

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Che Guevara's views
on transition to socialism

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Strikers halt production of the 'Pittsburgh Press'

BY PAUL MAILHOT

PITTSBURGH — Newspaper workers and their supporters here routed the *Pittsburgh Press* in its attempt to resume publication and break the strike of delivery drivers represented by Teamsters Local 211.

Faced with thousands of union members demonstrating and blocking newspaper delivery trucks and overwhelming support among working people throughout the area for the striking union's fight, the *Press* threw in the towel and decided to suspend publication July 28, after just two days.

"It's a victory for the unions," James Manis, *Press* general manager, admitted to TV reporters. "Let's just say there wasn't much cooperation out there."

The strike against the Pittsburgh Press Co. began May 17 after the company demanded implementation of a streamlined delivery system that would eliminate 450 of 605 Teamsters drivers' jobs. It would also abolish the jobs of some 4,500 youth newspaper deliverers in favor of fewer adult carriers with much bigger routes. Neither the *Press* nor the *Post-Gazette*, a morning newspaper that is printed and distributed by the Press Company under a joint operating agreement, had published

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'Pittsburgh Press' strikers face cop line; delivery trucks are at rear. Police failed to clear path for trucks to leave. Company stopped production the next day.

Sarajevo: victim of a one-sided murderous onslaught

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — The hills on the north end of this town, surrounded by the mountainous Trebevic national park, look lush under the afternoon sun. But the sense of beautiful scenery disappears within

EYEWITNESS REPORT

seconds as the driver races to avoid constant sniper fire toward the edge of the city. Most of the houses have been destroyed.

Near the top of the hill we are less than half a mile away from the front line where Bosnian fighters face Radovan Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party forces.

Ramiz Beshlija is a shepherd whose house is last before the forest begins. Artillery shells have already wiped out most of his sheep. The front of his house facing a

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George Novack, 1905-1992

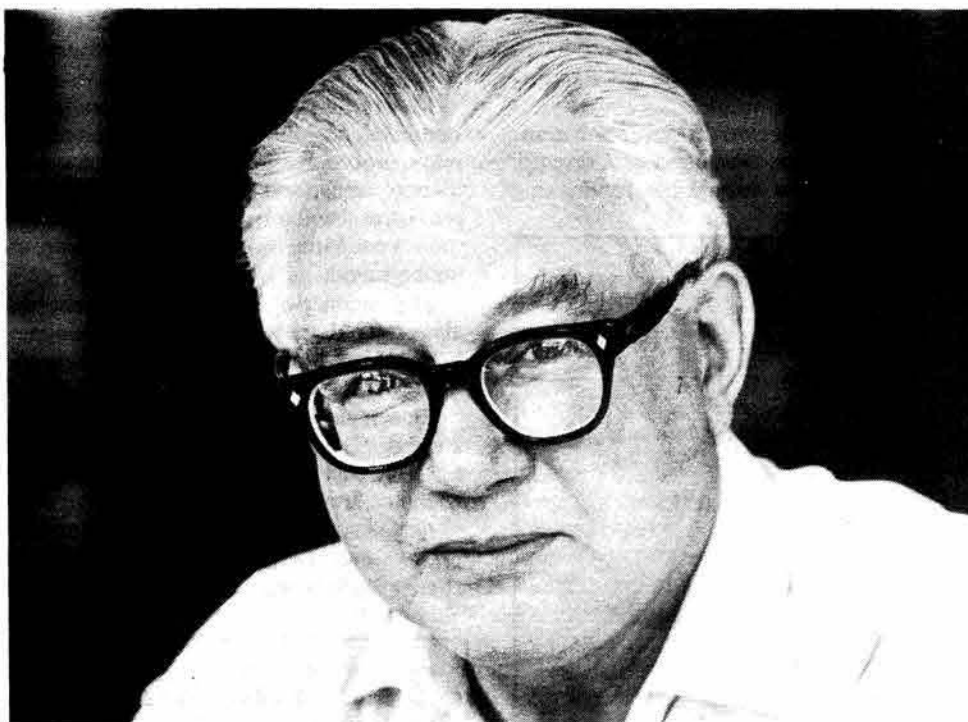
BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

George Novack, a member of the Socialist Workers Party for almost six decades, died in New York July 30 after a brief illness. He was 86. Novack was a member of the SWP National Committee from 1940 to 1972. Known internationally as a Marxist who wrote extensively on philosophy and history, he also played a leading role in several major civil liberties battles spanning several decades.

Born in Boston in 1905, the son of immigrant Jews from Eastern Europe, Novack attended Harvard University in the mid-1920s. Like other young people, he radicalized under the impact of the Great Depression and the initial labor struggles that led to big working-class battles and the rise of mass industrial unions in the 1930s. He was introduced to politics through a circle of radical writers and academics in New York associated with the *Menorah Journal* that included Sidney Hook, Diana Trilling, Clifton Fadiman, Herbert Solow, and others.

In 1931 he joined the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. He played an active role in the Scottsboro case, a nationwide civil rights fight in defense of nine Black youths who were framed up in Alabama on charges of having raped two white women. The youths, sentenced to death or long prison terms, were eventually freed.

While most radicalizing youth followed the Stalinized Communist Party at that time, Novack joined the Communist League of America (CLA), predecessor of the Socialist Workers Party, in the fall of 1933. He was impressed by the party's response to the victory of the fascists in Germany, who had come to power that year with no organized opposition by the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties. The CLA, part of the international communist movement, which was then led by Leon Trotsky, fought for working people to mobilize independently of the



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capitalist parties to defeat the fascists.

From the time he joined the CLA at the age of 28, Novack tied his life to the working-class movement and remained a communist to his death.

As national secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, Novack was part of the delegation that met the exiled Russian revolutionary leader in Mexico when he arrived there in 1937. Novack helped organize the International Commission of Inquiry, headed by John Dewey, which investigated the frame-up charges against Trotsky in the Moscow trials organized by Stalin's regime. The commission found the charges baseless.

A few years later he married Evelyn Reed, who had recently joined the Socialist Workers Party. The two became lifelong companions and political collab-

orators. Reed, a leading member of the SWP and the author of several books on the fight for women's liberation, including *Woman's Evolution*, died in 1979.

In 1941 the Socialist Workers Party asked Novack and Reed to help strengthen the work of the party in Minneapolis, where leaders of the SWP and of the Midwest Teamsters union were under fire for their active opposition to the approaching U.S. entry into the second imperialist world war.

When the federal government indicted 29 of these leaders under the notorious Smith Act, Novack returned to New York and served as national secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, which spearheaded a campaign in their defense. Eighteen SWP and Teamster leaders were convicted and jailed. Some 150 trade unions representing 5 million

workers around the country, along with many other supporters of civil liberties, joined the campaign for their freedom.

Novack played an important part in several other civil liberties battles, from the anticommunist witch-hunt period in the 1950s to the successful SWP lawsuit against FBI spying and harassment, filed in 1973. Novack was a plaintiff and one of the architects of that suit, which won with a historic federal court ruling in 1986.

The SWP leader helped build the party's branches in Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York, where he spent most of his life. He was also on political assignment in Paris and London from 1951 to 1953. Over the years he was a writer and editor for the *Militant*, *New International*, *Fourth International*, *International Socialist Review*, *Intercontinental Press*, and other socialist publications.

Novack wrote or edited 15 books, most of which have been published by Pathfinder Press. These include: *Understanding History*, *An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism*, *Democracy and Revolution*, *America's Revolutionary Heritage*, *Pragmatism Versus Marxism*, *The Origins of Materialism*, *Empiricism and Its Evolution*, *Polemics in Marxist Philosophy*, and the pamphlet *Genocide against the Indians*.

His works have helped arm new generations of young fighters with a materialist and working-class approach to politics. These books have been read around the world and have been translated into Spanish, Greek, Farsi, Turkish, Gujarati, and other languages.

Novack contributed to the SWP's leadership school, which was established in 1980, participating enthusiastically with younger party members in sessions devoted to the study of the political works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

Shortly before he died, Novack contributed much of his large and valuable collection of political books to the Pathfinder bookstore in New York, to make them available for young fighters joining the communist movement.

Coal miners protest new ventilation rules that increase danger of deadly explosions

BY JOHN HAWKINS

BIRMINGHAM — On August 16, work in U.S. coal mines will become a little more dangerous, and miners' fight for health and safety on the job a little more difficult.

On that date, unless federal courts intervene, revised regulations governing ventilation in coal mines are scheduled to go into effect. Miners and their union, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), have opposed such proposed changes for the past seven years.

The final version of the new rules, drafted by the Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), was made public May 15.

In the document MSHA itself clearly states the importance of ventilation to the health and safety of miners.

"Proper coal mine ventilation is necessary to protect against mine fires and explosions due in part to the presence of explosive gases in underground coal mines; oxygen-deficient atmospheres; and accumulations of harmful gases," the agency says. "Ventilation is also a primary method of controlling miners' exposure to respirable dust and preventing the development of pneumoconiosis [black lung]."

MSHA claims the revised regulations "update existing provisions consistent with advances in mining technology, eliminate duplicative and unnecessary standards, and reduce paperwork requirements, where possible."

However, coal miners explain that, while a few of the new provisions mark advances, the revised rules on balance favor mine owners. They will encourage practices that could lead to more tragedies like the 1984 Wilberg Mine fire in Huntington, Utah, which left 27 miners dead.

For that reason the UMWA filed suit July 10 to block implementation of the revised rules and requested that MSHA voluntarily delay their implementation until the suit is decided.

MSHA however is going ahead with its August 16 deadline.

As part of its implementation procedure MSHA is holding public meetings purport-

edly designed to explain the new rules to miners and management in coalfield communities across the country.

Miners object to rules

Close to 100 miners attended an MSHA briefing here July 16, along with some 50 company representatives. Many of the questions miners have about the new rule were raised.

One of the new rules that most concerned miners present was the set of regulations governing main mine fans, which are vital in forcing a continuous flow of fresh air through coal mines. The rule effectively eliminates mandatory daily inspections and MSHA approval.

The new regulations would allow the mine fan to be completely shut off for entire periods of time in smaller mines, increasing the chances of explosion.

Inspections of fans are to be reduced to weekly checks, where a mechanical monitoring system is installed.

The rules also drop the requirement of a log detailing the performance of the fan. Reporting any defective operation will now be left to management discretion.

Prohibitions on the use of electrical equipment in case of an unintentional fan stoppage have been relaxed. The complete evacuation of miners from underground in such an event is no longer required.

Instead, if power is restored within a certain amount of time, evacuation procedures may be halted, the mine inspected with miners still underground, and work resumed.

These changes in the law, miners point out, ignore the very real possibility that a potentially explosive accumulation of gas can build up in only a few minutes. This is exactly what happened in 1983 in Homer City, Pennsylvania, the UMWA notes. There, a foreman entered a mine on a battery-powered jeep to perform an inspection following a fan stoppage and triggered an explosion.

Miners also object to the new regulations covering company inspections. Currently mine officials are responsible for making



UPI Telephoto

Dozens of miners died in 1968 when explosions and fires ripped through Consolidation's Mannington Mine in West Virginia. Thorough ventilation cuts down on coal dust that contributes to explosions.

sure that daily and weekly inspections of the mine for methane accumulations and other hazards are conducted.

Management will now be able to use mechanical devices called Atmospheric Monitoring Systems (AMS) to replace daily inspections of certain return air courses — passageways that carry air laden with coal dust and methane away from the working face. The union notes that this change ignores the possibility of mechanical malfunction and the inaccessibility of certain areas that can be inspected only by human beings.

Companies will no longer be required to inspect for compliance with mandatory health and safety standards when conducting daily and weekly inspections for gas and dust. This means they can legally ignore other potential dangers.

Management off the hook

Federal inspectors will not be able to order more frequent checks for methane, freeing management from what it considers a nuisance. Only the general foreman will be required to countersign the inspection reports of foremen, leaving upper management off the hook should anything go wrong.

Miners also object to the relaxation of standards for the construction of escapeways, procedures for approval of mine ventilation plans, and the elimination of the provision absolutely prohibiting a change in mine ventilation while mining is going on underground.

The conduct of the briefings themselves also angered many miners. At the meetings here and in Ohio participants were restricted to presenting questions in writing.

Thus many miners' questions went unanswered. The briefings are the last step MSHA must follow before the new rule becomes law.

In June 1988, when MSHA held hearings around the country on the proposed changes, thousands of miners stayed off

their jobs in Alabama and several other areas in observance of a one-day memorial period called by the union. Union members packed the 1988 hearings to oppose the threatened deregulation of the mining industry.

Many miners at this year's Alabama hearings expressed displeasure with MSHA's changes in the rules. Miners had fought and hoped for rules that would have strengthened mine safety and set uniform standards that the union has had to fight for, mine by mine.

Instead the opposite was promulgated by the very agency that is charged, as UMWA members see it, with helping miners defend mine safety.

The new rules if enacted will place another obstacle in the fight by miners and their union to defend health and safety conditions. Miners, however, expressed their determination to continue that fight.

John Hawkins is a laid-off coal miner and a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2368 in Brookwood, Alabama.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE 'MILITANT'

This special issue of the *Militant*, printed August 4, replaces the issue that was planned for printing on August 12. In order to get into print news about the strike of Pittsburgh Press workers, and to report the death of longtime Socialist Workers Party leader George Novack, this issue, without many of the columns and features that appear in regular issues, has been prepared.

This is the last of the summer bi-weekly issues. The weekly schedule resumes with the next issue, to be printed August 18 and dated August 28.

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'Militant' reporters cover world events

BY DEREK BRACEY

On August 1, *Militant* reporter Argiris Malapanis returned from a reporting trip to the Balkans. He was the last to return of a team of four that covered events in Greece, Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

This was the latest among several reporting trips reporters for the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial* have made during the past four months. A review of the places and events *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* reporters have visited in this period gives a feel for the pace of political events and the ability of these publications to meet the challenge of responding to them.

In April, staff member Paul Mailhot headed to Illinois to report on the Caterpillar strike. Mailhot participated in solidarity actions and talked with strikers on the picket lines in Peoria and Decatur.

Also in April, Brian Williams went to Buffalo, New York, to report on the defense pickets mounted by hundreds who came for two weeks to stop Operation Rescue from closing down abortion clinics. The rightist group planned a "Spring of Life" campaign following on their assault on clinics in Wichita, Kansas, last summer.

In a significant victory for women's rights, supporters of abortion rights in Buffalo handed Operation Rescue a resounding defeat; not one clinic was shut down.

Los Angeles became the scene of a social explosion starting April 29 when the acquittal of the cops who beat motorist Rodney

King sparked a huge antipolice riot. Malapanis and *Militant* editor Greg McCartan were quickly on a plane to cover the reactions of workers to the events.

Malapanis also accompanied Aaron Ruby to Argentina and Brazil in June to participate in anti-imperialist meetings in those countries. In Argentina they attended a conference on the legacy of Che Guevara, which discussed the need for an international perspective to solve the dead-end road of capitalism. They also attended a regional meeting of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Brazil.

Perspectiva Mundial editor Selva Nebbia visited Cuba in late June to cover the tour of James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president. Warren was able to discuss with workers there the challenges facing the Cuban revolution and political developments in the United States today.

In early July, *Militant* editor McCartan and Shellia Kennedy traveled to South Africa to report on the fact-finding tour that Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. vice-president Estelle DeBates made to that country. The tour occurred as the African National Congress launched a mass action campaign to push the racist regime to accept a constituent assembly that would dismantle the apartheid system.

Three reporters, Nebbia, Ruby, and Francisco Picado, went to Nicaragua July 13-26. They reported on the third gathering of the São Paulo Forum, attended by a range of



'Militant' reporter Argiris Malapanis interviews antiwar student activist in Belgrade.

political parties from Latin America and the Caribbean. The team covered student demonstrations against cutbacks in education taking place in Managua at the time (see page 16 of this issue). Ruby and Picado also visited San Juan del Río Coco in northern Nicaragua to report on the fight for continued access to land by poor peasants, many of them former members of the Sandinista and contra armies.

On July 29, Mailhot began a two-day trip to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to get the first-hand story on the victory of newspaper workers who prevented the *Pittsburgh Press* from selling papers produced by scabs.

Malapanis, Natacha Terlexis from San Francisco, Ann Howie from London, and Lasse Johansson from Stockholm, Sweden, were the *Militant* reporting team in the Balkans. After attending a conference in Greece of the member groups of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in the Balkans,

they traveled to Belgrade, capital of Serbia, and reported on antiwar demonstrations taking place there. From Belgrade, part of the team went to Croatia and Bosnia — including a visit to Sarajevo, under siege by heavily-armed rightist gangs while the rest visited Kosovo, the province of Serbia where people of Albanian ethnic origin predominate, yet suffer systematic discrimination.

The ability of the *Militant* to carry out these kinds of reporting trips greatly widens and enhances the accuracy and usefulness of the information that *Militant* readers have on these developments. The opportunities to do such reporting trips are increasing. Readers of the *Militant* are encouraged to send donations to help pay for these trips. Through the help of our readers we can be in a better position to keep sending reporters directly to struggles as they develop.

Donations should be sent to: *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY, 10014.

City of Sarajevo: victim of murderous onslaught

Continued from front page

Serbian outpost on the next hilltop is pocked with bullet holes. The roof has caved in twice from mortar shells. His brother's house next door is burned to the ground.

The shooting intensifies as the whole family gathers in the back of the house. "Don't worry, the Chetniks won't get here," says Ramiz Beshlija in reference to Karadzic's troops. His brother Ahmed proudly displays his Kalashnikov rifle. The third brother Meho takes aim with an old machine gun at enemy positions.

The Beshlijas are among the very few families left in the neighborhood but they are determined to stay. "Nine out of 10 neighbors had to leave or are dead," said Ramiz. "We will defend this land with these old weapons and handmade bombs," he adds emphatically.

There has been no electricity in the neighborhood for four months. The UN supplies of food do not reach this hilltop either. Despite that the family goes out of its way to offer this reporter homemade bread from scarce reserves of flour, milk from the few remaining sheep, and spinach pie fresh from a wood oven. The treat is followed by Turkish coffee.

"In terms of food we are still better off than most people in the city," says Ahmed. The family cultivates a garden, hidden behind trees, at night when the shelling is not too heavy. The family sleeps in a dug-out basement. No light of any kind is allowed.

Not an ethnic war

"Tell America this is not an ethnic war," says Ramiz. He offers to take me to the front line where one of his Serbian neighbors, he insists, is among several Serbs in the Bosnian defense forces in this end of town, but the guide who knows the way through the minefields cannot be found. "Before Sarajevo was attacked he went and fought in Vukovar against the Yugoslav army," Ramiz says proudly about his neighbor.

Most people interviewed explained the same thing. Down the hill my driver Hasan Gluhic stops in the middle of the predominantly Muslim "Old Town" to show me a mosque, a Catholic church, and a Serbian Orthodox church right next to each other. "Here we all used to live together with no problems," he says.

His sister, Amra Gluhic, does not have much sympathy for any of the Serbs in the city. "Serbians are waiting for the victory of the Chetniks, that's why most of them are staying in the city," she says angrily. "Look at those Serbian women snipers in Grbavica



Ramiz Beshlija points to houses bombed in his Sarajevo neighborhood

and Vraca," she adds, referring to sections of Sarajevo controlled by rightist Serbian forces.

"No I don't think so," argues Azra Gluhic. "This is a war between primitives and humans." The 100,000 Serbs that are still in the city along with another 200,000 Muslims and Croats are prepared to defend the city, she explains.

Heavy bombardment resumes

The relative quiet of that afternoon of July 24 did not last long. A few days later heavy and indiscriminate bombardment of the city by Serbian artillery, tanks, and mortar resumed. The death toll in Sarajevo that had reached 1,400 in the first 100 days of the fighting is rapidly approaching 2,000.

July 31 was the heaviest day of shelling in weeks as Bosnian government forces organized an attempt to break through Serbian siege lines. The Bosnian offensive was answered by a Serbian barrage that pounded civilian areas throughout the city. At least 40 people died July 31, the greatest toll of casualties in one day since the siege began.

After 36 hours of fighting Bosnian military officials admitted the offensive had failed to break the siege. A breakout would have put Bosnian forces in position to drive north toward Vogosca, an industrial center eight miles from Sarajevo, and link up with Croatian-controlled territory further north. Expected aid from Croatian forces in Bosnia did not materialize.

"Boban's forces have the same aim as Karadzic, to partition Bosnia between Serbia

and Croatia," said Goran Milic in a telephone interview. Milic, himself a Croat, is the head of the international press center in Sarajevo.

Mate Boban, a Croatian arms dealer and leader of Bosnia's Croatian Democratic Union, has declared up to a third of the territory of the republic to be the new state of Herzeg-Bosnia. Croatian forces have entered Bosnia through the Dalmatian Adriatic coast and occupy part of the republic's territory, including the city of Mostar, south of Sarajevo. Mostar is a strategic city with an aircraft assembly plant, an air force base, and other industry. Slobodan Praljak, an official of the Croatian defense ministry, is head of this operation.

A brief lull in the fighting following the failure of the Bosnian forces to break Sarajevo's siege ended at dusk August 1 with intensive shelling of the city. Sarajevo television reported that a bus carrying 50 children as refugees out of the city came under machine-gun fire apparently from Serbian Democratic Party positions. The UN Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) had refused to provide an escort for the bus.

Two infants, one 14 months old and the other two years old, reportedly died during the attack on the bus, which was driving on the city's main street known as "Sniper Alley."

'Ethnic cleansing'

Meanwhile, Serbian rightist forces, who control two-thirds of the republic's territory, continue their "ethnic cleansing" operations in many areas in Bosnia. The August 2 issue

of New York *Newsday* reported that Serbian paramilitary groups have established two concentration camps in northern Bosnia where more than a thousand civilians have been executed or starved. The report was compiled from interviews by recently released prisoners from these camps. Reporters have no access to those areas of Bosnia.

A similar report of atrocities committed against Muslims at concentration camps had been released earlier in July by the Muslim News Agency (MINA) in Sarajevo.

MINA issued a press release with an "Appeal from Gorazde's children" July 17. Gorazde, a majority-Muslim town of 30,000 in eastern Bosnia with 70,000 refugees from other towns in the area, has come under siege and is the target of an offensive named the "Storm" by Karadzic's forces since July 11.

"We, the children of Gorazde, bear sufferings which are hard to imagine: we have run out of food, we eat leaves, no drinking water," says the appeal. "We spend all the time in cellars without electricity not distinguishing day from night."

Many of our friends from Visegrad, Foca, and Zvornik, the appeal continues, "are either executed or are in columns of refugees snaking their way" to a safe place.

Debate on military intervention

The seemingly endless murderous onslaught against the people of Bosnia has produced calls by its government for direct military intervention by Washington and other imperialist powers. This is echoed by many citizens of besieged Sarajevo.

A large picture of Josip Tito hangs in the small tire repair shop of Nenad Colic in the north end of the city. "These Serbian extremists are terrorists," said Colic, himself a Serbian. "I don't know how long we can hold against them. American troops should come in."

Most people interviewed in Sarajevo had the same view. "The American air force should bomb Serbian positions," said Ramiz Beshlija, the shepherd. "There is no way for us to win this war because we don't have artillery," said Amra Gluhic. "We need military intervention."

Her sister Azra, in one of the rare exceptions to this view, disagreed. "Look, American troops went into Kuwait not for democracy but for oil," she said. "Hussein is still in power and look what happened to the Kurdish people." Azra Gluhic said she was against a U.S. or European military intervention. "But we need weapons to defend the city, heavy weapons," she added.

Strikers halt 'Pittsburgh Press' production

Continued from front page since the May 17 walkout.

The newspaper bosses had announced June 14 that one or both of the papers would resume publication within 10 days with or without the striking union members. It was also widely reported that the *Press* had already hired a force of nonunion replacement drivers to deliver the papers.

As word went out that the *Press* was going to start up Sunday night and be delivered by scab drivers, local unions began calling members to demonstrate in front of the *Press* building where the newspaper is normally printed. By midnight more than 5,000 workers had gathered and began marching around the building chanting, "Scabs go home" and "Stop the *Press*." The entire street in front was blocked off.

Joining the striking Teamsters were many mail handlers, pressmen and other workers from the 10 unions at the *Press* Co. who had been laid off when the drivers strike began. The largest contingent of supporters—hundreds of carpenters, laborers, and operating engineers—came from the construction workers unions.

Others came from the United Mine Workers of America, United Food and Commercial Workers, United Steelworkers of America, International Association of Machinists, and from the boilermakers union. Teachers, government employees, and hundreds of workers from many different labor unions joined in the protest throughout the night.

Workers from the *Daily News* in New York were also in town to lend their support. *Daily News* workers had been involved in a strike in 1990-91 against their employer's attempt to impose massive cutbacks.

Solid picket line stops trucks

Nearly 1,000 workers were still out in front of the *Press* building at 6:00 a.m. when delivery trucks began moving toward the gate. A sizable contingent of police in riot gear demanded that the demonstrators disperse, but none of the workers would move.

Several dozen cops tried to push back the strikers and their supporters and open up a path for the trucks, but the workers pushed back and held their ground. After

about 15 minutes the trucks pulled back and Police Chief Earl Buford announced that everyone was under arrest for obstructing traffic.

Workers at the front of the line sat down in the street and as police began arresting union members, others took their place. After hauling off a few dozen workers the police gave up and no further attempts were made to move trucks from the building. The workers had clearly won the opening round of the fight.

The *Pittsburgh Press* immediately went to court to get an injunction to limit picketing, but Judge Lee Mazur postponed making a decision on the company's plea. By the time the *Press* decided to halt production of the paper at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, the judge had still not ruled on their petition.

Young people join the fight

While workers were able to stop papers from coming out of the main plant, the *Press* Co. went ahead and printed an issue of both papers at an undisclosed location and began distributing them. But the newspaper bosses didn't fare any better in the streets of Pittsburgh and surrounding towns than they did in front of their own building.

Youth carriers began following adult deliverers on their old paper routes picking up every copy of the *Press* that was being handed out. "The customers just didn't want them. They just left them sitting out in their yards," said David Missenda, a 13-year-old carrier who brought down a bag of papers to the *Press* building and dumped them in front of the doorway.

Young carriers were greeted by spirited cheers from picketing union members throughout the day on Monday as they carried their sacks of papers to the *Press*, adding to the pile.

All day long workers from the greater Pittsburgh area stopped by the *Press* building to throw away their unwanted subscriptions. "This is jive," Regina Miller an AT&T operator, told reporters as she dropped off her paper and had her dog urinate on the pile. "I'm working without a contract and I'm sending my employer a message."

Several thousand people canceled their subscriptions to the paper when the *Press* announced that it would resume publication without resolving the dispute.

'I'm not selling the papers'

The *Pittsburgh Press* nonunion delivery drivers didn't have much success getting newsstands around town to take the newspaper either. Many newsstand owners were told that if they didn't take the papers now they wouldn't get them when the strike was over. "I'm definitely not selling the papers," Dennis Asay, owner of a newsstand in Tarentum, told the *Valley-News Dispatch*. "If they don't bring me the papers, to hell with them."

Many newsstands put up signs distributed by the union that read, "*Pittsburgh Press* and *Post-Gazette* not sold here."

While hundreds of union members maintained the picket line in front of the *Press* building throughout the day Monday and Tuesday, workers also began picketing at many of the 25 distribution depots set up by the company to get the paper out. One indication of the tremendous support and solidarity the strike had among working people is that, under pressure, town officials began closing down some of these distribution facilities for violating various health and safety codes.

The *Press* was ordered to close, or not permitted to open, distribution sites in Wilkensburg, Butler, Pittsburgh's west end, Brentwood, and Sharpsburg.

Another indication of the broad support for the strikers is that the *Press* Co. was unable to get any of its major advertisers to buy space. The Appliance Store was the only big company to place an ad in the Monday edition but, sensing the mood in the city that day company officials quickly put out a statement saying they had made a mistake and been "misled" by the *Press*. "We do not intend to advertise until the workers are back in their jobs," said the company president.

Prayer vigil becomes victory rally

A previously scheduled prayer vigil in support of the strike on Tuesday evening turned into a jubilant victory celebration in a park near the *Press* building. Again more

than 5,000 workers turned out and, after a short program by a handful of religious leaders, union members led the crowd around the *Press* building chanting, "Union yes" and "Scabs go home."

Workers from dozens of union locals attended the Tuesday rally. Twenty bus drivers who had been involved in a bitter strike earlier this year and had gone back to work after union officials complied with a back-to-work court order were there. "There is a lot of confusion and resentment about our strike where I work," explained one of the drivers. "Some drivers, who are good union people, are getting frustrated with the union. But I think this *Press* fight will help turn things around."

A contingent of 25 members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 325 from the Heinz ketchup plant carried a banner that read, "United we stand. Divided we fall."

During solemn prayers by the preachers, workers couldn't suppress their chants of "Union! Union!" In contrast to most of the religious leaders who prayed for peace and reconciliation, Rev. Jack O'Malley, a Catholic priest, blasted the *Press* management and said, "In critical times, religious people cannot remain neutral. I'm telling you I'm prejudiced. I'm for the working people. The lesson of this strike is that if you're strong enough and tough enough the companies will sit down and talk to you." His speech got the biggest cheers of the night from the thousands of workers.

O'Malley also condemned the paper for trying to pit the unions against Blacks by hiring many Black workers as scabs. "These companies that don't hire Blacks and women, but bring them in during a strike—that's racism," he said.

In interviews with this reporter the following day, a number of Black students at the Community College of Allegheny County explained that there was a lot of support for the strikers in the Black community. "I think people just want to support union members," said Ken Rainey. "Before the strike the *Press* hired hardly any Black workers, now they want to bring Blacks in as replacement workers and have a lower paid work force. That's what they're trying to do."

Picket lines come down

After halting publication, the *Press* Co. and the Teamsters union resumed negotiations. Union officials withdrew most of the picket lines except for a token few that were left in front of the *Press* building.

But even with a small presence workers demonstrated that their strike had the momentum against the company. Since papers weren't being published, the *Press* tried to return several of their rented trucks. Union members on the picket line decided that the trucks should be searched before being allowed to leave to make sure that they weren't carrying any papers.

The handful of pickets stopped the trucks and called in reinforcements. Faced with several dozen union members who weren't about to budge, the company backed down and allowed inspection of the vehicles. Union officials then decided to stop all picketing saying that they were making "a good-faith gesture" to help the negotiations along.

The *Press* has dropped the number of jobs it wants to cut from 450 to 275, still nearly half of the 605 delivery drivers. Teamster Local 211 president Joseph Molinero is reported to have offered to give up 200 jobs, but not the number the *Press* wants to cut.

Rank-and-file members of the union are elated about having faced down the *Press* but don't see the fight as settled yet. "If [negotiations] don't go anywhere, it doesn't mean anything," said Jack Creamer, a member of Teamsters Local 636. He hoped that the paper's decision to stop the presses wouldn't "keep people off the streets and keep us from showing what we need to show—solidarity."

"We're happy that they'll finally sit down and talk," explained Teamsters driver Dave Sell, but he noted, "this fight is hardly over."

Bill Scheer from Pittsburgh contributed to this article.

Socialist candidate supports strike

BY PAUL MAILHOT

PITTSBURGH—Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress from the Pittsburgh area, is running an active working-class campaign here. She has put solidarity with striking *Pittsburgh Press* drivers at the heart of her activity.

After the *Press* Co. announced plans to resume publication of its struck newspaper at the end of July, Kuniansky's campaign put out a statement to help build the labor solidarity effort to "Stop the *Pittsburgh Press*." Her statement explained, "We can show the *Press* they will not get away with publishing and selling a scab paper if we throw our united strength into this campaign." She called on working people and youth throughout the area to join the protests in front of the *Press* building and at the paper's distribution sites.

Kuniansky, who is a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, along with many of her campaign supporters, joined thousands of workers massed in front of the *Pittsburgh Press* building Sunday night and into the early morning hours. She then traveled to the Pennsylvania state capital in Harrisburg to officially announce her campaign and make a statement in support of the striking workers.

The first reporter to show up at her press conference was a writer for the *Press* who asked for an interview. "I'm not giving you an interview," she told the shocked reporter. "When your paper settles with the delivery driver's union and gives the workers their jobs back, then I'll give you an interview."

A story about Kuniansky's campaign, noting her strong support for the strikers,



Militant Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers candidate for Congress, urges support for 'Pittsburgh Press' strikers.

went out over the Associated Press wire service and was picked up by local newspapers. The article also drew attention to Kuniansky's opposition to U.S. military action against Iraq.

The next day, at the rally following the *Press*'s announcement that it was suspending publication, Kuniansky campaigned among strikers and their supporters. Many of the workers were appreciative of her support for their fight and especially her act of solidarity in not giving an interview to the scab paper.

Socialist campaign fund results

Payments to the Socialist Workers election campaign fund are continuing to come into the campaign office. Supporters have sent in contributions totaling more than \$53,600 so far in the drive to raise \$75,000.

The fund is to help finance international travel of the candidates, cover expenses of the teams of volunteers petitioning to get the candidates on the ballot, and

pay for publicity materials.

A report in last week's issue erroneously stated that the fund drive had ended. In fact, donations are urgently needed to meet the overall goal. Many pledges to the fund are still outstanding; the target is to collect all these by August 31.

Send contributions to: Socialist Workers 1992 National Campaign, 191 7th Avenue, 2nd Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

Contributions received up to July 30

City	Goal	Received	City	Goal	Received
Atlanta	\$2,800	\$2,915	New Haven	\$700	\$30
Baltimore	2,300	1,070	New York	9,000	3,755
Birmingham	2,200	1,330	Newark	7,000	1,466
Boston	3,000	890	Philadelphia	2,500	2,314
Chicago	3,500	2,075	Pitts	2,100	2,670
Cincinnati	700	175	Portland		500
Cleveland	2,300	2,075	Salt Lake City	3,000	3,060
Des Moines	2,000	2,235	San Francisco	6,000	5,900
Detroit	2,200	1,540	Seattle	2,000	800
Greensboro	1,600	1,480	St. Louis	2,500	2,710
Houston	2,700	1,812	Twin Cities	3,600	3,525
Los Angeles	5,500	4,682	Wash., DC	2,300	2,385
Miami	2,000	1,555	Other		115
Morgantown	2,800	550	TOTALS:	\$76,300	\$53,614

Socialist nominee meets Alabama strikers

BY DAN FURMAN

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Socialist Workers presidential candidate James Warren recently made a three-day tour stop here. Warren visited strikers at Meadowcraft Industries in Pinson, Alabama. Three hundred workers organized by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) were out on strike over company demands to change the work-week to three or four twelve-hour shifts per week with no overtime pay.

"The company was young and struggling, so we tried to work with them," a picket captain told Warren. "We gave them 25 cents pay last contract, and we've given up a holiday and vacation time. But now, all we didn't give them, they want to take back."

Strikers asked about the socialist campaign. "We've been traveling around the world and all over this country talking to workers and young people," said Warren. "We've been putting forward the idea that

there is no way out of the homelessness, drug problems, union-busting, and the drive towards war within the framework of capitalism."

Later that day, the socialist candidate joined a group of campaign supporters at the gate of Trinity Industries in Bessemer, a USWA-organized plant that makes rail cars. Many of those who stopped to meet Warren had already signed petitions circulated inside the plant to get the socialist presidential ticket on the ballot.

During his stay in Birmingham, Warren was interviewed by both of the daily newspapers and by the *Birmingham World*, a local Black newsweekly.

Warren also addressed a campaign rally of 35 people who had gathered July 12 at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Birmingham. The rally culminated a three-week drive to collect signatures for placing the socialist presidential ticket on the ballot in this state.

"What we are fighting to do," said Warren, "is to practice real politics. Real politics is what happens in the streets. It's ideas and action combined." He pointed to the movement being built in South Africa as an education for workers and fighters all around the world. "Before we get out of the current depression," he said, "we will see people doing that in the streets here."

One rally participant asked, "what would you do if you were elected?" "If I was elected," replied Warren, "there would already be a revolution. Then the question would not be so much what I would do, but what working people would do."

Two of the other speakers on the panel with Warren had participated in the nationwide effort to put Warren and vice-presidential candidate Estelle DeBates on the state ballots. Jerry Teichmiller, a socialist activist from Cullman, Alabama, spoke about his experience as part of a petitioning team in

Cleveland, Ohio. "We asked for signatures to get socialist candidates on the ballot in shopping centers and other places frequented by working people. In contradiction to what I thought, the response was very encouraging. Most working people are fed up with the government," he observed.

Another member of the petitioning team, Daniel Michele, had just returned from a week in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, successfully defending an abortion clinic there from Operation Rescue. Michele pointed to the example set by the young fighters who stood up to Operation Rescue. "These are the people who will be the heart and soul of a revolutionary movement," he said.

"As we're gathering here tonight, there are others who are meeting in corporate boardrooms in Washington and New York," said Frances Farley, a Steelworker and Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from Alabama. "They're planning to lead us into another war — and you can bet it will not be a war for freedom and democracy."

In April Farley had traveled to St. Louis, Missouri, to help build solidarity with Caterpillar workers who were on strike in Illinois. "We have an activist campaign," she explained.

Dan Furman is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9226.

Youth discuss politics today with Warren

BY DAN FURMAN

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — "So if you know you won't win the election, then what are you trying to do?" This was one of the questions asked of Socialist Workers candidate for president James Warren at an informal discussion with young people from the Anarchist Action Network in Birmingham. During a period of two hours the discussion ranged from the nature of capitalism to the repression of young people to how to understand the Cuban revolution.

"No, we won't win this election," replied Warren. "And it wouldn't change anything if we did. For us, the only way society can be changed is through the actions of millions of people moving into politics. In this period, we are campaigning to reach the thousands, not millions, who are stepping forward right now and who want to learn how to fight this system and what it does. These thousands of people, like those of us sitting here tonight, are extremely important because they will be the leaders for the millions who come forward tomorrow."

"The Socialist Workers campaign wants to help build and be a part of this leadership," he continued. "We don't want to have to reinvent the wheel every time we have to struggle. The role of communists is to be the living representatives of the history of our class and to share this experience with those who are moving into the struggle."

"But you can't create a perfect society," stated one participant. "Racism will always exist. Capitalists will exist even after a revolution because there will just be a new group using their power to exploit others." The discussion turned to the history of the development of human society, from the "primitive communism" of Native Americans to feudalism, capitalism, and the possibility of autonomous self-governing communities existing with no state governments over them.

"The question is not what you would like to see," pointed out Warren. "We could spend all day discussing our views of that. What's important now is how we can begin to fight today to move in that direction."

"Do you see any government in the world that is doing this?" asked one young person. Warren replied that Cuba, which he had recently visited, is the best example of a government that, despite enormous setbacks, continues to fight to put the interests of workers and farmers first and to build a society of new men and women.

"If Cuba is so great, how come everyone is trying to leave?" asked one young woman. "Fidel Castro is a dictator. I support the Cuban people, but not Fidel Castro," stated another.

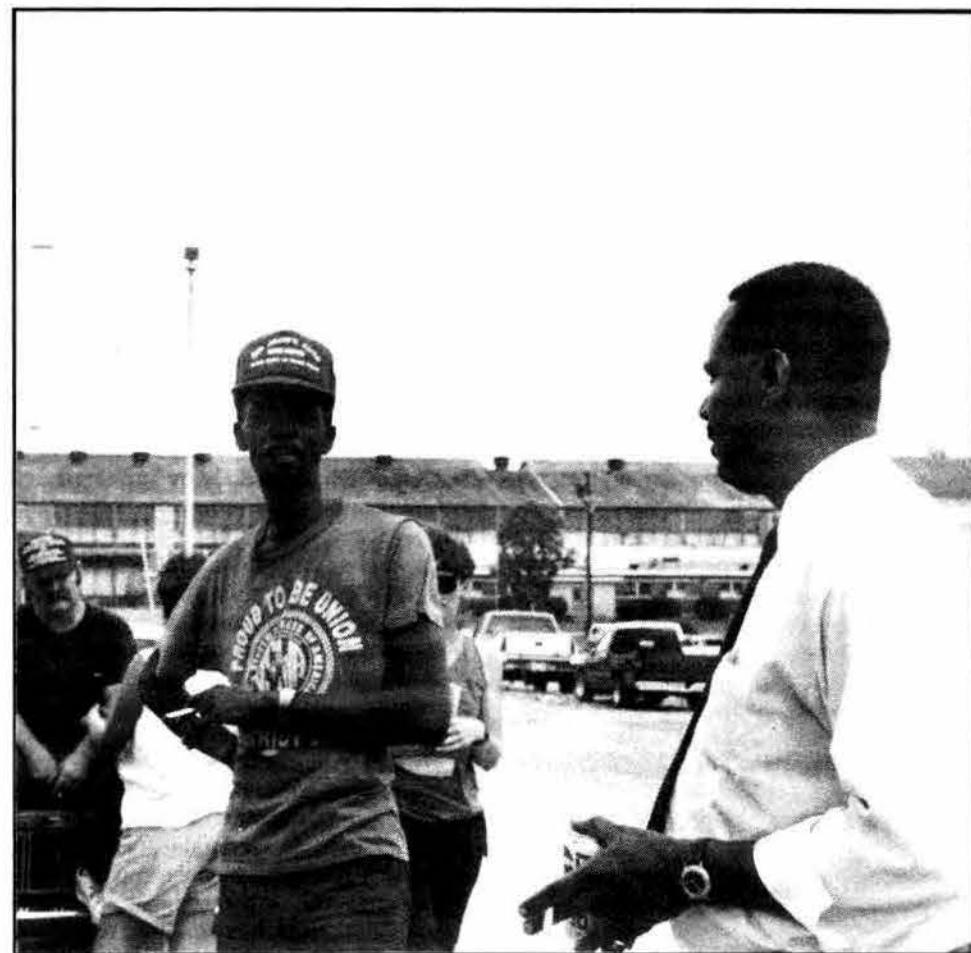
"You can't disagree with the government in Cuba. If your trip was organized by the government, they wouldn't let you see anything bad," said a third participant.

Warren disagreed. "I could go wherever I wanted," he said. "I agree with you on this characterization for every other state that called itself communist. Those countries were bureaucratic police states that repressed and murdered working people. But Cuba is different. People want to leave Cuba to come to the United States for the same reason that people from all over the Third World are trying to get into this country. They think they'll find a better life here. That's the image they see of the United States — a land of opportunity."

"Why focus solely on those who want to leave? What about the millions who elect to stay in Cuba and fight for the revolution? In what other country in the world," he continued, "would 50,000 people answer a call from the government and volunteer to risk their lives in Africa in the fight against apartheid?"

"I still stand with Mercedes Paez and the Green Opposition in Cuba," maintained one

young anarchist. Participants in the discussion, all of whom were activists in the fight against racist skinhead violence in Birmingham, agreed to exchange information on Cuba and continue the discussion at a later date.



Many workers at Steelworker-organized Trinity Industries in Bessemer, Alabama, signed petitions to place James Warren (right) on the ballot.

—Socialist Campaign in the News

The Birmingham News

MONDAY, JULY 13, 1992

OUR 105th YEAR

4 SECTIONS



Socialist James Warren

Socialist candidate seeks change, not votes

By Greg Garrison
News staff writer

The presidential candidate strode to the podium, a backdrop of party goals listed on a banner hanging behind him, and spoke to a receptive audience.

"American capitalism is in deep, deep trouble," he said. "We are in a depression."

James Warren, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, spoke to a Sunday night rally in Birmingham attended by about 30 people, including several Socialist candidates for political office.

As the Democratic National Convention opens in New York City today, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton will occupy the media spotlight and have a chance to position himself in relation to incumbent Republican President Bush and independent challenger Ross Perot.

Warren, a steelworker who also ran as the

Socialist candidate in 1988, can hope for little such notice and few votes. His message — socialism works, capitalism doesn't — will be paid little heed.

"We're not a party that's running around looking for votes," Warren said. "Our votes are very small, but we don't determine anything by how many people vote for us. We are beginning a process to change the whole conception of politics in this country."

Bush, Clinton and Perot are all capitalist candidates and virtually all the same, Warren said. "They all agree on most things," he said. "They represent basically the same things."

Frances Farley, a steelworker at USX Corp.'s Fairfield Works plant and a write-in candidate for U.S. Senate against incumbent Richard Shelby, said the two-party system is under siege.

"People are fed up with the economic policies of the Democratic and Republican parties," she said. Though the socialist candidates

have little chance at the polls, they still insist that it's not a wasted vote. "It's better to vote for what you want and not get it than vote for what you don't want and get it," she said.

In explaining why voters fed up with the two establishment parties are turning to Perot instead of the Socialist Party, Warren said people don't properly understand socialism.

"The vast majority of people haven't had the experience in life that would teach them to look to themselves instead of to some billionaire from Texas, some yuppie from the South or some other millionaire from Texas," he said. "Our problem is the capitalist system."

People who think a failure of socialism led to the demise of the Soviet Union are again misinformed, he said. The former Soviet empire was not a true socialist system, he said. "What happened in the Soviet Union was a possibility for building socialism," he said.

But the Soviet socialist experiment went

awry when Joseph Stalin came to power in 1924, Warren said. Although the means of production continued to be state-owned, the vision of power for the workers was lost, he said.

"I consider the fall of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a step forward for humanity and a step forward for socialism," Warren said. Because the Soviet Union was not a good representation of socialist ideals, it's better that it's out of the picture, he said.

Cuba, on the other hand, is "an example to all the world," said Warren, who recently visited the island nation led by the aging revolutionary Fidel Castro. "They deserve our solidarity."

The socialist candidates favor a federally mandated 30-hour work week with full pay for all employees and canceling all Third World debt, Ms. Farley said.

They also favor abortion rights, oppose war, police brutality, resurgent fascism and racism, she said.

Sales drive gains 3,079 new readers of 'Militant'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The final scoreboard for the April 4-July 25 international circulation campaign is printed below. Supporters reached 88 percent of the *Militant* goal, selling a total of 3,079 subscriptions. In addition 629 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and 975 copies of *New International* were sold.

Supporters in Los Angeles helped lead the way during this drive, selling more *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and copies of *New International* than any other area. Since the announcement of the verdict in the Rodney King trial and the ensuing protests at the end of April, Los Angeles supporters sent in 183 *Militant* and 118 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions.

Six areas — Des Moines, Los Angeles, London, Wellington, Sweden, and Belgium — succeeded in meeting each of their goals for the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International*.

Supporters in several areas made a special effort during the last two weeks of the drive, to successfully reach their *Militant* subscription goal. Philadelphia, which is at the top of the scoreboard, sent in 24 subscriptions; Birmingham sent 25; Salt Lake City — 31; Los Angeles — 39.

Alyson Kennedy from Birmingham writes: "We decided we were going to make our subscription goal. We got on the phone and called coworkers and young people who had signed campaign interest cards during the petitioning drive to place the SWP presidential ticket of Warren and DeBates on the Alabama ballot. Four subscriptions were obtained by calling names on these cards — two were sold to high school students. In two-and-a-half-days we got 18 subscriptions!"

Supporters in Des Moines successfully combined campaigning for the socialist candidates and winning new subscribers in several area meat-packing plants. Cleve Andrew Pulley reports: "More than 500 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) in three

Iowa locals have signed petitions to place the 1992 Socialist Workers candidates on the ballot. In addition, UFCW members in Iowa have purchased 39 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 23 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 17 copies of *New International*.

In Massachusetts, socialist campaigners sold 15 *Militant* subscriptions and 550 single copies while collecting 15,000 signatures in 21 days to place Warren and DeBates on the ballot.

Supporters sold 635 *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions to members of the unions listed on the "Selling the socialist press to unionists" chart below. *Militant* distributors in the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, United Auto Workers union, United Food and Commercial Workers union, and United Transportation Union surpassed their *Militant* goals. In addition, 27 subscriptions were sold to members of the United Mine Workers of America union during the course of this drive.



'Militant' supporter in Philadelphia campaigning to put socialist candidates on the ballot. Gaining signatures combines well with subscription sales.

Maryland prisoner fights parole denial

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Supporters of Terrence Johnson recently announced plans to step up efforts to win his parole. Johnson, who is Black, is serving a 25-year sentence resulting from the fatal shooting of two Hyattsville, Maryland, cops in 1978. At the time of the shootings Johnson was 15 years old.

Mauri Saalakhian, convener of the Coalition Against Political Imprisonment, said the group will host a series of forums to get out the word on Johnson's case. Charles Ware, General Council for Maryland National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Johnson's attorney, announced plans for the filing of a habeas corpus brief for Johnson's release. Johnson's wife Donna stressed the importance of public meetings and protests in the fight to win her husband's release.

On June 26, 1978, Johnson's older brother was arrested on theft charges. Although Terrence Johnson was not a suspect, police took both youths to the station. When Terrence Johnson refused to answer questions about his brother, the cops threatened and beat him.

Officer Albert Claggett took Terrence Johnson into an adjacent room where he strangled him and slammed him against a table. During this struggle Johnson took Claggett's gun and forced the cop to release the stranglehold. When Claggett attempted to grab him again, Johnson fired two shots. Claggett died hours later.

As the frightened youth fled the room, several shots were exchanged in the station. A second cop, James Swart, was fatally hit. It remains unclear who fired those shots. Johnson was wrestled to the ground, disarmed, beaten again, and arrested.

Initial bail for Johnson was set at more than a million. A public outcry forced its reduction to \$100,000. To make it possible for Johnson to receive the maximum punishment Judge Vincent Femia ruled that he be tried as an adult.

After a well-publicized trial and a broad public campaign, Johnson was acquitted on six of eight major counts and found guilty of manslaughter and illegal use of a handgun.

At his sentencing Judge Jacob Levin admonished Johnson to be thankful that 25 years was the maximum the law permitted him to impose.

Johnson has been eligible for parole since 1987, but it has been repeatedly denied. Last fall, a petition campaign for his release netted 70,000 signatures. While in prison Johnson completed his General Education Diploma, received a degree from Baltimore Community College, and graduated with honors from Morgan State University in 1986. He founded and served as president of the Inmate Advisory Council at Jessup prison, where he is currently being held. Prison authorities have repeatedly rated his "adjustment progress" as excellent.

In a 1990 hearing the Maryland Parole

Commission said that Johnson needed to be "tested in a work release situation" before it considered granting him parole. But one year later the commission reversed itself and refused Johnson any form of release. Citing the "serious nature of the crime" the commission wrote in its decision that it "fears that in these times of violence being on the uprise, a negative

message would be sent to the community if we were to allow Mr. Johnson to be paroled." The commission also noted the length of the sentence imposed by the court.

Attorney Ware explained that Johnson's trial judge had sent a letter to the parole commission stressing his intention that Johnson serve the full 25 years.

Final Sales Scoreboard

Areas	The Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		L'Internationale		New International		Total	
	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Philadelphia	85	90	106%	20	23	3	0	30	24	138	137
Los Angeles*	200	210	105%	110	111	4	1	110	115	424	437
Birmingham, AL	80	82	103%	5	2	2	0	40	2	127	86
Seattle	120	122	102%	35	21	3	3	25	25	183	171
Salt Lake City	130	131	101%	20	10	2	0	30	18	182	159
Des Moines, IA	130	130	100%	25	28	2	2	40	43	197	203
Portland	10	10	100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
Pittsburgh	90	78	87%	5	5	2	0	30	3	127	86
Houston	80	68	85%	20	18	2	0	20	6	122	92
Washington DC	130	110	85%	20	25	10	3	55	45	215	183
Chicago	150	124	83%	35	19	5	0	70	41	260	184
St. Louis	100	82	82%	5	1	2	0	25	6	132	89
Morgantown, WV	80	64	80%	3	3	2	0	30	20	115	87
Twin Cities, MN	140	110	79%	20	12	2	4	30	15	192	141
Atlanta	90	70	78%	8	8	2	1	30	22	130	101
San Francisco	150	115	77%	50	16	8	3	70	62	278	196
Newark, NJ	160	120	75%	50	24	15	9	70	25	295	178
Boston	135	101	75%	40	40	15	8	50	57	240	206
Greensboro, NC	80	58	73%	8	8	2	1	15	8	105	75
Baltimore	110	77	70%	12	9	3	2	30	19	155	107
Detroit	140	90	64%	10	7	2	0	30	29	182	126
Miami	110	65	59%	30	27	15	19	45	27	200	138
Cincinnati*	39	23	59%	3	3	0	0	5	2	47	28
New York	250	131	52%	100	24	20	6	110	39	480	200
Cleveland	90	42	47%	10	2	2	1	20	12	122	57
New Haven, CT*	20	9	45%	4	1	0	0	6	3	30	13
Wilmington, DE	10	2	20%	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	2
Ft. Madison, IA	5	1	20%	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
U.S. TOTAL	2,914	2,315	79%	648	447	125	63	1,016	668	4,703	3,493
AUSTRALIA*	45	44	98%	14	15	1	0	20	17	80	76
BELGIUM*	6	7	117%	2	2	1	1	8	10	17	20
BRITAIN											
Manchester	50	52	104%	2	3	1	1	30	28	83	84
London	80	83	104%	6	7	2	2	40	42	128	134
Sheffield	50	43	86%	3	1	2	0	25	15	80	59
BRITAIN TOTAL	180	178	99%	11	11	5	3	95	85	291	277
CANADA											
Montreal*	75	72	96%	20	23	30	12	60	64	185	171
Vancouver*	130	119	92%	15	13	8	8	30	29	183	169
Toronto	90	78	87%	20	18	5	2	45	42	160	140
CANADA TOTAL	295	269	91%	55	54	43	22	135	135	528	480
FRANCE	5	2	40%	2	1	15	14	5	9	27	26
ICELAND	20	21	105%	1	0	1	0	5	2	27	23
MEXICO	1	1	100%	5	4	0	0	0	0	6	5
NEW ZEALAND											
Wellington*	50	58	116%	1	1	1	0	10	13	62	72
Auckland*	65	65	100%	5	5	1	1	13	12	84	83
Christchurch	40	37	93%	1	0	1	0	10	2	52	39
Other N.Z.	4	4	100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
N.Z. TOTAL	159	164	103%	7	6	3	1	33	27	202	198
PUERTO RICO	1	0	0%	5	7	0	0	2	2	8	9
SWEDEN*	75	78	104%	30	40	3	3	20	20	128	141
INT'L TEAMS	0	0	0%	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	42
TOTAL	3,701	3,079	88%	780	629	197	107	1,339	975	6,017	4,790
SHOULD BE		3,500	100%		750		200		1,250		5,700
DRIVE GOALS	3,500			750		200		1,250		5,700	
* raised goal											

Selling the socialist press to unionists

Union	% Sold (Goal)	Militant* Sold (Goal)	New Int'l Sold (Goal)
UNITED STATES			
ACTWU	64%	55	35
IAM	73%	110	80
ILGWU	72%	46	33
OCWA	131%	39	51
UAW	115%	75	86
UFCW	104%	90	94
USWA	88%	85	75
UTU**	104%	85	88
TOTAL	93%	585	542
SHOULD BE	100%	585	542
AUSTRALIA			
MTFU	120%	5	6
SHOULD BE	75%	4	2
BRITAIN			
AEU	30%	10	3
NUM	40%	10	4
RMT	106%	17	18
TGWU	120%	15	18
TOTAL	83%	52	43
SHOULD BE	100%	52	43
CANADA			
ACTWU	88%	8	7
CAW	53%	15	8
IAM	80%	5	4
USWA	50%	16	8
TOTAL	61%	44	27
SHOULD BE	100%	44	27
SWEDEN			
FOOD WORKERS	75%	4	3
METAL WORKERS	127%	11	14
TOTAL	113%	15	17
SHOULD BE	100%	15	17

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MFTU — Metal Trades Federation of Workers; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; OCWA — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers' Union; TGWU — Transport and General Workers' Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; USWA — United Steelworkers of America.

* Includes subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

** Raised goal

Repression cannot crush protests in Haiti

Activist: 'Embargo is a necessary sacrifice to return to a democratic process'

BY AARON RUBY
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — "The repression can't kill the popular mobilization and social movement in Haiti that has been building since the overthrow of Duvalier, and this is making Haiti ungovernable," said Jean Claude Fernard, member of a research group and leader of Lavalas, a political movement initiated by ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Fernard was in Argentina to participate in a conference on the revolutionary legacy of Ernesto Che Guevara and political perspectives for Latin America and the Caribbean. Guevara was an Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution.

In an interview here in June, Fernard described some of the developments in Haiti since the military coup last September that overthrew the elected government of Aristide.

Beginning in April, the National Federa-

tion of Haitian Students organized protests. Starting at 8:00 each morning they marched out of the schools into the streets chanting "Long live Aristide! Down with Cédras!" referring to Lieut. Gen. Raul Cédras, leader of the September coup.

In response, the authorities shut down the schools. More than 3 months of classes have been lost from the school year. About 250,000 students did not attend school last year because of the resistance to the military regime.

"In attacks aimed principally at the students and schools more than 300 were killed in the month of May" by security forces, Fernard estimated.

Fernard said there are increasing attacks by civilians on soldiers. He cited one such attack in the south of Haiti where the soldiers fled, dropping their weapons, and the barracks were burnt.

"This increased resistance has forced the coup leaders to retreat. This explains the recent agreements to form a new govern-

ment with Marc Bazin as the consensus prime minister. Bazin received only 13.8 percent of the vote in the December 1990 elections. It is a maneuver to prevent the return of Aristide, but it has no credibility," he stated. Bazin, who had placed a distant second in the elections that swept Aristide into power, was appointed by the military in mid-June in a bid to win support and end the international embargo on the regime.

Repression and refugees

"Since the coup more than 6,000 people have been killed," Fernard continued. "This has been documented and mass graves are being discovered. During the first week following the coup some 1,500 were killed, mainly in the poorest neighborhoods.

"Nearly 400,000 people in our country have become refugees." There are three groups of refugees: those who have tried to flee the country by boat to the United States, numbering more than 34,000 since September; the tens of thousands who have fled to the Dominican Republic and those who have fled from the city to the countryside to escape repression.

Asked about statements by the George Bush administration that the refugees were fleeing for economic reasons and not political repression, Fernard said, "During the Aristide government there were almost no refugees to the United States. People had real hope" that the social problems would be addressed. Referring to the May 24 executive order by the U.S. government to return all Haitian refugees fleeing by boat, he said: "This is an enormously brutal decision by the U.S. government that places the lives of the refugees in danger.

"Haitian television has shown images of people being returned from the boats who never appear at their homes. They are disappeared. This is a direct consequence of the U.S. administration's racist policy, which is a violation of human rights," he added.

Call to strengthen sanctions

Regarding the calls by the regime and by some forces outside Haiti to lift the economic sanctions that the Organization of American States voted to impose on the Haitian regime last October, Fernard said, "Despite the fact that the embargo worsens the economic crisis, everyone understands that the embargo is the direct consequence of the coup. As the international press has found, the people understand this as a

necessary sacrifice to return to a democratic process."

Fernard said the sharp economic crisis is worsening, affecting working people with a rise in unemployment, malnourishment, and lower wages.

"The fact that despite the economic crisis there have been no riots of an economic character clearly demonstrates that the people understand that their suffering is a consequence of the coup.

"The embargo is not being observed by Washington and other governments," he noted. "If it was the government would fall within 15 days. The coup leaders are obtaining supplies under the table. For example, there have not been any oil shortages other than a brief period in December.

"Despite denials by [Dominican president Joaquín] Balaguer, they are receiving decisive aid from his government across the border. Each night you can hear planes landing and taking off in Port-au-Prince," the Haitian capital. Holland is sending ships with oil, he added.

Washington, which was hostile to the stepped-up political activity and debate by Haitian working people during Aristide's rule, has been lax in enforcing the embargo against the military regime. "This is because the increased democracy for the Haitian masses was a threat to the interests of the United States, which has supported undemocratic regimes," Fernard stressed. "This was a dangerous example to the United States system of domination."

No military intervention

Fernard opposed the idea of a military intervention in Haiti by the Organization of American States or the United Nations. "We want a political solution. The Haitian army is a creation of the United States. An intervention would worsen the crisis and the suffering of the Haitian people.

"What is needed is the strict application of the embargo. An intervention by the United States would be used to increase its control over our resources and its political presence in the Caribbean. This would be part of a strategy of domination by the United States and not a defense of democracy.

"The fight to defend democracy in Haiti is the task of the Haitian people," Fernard concluded. That fight should receive "the aid of workers around the world, including working people in the United States."

Books answer basic questions on colonization of Americas

BY BOB SCHWARZ

Why were the Americas colonized?

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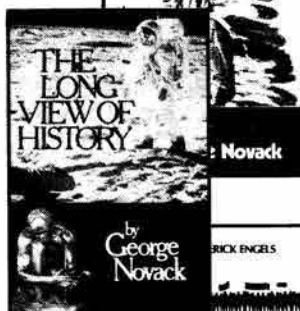
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BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A legal battle is underway over Washington's policy of picking up refugees from the dictatorship in Haiti in international waters and forcibly returning them to their country. A federal appeals court in New York July 29 ruled illegal President George Bush's May 24 executive order instructing the U.S. Coast Guard to carry out its policy.

"We conclude that the executive's action of reaching out into international waters, intercepting Haitian refugees, and returning them without determining whether the return is to their persecutors, violates" the federal immigration statute, wrote the court. Haitians stopped at sea, stated the court, were "far from, and by no means necessarily heading for, our gates."

The appeals court, however, promptly suspended its ruling for 48 hours while the Justice Department sought, and successfully obtained, an emergency stay of execution from the U.S. Supreme Court.

Washington's position is that Haitians should stay at home and apply for political asylum at the U.S. embassy in Port-au-Prince. In the last couple of months about 7,000 Haitians have sought asylum at the embassy. However, only 82 applicants have been granted permission to enter the United States.

Since the Sept. 30, 1991, military coup that ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, about 35,000 Haitians have taken to the high seas fleeing repression in their homeland and seeking political asylum in the

United States. Washington has pursued a policy of forcibly repatriating thousands back to Haiti.

The current court ruling continues a legal battle that has been going on for months. Prior to Bush's May 24 executive order, the Supreme Court had refused to halt Washington's forced repatriation policy.

Meanwhile, in mid-July students took to the streets in Port-au-Prince to protest continued military repression in Haiti. Police fired into the crowd of 200 students wounding 7, beating others, and arresting at least 50 people. Reuters news service reported this to be the first public street protest since Marc Bazin was appointed prime minister by the military rulers June 19.

In the United States, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and TransAfrica announced plans for a mass protest at the White House September 9 to support the return of Aristide as Haiti's president.

A correction

An article in the July 17, 1992, *Militant* erroneously stated that Haiti's prime minister, Marc Bazin, is a former aide of president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted in a coup in September 1991. Bazin in fact ran in opposition to Aristide in the December 1990 election receiving only 13.8 percent of the vote. In 1982 he served for several months as finance minister under the Duvalier dictatorship.

Che Guevara and the economics and politics of the transition to socialism

Introduction to new French-language edition of Carlos Tablada's book

The following is the draft of an introduction to the French-language edition of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada, to be published by Pathfinder Press in September.

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BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

The opening of the 1990s is a particularly apt moment for the appearance of this French-language edition of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Cuban author Carlos Tablada. World capitalism is mired in a depression marked by staggering debt, instability of the banking system, and mounting social ills such as rising unemployment, homelessness, and a resurgence of epidemic diseases. Bonapartist and ultrarightist currents rear their heads and grow. Economic and social conditions of working people in Africa and much of Latin America and Asia have de-

The USSR and Eastern European countries moved away from socialism.

clined without letup for nearly two decades. Throughout the capitalist world, class inequalities are widening, social polarization and segregation grow, democratic rights are under pressure, cop brutality is on the rise, and rival national ruling classes are intensifying conflicts with each other and pressing toward new and bloodier wars such as the onslaught against the Iraqi people in 1991.

Since late 1989, moreover, the bureaucratized regimes and Communist Parties throughout Eastern Europe and then in the former Soviet Union itself have shattered in the face of irresolvable economic, social, and political crises. The methods of planning and management employed, with this or that variation, in each of these countries were for decades promoted as the only road from capitalism to socialism by the big majority of those in the world who called themselves communists.

The alternative — and irreconcilably different — course advanced by Ernesto Che Guevara during the opening years of the Cuban revolution in the early 1960s is the topic of this book.

'Revolution within the revolution'

The verdict on the so-called Soviet model has now been rendered by history: the USSR and Eastern European countries were moving away from socialism, not toward it. Well prior to the events of the last several years, revolutionaries in the government and Communist Party of Cuba had begun to seek ways to combat the accelerating corrosive consequences of the methods copied from the Soviet Union, which had been increasingly applied in Cuba since the early 1970s. In 1986 the Communist Party launched what was called the "rectification process," in response to growing evidence of political demobilization and demoralization among working people in Cuba as a result of these policies. One by-product of this "revolution within the revolution,"¹ as Fidel Castro referred to it in November 1987, was a renewed interest in learning about the theoretical and practical contributions of Che Guevara to the building of socialism in Cuba.

Having served as a Rebel Army commander in the struggle that toppled the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959, Guevara shouldered a broad range of duties over the next six years in the new revolutionary government and its political leadership. During this period the Cuban workers

and farmers consolidated their political power and expropriated the domestic and foreign landlords and capitalists. The Cuban toilers and their revolutionary leadership began building a communist party capable of organizing working people to defend their revolution, to aid others in the Americas and around the world starting down the same road, and to begin the transition to socialism.

From physician to commander

Born in Rosario, Argentina, in 1928, Guevara had been trained as a physician. He traveled throughout Latin America and became involved in anti-imperialist political activity while living in Guatemala in 1954 during the period of the elected government of Jacobo Arbenz. Following the overthrow of that government in a CIA-organized coup, Guevara was forced to leave Guatemala and went to Mexico City. There he met Fidel Castro in mid-1955 and enlisted in the guerrilla expedition. Castro was organizing to overthrow the Batista regime. His Cuban compañeros nicknamed him "Che," a popular form of greeting in Argentina.

In December 1956 Guevara was part of the expedition that sailed to Cuba aboard the yacht *Granma* to begin the revolutionary armed struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains. Initially the troop doctor, by mid-1957 he was commanding columns of the Rebel Army, as well as organizing Marxist education for its cadres. Following the victory in 1959 he served as head of the Department of Industry of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA); was president of Cuba's National Bank during the crucial year 1960 when domestic- and foreign-owned banks were nationalized, along with most industries; and became head of the Ministry of Industry when it was established in February 1961. Guevara represented Cuba on many trips abroad, in front of the United Nations, and at numerous international conferences.

This book by Carlos Tablada is a study of Guevara's political and theoretical contributions to the economics and politics of the transition to socialism, the product of Che's work as part of the communist leadership of Cuba's working class. "The author," Fidel

Castro remarked in an October 1987 speech, "compiled, studied, and presented in a book the essence of Che's economic ideas, retrieved from many of his speeches and writings—articles and speeches dealing with a subject so decisive in the building of socialism." For a French-speaking readership, most of these articles and speeches by Guevara have either not been translated previously or are long out of print.

Enduring value of Che's ideas

The enduring political value of Guevara's ideas and example was discussed by Castro at some length at the October 1987 ceremony marking the twentieth anniversary of Guevara's murder at the hands of U.S.-trained troops in Bolivia. Guevara had left Cuba in April 1965 to carry out internationalist missions abroad, with the aim of extending the socialist revolution.

"What I ask for modestly at this twentieth anniversary," Castro said in the 1987 talk, "is that Che's economic thought be made known; that it be known here, in Latin America, in the world: in the developed capitalist world, in the Third World, and in the socialist world." It is with the aim of helping in this task that Pathfinder Press in 1989 published an English translation of Carlos Tablada's book and is now publishing this first French edition. Fidel Castro's October 1987 speech, which provides one of the best possible introductions to the place of Che's contributions as part of the living political continuity of the Cuban revolution, serves as the prologue.

* * *

The long emancipation struggle of Cuban working people dates back to the 1868 war of independence against Spanish colonialism. From the crucible of these and subsequent battles emerged leaders such as Antonio Maceo, Máximo Gómez, and José Martí, whose words and revolutionary deeds left a heritage of anti-imperialist intransigence, internationalism, political integrity, selflessness, and courage. The leadership that left Mexico on the *Granma* in 1956 drew strength from this rich revolutionary continuity in uncompromisingly leading the transition from Cuba's national democratic revolution that brought a workers' and

farmers' government to power in the spring of 1959 to the socialist revolution that accelerated in late 1960 and early 1961 in response to the hostile actions of domestic and foreign reaction, above all U.S. imperialism.

The socialist road that Cuban working people set out on at the beginning of the 1960s had been opened some four decades earlier by the October 1917 revolution in Russia. The Bolshevik Party leadership headed by V.I. Lenin went through the world's first experiences in organizing workers and peasants to begin the building

Cuba's socialist road was opened 40 years earlier by 1917 Russian revolution.

of socialism in the course of fighting to advance the world revolution. These efforts, from late 1917 through the end of Lenin's active political life in March 1923, left an invaluable legacy to revolutionists such as Guevara and Castro who later sought to continue Lenin's course. The record of the Soviet government, Communist Party, and Communist International in Lenin's time is rich in lessons in the economics and politics of the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The way workers transform themselves

The socialist revolution, as Guevara explains repeatedly in the works cited by Tablada, marks the first time in history that expanding political participation and revolutionary consciousness of the toiling majority becomes necessary to the economic organization of society. The door is opened for working people to cease being the objects of blind economic laws that determine their living and working conditions and social relations, and instead to begin placing society's productive forces under their own conscious control.

This is not optional, not just one way among others following a successful popular revolution to advance the transition to socialism. The most committed and self-sacrificing vanguard of the working people, organized in a communist party, must lead growing layers of their class in taking more and more control over the political direction and administration of the state and economy. This is the only way workers can transform themselves as they collectively transform the social relations under which they work, produce, and live. It is the only way they can make these social relations among human beings more and more open and direct—tearing away the veils and fetishes behind which the capitalist system hides the brutal consequences of its exploitation of toilers and obscures the unique contribution of labor to all social and cultural progress. Along any other road, society will not advance toward socialism and communism, but will instead—mired in bureaucratic planning and management—regress toward capitalism.

"Our revolution nationalized the domestic economy; it nationalized basic industry, including mining," Guevara explained in an August 1961 speech to a conference of Latin American government officials in Punta del Este, Uruguay. "It nationalized all foreign trade, which is now in the hands of the state, and which we proceeded to diversify by trading with the whole world. It nationalized the banking system in order to have in its hands the efficient instrument with which to exercise the function of credit in accordance with the country's needs. It provides for the participation of the workers in the management of the planned national economy."²

2. Che Guevara, "The Real Meaning of the Alliance for Progress," August 8, 1961, in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder, 1987), p. 276

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1. Fidel Castro, speech closing City of Havana provincial party meeting, November 29, 1987, in *Granma Weekly Review*, December 13, 1987. Hereafter GWR.



Che Guevara visits a factory in the province of Pinar del Río in 1962. Guevara was Cuba's minister of industry after the 1959 revolution.

The fundamentally *political* character of economic questions and decisions during the transition to socialism is central to Guevara's writings and speeches. His contributions in this regard, like those of Lenin, extend well beyond what is normally, and narrowly, thought of as "economics." Che constantly stressed the inseparable interrelationship between the transformation of the social relations of production and the transformation of the political and social consciousness of the working people carrying out this revolutionary process. "To build communism it is necessary, simultaneously with the new material foundations, to build the new man," as he put it in his 1965 article, "Socialism and Man in Cuba."³

Economic and political questions

Thus, Tablada's extensive summary of Guevara's views encompasses a wide range of economic and political questions that confronted revolutionary Cuba. These include:

- the unique character of the transition from capitalism to socialism in contrast to all previous transitions in the history of class society;
- the role of increasing political consciousness and growing control of industry by working people without which this transition will not only never be achieved, but will slide back toward what Fidel Castro, at the beginning of the rectification process, called "a system worse than capitalism";⁴
- the need for a revolutionary leadership of the working class, a communist party;
- the ways in which market, that is, commodity relations carried over from capitalism (the "law of value") do or do not continue to operate in aspects of production and distribution during the transition period: in relations between the state, private, and co-operative sectors; between state enterprises and consumers; and between state enterprises themselves and their transactions with vital social institutions such as schools and hospitals;
- how a course can be charted to consciously and progressively restrict the field of operation of the law of value and its reactionary social consequences;
- the changing function of money, banking, and prices;
- the crucial place of a state monopoly over banking, foreign currency reserves and trade, and domestic wholesale trade;
- the obstacles posed by the use of capitalist categories such as "profitability" in judging social costs and benefits, and in guiding a revolutionary government in the

organization of production to advance its goals;

- the problem of international commerce at world market prices that siphons to imperialist owners an exorbitant portion of the value created by the labor of workers and peasants in the Third World, and the internationalist responsibilities of industrially advanced workers' states in the face of this situation;
- the need to transform social attitudes toward work, and the relationship of this goal to the wage structure, forms of incentives, production norms, encouragement to attain higher educational and skill levels, and voluntary work; and
- the political leadership qualities needed by communists engaged in the construction of socialism, whether on production lines and in the fields, in the administration of state enterprises and institutions, or in the apparatus of the government, armed forces, and Communist Party.

In 1963-64 a public discussion touching on many of these questions took place in

Guevara began the study of Marxism in his late teens.

several Cuban journals. This debate reflected growing conflict between two irreconcilable approaches to economic planning and management, both of which were being used in Cuba during those years. Guevara championed what was called the budgetary finance system, which was being applied under his direction in state enterprises responsible to the Ministry of Industry (some 70 percent of Cuban industry). The other was known as the economic accounting system (or sometimes the financial self-management system). Drawing heavily on contemporary experience in the USSR and Eastern Europe, this system was in use in enterprises organized by the National Institute of Agrarian Reform, then headed by Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, as well as in those accountable to the Ministry of Foreign Trade, directed by Alberto Mora. The articles written by Guevara in the course of this rich discussion are frequently and generously cited by Tablada.⁵

As Guevara worked to help lay a theoretical foundation for the transition to socialism in Cuba, he was in the thick of daily central leadership responsibilities in the revolutionary government and party. Many

5. Articles by Guevara from this debate in the early 1960s, together with discussions from the late 1980s and early 1990s of Che's views, appear in issue no. 8 of the English-language magazine *New Internationalist* and in issue no. 2 of its Spanish-language sister publication *Nueva Internacionalista*. The issue is entitled "Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism."

photographs reproduced in this book record his activity as he carried out this work: his frequent meetings with assemblies of workers in various factories and enterprises and his participation in Sunday voluntary work mobilizations on priority social projects. Guevara immersed himself in the literature discussing the most modern industrial processes in use in other countries. He learned the principles of accounting and took classes in mathematics so he could help advance the application of computerization to economic planning and financial control in

Cuba, a task he considered vital.

Guevara's study of Marxism

Guevara also reached back time and again to the lessons drawn by communist leaders from the experiences of previous generations of working people. He had begun this study of Marxism in his late teens, long before meeting Fidel Castro and other leaders of the July 26 Movement from Cuba. He began reading some of the main works of Karl Marx (whom he affectionately referred to in letters as "St. Carlos") and Frederick Engels, the founders of the modern communist workers' movement, and of Russian communist leader V.I. Lenin. In 1954, 1955, and 1956 Guevara concentrated on political economy through an extensive study of Marx's *Capital*. Later, as part of his revolutionary work in Cuba, he sought to deepen his knowledge of Lenin's writings and speeches from the opening years of the workers' and peasants' republic in Soviet Russia and from congresses of the Communist International. He frequently went back to *Capital*, *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*, and other works by Marx and Engels, including their rich, pre-Marxist writings from prior to 1847.

References to these works by Marx, Engels, and Lenin occur throughout Guevara's speeches and articles. Speaking before a crowd of several hundred thousand Cubans in October 1967, little more than a week after Che's murder, Castro pointed out how Guevara had ceaselessly worked to deepen his understanding of Marxism and combine that knowledge with concrete experience in order not only to advance the worldwide fight for national liberation and socialism but to help lead Cuban working people in the peaceful construction of socialism:

If we looked through the windows of his offices, he had the lights on until all hours of the night, studying, or rather, working or studying. For he was a student of all problems; he was a tireless reader. His thirst for learning was practically insatiable, and the hours he stole from sleep he devoted to study.⁶

* * *

The accomplishments of the workers and farmers of Cuba, many of which are recounted in these pages, including their unstinting internationalism, have earned the views of their communist leadership a hearing in any discussion on the transition from capitalism to socialism. A serious consideration of these matters is otherwise impossible, since the experience of the socialist revolution in Cuba cannot be abstracted from the history of the twentieth century, nor from the future of the twenty-first.

Starting from an oppressive legacy of

6. Castro, "Che's Enduring Contributions to Revolutionary Thought," October 18, 1967, in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 26.

colonial and semicolonial domination at the time of the revolution in 1959, the Cuban toilers through their labor and political commitment transformed social and economic conditions in that country. This transformation—unprecedented, and thus far un-repeated elsewhere in the colonial world—has strengthened the worker-peasant alliance that formed the bedrock of the revolution and its progress from the outset of the struggle in the Sierra Maestra. These economic and social conquests have been registered despite Washington's unrelenting military pressure and despite its ongoing economic embargo, measures aimed at eroding popular support inside Cuba and around the world for the government's revolutionary course.

- Land to till was provided to poor peasants, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and other rural working people, along with credit at low interest and access to needed supplies. On a voluntary basis over the subsequent thirty years, the big majority of Cuban peasants joined farming cooperatives. Most of the former capitalist-owned sugar plantations and many large farms and ranches were organized as state farms, which today encompass some 80 percent of Cuba's agricultural land.

- The production of sugar, Cuba's main export, was in substantial part mechanized, including the backbreaking tasks of harvesting. This modernization made it possible to expand sugar output on state farms and cooperatives while reducing the number of cane cutters from 350,000 before 1959 to one-fifth that number today. This freed up labor for diversified farm production, industrialization, needed construction projects, and social services vital to working people such as education and health care.

- The revolution brought electrification to the big majority of Cuba's rural working people, as well as to the previously poorest layers of the urban working class. Industry, largely restricted to light consumer goods

Continued on next page

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CHE GUEVARA: L'ÉCONOMIE ET LA POLITIQUE DANS LA TRANSITION AU SOCIALISME

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3. Guevara, *Socialism and Man in Cuba* (New York: Pathfinder, 1989), p. 6.

4. Castro, "Important Problems for the Whole of Revolutionary Thought," December 2, 1986, in *New Internationalist*, no. 6, 1987, p. 217. Hereafter *NI*. Also found in *GWR*, December 14, 1986.

Che Guevara and transition to socialism

Continued from previous page

prior to the revolution, has been spread to the production of sugar harvesting combines, automated steel-making, machine tools, electronic equipment, biotechnology, refrigerators and other household goods, and automatic and semiautomatic weapons. Unlike Third World countries still dominated by imperialism, the benefits from economic modernization in Cuba have been used to improve the living and job conditions of working people, not to enrich a handful of foreign and domestic capitalist families.

- A massive literacy campaign in 1961 mobilized 100,000 young people to go into the countryside to teach Cubans to read and write. As a result, illiteracy was virtually eliminated. Since that time a campaign to bring the vast majority of Cubans up to a sixth-grade education has been successfully completed, and the population is on its way to achieving a universal ninth-grade level of education. Throughout the rest of Latin America, illiteracy averages nearly 30 percent of the population.

- A system of legal segregation and race discrimination similar to that which existed throughout the Jim Crow South of the United States in 1959 was outlawed with the triumph of the revolution. And the new laws were enforced. As Nelson Mandela, president of the African National Congress told the Cuban people on July 26, 1991, the revolution's "consistent commitment to the systematic eradication of racism is unparalleled."⁷ The results are everywhere evident in Cuba, especially among the generation that has grown up within the revolution, which today comprises the majority of the population.

- A similar commitment to advancing social and economic equality of women has in 30 years brought about changes in women's status that took 150 years or more to accomplish in what are today the most industrialized capitalist countries.

- A concentration of effort and resources on primary health care, training of doctors and other medical personnel, development of a family doctor system, and the construction of hospitals and clinics has reaped impressive gains. Life expectancy and infant mortality rates compare favorably with industrially developed capitalist countries.

Serving oppressed and exploited

- Moreover, Cuban working people have placed their revolutionary government, their resources, and their skills at the service of oppressed and exploited peoples in struggle throughout the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Many hundreds of thousands of Cubans have volunteered to serve as construction workers, engineers, doctors, teachers, technicians, and soldiers—from Nicaragua to Ethiopia, from Vietnam to Mozambique. Some 300,000 Cubans went to Angola as internationalist volunteers between 1975 and 1988 to aid its government and people in defending themselves against South African invaders and imperialist-backed counterrevolutionaries.

The victory at Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola in the first months of 1988 by the Angolan army, Cuban volunteers, and the South West Africa People's Organisation dealt a decisive military defeat to aggression by Pretoria. The apartheid regime was compelled to sign an agreement that led to Namibia's independence in March 1990 and allowed the return home of the last of Cuba's military volunteers in May 1991. "The defeat of the apartheid army was an inspiration to the struggling people inside South Africa!" said Mandela in his speech to the July 26, 1991, rally in Cuba. "... Cuito Cuanavale has been a turning point in the struggle to free the continent and our country from the scourge of apartheid!"⁸

Despite these achievements, the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba came to the conclusion in the mid-1980s that serious political errors had begun to accumulate during the 1970s that "could have reached the point of being irreversible. We

had to rectify them in time," Fidel Castro explained at the November-December 1986 session of the congress of the Communist Party of Cuba.⁹ Doing so, Castro said, involved reaffirming "essential concepts about what socialism is and how it can be built."¹⁰

Following Che's departure from Cuba in 1965 to carry out internationalist missions, Castro said in the 1987 speech that serves as the prologue to this book, some of his "ideas were incorrectly interpreted and, what's more, incorrectly applied. Certainly no serious attempt was ever made to put them into practice, and there came a time when ideas diametrically opposed to Che's economic thought began to take over."

As a result, while "much has been done to recall his other qualities," Castro said, Che's contribution on these matters "has been largely ignored in our country." The publication of this book by Carlos Tablada in 1987 helped initiate a timely discussion on Guevara's economic thought, in the political context of the rectification process begun the previous year.

'Reacted on time'

Che would have been "appalled" by the road that Cuba had begun to head down, Castro explained in the October 1987 speech, "for he knew that communism could never be attained by wandering down those worn capitalist paths and that to follow along those paths would mean eventually to forget all ideas of solidarity and even internationalism."

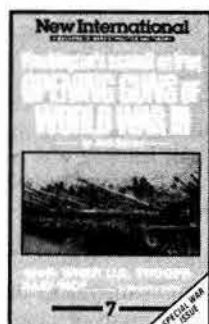
Even the Communist Party itself "was starting to go to pot," Castro said in his closing address to the November-December 1986 party congress session. "But we have reacted in plenty of time so that the party members will not be corrupted, the party will not be corrupted, the young people will not be corrupted, and above all our working class will not be corrupted."¹¹ Rectification went hand and hand with continuing efforts to transform the Communist Party, which encompasses the vanguard of working people in Cuba. Steps toward advancing the proletarian composition of the party's membership and leadership were taken at the February 1986 session of the party congress that immediately preceded and opened the way to the rectification course. In his report on the new Central Committee elected at that congress, Castro stressed the importance of the steps that had been taken to

9. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 218.

10. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 218.

11. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 217.

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Che Guevara participating in a volunteer brigade. The revival of collective voluntary work is at the center of the rectification process.

bring into the leadership more factory workers, more Cubans who are Black, more women, more youth, and more veterans of internationalist missions.¹²

Speaking to the Union of Young Communists in April 1987, Castro explained that over the previous fifteen years the course being charted in Cuba had begun to be justified by the concept that various economic and political mechanisms "would automatically solve problems; the idyllic notion, the stupid notion that mechanisms would do the Party's work for it, that they would build socialism, that they would promote development."¹³

The governmental structure of People's Power, for example, "was a great advance, unquestionably," when it was established in the mid-1970s in Cuba, Castro had explained at the November-December 1986 session of the party congress. But "the naive belief came about that following these changes, these steps forward, the state was going to function perfectly, almost automatically. Later we started to realize that this called for very important political work, an immense task for the party."¹⁴

Other methods cited by Castro that were gaining increased acceptance in Cuba while undermining political consciousness were numerous concepts borrowed either from the USSR or directly from capitalism:

- increasing distribution of food and other necessities through the market at prices determined by supply and demand rather than prioritized to meet social needs;
- evaluation of economic performance of state enterprises measured by their profitability, rather than by their production of socially necessary goods and services, based on strict cost accounting to minimize the expenditure of human labor, material resources, and limited foreign currency reserves for any given output;
- growing competition and market/commodity relations among state-owned enterprises and institutions themselves; and
- increasing reliance on bonuses and individual material incentives while expenditures on the "social wage" (housing, health, education, day care) stagnated, thus widening social inequalities.

"Cuba will never adopt methods, styles, philosophies or characteristics of capitalism," Castro told the quarter million Cubans in Santiago de Cuba who turned out for the annual July 26 rally in 1988. "Socialism and capitalism are two diametrically different things, by definition and by essence."¹⁵

Even state property and the state monopoly of foreign trade, of control over foreign currency transactions and reserves — vital conquests of the Cuban revolution, and the

12. Castro, "Renewal or Death," February 7, 1986, in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 241.

13. Castro, speech at closing session of the Fifth Congress of the Union of Young Communists, April 5, 1987, in *GWR*, April 19, 1987.

14. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 220.

15. Castro, *Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods*, (New York: Pathfinder, 1988), p. 20.

foundation for maintaining the worker-peasant alliance — could not lead toward socialism unless Cuban working people were mobilized to use these tools consciously and politically to advance that goal. While these revolutionary measures were necessary to break the domination of capitalist social relations and make possible economic planning, they were not alone sufficient to advance the construction of socialism.

"The construction of socialism... is fundamentally a political and revolutionary task," Castro explained, echoing one of Guevara's most important themes reviewed

Goal of food self-sufficiency for Cuba became victim of Soviet planning priorities.

in the pages that follow.¹⁶ "We must help raise people's consciousness. The other mechanisms, the economic factors, are means, or auxiliary tools for political and revolutionary work required by a genuine revolution, and, especially, required for the construction of socialism and the path to communism."¹⁷

Devastating political consequences

Using the economic priorities and methods borrowed from the USSR as a guide was having devastating political consequences among a growing social layer in Cuban society. Castro explained at the November-December 1986 session of the party congress that in the years leading up to the launching of the rectification process, a layer of administrators had emerged in state enterprises who "dressed up like capitalists, began to act like capitalists, but without the capitalists' efficiency."¹⁸ They set easily achievable annual production goals in order to garner unearned "overfulfillment" bonuses for themselves and layers of relatively privileged workers. They were obsessed by surpassing quantitative quotas, but couldn't care less about the quality of goods for use by the Cuban people. They hoarded and wasted raw materials, and sold shoddy, overpriced goods to other state enterprises, institutions, and consumers. They cooked their ledgers in order to appear "profitable" in money terms, while paying no attention to the true costs to society in terms of squandered resources and labor time. Their own self-seeking, petty-bourgeois example in turn undermined full use of the working day to advance production for the benefit of society, eroded workers' consciousness and discipline, and deepened cynicism.

"Whenever there is a clash between the interests of an enterprise and the interests

16. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 221.

17. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 227-28.

18. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 228.

of the Revolution and society," Castro explained in April 1987, "... the interests of the Revolution and of society must prevail."¹⁹

"We are not going to have our socialist enterprises competing with each other," he emphasized at the 1986 party congress, "because that has nothing to do with the idea and conception of socialism; it has nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism. They can emulate each other but that's not competition in capitalist fashion, with its dramatic consequences."²⁰ Instead of factory administrators who operate along these lines, he said, a goal of the rectification process must be that the person in charge of a state enterprise, whether a member of the party or not, "must truly be a communist ... a revolutionary! And not a communist playing at capitalism, a communist dressed up as a capitalist, or, mark you, a capitalist dressed up as a communist."²¹

Workers are the most important force

This alone would not solve the problems even at the factory level, however. The workers and unions must no longer leave decisions about costs, quality, and performance "to the wise men, the brains, the technocrats," he explained to a conference of Cuban trade union leaders in January 1987. "It is time for every worker to know about the problems of his factory,"²² he said. "You are the party's most important force in the battle to rectify errors, struggle against negative tendencies and build socialism and communism in our country."²³ But this does not mean that workers should join with administrators in seeking to maximize the "profitability"—and accompanying bonuses—of a particular enterprise at the expense of other groups of workers or of society as a whole. In the transition to socialism, Castro explained to the trade union leaders, workers are not the collective owners of the factory or enterprise in which they happen to be employed. "The workers own all the factories in the country and it is in the interests of all workers to have all factories, schools, and services functioning well."²⁴

While fully egalitarian conditions cannot be achieved short of communism, Castro explained at the January 1987 trade union conference, society will not march toward that historic goal unless conscious steps are taken to narrow inequalities in wages and living conditions. *Granma Weekly Review* reported that Castro "said that the wage reform [of the early 1980s] raised the salaries of those who were already earning a lot but forgot about the modest worker." If this were not corrected then "little by little we will fall into a society based on a hierarchy, with a series of social categories of all kinds and follow in the footsteps of capitalism in this respect."²⁵ To remedy this situation, the Cuban government at the beginning of rectification gave priority to raising the minimum wages and living conditions of the lowest paid sections of working people, thus narrowing the gap between them and the highest paid.

At the same time, a new attitude toward work was fostered—something Guevara had placed great emphasis on in the opening years of the revolution, as Tablada recounts. As working people are drawn into the administration of the state and economy, they are

increasingly attracted to work for the benefit of society, both nationally and internationally, not just for themselves and their families. At the November-December 1986 session of the party congress, Castro pointed to a delegate who had twice volunteered for internationalist missions in Angola, asking what material incentive could lead to such self-sacrificing conduct. "I wonder, what bonus could we give him, what mechanisms could we utilize with him and the many thousands of others like him?" Castro asked.²⁶

Revival of voluntary work

In order to advance along this communist course, Cuban revolutionists placed at the center of the rectification process the revival of collective voluntary work on the most needed social projects. In his speech on the twentieth anniversary of Guevara's



Militant/Selva Nebbia
Members of the Alquizar agricultural brigade. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans have participated in brigades to meet Cuba's food needs.

death, Castro explained that during the previous decade:

Voluntary work, the brainchild of Che and one of the best things he left us during his stay in our country and his part in the revolution, was steadily on the decline. ... The bureaucrat's view, the technocrat's view that voluntary work was neither basic nor essential gained more and more ground.

The political retreat inside Cuba during the latter half of the 1970s and early 1980s on fronts such as voluntary work, however, was mitigated by the internationalist response of Cubans to popular victories in Vietnam and Africa, and especially by the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions in 1979. These victories inspired hundreds of thousands of Cubans to volunteer for internationalist duties in these countries and elsewhere. In response to escalating U.S. military pressure, millions of Cubans mobilized for the Marches of the Fighting People and joined in the newly established Territorial Troop Militia in 1980. "During this period," Castro explained at the Communist youth congress in April 1987, "I would say that the revolutionary spirit found shelter in defense activities, in the Territorial Troop Militia mobilizations, in military training, in the millions of hours dedicated to these activities."²⁷ The response of Cuba's working people to improve qualitatively the de-

fense of the country and to aid those making revolutionary advances abroad held off some of the worst consequences of the retreat and reinforced values and attitudes of solidarity and self-sacrifice that could be called on with the opening of the rectification process.

Following 1986, voluntary social labor was revived on a level comparable only to the early years of the Cuban and Russian revolutions—but on a larger scale and with greater centrality to the revolution than even these earlier experiences. Tens of thousands of full-time volunteers joined "minibrigades" building day-care centers, housing, clinics, and other projects. Hundreds of thousands more Cubans volunteered after school or work and on weekends.

Castro called special attention to the grave consequences for Cuban women of the snail's pace in constructing new day-care centers prior to the relaunching of the minibrigade movement. Between 1980 and 1985, for example, only five new day-care centers in Havana had been planned, and only two had been built. Through the minibrigades, more than 110 were constructed in 1987-88 alone, making it possible for thousands more women to join the work force and participate more fully as equals. Castro told delegates to a November 1987 Havana provincial meeting of the Communist Party:

Those who advocated reactionary ideas within the revolution argued that building a day-care center was a social expense. Social expenses were no good, investing in production was good; as if those who work in the factories were ... male and female mules and not human beings, not men and women with their problems, especially women with their problems. ... And whenever they say no day-care center, you can be sure there is a technocratic, bureaucratic, reactionary concept at work.²⁸

Most full-time minibrigade members were workers who volunteered to be released from their regular jobs for a couple of years, receiving whatever wage they had been getting in their workplace. The minibrigades took on the character of a growing social movement led by some of Cuba's most conscious and disciplined working people who were convinced that the brigades opened the road toward returning to proletarian methods of meeting Cuba's social needs. Minibrigades had first been launched in Cuba at the opening of the 1970s. Like voluntary work efforts in general, these projects were abandoned by the

end of that decade as inconsistent with the new planning and management methods modeled on those in the USSR.

"The minibrigades, which were destroyed for the sake of such mechanisms," Castro said in the speech that serves as the prologue to this book, "are now rising again from their ashes like a phoenix and demonstrating the significance of that mass movement, the significance of that revolutionary path of solving the problems that the theoreticians, technocrats, those who do not believe in man, and those who believe in two-bit capitalism had stopped and dismantled."

* * *

In the summer of 1989, three years into the rectification process, the growing political consciousness and self-confidence of Cuban working people collided with the corruption and privileges of a social layer in the state apparatus. In July 1989 Diocles Torralbas, minister of transportation and a member of the party's Central Committee, was convicted on corruption charges and sentenced to twenty years in prison. That same month Arnaldo Ochoa—a popular division general who had been awarded the medal of Hero of the Republic of Cuba in 1984 for his role in commanding troops in Ethiopia and Angola, and a longtime Central Committee member—was convicted on charges of drug trafficking and treason and executed, along with two high-ranking officials in the Ministry of the Interior and another army officer. In August, José Abrantes, the minister of the interior and a Central Committee member, was convicted of misuse of government funds and abuse of authority and sentenced to twenty years.

Two worlds

In his speech before Cuba's Council of State reviewing the conviction and sentencing of Ochoa, Fidel Castro pointed to the "two worlds" in Cuban society whose conflict had been brought into the open by such cases of high-level abuse and corruption. "What do the lives of these gentlemen have to do with the life of a worker?" Castro asked. "What do the customs of these gentlemen have in common with the customs of our working class? They are two different worlds. And we cannot rest until there is one single world here: not the world of the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie, but the world of our workers, our working class, our proletariat, our farmers."²⁹ Castro's speech, and the remarks of all the other members of the Council of State, were broadcast nationwide on Cuban television. It was notable that several members of the body emphasized the necessity of returning to the course charted by Che Guevara if the social chasm revealed by the Ochoa affair was to be closed.

The wherewithal to continue the volunteer construction brigades and social advances that marked the opening years of rectification, however, evaporated at the opening of the 1990s as a result of the severe economic shortages and dislocations caused by the collapse of Cuba's trade with the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; this trade had previously accounted for some 85 percent of Cuba's imports. Imports from

Continued on next page

28. Castro, speech closing City of Havana provincial party meeting, November 29, 1987, in *GWR*, December 13, 1987.

29. Castro, speech to Council of State, July 9, 1989, in *Militant*, August 11, 1989.

Che Guevara, Cuba and the Road to Socialism

In *New International* no. 8

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19. Castro, speech at Fifth Congress of the Union of Young Communists, in *GWR*, April 19, 1987.

20. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 223.

21. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, p. 223.

22. Castro, speech to plenary meeting of the National Council of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, January 14, 1987, in *GWR*, February 1, 1987.

23. Castro, speech to plenary meeting of the National Council of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, January 14, 1987, in *GWR*, February 1, 1987.

24. Castro, speech to plenary meeting of the National Council of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, January 14, 1987, in *GWR*, February 1, 1987.

25. Castro, speech to plenary meeting of the National Council of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, January 14, 1987, in *GWR*, February 1, 1987.

26. Castro, "Important Problems," in *NI*, no. 6, 1987, pp. 227-28.

27. Castro, speech at Fifth Congress of the Union of Young Communists, in *GWR*, April 19, 1987.

Che Guevara and transition to socialism

Continued from previous page

Eastern Europe virtually disappeared by the end of 1990; in 1991 imports from the Soviet Union plummeted to only 30 percent of their 1989 level and have plunged further since then. Overall, Cuba's imports were reduced by almost 60 percent over that two-year period. There are acute shortfalls of oil, grain, animal fodder, basic foodstuffs, construction materials, spare parts, and other goods. Reserves of foreign currency are under enormous strains.

'A special period in times of peace'

As a result of this rapid and drastic contraction in imports, and consequently production, the Cuban government and Communist Party have initiated a package of measures aimed at meeting the requirements of what they call a "special period in times of peace." Not only has construction been stopped on social projects, but strict priorities have had to be placed on capital investments, allotments for major civil engineering projects, and purchases of raw materials and spare parts and renewal of amortization funds for many state enterprises. Resources and labor have been channeled toward projects deemed most essential to advancing self-sufficiency in food production and increasing hard currency earnings to purchase vital energy and industrial imports.

In his opening speech to the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party in October 1991, Castro summarized some of the consequences of the collapse in Cuba's trading links:

Many people still don't understand what the special period is and the problems it entails. Many are still dreaming about things that we were doing, problems we were solving, and which we had to suspend suddenly when starting with the process of rectification we carried out a large-scale program in a series of fields. We were building housing at a tremendous rate; we had reorganized the minibrigade movement, for example. We were giving an enormous boost to the production of building materials.... There was cement for all of the social projects, housing, economic projects, hotels and everything else.

That is, starting with the process of rectification, we tackled many problems in order to solve many of the material difficulties we had.... We didn't lose a minute, but used the few resources we had to boost all of those plans. We built child-care centers, special schools, polyclinics, and hospitals.³⁰

Working people gained confidence

What the Cuban revolution has accom-

30. Castro, opening speech to Fourth Congress of Communist Party of Cuba, October 10, 1991, in *Granma Internacional*, November 3, 1991.



Delegates at the Union of Young Communists congress in April 1992. The UJC has helped organize volunteer brigades to the countryside as part of the effort to achieve food self-sufficiency.

Militant/Aaron Ruby

plished since 1990 in the face of such unprecedented economic blows is something no capitalist country in the world could have done. In fact, it is something that Cuba itself could not have done had working people not gained confidence through the rectification process by taking on bureaucratic resistance to their collective efforts to keep the revolution moving forward. The revolution's capacity to survive is a product of the political consciousness and spirit of volunteer labor on the part of millions of Cuban toilers.

In face of acute shortages of fuel and other inputs, the Cuban government mobilized large numbers of volunteer cane cutters to minimize the depletion of scarce petroleum resources in tractors and mechanized harvesters; the sugar harvest dropped in 1991 and fell even further in 1992. Workers and farmers on state farms and cooperatives are using growing numbers of oxen in farm production and transport during the "special period." Large quantities of bicycles have been imported, and begun to be produced in Cuba, to compensate for necessary cuts in the extent and frequency of public transportation. Private energy use and purchase of gasoline have been sharply curtailed. Shortages of energy, raw materials, and spare parts have led to the shutdown of factories and a shortening of working hours and days in other enterprises.

The government has taken steps to ensure that the greatly reduced quantities of neces-

sities (either imports or items dependent on imports for their production) are distributed as equitably as possible. Virtually all food items (except fresh fruits and vegetables), clothes, soap, and other basic consumer goods in very short supply are strictly rationed. While the shortages bring substantial hardships, and the distribution system is plagued with bureaucratic inefficiencies, the assurance through the rationing system that everyone gets an equitable, even if small, amount of what is available is welcomed by most working people in Cuba.

The construction of new housing, child-care centers, and other social projects has been halted, and the special contingents pared back. The momentum from the volunteer labor mobilizations during the opening years of rectification, however, has been redirected toward a major effort to achieve food self-sufficiency in Cuba. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans have volunteered for intensive two-week work brigades in the fields of state farms. Special contingents of volunteers who sign up for a couple of years are constructing dams and expanded irrigation systems and waterworks, as well as providing a skilled work force in agriculture. In Havana and other cities, a major focus of construction is on refrigerated storage depots for farm produce and an expanded network of distribution centers. As a result, there has been a marked increase in the availability of vegetables, tubers, and fruits since the food program began.

There is growing confidence among working people that Cuba will, over time, be able to meet its food needs.

Legacy of imperialism

Dependency on food imports in Cuba—as throughout the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and most of Asia and the Pacific—is a legacy of imperialist superexploitation. Cultivation and animal husbandry to feed the population in these countries were destroyed and arable land used to raise export crops to profit imperialist businesses, while meat, grain, and processed foods were imported from Europe, North America, Japan, and Australia and New Zealand. In the "underdeveloped world, in the world of hunger," Guevara told an international trade conference in March 1964, "projects for increasing food production—that is, to be able to eat—are actually discouraged in order to maintain present prices. This is the inexorable law of the philosophy of plunder, which must cease to be the rule in relations between peoples."³¹

"In terms of agriculture," Guevara said in a 1961 speech, "Cuba has set itself the goal of reaching self-sufficiency in the production of food," centering on crops and meat products suited to its soil and climatic conditions.³²

This goal, too, was a victim of the turn toward the economic planning priorities of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the early 1970s, which accompanied Cuba's entry into the Moscow-dominated trading bloc, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). Cuba's initial steps toward food self-sufficiency were largely shelved, as the role assigned to Cuba in what the CMEA considered an "international socialist division of labor" was the export of sugar, citrus fruit, and nickel and the import of many food products along with light and heavy industrial goods. Steps initiated during rectification to begin redressing this imbalance were necessarily accelerated in the early 1990s, when both the CMEA and Cuba's long-standing trading patterns simultaneously disappeared.

With the aim of rapidly increasing hard currency earnings, the Cuban government is giving priority to investment in tourism, nickel production, and medical and pharmaceutical products. It is encouraging joint ventures with foreign capital to expand investment in these sectors and pry open markets to counter the pressures of Washington's embargo.

The difficult conditions during the "special period" provide a new rationalization

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31. Guevara, "The Philosophy of Plunder Must Cease," March 25, 1964, in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 313.

32. Guevara, "The Real Meaning of the Alliance for Progress," August 8, 1961, in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 288.

Departure of Gates in Los Angeles won't end police brutality

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — The close of a major chapter in the history of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) was marked by the departure of Daryl Gates as police chief and his replacement by Willie Williams.

Gates had come to symbolize the violence and racism of the LAPD. Williams, former top cop in Philadelphia, is the first Black chief of police in Los Angeles. His appointment is intended to help improve the badly battered image of the police department.

Gates contributed substantially to escalating police brutality. But the brutality did not begin with his appointment and it will not end with his departure.

Williams begins his tenure projecting the image of a reasonable cop, a chief who will curb brutality and racism.

But a consideration of the nature and role of the police confirms that cops will remain what they are intended to be — instruments of ruling-class repression.

Gates ended his 14-year rule as chief on June 26 and Williams was sworn in the same day. Gates will enjoy a retirement pension of \$126,000 a year.

His decision to retire was the culmination of a chain of political events triggered by the March 3, 1991, police beating of Rodney King.

In Los Angeles, the anger was deepest in working-class communities, especially among Blacks and Latinos, who are special targets of police abuse and brutality.

That anger quickly focused on Gates, an outspoken racist. His blunt declarations — Latinos are "lazy"; Blacks are different than "normal" people — were recognized as a green light for cop violence.

Among the protesters against the King beating, the rallying cry quickly became, "Gates must go!"

Initially, the protests were significant. In the Black and Latino communities, hun-

dreds of people jammed into public hearings to recount the injustices they had suffered at the hands of the police, demanding justice for Rodney King and the ouster of Gates.

A month after the King beating, 5,000 people marched through downtown Los Angeles to the police headquarters, demanding, "Gates must go."

The demonstration had the official support of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, as well as civil rights, church, and civil liberties groups.

The people who rule the city — the bankers, industrialists, big-time real estate sharks — moved to defuse the situation.

Mayor Tom Bradley announced formation of a commission to study the issue of police violence. The panel was composed of "illustrious" citizens — corporate executives, prestigious lawyers, and educators.

The commission was headed by Warren Christopher. Influential in city politics, Christopher is a former U.S. deputy attorney general and former deputy secretary of state.

Bradley declared that the commission's purpose was to "restore the public's confidence in the cop on the street."

Its members recognized that an old-fashioned whitewash of the LAPD wouldn't work. Something more was needed.

Juggling a hatful of statistics, the commission asserted that brutal practices were the work of a small number of "bad guys" on the force. The big majority of cops, they insisted, were fine public servants.

The commission recommended a series of measures designed to give city hall a greater grip over the police department which, under Gates, had increasingly become a power unto itself.

Recognizing that Gates had become counterproductive, it was recommended that he step aside.

The report was released July 9, 1991, and 13 days later the chief announced that he



Former Los Angeles police chief Gates

intended to retire — April 1992.

The commission also recommended that lifetime tenure for the chief of police be scrapped and that future chiefs be limited to two five-year terms.

It proposed that the civilian police commission, traditionally little more than a rubber stamp for the chief, be given added voice in LAPD policy-making.

Because these and other changes required revision of the city charter, they were codified into an initiative and submitted to the voters in the election held this past June.

In voting for Proposition "F," the yes vote won handily, racking up a 2-1 majority.

A no vote had been urged by Gates, the cops' "union," and other rightists.

The campaign for a yes vote had major corporate support. Endorsers and contributors included the Bank America Corp., the Walt Disney company, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Other backers of "F" included Chief Williams and two former Los Angeles police chiefs.

Various church and liberal figures in the Black and Latino communities also advocated a yes vote.

The Socialist Workers Party opposed the campaigns for and against "F" and called for a "not voting" stance.

A party statement noted that proponents of the measure argued that its passage would help "restore accountability and trust between the LAPD and the people it protects and serves."

The only people whom the cops protect

and serve, the Socialist Workers Party explained, are the ruling rich.

With a deepening world recession, the statement added, there is a drive to put the burden of the crisis onto the backs of working people.

Speaking at a pre-election meeting on this issue, Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers candidate for Congress in the 37th District, pointed to the terrible violence meted out to the Iraqi people by U.S. forces there and the increasing cop violence at home.

In both cases, he charged, the basic aim is the same: "to brutalize working people and put us in our 'place.'"

Measures like Proposition "F," he said, do nothing to end this.

In fact, he declared, the yes campaign on "F" was "a diversion from the struggle to expose police brutality and to curb the cops."

"Gates-led reactionaries," he emphasized, "must be answered with political mobilizations in the streets."

Looking back at the chain of events since the King beating, it becomes evident that ongoing political mobilizations in the streets were exactly what the situation called for.

After the initial protests, the leading figures in the Black and Latino communities backed away from organizing further action.

The top officialdom of the union movement lapsed into total, shameful silence.

With that situation, the four cops indicted for beating King were able to win a change of venue to Ventura County where Blacks are 2 percent of the population. A jury was impaneled that did not include a single Black person.

The prosecution leaned over backward to avoid the issue of LAPD racism, even though it was at the heart of the police assault on King. It even refused to call King to the witness stand so that he could explain for himself what had been done to him.

Meanwhile, the defense used the televised trial to continue their racist smear campaign against King and to promote their reactionary notions of "law and order."

When the not guilty verdict came in, it shocked people everywhere. In many cities here and abroad, protest demonstrations were held. In Minneapolis, 6,000 people marched.

What was the situation in Los Angeles?

There was deep-going fury at the outrageous verdict, that provided every basis for an organized, giant protest demonstration. Such a massive action would have put powerful pressure on the federal government to prosecute the four cops.

But again, the misleaders of the Black community and the unions refused to act. They counseled keeping calm — and voting for Proposition "F."

South Central Los Angeles exploded with blind rage. Fires flared, and shops were emptied of their merchandise in antipolice rioting. Most of those hit were small shopkeepers.

The experience underlined that the absence of leadership and political perspective is costly.

On June 26, Amnesty International issued a report on police brutality in Los Angeles.

An introduction declares that its investigation showed "a serious problem of excessive force by police — a problem which has gone unchecked for many years. . . . All too often this force has led to serious injury or death; at times it has even amounted to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. . . ."

Gates dismissed the findings as the work of "a bunch of knucklehead liberals." Williams' response was smoother.

Williams said he had not yet read the report, but added, "Those of us in law enforcement are used to blanket indictments." He indicated he would use a balanced approach. Where there are problems of brutality, he asserted, he will "point them out and . . . do it publicly."

"And," he said, "the same when officers are doing a good job and need a lot of support."

That touches on what will prove to be Williams' key assignment — to try to build public support for the cops where Gates couldn't.

Che Guevara and the transition to socialism

Continued from previous page

for privileged layers within the state and party apparatus to argue that whatever the merits of Guevara's economic and social perspectives on the transition to socialism, now is not the time to begin applying them in Cuba. The opposite is the truth, however.

Guevara's integrated approach

In the speech that opens this book, Fidel Castro insists that the views fought for by Che in the opening years of the Cuban revolution are "absolutely relevant today, ideas without which I am convinced communism cannot be built." That remains the challenge to working people and revolutionaries in Cuba today. Given their determination to surmount the enormous difficulties created by the economic and political pressures of U.S. imperialism, compounded by the collapse of economic relations with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, now more than ever the challenge is to move toward reorganizing economic planning and management, and the social relations that underlie them, along the lines championed by Ernesto Che Guevara that are described in the pages that follow.

As this book amply demonstrates, Guevara's perspectives — codified in the budgetary finance system — were not disconnected proposals, practical only in "the best of times." They were an integrated approach to organize and mobilize the collective labor of working people to adjust to whatever particular objective conditions they confronted. They provided a framework for the working class, in alliance with toiling farmers, to structure the economic and social organization of its state and economy to advance the construction of socialism, and in the process to transform themselves into a more politically conscious, self-confident, and proletarian component of an internationalist communist movement.

omist who teaches at the University of Havana and has worked in the management of Cuban state enterprises. He is an associate of Cuba's Center for the Study of the Americas and of the Center for Research on the World Economy. His manuscript of this book, completed in 1984, was awarded the Ernesto Che Guevara Special Prize in the 1987 literary competition of the Havana-based cultural institution Casa de las Américas.

A first edition of Tablada's manuscript was published in Cuba in 1987 in two limited printings with the title *El pensamiento económico de Ernesto Che Guevara* (The economic thought of Ernesto Che Guevara). When a second edition was published under the same title by the publishing house of Casa de las Américas in early 1988, it became a best-selling title. The initial run of 250,000 was sold out in Cuba within weeks.

This French edition has been translated from the manuscript of a third Cuban edition, and incorporates several additional citations from Guevara's works suggested by the author. The translation into French was done by Léonne Goldstein Mayero with the help of a team of volunteers in Paris and Montreal. The French edition was edited by Michel Dugré of Montreal.

Since the publication of this book in Spanish, Tablada has traveled widely, speaking on Che Guevara's political and theoretical contributions and their relevance to the Cuban revolution today. In Latin America he has visited Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela, more than once in several cases. In the fall of 1989 he conducted a two-week speaking tour of Canada. In April-May 1990 he spoke in some thirty cities and towns across the United States, returning in November-December 1991 for another U.S. tour of fifteen cities. In late 1990 and early 1991, Tablada toured ten countries in Western Europe: Britain, Denmark, the Faeroe Islands, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Norway,

Spain, and Sweden. He has spoken in Italy in 1988 and 1989. The publication of this French-language edition coincides with a fall 1992 European speaking tour.

Footnotes to the quotations used in the text indicate a French-language source when one exists and is in print; French translations that are out of print are indicated in the list of further readings. The translation of quotations from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels has been taken from the *Selected Works*, unless otherwise noted. Translations of quotations from V.I. Lenin that appear in the text are taken from the French-language edition of Lenin's *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers). Minor editorial improvements in these translations have been made in a few cases.

The most complete edition of Guevara's writings and speeches in print is the nine-volume *Ernesto Che Guevara: Escritos y discursos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1977). A seven-volume edition of Guevara's works published in limited numbers by the Ministry of Sugar in 1967 has long been unavailable. Quotations from Guevara cited from existing French translations are indicated in the footnotes; others have been newly translated for this French-language edition. The extensive bibliography compiled by Tablada and published here, drawn largely from the Ministry of Sugar edition, indicates the extent and breadth of Guevara's writings and speeches. Much work still remains to bring this material as well as many unpublished manuscripts and speeches by Guevara into print. We hope that Pathfinder's publication, first in English and now French, of this survey of Guevara's contributions is a step toward the publication of more and more of his works and their translation into both languages in coming years.

We are grateful for the photographs that have been made available for this edition by Prensa Latina and *Granma* newspaper.

— August 1, 1992

* * *

Carlos Tablada, born in 1948, is an econ-

Antitax protest by Senecas in New York forces state authorities to back down

BY MELISSA HARRIS
AND STEVE CRAINE

CATTARAUGUS RESERVATION, New York — Protests by hundreds of Senecas on the Allegheny and Cattaraugus reservations in western New York in mid-July forced the state government to retreat from its attempts to impose sales taxes on gasoline and cigarettes sold on the reservations.

On July 17 an appeals court granted an injunction against enforcement of the tax. The same day, the State Highway Patrol agreed to stay off Native land.

These victories in the ongoing battle over the sovereignty of New York's six Native nations were won by the initiative of young Senecas on the two reservations who temporarily shut down several highways, including the New York State Thruway, which cross their reservations.

Since 1989 when a new tax law was enacted, the state has been trying to circumvent provisions of federal treaties dating back to the 18th century. These treaties explicitly recognized the right of Native peoples to conduct business on their land free from federal or state taxation.

In the face of a highly publicized budget crisis, the state is trying to recover some \$50 million in "lost" revenue from the untaxed gas and cigarette sales to non-Natives. On July 9 the state won a court ruling on this issue, and gasoline and cigarette distributors began to try to collect taxes from stations on the Cattaraugus Reservation.

The Senecas responded with educational leafletting to passing motorists, appeals to state government officials, and many meetings on the reservation. After a few days, some young Senecas decided to build protest bonfires along the section of the thruway that crosses the reservation, about 30 miles southwest of Buffalo.

Scott Snyder was one of about 30 people who took part in the first thruway protest on July 13. "Somebody had to do something. We had to do something to wake everybody up," he told us later.

On the 13th and the following night, small groups built fires and kept state troopers at bay. By the third night, July 15, the protesters' ranks had grown to more than 200 and the tactic spread to the Allegheny Reservation, 30 miles to the south.

State troopers attacked the Cattaraugus demonstrators, bringing in fire trucks, and arresting 14 and brutalizing dozens of others. Snyder and Linda Doxtator told us they witnessed troopers beating not only the protesters but other Natives who were simply passing through the area.

A partly paralyzed man was pulled from his car and beaten. One young man had his arm fractured in three places, Doxtator reported.

While an injured state police commander was evacuated by helicopter to a Buffalo hospital, Snyder said the police refused to let the reservation ambulance through to aid injured Senecas.

Smoke from burning tires forced the closure of a 30-mile stretch of the thruway for several hours.

The next day a meeting of 500 of the reservation's 3,000 residents decided to demand the troopers get off the reservation by 6:00 p.m. the following day. The state waited until five minutes before the deadline and then withdrew. They have promised not to enter Native land again without permission from the Native authorities.

Meanwhile, the taxation issue itself is



Senecas protesting a new sales tax on reservations are confronted by police in New York State

also on hold. The same evening that the state cops withdrew, a court of appeals judge issued a temporary injunction against the collection of the disputed taxes.

"Many of our people still feel the government is lying to us," said Linda Doxtator. "The young people are still meeting to discuss how to be ready for another confrontation if it becomes necessary."

"I was proud of them for just going out and doing what was needed," she said, "while the Tribal Council and most of the rest of us were having meeting after meeting discussing things like what color to make the bumper stickers. I tell the young people never to be ashamed to be called a radical."

Doxtator explained that the gas and cigarette sales are a vital part of the reservation's economy. "The Nation runs two service stations, a campground, and a bingo hall," she told us. But there are no major groceries, clothing stores, car dealers, or other businesses on the reservation, so "most of our money goes out of the reservation. All we have are the gas and cigarettes."

"Fifty years ago," added Snyder, "we were selling beads and moccasins and they never bothered us. Now that we're making some money they are trying to stop us."

"Taxing these things will just be an opening to many other kinds of intervention," said Doxtator. "Eventually it can lead to taking our land. That's why everyone wanted to fight."

A leaflet produced on the reservation also pointed to the racist character of the state's

proposal that each customer at reservation stores would have to identify themselves as Native or non-Native, so the amount of taxable sales could be calculated.

Doxtator and Snyder reported that many Senecas had supported the Mohawk occupation to defend their land at Oka, Quebec, two years ago. "We did collections here and a few guys stayed up there on the barricades for a while," Doxtator said.

The Senecas have also appealed for support from non-Natives. Many have been supportive, they told us. At one point, a number of truck drivers agreed to drive through the Senecas' stretch of the thruway at five-miles-per hour, effectively tying up traffic for some time.

"The main thing is unity," Snyder emphasized. "I guess this is what it takes. And we can do it again. We're having meetings almost every day to plan out what to do next."

White supremacist sentenced to jail in Minneapolis

BY MAREA HIMELGRIN

MINNEAPOLIS — Tom David, a white supremacist who attacked an antiracist activist last February at the University of Minnesota, was sentenced to 60 days in the Hennepin County Workhouse by Judge Richard Solum on July 17, 1992.

David must serve three days of the jail term beginning July 31 and will be subject to serving the rest of it in the next year if he has contact with the victim of his assault — Martin O'Conner — violates probation, or commits a similar crime.

David, who has been trying to form the White Student Union at the university, sprayed O'Conner in the face with tear gas after David was asked to leave a campus meeting sponsored by Anti-Racist Action.

Prosecutor Stacy Fuller agreed to drop charges of unauthorized use of a tear gas compound and disorderly conduct in exchange for a guilty plea by David to the charge of assault in the fifth degree.

"It's good to see a fascist-minded individual like Tom David put behind bars for even a few days for his criminal conduct," commented Chris Nisan, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 5th District and a leader over the last year of protests against the White Student Union.

"The more people who know about this sentence the better," continued Nisan. "It needs to stand as a warning to other Nazi admirers that they can't run wild in the streets using force and violence against those who disagree with their reactionary ideas."

Pro-choice activists in Wichita successfully defend abortion clinics

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA

WICHITA, Kansas — Antiabortion forces organized by the Lambs of Christ and the Wichita Rescue movement failed to mobilize sufficient forces to shut down the Women's Health Care Services clinic in Wichita, Kansas.

The victory for women's rights came during a week of antiabortion protests billed as "Lifeweek," which opened on July 12.

"It does not appear that we have the groundwork to motivate the people to arise as they did last year," said Bill Curry, who works with Operation Rescue. Last year's clinic blockades in Wichita lasted six weeks and resulted in more than 2,700 arrests.

In preparation for "Lifeweek," pro-choice forces in Wichita united in a citywide coalition, and the three clinics which provide abortion services began coordinating the physical defense of their facilities. Many involved in clinic defense became active after Operation Rescue left Wichita last year. At that point the city council said it was up to the clinics, not the city or state, to organize defense against the physical attacks by rightist forces.

Although the clinic defenders did not always outnumber the antiabortion forces, they were sufficiently organized to keep the clinic open. Police arrested 51 antichoice activists as they attempted to cross three-foot high snow fences surrounding the clinic. At the end of the week, 45 remained in jail on \$2,000 to \$3,000 cash bonds for refusing to identify themselves to police.

On Saturday, when antichoice forces made their final attempt to blockade the clinic, they were met by women's rights fighters who outnumbered them 2-1.

Michael Dodds, executive director of Wichita Rescue Movement and an executive in the Pizza Hut Corp., said, "I think that the massive rescues at will are probably over." But despite the setbacks suffered by

antichoice forces this week in Wichita, Dodds says they have not given up. "There's a lot of tactics we can do in the meantime to make it difficult for abortionists."

A report in the July 19 *Wichita Eagle* stated that antichoice groups in the Wichita area, including the Lambs of Christ and Missionaries to the Pre-Born, are considering more "radical" tactics such as clinic "invasions."

Activists in Wichita, many of whom had participated in the April 5 Washington, D.C., March for Women's Lives and in clinic defenses around the country, said they will continue activities in defense of the clinics and a woman's right to choose.

300 in Houston rally to demand: 'Freedom for Aldape Guerra'

BY MICHAEL CHAMBERLAIN

HOUSTON — Some 300 supporters of Ricardo Aldape Guerra marched and rallied here July 4. Aldape, a 30-year-old Mexican-born worker, has been on death row for 10 years.

March participants, mainly Chicano and Mexican, came from Phoenix and Denver, as far west as San Jose, California, as far north as Chicago, and as far south as the Rio Grande Valley. A delegation from northern Mexico, which included the parents of Aldape, also took part.

Marchers carried placards with a portrait of Aldape, which proclaimed in Spanish, "I am innocent!" and others which said "Save the life of Ricardo Aldape Guerra." As the demand rang out, "What do we want for Ricardo?" marchers responded, "Justice and freedom!"

Aldape was framed up and convicted of killing a Houston cop. Eyewitnesses are now prepared to testify to his innocence and

an international campaign has grown demanding his freedom.

Alvaro Luna, coordinator of the Ricardo Aldape Guerra defense committee, addressed the crowd at a rally following the march. "We know that defense of Aldape is defense of ourselves," he said. "If we don't raise our voices we will continue to be abused, discriminated against, and marginalized."

Luna noted the conspicuous absence of Democratic and Republican party politicians. "Where are our elected officials?" he demanded. "We have continuously made an effort to reach out to them. They parade around as your leaders but only at election time."

The rally was followed by a performance of traditional Mexican music and dance.

The day before, 100 representatives met from around the United States to form an ongoing structure and discuss future activities.

Paperworkers in New Zealand launch strike

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers

lation, passed in 1991, has freed the employers' hands to abolish national union contracts, block union recognition, and hire non-union labor.

The company has begun organizing to reopen its struck Auckland recycling plant with nonunion

ing and rail companies laid off hundreds of workers.

The province-wide settlement included a \$1.10-per-hour increase over two years and improvements in pensions. Workers at several mills are continuing to strike over unresolved local issues.

Steelworkers accept concession contract

Facing threats of plant closings, workers at McLouth Steel in Trenton, Michigan voted July 8 to accept a concessionary agreement. A week earlier union members had voted down this same proposal by a 3-1 margin.

In 1988 the workers, members of two locals of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), agreed to "buy" the company in an effort to prevent the plants from closing. The unionists agreed to have 10 percent of their wages deducted to pay for the buyout.

The new contract calls for a further 7.5 percent pay cut whenever the plant-wide daily production quota of 3,500 tons of steel is not met. Since December 1991, the work force has been cut by 25 percent. The new agreement includes a further cut of 60 jobs, making the quota even harder to reach.

Union officials, some of whom serve on the company's board of directors, campaigned for the concessions. Adron Fields, a McLouth worker for 21 years, voted no on the concessions. "We've been through this too many times," he said. "We may as well work at McDonalds."

One worker explained, "It's our company only when they want to take something from us."

Another said that workers were upset about management's refusal to disclose their salaries. "How can it be confidential when it's an employee-owned company?" he asked.

Jenmar workers fight to defend union in Utah

A small group of determined workers continues to fight for a union at Jenmar, a plant in Helper, Utah, that produces roof bolts for coal mines. Workers have waged this fight despite depression-like conditions in Utah's coal mining industry. In 1982, 4,296 miners in 29 mines produced 16.9 million tons of coal. In 1991, 2,701 miners in 18 mines produced 22.3 million tons.

Workers at Jenmar began their fight by voting in July 1989 to be represented by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Their struggle was sparked by unsafe working conditions and low wages, averaging around \$5 an hour. An accident in which a worker lost 3 fingers, and the failure of the company to file the reports necessary for the worker to receive compensation were immediate factors that led to the unionization drive.

Since that initial victory, Jenmar with the help of its Beverly Hills lawyers has attempted everything in its power to overturn the results of the election. The company fired pro-union workers. It challenged the results of the election in court and forced another election to be held. When workers again voted for the union in November 1990, Jenmar dug in its heels. It laid off more workers and cut the workweek to 32 hours. Management suspended quarterly bonuses. In the first negotiating session with the union over a contract, the company said it was looking to move the plant.

Finally this year, with the work force down to eight workers, of whom half were on disability, the company tried to initiate a decertification petition. It was unable to find anyone to circulate it.

In May, Jenmar announced

what it hopes will be the final blow to the union aspirations of its workers. It announced that it was moving the plant to Clearfield, about 30 miles north of Salt Lake City and just outside the 120-mile radius of UMWA representation for the plant won in the certification election. Jenmar claimed the reason for the move was transportation costs, although Clearfield is well over 100 miles from any of Utah's coalfields. The new plant will open in September with 20 to 25 workers, at which time the Helper plant will close. None of the hourly workers at the Helper plant will be offered jobs at the new plant, although the bosses will.

Safety conditions at the Jenmar plant are horrendous. Workers report that the company has been fined by the government for failing to report more than 200 accidents. Injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome, lost fingers, and injured backs are rampant.

Jenmar workers want the new plant in Clearfield to be union. They hope to organize a rally when the plant opens and are seeking the support of unions in the Salt Lake City area. In the meantime, the UMWA is investigating unfair labor practice charges against Jenmar. One worker warned workers in Clearfield, "People should be aware of what they're in for with this company."

The following people contributed to this week's column: Ruth Gray, member of the New Zealand Engineers Union, in Auckland; Paul Kouri, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 3495 in Vancouver, Canada; Candace Wagner in Detroit; and Ellie Garcia, member of USWA Local 4347, and Bill Arth, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 2-591, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

ON THE PICKET LINE

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.

Pulp and paperworkers struck two New Zealand Forest Products mills July 17 and gave strike notice at the company's two other plants. The 1,500 workers are fighting to maintain a company-wide contract in face of management intransigence.

New Zealand Forest Products is jointly controlled by one of New Zealand's largest companies, Brierley Investments, and the United States paper giant, International Paper. The workers had remained on the job without a contract for the past 10 months while representatives of 12 unions represented in the plants conducted fruitless negotiations with the company. Bosses are demanding separate contracts for each plant, and a free hand to lay off any workers they choose.

Union leaders are predicting a long struggle. The *New Zealand Herald* predicted that this is "likely to be the biggest strike yet under the Employment Contracts Act." This antiunion legis-

labor. To meet this challenge striking paperworkers are setting a 24-hour picket there.

New Zealand Forest Products management has closed its vast forests surrounding Kinleith mill to all recreational users. Strike leaders describe this as a direct attack on the strike. In 1980 during an 11-week strike at Kinleith, workers used the forests to provide fuel and food to their families.

British Columbia pulp and paperworkers end strike

Some 12,500 workers ended a five-week province-wide strike in British Columbia after pulp and paper companies agreed to a mediator's report, which rejected the employers' main demand that workers give up one of their four yearly statutory holidays.

The employers campaigned aggressively for concessions claiming to have lost \$900 million during the past 24 months and citing the need to remain competitive. However, the members of the Canadian Paperworkers Union and the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada stood firm. Production at 19 pulp and paper mills was shut down. Construction work on some mills was halted. The strike had a major impact. The big-business media claimed that millions of dollars were being lost every day because of the strike. Related industries like sawmills and truck-

LETTERS

Railroad strike

Recently, I worked as a flagman at a bridge reconstruction site that stood over a Conrail track in Baltimore. Nearby was an Amtrak maintenance facility.

Everyone denounced Congress for issuing a back-to-work order for the 1,500 striking Machinists at CSX. But not everyone agreed with my comments faulting our union leaderships for failing to answer the nationwide lockout by the railroad carriers with mass pickets lines and rallies.

There are too many laws preventing railroad workers from striking, said one. I said that unjust laws are meant to be broken.

But what about PATCO? he asked.

What happened to the air controllers doesn't have to happen to railroad workers, I said. We need to explain our situation to others and aggressively organize broad support in the labor movement.

One railroad worker who repairs overhead electrical equipment noted that when first hired, there were 24 in his department. Now there are just four. He complained about the long, drawn-out contract negotiations. "The company benefits; not us," he said referring to years of working without a contract.

I told him that I went to Amtrak's Penn Station looking for the strike that never happened. He replied, "A lot of people were disappointed that we didn't strike. I still have my picket sign."

Another Amtrak employee, a carpenter told me that his union accepted a pay cut the last time around. Now maintenance workers want an adequate pay increase.

"The companies want to push railroad workers back to where we were a hundred years ago," he said.

He was pessimistic but said he was going to vote the contract down at the upcoming Maintenance of Way union meeting. I responded by saying that a no vote should be backed up with a strike, but we need a union leadership capable of making winnable strikes.

*Glova Scott
Baltimore, Maryland*

A people's paper

The Afrikan Culture Workshop would like to thank you for your moral support.

We, the Afrikan Culture Workshop of F.C.I. Phoenix really consider the *Militant* a people's paper.

Members of our club were taken to the Special Housing Unit and locked up 23 hours a day in what we call a prison within a prison. If all this can happen from the result of a walk to honor Malcolm X who has not physically been with us for some time, then this must mean that he really lives, and therefore, his works must be re-examined under a fine glass.

I'm sure we will find a message for the workers of the world to keep struggling no matter how great the odds may appear. The bottom line, that's what struggle is all about, a good hard fight!

*A prisoner
Lompoc, California*

Working class

Articles and editorials in the *Militant* often refer to "working people" or, more specifically, to "the working class." Please, if possible, elaborate

on this seemingly simple question: in contemporary society, exactly what constitutes the working class? I've asked this of 10 different people and received 10 different answers! Does it have to do with whether or not a person/member of society produces a product? Does it have to do with wage levels or with an hourly vs. a salaried wage? Does it have to do with working conditions? Whether or not the person "owns" the means of production or capital? Whether or not the person is exploited directly by someone? If you can, please take this up — since Marx, etc., didn't envision a (albeit shrinking) middle class and extensive service industry, we need to define this term as it applies to the composition of society as it exists today in developed capitalist countries.

*Marty Michaels
Washington, D.C.*

Aid to Sarajevo

The *Militant* has done an excellent job explaining the current situation in Yugoslavia: the fact that it's not an ethnic war, that the imperialist powers are motivated by their own power rivalries and not humanitarian aims, and that the working people of the region are the only ones who can resolve the crisis in a positive way.

Given this, I was puzzled when I read in the June 19 issue of the *Militant* an article which reported that Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president James Warren "demanded that Washington send emergency aid to the people of Sarajevo." The limited aid going to Sarajevo is being organized under the auspices of the United

Nations, which also sponsored the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. How can a socialist demand that the United States send aid when, given the civil war raging, this inevitably means some sort of military intervention? I am looking forward to some discussion of this in the *Militant*.

*Carl Weinberg
New Haven, Connecticut*

Veterans visit Cuba

Nine veterans, journalist representatives from chapters of the national organization Veterans for Peace, recently visited Cuba. We came from New York; Ipswich, MA; Milwaukee, WI; Columbia, MO; San Francisco and Santa Cruz, CA. We talked extensively with Cubans from all walks of life — workers and officials, young people and old people, women and men, veterans of the Angolan War and students. We heard their complaints, their hopes and their fears and we expressed our own views on Cuba and the United States.

As a delegation of veterans, we had a great deal in common but there were also significant differences among us on political and economic questions. Nevertheless, we came away from Cuba with some important agreements: first, we all have a new (and renewed) appreciation for the Cuban political and socio-economic reality, which is seldom expressed in its richness, diversity and dynamism in the U.S. press. Second, we are all convinced that the U.S. campaign to isolate and crush the Cuban people by continuing to impose economic sanctions is wrong and must be stopped.

This U.S. policy, tried out in Iraq and now being utilized in Yugoslavia and Cuba, is cruel: it is the poor, the children who suffer most. In addition, it points up the big lie that the Bush Administration favors free trade and free markets. It is the U.S. government, not Cuba, which attempts to stop Americans from traveling to Cuba and prevents Americans from doing business with Cuba.

The Cubans who we met had many different points of view and many different solutions to the problems facing Cuba. Almost universally — regardless of their political views on other things — they resented and opposed the U.S. blockade on trade and travel. If Bush wants to prove the superiority of Miami over Havana and win the Cuban people away from their revolution, it is time to force him to practice what he preaches. We should do everything in our power to end the blockade of Cuba.

*Harry Meserve
Felton, California*

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, NY 10014.

Students in Nicaragua demand increased funding for education

Former army officers and bus drivers also hold protests

BY FRANCISCO PICADO

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "Six percent now!" chanted thousands of university and high school students, professors, campus workers, and other supporters in a large national demonstration through this capital city demanding that 6 percent of the national budget be spent on education.

The July 23 protest culminated some 10 days of a student strike. Students organized campus sit-ins, blocked traffic, held street fund-raisers, marched in working-class neighborhoods, and rallied in several cities. The protesters opposed the government's refusal to increase funds to the national university system and its 32,000 students.

Contingents came from cities as far away as Estelí, and several dozen students from León walked for two days to complete a more than 60-mile hike to Managua. July 23 is Nicaragua's national day of commemoration of a 1959 massacre of students in León.

Students, faculty, and university officials maintain that the government is allocating only 4.2 percent of the national budget for education, in violation of the constitution, which requires a minimum of 6 percent for the autonomous university system.

'Education is a right we earned'

On July 14, the Supreme Court and National Assembly buildings, as well as the riot police protecting them, were showered by a hail of eggs and rocks thrown by students demanding that the court declare the budget unconstitutional. News of a court decision to uphold the budget was made public July 22.

Education "is a right we have earned," Larissa Martínez, a 19-year-old student at the National Engineering University, said in an interview. "I believe it is incorrect for the government not to give us the 6 percent. Without this money massive numbers of people will be forced to drop out because they won't be able to afford tuition."

Education was made free of charge or very low cost after a revolutionary government was placed in power by the popular armed insurrection that overthrew the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in 1979. Students at the Central American University currently pay a tuition fee of about \$23 per semester, which is equal to half the monthly wage of many workers. Students explained that xeroxing of whole chapters of books is now a common practice due to their high price.

"In Nicaragua education is exclusive," said Miguel Ayerdis, a liberal arts student who belongs to the affiliate of the National Union of Nicaraguan Students at the Central American University. "Beginning in 1979, education became more accessible to larger numbers, but now it's on its way to becoming a privilege of elites again. This year, for example, some 10,000 high school graduates were not able to get into a university."

Many chants and placards used in the march and the actions leading to it mocked Antonio Lacayo, minister of the presidency, who stated on national media that the students' demands would mean that workers and peasants would end up paying the college education of "rich kids" and the government would be forced to make further cutbacks on grammar and high school education.

"No universities of the rich" and "If there is money to steal, there is money to study" were popular demands made by the students in reference to an ongoing government corruption scandal involving the embezzlement of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"I would say that it is probably true that a small layer of the students attending the

Central American University have enough money to pay higher tuition if they were forced to do it," said Rigoberto Jarquín, 18, when asked about the issue, "but that should not be used to deny the right of the rest of us to education."

The cost of non-university education is also increasing. The government has been charging \$2 per student a month for high school and grammar school students. While the government has not been able to collect those high fees throughout the country, some students and parents reported that, with an official monthly minimum wage of \$30 in the countryside and \$50 in urban areas, and the high costs of transportation, food, and school materials, the new fees have increased the drop out rate.

The demonstration, called by the National Council of Universities (CNU), was spearheaded by the National Union of Nicaraguan Students. Along with members of UNEN, the CNU includes representatives from the union of campus workers, campus administrations, and professors.

The student actions coincided with protests of demobilized army officers and transportation workers who also joined the mobilization.

The former officers are demanding severance pay of 60 months salary and benefits as opposed to the government's offer of 48 months. The officers' actions coincided with a work stoppage by workers from Enabus, a state-owned public transportation enterprise in Managua, who blockaded streets to protest the government's attempt to privatize part of the bus routes and its holding back of spare parts for the buses. The government later agreed to the Enabus workers' demands.

Workers and demobilized army officers were involved in a series of armed confrontations with the police, who tear gassed and assaulted the protesters. Fourteen police and some workers and army veterans suffered



Militant/Selva Nebbia

July 23 protest in Managua, Nicaragua, culminated more than a week of student protests demanding 6 percent of government budget go to education.

gunshot wounds and other injuries after one clash June 22. The army closed off sections of downtown Managua for periods of time following the confrontations, although the city continued to function normally.

Students take issue with General Ortega

Throughout the student demonstration, participants took issue with a statement made by Sandinista People's Army chief Gen. Humberto Ortega, who called the former army officers, "adventurers," "delinquents," and "bandits," and said that workers and students were too radical. In the march students carried an effigy of

Humberto Ortega in army uniform with a swastika painted on his cap. It was burned along with one of Antonio Lacayo.

Many students on the march said they were not supporters of any political party and emphasized the broad character of the actions, while others identified themselves as supporters of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

After the march, the organizers called on all students to show up at their campuses the following Monday, not to go back to classes but to "decide the new set of actions to be carried out in order to win the 6 percent."

Newfoundland fishermen, hit by huge layoffs, win increased compensation

BY ANNETTE KOURI

ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland — The two-year ban on cod fishing imposed by the Canadian federal government on July 2 has had a big impact. The ban precipitated the layoff of 20,000 fishermen and workers in fish processing plants here — the largest layoff in Canadian history.

Nearly 400 communities in Newfoundland depend on the northern cod for jobs. The government claimed the moratorium was necessary to allow the replenishing of the rapidly depleting cod stocks.

Initially the federal government put a \$225 ceiling on weekly compensation payments to fishermen and plant workers, but the outrage of the workers forced Fisheries Minister John Crosbie to announce July 17 that he was raising the maximum to \$406.

Four hundred fishermen, prohibited from attending Crosbie's press conference, jeered as they watched from a nearby hotel.

The Newfoundland Fishermen, Food, and Allied Workers, which is now part of the Canadian Auto Workers union (CAW/FFAW), led a campaign to improve the offer — including threatening to defy the ban on fishing for cod.

Approximately 700 fishermen, plant workers, and their families met in Goulds

on the Avalon peninsula in southeast Newfoundland, at a meeting organized by the Newfoundland Inshore Fisherman's Association, to pressure the federal government to improve the compensation package and save the fisheries. Representatives of CAW/FFAW also spoke.

Richard Cashin, CAW/FFAW president, was jubilant at the government's announcement of increased compensation payments. Some fishermen were less enthusiastic. "It's not too bad," said John Williams, who has been fishing for about 20 years. "We can exist on it, but that's about it."

It remains unclear how the federal government will apply the payment plan. For example, some workers are concerned that they will be forced into retraining programs to qualify for more than \$225.

Groups like the Conception Bay North based Fish Crisis Committee explain that the program does not address the problems of small businesses associated with the fisheries, such as fish truckers and small marine supply stores.

Fishermen have warned for years that overfishing fueled by corporate greed is responsible for the decline of fish stocks. Cashin, in 1990, explained, "There is considerably less groundfish, cod, turbot, flounder, etc. in the waters surrounding our prov-

ince than there was supposed to be. . . . For many years inshore fishermen were aware that something was wrong. They were using more gear to harvest less fish."

The union's 1990 report also explained that the entire fishing industry faced a "crisis of unprecedented proportions," and cited evidence that the policies of both the Canadian and Newfoundland government were not acting in the interests of the 20,000 fishery workers. Cashin pointed out that the future of the fisheries was being determined by corporations.

The impact of the two-year closure is still sinking in among those most directly affected. When this reporter visited, a large number of fishermen and plant workers were standing idly on the docks or fixing up their boats when they would normally be out fishing. Many agreed with George Petten from Port de Grave who owns a boat and hires a crew of eight men who share a portion of the sale of the catch: "It'll be more than two years, most likely five, before we'll be able to catch cod again."

Annette Kouri is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 712 and works as a chemical miller at Canadair in Montreal.