the publication of *Malcolm X for Beginners* or denying the author and publisher the use of extensive citations from Malcolm's works. Pathfinder, he said, does not attempt to prevent anyone from reproducing Malcolm's work as long as it is done under copyright arrangements with Shabazz and Pathfinder and in a way that preserves the revolutionary's literary legacy.

Literally hundreds of books and newspaper articles as well as television programs have used parts of — or whole — speeches by Malcolm X with such permission.

Malcolm X's words have been published in several other languages as a result of such agreements. This includes editions of *Malcolm X Speaks* in German, French, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, and Danish; *Malcolm X on Afro-American History* in Italian; and *By Any Means Necessary* in Japanese and Italian.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the interests of the Working People

November 28, 1966 Price 10c

Declarations of opposition to being drafted for service in the U.S. armed forces and being sent to Vietnam are piling up in Puerto Rico.

The Oct. 30 issue of *Claridad*, the weekly publication of the Movement for Puerto Rican Independence, listed the names of more than 600 who have signed a statement that they will not serve in the "armed forces of the United States under any circumstances."

Through this action, the statement said, the signers expressed their repudiation of "the tyrannical law of compulsory military service, which, as part of the colonial subjugation of our country, North American imperialism imposes on Puerto Rican youth.

"We affirm in addition," continues the statement, "our solidarity with and support for the heroic struggle which the National Liberation Front of south Vietnam is waging for national independence, neutrality, peace and national sovereignty.

"As evidence of our determination, we are ready to face all the consequences, sustained by the knowledge that our stand is completely principled and morally justified."

Claridad reports that many others are adding their signatures.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

November 29, 1941

During the last three days James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party and one of the 23 defendants in the "sedition" trial, has been on the stand

as the first defense witness. He had gone on the stand, presumably, as a defendant on a criminal charge — plotting to overthrow the government by force and violence. But not for a moment was Jim Cannon on the defensive. From the first he took the offensive, his testimony constituting a detailed indictment of the decaying capitalist system which resorts to war and fascism and to such frame-ups as this prosecution.

The central charge in the indictment, from which all the other charges flow as corollaries, is that "the said defendants and their co-conspirators would, and they did, accept as the ideal formula for the carrying out of their said objectives the Russian Revolution of 1917, whereby the then existing Government of Russia was overthrown by force and violence..."

Cannon's answer to this fundamental charge was completely conclusive. Yes, he declared, those defendants who are members of the Socialist Workers Party proclaim that the Russian Revolution is the greatest event in history: it is the great example for the working class in every capitalist country of the way out of capitalism toward socialism. But the government is lying when it says that the Russian Revolution was accomplished by force and violence on the part of the working class.

He gave a chronology of the main events in Russia in 1917 from the fall of the Czar in March to the establishment of the Soviet government on November 7, 1917. Those indisputable facts established that, with the collapse of Czarism, all the labor and peasant parties and organizations united to set up the Soviets; that the Soviets were from the first the most authoritative body in Russia.

The Soviet government was legally established by the authority of the overwhelming majority of the people, and the violence came, not from the workers and peasants, but from the reactionary, outlived minority which refused to abide by the decision of the majority.

Books by

Malcolm X

Malcolm X Talks to Young People
A new collection
110 pages, \$9.95.

Malcolm X: The Last Speeches
Six speeches and interviews from the last two years of Malcolm X's life.
189 pages, \$15.95.

Two Speeches by Malcolm X
47 pages, \$2.50.

Visit bookstores on page 12 or write Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014. Please include \$3 shipping for first copy, 50 cents each additional copy.



A fighting program for workers

The November 15 plunge in the stock market followed a string of announcements indicating serious economic problems: retail sales are down, average earnings fell in the previous period, while the number of people applying for unemployment rose and auto sales declined.

The news is particularly bad for working people. One out of every 10 people living in the United States now relies on food stamps to put food on the table. This meager allowance is a mere 65 cents per meal for a person eating three meals a day.

Families with young children now make up at least one third of all workers who are homeless.

The relentless employer offensive against the standard of living and union organization begun during the 1974-75 recession has driven many working people one paycheck away from being able to provide for themselves or their families. Those hardest hit are Black, Latino, and immigrant workers.

The employers continue their drive to make working people pay for the crisis of their system, capitalism. But in the face of this onslaught the trade union officialdom holds out to workers as the solution identifying with what is good for "our" industry, and "our" company. They echo calls by bourgeois politicians, from liberal Democrats to conservative Republicans, to put "America first."

Instead of this dead-end approach, the labor movement needs to advance a program of demands that unify working people to fight to defend themselves in the face of the economic and social disaster capitalism is preparing. This begins with the most basic needs of working people, which are the same on a worldwide scale as capitalism's crisis hits every country.

Such a program of demands is discussed in the *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, issued

by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee as a response to the October 1987 stock market crash, which signaled the coming world economic and social crisis. The latest economic events sharpen the relevance of this perspective for workers looking for a fighting way forward.

In Africa, Asia, and Latin America millions of peasants are being driven off their land, joining millions of other working people without jobs. By every measure — infant mortality, caloric intake, real wages, deaths from curable diseases, ecological disasters — the human toll in the semi-colonial world resulting from the massive debts governments in these countries owe to the imperialist banks becomes ever more unbearable.

Neither the imperialist powers nor the capitalist regimes in the semicolonial world offer a way out of the debt trap. The labor movement should demand that the debt these countries owe to the imperialist banks be cancelled.

With joblessness rising in the imperialist countries, working people should join together and fight for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay to create jobs and a sliding scale of wages in the face of the ravages of capitalist-caused inflation.

The way capitalism operates breeds competition among working people and reinforces inequalities and divisions which weaken the labor movement's ability to fight back. To help workers struggle more effectively for their common interests, affirmative action is necessary for Blacks, women, and other targets of discrimination. The labor movement must champion the fight for quotas and other steps in hiring, job upgrading, and education.

Combating cuts in government social programs, raising the minimum wage, and fighting for a much needed national health-care system are other important affirmative action measures.

End the U.S. blockade of Cuba

In response to Cuba's exposé at the United Nations of Washington's criminal economic blockade of the island, the U.S. arguments can only be described as feeble. Cuban UN ambassador Ricardo Alarcón presented numerous examples of how the United States uses intimidation to block trade with the island and to prevent governments around the world from speaking out against these actions.

Washington's Cuba blockade is only one aspect of its violations of the sovereignty of countries around the world, such as the invasion of Grenada in 1983, the years-long contra war against the people of Nicaragua, and the war in the Arab-Persian Gulf, to name only some recent examples.

Now, when Cuba brings just one part of this to the attention of the world by requesting an agenda point at the UN General Assembly on the U.S. attempt to strangle Cuba with its embargo, Washington has the nerve to complain that this is "interference in the internal affairs" of the United States!

President George Bush, in his calls for "elections, under international supervision" in Cuba, is pushing for further violations of that country's sovereignty. But Bush and the rest of the defenders of capitalist rule in the United States and around the world are not interested in democracy for working people.

The U.S. Mission to the United Nations let its class hatred show in the November 13 reply to Cuba's charges, which states:

"The Government of Cuba expropriated millions of dollars in private property belonging to U.S. individuals and

has refused to make reasonable restitution."

This certainly gets at the heart of the dispute. The U.S. ruling rich — who owned and controlled land, factories, and other facilities in Cuba for decades, leaving the masses of workers and peasants living in poverty — will never forgive the Cuban people for their "crime": fighting for real economic and political independence, for social justice, for socialism.

The Rockefellers, Mellons, Morgans, Du Ponts, and other ruling families don't want to see a country anywhere on this planet with working people in power, independently involved in politics, and extending their solidarity across the world, much less on the U.S. doorstep. Cuba continues to be an example for working people who want to build a new society that puts human needs before profits.

Washington's hostility to Cuba — almost to the point of a blind rage as shown by its refusal to allow Cuba to obtain even the most basic medicines and medical supplies for children — can backfire.

Some in ruling circles worry about this.

"Cuba is becoming a *cause célèbre* in Latin America," noted the *Christian Science Monitor* November 15. "Popular sympathy for President Fidel Castro's regime is growing."

Washington's weak performance next to Cuba's dignified and convincing arguments at the United Nations shows the opportunities for strengthening opposition to the U.S. harassment of Cuba.

End the U.S. blockade of Cuba!
U.S. out of Guantánamo!

No sanctions against Yugoslavia

Working people have no interest in supporting sanctions being organized against Yugoslavia by the European Community (EC) with the backing of Washington and Ottawa.

The sanctions include cutting off Yugoslavia from a \$1 billion EC aid plan and restricting its commerce with Europe. Yugoslavia's trade with the 12 EC countries amounts to half of its total foreign trade. The European and North American imperialist powers are also moving to organize an oil embargo against Yugoslavia, under cover of the United Nations.

These measures, purportedly to help bring an end to the civil war, will only hurt the people of Serbia, Croatia, and other republics of Yugoslavia. They are a step toward armed imperialist intervention, a step which is foreshadowed by the European Community plan to send so-called peacekeeping forces there.

The civil war is a result of the resource-grabbing efforts of the bureaucratic rulers in the individual republics. They are attempting to either expand or hang on to the borders of their fiefdoms regardless of the wishes of the people living there and the enormous cost of the war in lives and human suffering. The war is the outcome of decades of Stalinist misrule over working people in Yugoslavia.

In an attempt to build support among working people for

their war, these regimes have demagogically appealed to the most narrow nationalism — in Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Through the Yugoslav revolution in the 1940s, many of the divisions promoted by capitalism were swept away as working people forged a broader unity in struggle against their common exploiters, the capitalists and landlords.

Working people in Yugoslavia, who will gain nothing but death and destruction through the civil war, are resisting it in many ways, from widespread refusal to join the fighting to the beginnings of street protests.

The EC governments and Washington are pushing economic sanctions and raising the specter of intervening with military force in an effort to persuade the bureaucratic regimes to rapidly end the conflict. The imperialists fear the instability that the war could produce, including the possibility of workers and peasants taking the road of mass struggle as the only way to end the destruction and carnage, as they did five decades ago.

The labor movement around the world should speak out against these sanctions. The struggles of working people in resistance to this war point the way forward in Yugoslavia.

This column is devoted to a discussion with our readers — printing remarks, questions, suggestions, and other comments sent to the *Militant*. Where possible we will take up issues raised in notes and letters as a way to help clarify and expand on the coverage of the paper.

In this week's letters column Will, a reader from Connecticut, says he believes there is a more effective way to win some "who see a person in the beating hearts and defined features of the fetuses in the antiabortionists' photographs" to support abortion rights.

He deems as insufficient the arguments put forward by Estelle DeBates that a fetus is not a baby, but an embryonic human life, and that a baby can only be a baby when it is born. DeBates said that to be effective in countering claims that a fetus is a baby, defenders of abortion rights need to recognize this difference between a fetus and any other clump of cells making up a human being.

Will, on the other hand, says the important division lies between a fetus and a "person," which he defines as a "conscious identity, derived from a network of interpersonal

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

relationships, ideas, judgments, goals, and autonomous activity in the world." By having an abortion, a woman is not therefore killing a person, he says.

Winning workers and youth to support abortion rights begins at a more fundamental level: understanding why the fight for women's emancipation is a central issue for the labor movement.

Working people cannot muster the allied forces necessary to successfully do battle with the employers and their system without fighting to mobilize and advance women along the road to economic independence and social equality as an integral part of labor's goals.

Convincing others of the political place of the fight for women's rights opens up the ability to discuss why women's ability to control their own bodies is central to fighting for equality in all aspects of social and political life.

Secondly, Will's arguments head away from recognizing the scientific difference between a fetus and a baby. As DeBates explained, not recognizing this plays into the hands of the right wing precisely because it leads to lines of reasoning such as Will advances.

A newborn baby certainly doesn't have goals, a web of relationships, values, and the like. Does that mean it shouldn't be protected from abuse, and nurtured by whatever means society has available? Should it be seen like a fetus — a completely dependent mass of cells, not viable outside the womb, but one that is a potential human life?

Opponents of abortion rights most often argue that a fetus is a human being whose rights must be defended against self-serving and self-interested women. Raising the stakes to say it is not a "person" only leads to claims that defenders of abortion rights are for killing newborn babies and cuts across the important distinction explained by DeBates.

Tim, a reader from New York, writes that he disagrees with aspects of the *Militant's* coverage of the David Duke campaign in Louisiana. "Duke is not an ordinary bourgeois politician," Tim writes. "He has a past that is well-known, and I see little reason to believe that he has renounced it."

"What concerns sections of the ruling class and should concern working people is the possibility that Duke is still a neo-Nazi," he says. "This is not to say that I think Duke is at the head of an incipient fascist movement... but his past can't be ignored."

The November 8 articles by Estelle DeBates and the one by Greg McCartan this week both explain how Duke has publicly renounced his past ties and activity with the Ku Klux Klan and give examples of the kind of political perspectives raised in the campaign.

The central points Duke hammers away at are views held by the conservative wing of the Republican Party and by many in the right wing of the Democratic Party.

Both articles highlight how Duke wins a hearing for his right-wing proposals among a layer of the working class — both privileged and some more ground-down workers — and middle-class layers terrified by the economic crisis.

Duke is different from many conservative capitalist politicians because he poses as a "little man" championing the interests of other "little men" against the interests of "big government." To win a hearing he relies on demagoguery, that is, making promises based on the fears, bigotry, racist attitudes, insecurity, and other backward ideas of these social layers. His campaign does reflect how far to the right capitalist politics has shifted. As Tim points out, the fact that his campaign did not win the backing of any major section of the capitalist class shows that they do not think implementing his proposals is the best way to advance their assault on the working class today.

Certainly many working people reacted with disgust at Duke's anti-working-class and racist proposals and explanations of the root cause of the economic crisis.

The *Militant*, however, refused to back the Democratic Party candidate, unlike many so-called socialists who did so openly or backhandedly. We pointed out the incapacity of the liberals to effectively answer Duke or propose any solution to relieve the impact of the economic crisis, which Duke uses as grist for his mill.

We explain that only the labor movement can effectively fight against the threat that Duke's ideas pose, and point to the need to chart an independent working-class political course in opposition to both parties of big business.

USAir demands \$400 million concession package

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes over speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, and attacks on health and safety benefits. Some unionists faced with sharp takeback demands, lockouts, and union-busting moves by the employers have gone on strike to force the bosses to back down.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way

and caterers, voted down representation by the Teamsters, leaving this section of the work force without a union. Currently, both the AFA and the IAM are working under expired contracts.

During the system-wide meetings, workers expressed a range of responses to the concession proposals. Some nonunion employees said the company's problems originated in the higher pay of unionized workers and restrictions on job combinations. For example, only unionized workers could push back airplanes from the gates, they said. Others asked why employees should pay

Canadian Airlines International (CAI) have voted to accept a wage freeze in 1992.

Sixty-six percent of those voting accepted a September 30 "letter of understanding" signed by union officials and CAI management. Thousands of the IAM's 7,000 members at Canadian did not participate in the vote. CAI employs about 16,000 workers and is Canada's second-largest airline.

The Canadian Air Line Pilots Association has agreed to the freeze, as has the Canadian Air Line Dispatchers Association. The freeze will go into effect if flight attendants and ticket agents, organized in the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), agree to forgo their scheduled 4 and 5 percent increases for 1992.

In a letter to members, IAM District Lodge 721 leaders argued that the freeze was necessary to make the company "more viable." A few weeks earlier CAI bosses had announced 1,300 layoffs by the end of 1991 as part of a \$23 million "cost-cutting" program.

IAM national leaders also said they wanted the membership's agreement on the wage freeze now in order to put pressure on the memberships of CUPE and CAW to accept a 1992 wage freeze.

The IAM officials admitted that accepting the freeze would not stop layoffs. They stated that they had seen the company books and agreed with CAI management that the company is "overstaffed."

These officials say concessions are necessary to enable the company to compete with U.S. airlines if a new "open skies" treaty, now being negotiated between the U.S. and Canadian governments, is implemented.

Since 1985 the real wages of airline workers have dropped 4.2 percent. Layoffs at Air Canada will total 4,000 by the end of the year. In the first six months of this year Air Canada and PWA Corp. — CAI's parent company — lost a combined \$229.5 million.

At this point neither the CAW nor

CUPE has accepted the demands for a wage freeze.

Glass workers strike over wages, health insurance

After nine years without a pay raise and steadily increasing premiums for medical insurance, 72 workers at Beaumont Glass in Morgantown, West Virginia, walked off their jobs September 21.

Striker Ferrel Jones explained that for three years the company had been threatening to shut down. "The last time the company said this to us, I told them to just give me the hammer and nails." Beaumont is Morgantown's sole surviving glass manufacturer.

Beaumont glass workers are members of the American Flint Glass Workers Union locals 536 and 95. Wages range from \$6.41 to \$8.28 per hour. Strikers point out that they rarely work 40 hours per week. Yet every two weeks the company takes \$128 out of their pay check for medical insurance.

The union members have been working without a contract for two years. Paul Myers, a representative of the Glass Workers Union, said workers pay \$1,950-\$3,200 a year for the insurance program while the company contributes 40 cents per man-hour worked. On October 7, Beaumont offered to increase its contribution by 10 cents per hour.

Myers said, "We've been told there will be another increase in our insurance rates. It could be as much as 100 percent. If it goes up that much, some of our people could be paying \$6,000 a year for health benefits. Ten cents an hour won't help." Isa Metheny, president of Local 536, called the offer "a slap in the face."

Union members have shown a determination to see the strike through to the end. "We'd be better off if they just shut down rather than accept things the way they have been," one striker said.

Louisville garment workers fight to win contract

Sixty garment workers and their supporters braved near-freezing

temperatures and snow flurries November 2 to show support for Louisville Manufacturing workers trying to gain a contract.

Workers at Louisville Manufacturing voted in December 1989 to be represented by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). Since then there have been 39 bargaining sessions but the company has refused to budge on the question of wages or health benefits.

The low wages and a family health plan that costs workers \$59.30 a week were the main issues that led to the original union organizing drive. Another major issue is carpal tunnel syndrome and other work-related injuries that average 10 times higher than in most ACTWU-organized plants.

The occasion of the march was the Breeder's Cup horse race. Louisville Manufacturing's owner, Mickey Heideman, will gain from \$750,000 to \$1 million from sales of souvenirs at the race. Many of the workers bring home \$164 a week.

A broad coalition of forces has come together to support the garment workers. Members of the Nurses Professional Organization, Coalition of Labor Union Women, and Citizens' Action spoke at the rally. Steve Mathis, representing the National Organization for Women, said, "Louisville Manufacturing puts a new twist on the meaning of violence against women." Brenda Holstein, who works at the plant, also spoke.

ACTWU organizer Joe Buonadonna, a former Eastern Airlines pilot who refused to cross the picket line during the Eastern strike, said support for the workers is broad and that more public activity and outreach is planned. Holstein commented, "We've stuck with it for two years and we're getting stronger. I know we're going to win!"

Edwin Fruit in Baltimore; John Steele in Toronto; Bernie Senter in Morgantown, West Virginia; and Bronson Rozier in Louisville, Kentucky, contributed to this week's column.

ON THE PICKET LINE

for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

In a series of employee meetings held around the country, USAir Group, Inc., the nation's sixth largest airline, has proposed a \$400 million program of wage and benefit concessions.

USAir, which has been losing money since 1989, claims that the measures are necessary to return the company to profitability. The proposed concessions, including pay cuts, a freeze on raises, increased employee payments for medical benefits and a freeze on pension contributions by the company, would be in effect for 15 months.

Only half of USAir's 45,000 employees are represented by unions, which include the Air Line Pilots Association, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), and the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which represents mechanics, cleaners, and stock clerks. Earlier this year the fleet service, made up of baggage handlers

for management mistakes or why the company had 47 vice-presidents.

Workers asked if they would get any guarantees against layoffs and how real was the 15-month freeze period, but got no answer.

Some workers, not having gone through the experience of concessions, were "willing to give the company a chance." In informal discussions some said, "I'll take a cut if it will save my job."

One nonunion baggage handler explained that she was a single mother already having a hard time making ends meet and that she was seriously rethinking whether she needed a union.

A company representative stated that if the unions only agreed to a 4 percent reduction the nonunion workers would still take a 10 percent cut.

One flight attendant, a former Braniff worker, said that the whole plan was a scam. She explained that once workers gave any concessions the company would keep asking for more and more, and that employee sacrifices by workers would never "save" the company.

Canadian Airlines workers vote for wage freeze

Members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at

body, but rather a conscious identity derived from a network of interpersonal relationships, ideas, judgments, goals, and autonomous activity in the world. A fetus has none of these fundamental traits of personhood, and thus is no "person." This is what we mean when we say a fetus is not a person, and therefore cannot be murdered. Each woman's decision whether to have an abortion thus concerns only one person — the mother — and the right to control her own life and body are the only actually existing interests at stake.

Once the myth of abortion as murder is dispelled, the real stakes of the abortion rights fight become more obvious.

Will Wilkin
Willimantic, Connecticut

Pentagon secrecy

Within a matter of hours, at no cost, the United States government could improve the navigation of ships on a worldwide basis. By enabling the crews of ships to more accurately know the position of the ship it would make the operation of the ships safer and reduce the chance for environmental disasters.

The U.S. military is spending \$10 billion to install its Global Positioning System (GPS). Currently the GPS system has 16 satellites with 5 more planned. The satellites send out radio signals that can be picked up with a hand-held receiver that operates with batteries. The receiver is about the size of a book and is



easy to operate. In a few minutes, with the information from four satellites the receiver can calculate the position of the unit anywhere on earth to within 10 meters (33 feet). The ground unit costs about \$5,000 and the price is rapidly falling.

The Pentagon has decided that the system is too good for humanity. They claim that it is a question of national security. In order to monopolize this technology they deliberately send out a poor quality signal. With the degraded signal, GPS is only accurate to within 100 meters (330 feet). This feature can be switched on and off by sending a signal to the satellites. Many aspects of the GPS remain classified.

GPS is an example of how the U.S. military is an obstacle to putting modern technologies to work to improve the living and working conditions of workers and farmers throughout the world. Communists

have traditionally demanded an end to the secrecy that capitalists use to hide the inner workings of society. Demanding that all available technologies be made available to help humanity is an appropriate demand for today.

Ron Richards
Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico

Thanks for responding

Thank you for your response to my question about Cuba (in the October 18 *Militant*). It was a question and not a statement of disagreement. I have never held that a hardened bureaucratic caste had emerged in Cuba.

But sometimes your comments have seemed too lyrical without frank acknowledgement of contemporary problems or the very incomplete state of socialist democratization in Cuba. As you thought, Mary-

Alice Waters' article did clarify the issue for me — though necessarily in very general terms. Keep up the good work.

Bill Stanley
Largo, Florida

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.

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

LETTERS

Abortion debate

Antiabortion forces — some sincerely, others as a cover for a larger anti-working-class agenda — justify their campaigns with the argument that abortion is murder. Pro-choice forces, not fooled by this lie, strive to explain the real issues at stake: a woman's quality of life and equality in society fundamentally require that she have control over her own body and the course of her life. Further, we understand that this right is not simply a woman's issue, since overcoming sexual and racial inequalities is the only way to unite our class against the attacks on our standard of living and democratic rights by the employers and their government.

Not enough has been said in the *Militant* to refute the murder argument. In the "As I See It" column by Estelle DeBates in the September 27 *Militant*, we read "There is no such thing as an unborn baby; to be a baby you must be born. A fetus is not a baby. . . . [it] is an embryonic human life."

But simply juxtaposing two categories (fetus and baby) is not in itself a strong enough argument to win those workers who see a person in the beating hearts and defined features of the fetuses in the antiabortionists' photographs.

When discussing the need for abortion rights with such workers, we must challenge them to think concretely about what really constitutes a person. A person is not simply a developing or functioning physical

Bombing provokes angry response from working people in Nicaragua

BY SETH GALINSKY

Social tensions in Nicaragua have reached a high point in recent weeks. Striking workers, members of the pro-Sandinista National Workers Federation (FNT), occupied five sugar refineries around the country to press their demands. Members of progovernment unions actively opposed the strike, which ended November 14.

In the early morning of November 9, unknown assailants set off a bomb in Managua at the tomb of Carlos Fonseca, founder of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). The bomb destroyed the monument, provoking an angry reaction from FSLN supporters.

The attack on Fonseca's tomb took place hours after a demonstration commemorating the 15th anniversary of the FSLN leader's death. The Sandinista Front led the revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in 1979 and brought workers and peasants to power.

Hundreds of thousands of peasants received land during the course of the revolution, after expropriations of Somoza-owned properties and many other farms and factories. Unions, which had been violently repressed under the dictatorship, grew rapidly, winning new benefits for workers.

The present government headed by President Violeta Chamorro, which defeated the FSLN in the February 1990 elections, has sought to reverse the gains of the revolution. Economic and social conditions in Nicaragua — which had deteriorated during the last years of the FSLN-led government as more and more of the burden of the capitalist economic crisis was placed on working people — took a further nosedive under the Chamorro regime.

In a series of phone interviews November 13 and 14, union leaders in Nicaragua described the present situation.

Unemployment exceeds 50 percent

"More than 50 percent of textile and garment workers have been laid off over the last year," said Carlos Borge, secretary general



Nicaraguan workers strike at Corona cooking oil factory in 1990. Sign reads: "They are denying us food and wages. They have pushed us to strike."

of the federation of textile workers, an FNT affiliate. Several factories have been closed.

"Overall unemployment is more than 50 percent," noted Dámaso Vargas, FSLN deputy to the National Assembly and a leader of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST). "Illiteracy and malnutrition are on the rise. It is the working class that is suffering the most from the government austerity plan."

"The government just imposed a minimum wage of \$50 a month," Vargas added. "But that is way below the \$175 needed to feed and clothe a family."

The economic crisis has been exacerbated by continuing conflicts in the countryside. While hundreds of thousands of poor peasants

were given land during the revolution, many never benefited from the land reform. As the contra war ended, demand for land increased, both from returning contra soldiers, most of whom were from peasant families, and from soldiers in the Nicaraguan army, which has been reduced in size.

Some National Assembly members of the National Opposition Union (UNO), which backed Chamorro's successful presidential bid, have been encouraging small groups of former contras to once again take up arms. The *recontras* are demanding land and government aid for former mercenaries and the removal of FSLN officials from the army and police. They also call for replacing government ministers

they view as too sympathetic to collaboration with the FSLN.

The army has avoided direct confrontations with the *recontras*. Retired members of the army and the interior ministry have formed the *recompas*. (*Compa* is short for *compañero*, or comrade, the term used commonly for supporters of the Sandinista revolution.) According to Salvador Ramírez, a leader of the Association of Rural Workers, the *recompas* were formed "to protect towns and farms from *recontra* attacks."

Recently, the army formed a commission made up of both *recontras* and *recompas*, to disarm both sides in the northern part of the country.

Government violates agreement

The strikes at the sugar refineries began October 28, when the FNT charged that the government had begun returning state-owned refineries to private owners in violation of an August agreement negotiated between the government, employers, and the unions. Some farms were also occupied by farm workers.

Under that accord, the unions agreed to the privatization of many state-owned farms and factories in return for 25 percent ownership of stock and guarantees of a share of the profits.

The work force at the refineries has long been divided between supporters of FNT unions and anti-FSLN unions.

At one refinery in the north central part of the country, anti-FSLN unionists backed by former members of the *contras* failed in an attempt to eject the strikers. One *recontra* commander was killed in the attempt. According to press reports both sides were armed.

Health workers in Managua, meanwhile, were also putting forward their demands for higher wages. After the Minister of Labor refused to meet with them, doctors and nurses occupied the ministry. "The police came and evicted them, using tear gas," said Mario Malespín, head of the Federation of Telecommunications Workers. "They even burst into nearby homes to beat demonstrators who had hidden there after the police attack."

In the midst of the strikes, the whole national directorate of the FSLN met with Chamorro's cabinet. After two days of discussions, Chamorro's chief minister announced November 5 that the FSLN had agreed to withdraw from the factories and other occupied buildings.

FSLN leader Daniel Ortega called for all sides to renounce violence and to solve problems through dialogue. His statement was widely interpreted by FNT officials as a call to end the strikes.

"Daniel Ortega has the right to issue appeals to workers or anyone else, even to Martians, but our position is not negotiable," said Gustavo Porras, an FNT leader and head of the health workers' union, at a press conference the next day.

After the November 9 bombing of Fonseca's tomb, outraged demonstrators in Managua, in many cases led by army veterans, burned down the mayor's office, destroyed two right-wing radio stations, and commandeered dozens of city vehicles, which they later set on fire.

Police, most of whom were trained during the FSLN government, stood by all day without trying to stop the actions.

The sugar workers' strike was settled November 14. According to CST leader Vargas, the government agreed to honor its commitment of granting 25 percent of stock ownership to the sugar workers and to negotiate wages refinery by refinery.

In the face of austerity plans and attempts to limit the rights of working people, "the FNT is for continuing the dialogue with the government," Vargas said.

Cuban student leaders on U.S. tour explain fight to defend their country's revolution

BY JOHN COX

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Cuba will continue to defend its right to self-determination. We don't want this right infringed on by any country," said Randy Falcón, one of a group of five Cuban students touring the United States this month. He was speaking here at a November 6 meeting at American University.

The five students, members of the Federation of University Students (FEU) of Cuba, are being toured by the United States Student Association (USSA).

The meeting was attended by 65 people, mostly students. In his talk, Falcón emphasized the economic blockade that Washington has imposed on Cuba for the last three decades. "Bush hopes the blockade will bring the downfall" of Cuba's revolutionary government, Falcón noted, adding that "the real victims are the Cuban people." He pointed out that the blockade is so thorough that "even a bottle of aspirin" from the United States can't get through.

Falcón discussed other examples of the U.S. government's hostile policy toward Cuba, citing the maintenance of a naval base at Guantánamo "that the Cuban people do not want" on Cuban territory, and recent naval exercises off the coast of Cuba.

Several students, including two Cuban-

Americans who were opposed to the revolution, spoke during the discussion period. One student asked about the current economic problems in Cuba, stating that these problems indicate the revolution will not survive. Tania Ramos, one of the Cuban students on the delegation, answered that while Cubans "do not have the highest standard of living, everyone has the necessities. What we have is spread around in an egalitarian manner," which she contrasted to the situation in the United States. Falcón added that "Cuba may not have the material wealth" of the United States or other advanced industrialized nations, but that "we have a different focus on how we use our resources. We emphasize bettering ourselves as humans rather than the trivial pleasures of a materialist, consumer society."

A Cuban-American in the audience stated that "the only way you can go to a university in Cuba is if you're a communist." While mentioning that he had not been to Cuba since 1967, he also charged that the increased rationing of food in Cuba will exacerbate the "injustice" of Cuban society.

Falcón pointed out that prior to the revolution there were "only three universities, and now there are 75. Before the revolution, most Cubans couldn't even get a primary education." He also explained that

there are no political criteria determining who can receive a university education.

Ramos responded to the charge that Cuban society is unjust saying, "In Cuba, we have free education for all, women are guaranteed job protection and paid maternity leave, and there is no racial discrimination. This is injustice?"

Another student said he was "always disturbed" by the fact that Cuba sent troops to Angola. He saw this as an "irresponsible use of scarce resources." One of the Cuban students, Enrique Martínez, replied that "Cuba is very proud of helping others who are in need even when we're in need ourselves." He explained that Cuba did not send troops to Angola following the South African invasion in 1975 in order to "bring back raw materials, but to fight racism and apartheid. All we brought back were the corpses" of the Cuban volunteers who died in the fighting.

Falcón explained that "the Cuban people have been and always will be in solidarity with people struggling to change their society" to the benefit of the majority. He explained that Cubans volunteer as doctors and teachers throughout the Third World. "We'll continue to do so despite the difficulties" Cuba is now experiencing, "because this is the foundation of our philosophy."