

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

'Militant' subscription, fund drives off to good start
— PAGES 3,7

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'Cuba will never accept living on our knees'

Foreign minister speaks at UN against U.S. policy

BY LAURA GARZA

UNITED NATIONS — "Cuba wishes normal relations with the United States, if and when a true sentiment of good will between neighbors, respect, and equality prevail between both countries," said Roberto Robaina, Cuba's foreign minister, in a speech here September 25. "But Cuba will never give up in the face of threats, and it will survive in any case, as there are always ways out of a crisis, but not from the dishonor of living on our knees."

In his address before the 50th session of the UN General Assembly, Robaina blasted efforts to pass legislation in the U.S. Congress that will significantly tighten Washington's economic embargo of the Caribbean nation.

"Only a few days ago," the Cuban foreign minister said, "the House of Representatives took the first step of this announced crime by passing this bill that, among other absurd things, suggests an international blockade against Cuba, which in fact is against humanity itself."

Robaina was referring to legislation introduced in Congress by Rep. Dan Burton and Sen. Jesse Helms. On September 21, the House of Representatives passed the bill by a strong bipartisan majority of 294 to 130. The legislation will be discussed next in the U.S. Senate.

Despite the threat of a tighter embargo, Cuba will resist any attempt to force it to give up its right to self-determination and independence, the Cuban leader stated.

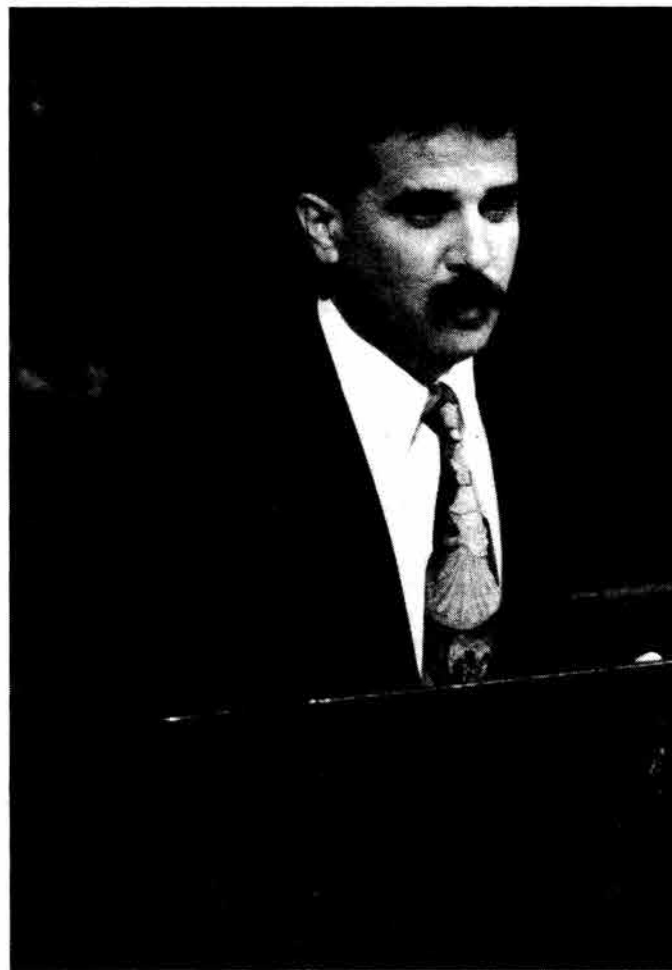
"Since 1959 we have been defending, jealously and firmly, the commitment made by the founders of our nation, that of keeping it free and sovereign just 90 miles from the great power that has always looked at us as its backyard and as an ap-

pendix of its soil," Robaina said.

"We firmly believe in the authenticity and popular support upon which our revolution and our socialism were constituted and are being carried out. They are as Cuban as our palm trees."

The Helms-Burton bill would grant U.S. citizens who are former owners of expropriated properties the right to sue in U.S. courts individuals and companies that currently hold investments in those properties in Cuba. The legislation would also require the federal government to deny entry to the United States to any shareholder, executive, and their family members, of a company that does business involving properties confiscated after the 1959 revolution. That was when the Cuban people overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

In addition, the bill would compel Washington to cut aid to any country that provides goods or loans to Cuba at below-market rates, require a reduction in U.S. government contributions to the World



UN Photo/J. Isaac

Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina at the UN

Bank or other international lending institutions if they provide aid to Cuba, and impose stiffer civil and criminal penalties on

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Detroit newspaper unions keep up the fight

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — Newspaper workers on strike against this city's two dailies are discussing ways to advance their fight after a judge issued a court injunction banning mass picketing in front of the Sterling Heights printing plant.

Officials of the striking locals have urged people to stay away from the plant. At the same time many strikers and other unionists continue to look for ways to delay or stop the Sunday edition.

Several hundred strikers and their supporters turned out September 23 at the Riverfront printing plant in nearby Detroit, because the newspaper was printed there the week before. Once it became clear that production was taking place in Sterling Heights, 200 strikers and supporters moved their picket to the Clayton Street Depot in southwest Detroit. Clayton Street is used to ship the assembled newspapers out for retail sales.

The Detroit police moved quickly to protect the strikebreakers and their newspapers. After escorting a van of scabs and arresting two strike supporters, the cops were forced to order two semi-trucks away because of the pickets.

The company and the cops were only

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'Million man march' leaders offer no way forward

BY SAM MANUEL
AND GREG ROSENBERG

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A march called by the Nation of Islam will convene here October 16. The call for the event proclaims it will be a "Million Man March" — led by Minister Louis Farrakhan.

In recent days, a host of capitalist politicians — liberal and conservative — along with leaders of national civil rights organizations, businessmen's groups and other middle-class associations have endorsed the October 16 march. Jesse Jackson, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference have joined with mayors Edward Rendell of Philadelphia, Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore, and Marion Barry of Washington, D.C., in announcing their support for the action.

Tens of thousands are expected to participate in the event. Many students and working people planning to attend are drawn by the idea of a public action in opposition to racist discrimination.

Despite some vaguely anti-government rhetoric, however, not a single demand is placed on Washington in defense of affirmative action, against cop brutality, for a jobs program, or any other measures to protect the working class in general, or Black workers in particular, from the ravages of economic depression and the employers' offensive against the labor move-

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Supporters of Mark Curtis demand parole now 'in the interest of justice'

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Dozens of letters urging the Iowa State Board of Parole to grant freedom to union and political activist Mark Curtis continue to arrive at the offices of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. The committee is leading the international effort to gather public support for Curtis's release on parole.

Curtis was arrested and brutally beaten by the Des Moines police in 1988 after speaking out in Spanish at a public meeting to defend 17 co-workers from Mexico and El Salvador. They had been seized by federal authorities in an immigration raid on the Monfort meatpacking plant where they worked. Curtis was framed up on charges of rape and burglary and has spent the past seven years in Iowa prisons.

Curtis has remained a political activist behind bars, and recently worked with other inmates at the Iowa State Penitentiary to gather more than two dozen signatures on a petition urging the governor of Pennsylvania to grant freedom to Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Black rights activist fighting to overturn a death sentence there. Because of his political activism and his re-



Frank Travis, locked-out worker in Decatur, Illinois, visits with Mark Curtis (right).

fusal to be broken, Curtis has faced a number of attacks at the hands of prison authorities. Iowa officials have repeatedly

refused him parole.

This week the defense committee re-

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Trinidad oil strike ends

Oil workers in South Trinidad returned to work September 18 following a six-week strike over wages and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) increments. The Oilfields Workers Trade Union ended the walkout after settling for a 7 percent wage hike and a cap on COLA payments.

"We made a compromise," said union president Errol McCleod. But "we have gained some things." The union's fight was weakened by a number of picket line crossers. The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago has vowed to deal severely with any strikers who they claim were involved in incidents on the picket line.

Mexico border fence okayed

Doris Meissner, commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, declared September 11 that the U.S. Border Patrol was approved to erect a 10-foot-high steel-mesh fence along the U.S.-Mexico border. The fence is to be built between Sunland Park, New Mexico, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and stretch for 1.3 miles along the desert.

Meissner said the fence would be a "firm response" to immigrant workers trying to cross the border into the United States. Mexican officials say the barrier would be an insult to Mexico.

Buenos Aires to sign oil pact

The Argentine government reached a tentative accord with London September 19 governing the extraction of natural gas and petroleum around the Malvinas Islands, which the British government seized from Argentina in 1832. The two countries waged a 74-day war over the islands in 1982 that killed 1,000 troops. Buenos Aires maintains its claim of sovereignty over the islands.

Argentina's largest daily newspaper, *Clarín*, reported September 19 that under the agreement the British government would grant licenses to explore waters to the east of the Malvinas and obtain 66.6 percent of earnings on any oil or gas discovered there. Argentina would receive



Nearly 2,000 people marched in Manila September 22 against higher rice prices. Protesters also paralyzed public transportation throughout the Philippines and denounced the government for mismanagement. The banner shows the right half of the face of the former dictator Ferdinand Marcos and the left half of current president Fidel Ramos.

the rest. Revenue on gas and oil found in waters to the west of the islands would be divided equally.

Chechnya facing more war

The shaky truce signed July 30 between Moscow and Chechen guerrilla forces is threatening to come apart completely as cease-fire violations continue. The Chechen rebel commander-in-chief, Aslan Maskhadov, acknowledged that Chechen heavy weapons had been moved into "combat positions" instead of surrendering them to Russian authorities. Maskhadov stated that while the accord required the Chechens to turn in some 45,000 weapons, "We will not listen to ultimatums."

Russian troops still routinely bomb three southern mountain towns that they were never able to conquer. Rebel fighters loyal to Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev have set up self-defense units in vil-

lages as they return to their homes. Alek Makhayev, who spoke at a rally September 17 in Samashki, said he led a battalion in the war and had no intention of giving up his weapons. "We will only disarm when Russia leaves this place," he told the *New York Times*.

Russia: electricity at gunpoint

Russian sailors forced the authorities at the Kola Peninsula power company to restore power to a naval base at gunpoint September 21, the Itar-Tass news agency reported. The power company cut off the electricity because the fleet owed about \$4.5 million in unpaid bills. The power outage caused a submarine's reactor system to overheat and "the danger of an accident with unpredictable consequences became imminent," the agency stated.

Since 1992, there have been 16 cases of power being cut to military installations for non-payment of bills. Moscow is often months behind in meeting payments to utilities and its soldiers. In one case, a base commander in the Far East used a tank to expedite getting his power turned back on.

Hunger crisis widening in Iraq

Officials of the United Nations's World Food Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization said 4 million Iraqis are completely destitute today, compared with 2 million a year ago. The agencies report that 70 percent of the population does not have enough to eat and that the country needs \$2.8 billion in food aid to halt widespread hunger.

The officials blamed the UN sanctions imposed on Iraq after the U.S.-organized war against that country in 1990. The UN

Security Council extended the five-year-old sanctions against Iraq September 8.

Furor on Okinawa rape case

The rape of a 12-year-old girl by three U.S. soldiers in Okinawa has sparked demands for the closure of the massive U.S. military bases there. There are 45,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan, with 29,000 in Okinawa. Tokyo pays about 70 percent of the costs of maintaining the bases, which take up 20 percent of the land on the island.

Okinawans say the case, one of 4,500 crimes committed by U.S. GIs stationed there since 1972, has increased tensions that have been simmering for years. "All Okinawans are shaking with anger," said Fumiko Nakamura, an 81-year-old opponent of the U.S. bases in Okinawa. A women's protest has been called against the bases.

Court won't ban nuke tests

The World Court judges in The Hague, Netherlands, dumped the New Zealand government's request to ban French nuclear tests in the South Pacific September 22. The judges refused to reopen a 1973 case against Paris's atmospheric atomic testing, saying it didn't apply to the underground program. The French government ignored an interim ban imposed by the court in the 1973 case.

Jacques Baumel, vice-president of the French National Assembly's defense commission, said September 22 that the next nuclear test, which is scheduled within the next 10 days, could be more powerful than the September 5 underground blast at Moruroa Atoll. Meanwhile, delegates to the annual conference of the 122-nation International Atomic Energy Agency wound up their meeting by passing a resolution calling for a halt to nuclear testing.

Virginia gov't rushing to execute

The state of Virginia plans to execute nine people in the next three months — an unprecedented schedule of one for every 10 days for the rest of the year. A Virginia law put into the books July 1 sets new restrictions for habeas corpus appeals and requires local courts to schedule an execution date within 70 days after an inmate's petition to appeal has been rejected by the Virginia Supreme Court or the federal appeals court.

Defense attorneys in Virginia warn that the rush to execute could result in innocent people being killed, especially now that nonprofit organizations that represent penniless death row inmates are threatened with loss of federal funding. "The greatest cost is going to be people who are innocent being caught up in this riptide," Steven Hawkins, director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, told the *Washington Post*.

— BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Defend the Cuban revolution

The 'Militant' brings you news and analysis of developments in Cuba. Our correspondents report on debates and discussions in the factories, fields, political meetings, and demonstrations. Supporters of the Cuban revolution need the facts provided by the 'Militant.' Don't miss a single issue!



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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

'Capitalism puts our ideas on the agenda'

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — "The crisis of capitalism puts our ideas on the agenda," said James Robb, Communist League candidate for mayor here, at a meeting to launch the campaign in early August. The Communist League is also standing Annalucia Vermunt, an assembly worker and member of the Engineers Union, for mayor of Manukau.

Robb, who is a meatpacker at the Auckland Abattoirs, was explaining his response to questions he is being asked by journalists intrigued that communists are participating in this election, several years after the announced death of communism.

The socialist candidate noted that one reporter had been particularly surprised that Vermunt, aged 27, had joined the communist movement since the collapse of the Soviet Union. "Today, as the Stalinist parties have dropped the pretense of being communists, it is easier to see who the communists are and what they stand for," Robb explained.

Solidarity with independence struggles

Central to the communist campaign here is solidarity with the Tahitian people in their fight for independence from French rule and against nuclear weapons testing. Vermunt declared the campaign's support to the 200 Tahitian workers at Moruroa who had just declared a strike. She pointed to how the New Zealand government is using antinuclear sentiment and nationalism as a lever against their rivals in Paris, while distancing themselves from the independence movement in Tahiti.

Vermunt condemned the New Zealand government's decision to send the naval vessel *Tui* to Moruroa. This move is aimed at creating the illusion that the New Zealand military can play a progressive

role in the world, she said.

"Working people in Auckland face the same problems as those the world over," Robb explained. "The local issues being discussed in the campaign, from public transport to sewage treatment, are not unimportant, but they are part of a much larger crisis of world capitalism that belies a local solution."

The communist campaign proposes a program of working-class unity to fight the effects of the capitalist crisis on working people. Central to this is the fight for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay to end competition for jobs.

"The unions should champion affirmative action programs in employment, housing, and education to cut across the bosses' attempts to use discrimination to divide workers," Robb said. And the candidates are calling for the cancellation of the debt owed by governments in the Third World to the imperialist banks, to overcome the unequal burden on the toilers of these countries.

Robb expressed his opposition to the imperialist intervention in Bosnia, of which New Zealand troops are an integral part. In violation of Bosnia's sovereignty, their goal is to partition the country, while each power attempts to increase its influence in the region. "The labor movement should demand that New Zealand and all United Nations troops withdraw and all immigration restrictions should be lifted," he said.

Socialists draw attention

The communist campaign has begun to attract attention in the news media. Vermunt was interviewed on nationwide morning radio, and both candidates have appeared on the local television channel.

Robb's participation in the August Cuba Lives festival in Havana, has been a point of interest among working people



Militant/Janet Roth

Strikers at roofing plant factory in Auckland. Communist League candidate James Robb (on right), says, "Working people face same problems around the world."

and youth here. He described an interview with "Radio Liberty," a right-wing station, in which he was able to explain that the "Cuban revolution has proved more resourceful than its critics would believe and today, far from collapsing, remains on its socialist course."

He pointed to the half-million-strong march in Havana that he participated in at the close of the festival as evidence of his impression that the majority of Cubans do not want to leave, but intend to stay and build the revolution. "Cuba shows how the creativity and consciousness of working people can achieve miracles when workers hold political power and fight," he said. "We need a government of workers and farmers here, and this campaign is a small step towards this goal."

The Communist League election campaign has been getting a good response at political protests and meetings here. The socialist candidates are getting out to anti-nuclear protests, meetings in solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal, and union struggles. Robb had just visited the picket line of striking construction workers at Carter Holt Harvey to offer his solidarity and explain his election campaign platform.

Vermunt invited everyone at the election campaign event to join the socialist candidates in election campaign activity.

Those in attendance also made pledges to the Militant Fund totaling NZ\$3,570 (NZ\$1=US\$.60).

Felicity Coggan is a member of the Meat Workers Union.

'The Militant helps us understand the world'

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

BROOKLYN, New York — We are off and running! As the accompanying scoreboard indicates, slightly over \$10,000 has been contributed so far for the Militant Fund.

The drive to raise money to sustain the publication of the *Militant* and its sister Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* got a boost last week from successful fund-raising meetings in several cities.

Supporters in Pittsburgh gathered September 23. The featured speaker was Tom Leonard, a long-time member of the Socialist Workers Party who was active in the National Maritime Union during and after World War II.

'Must keep getting out Militant'

Leonard explained that the *Militant* has been striving to get out the working-class point of view since its inception in 1928. He told the meeting about one particular example of this in Harlem in the mid-1950s. At a protest meeting organized to oppose the lynching of Emmitt Till in Mississippi, Leonard brought a small bundle of the issue of the *Militant* that highlighted the case. He quickly sold out. He then made arrangements to come back with several hundred more copies, which also quickly sold out. "We must continue in that spirit," Leonard concluded, "to get the *Militant* out to working people and youth and to contribute generously to keep the paper going."

Also speaking at the meeting in Pittsburgh was Chris Zimmerman of the Bruderhof Christian Community near Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Zimmerman and his organization have been active in the fight against the death penalty and in defending Mumia Abu-Jamal. "We're not socialists," Zimmerman said, "but we started reading the *Militant* this past spring and find that it not only helps us understand the Mumia case but what is happening around the world."

Supporters in Des Moines, Iowa, also held a fund-raising meeting September 23. Doug Jenness, who was the featured

speaker, told those attending about his recent *Militant* reporting trip to Japan, where he participated in the events marking the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-inflicted nuclear holocaust in Hiroshima.

A member of the United Rubber Workers who was part of the strike against Bridgestone/Firestone attended the meeting. He too had just returned from Japan, where a delegation of former strikers met with Bridgestone/Firestone workers in Japan.

As a result of the event, supporter Joanne Murphy reported, pledges in Des Moines now total \$2,400, and \$421 was collected at the meeting toward the local goal of \$3,200.

New readers kick in

As supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* participate in the drive to win new readers, the international fund drive will also receive a boost. Many people who first pick up the *Militant* from a street table or from a visit to their home may want to kick in some money to keep a working-class paper going. Manhattan supporters, for example, found it helpful to have attractive collection cans on their tables where working people could easily contribute. Many did. During their big sales effort on September 24 they collected \$18.

A Militant Fund committee in Brooklyn is coordinating the organization of the international fund drive. This committee will be looking for short articles on how supporters are carrying out the fund drive, who is contributing, and what they have to say about the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. These articles can be sent to the Brooklyn Pathfinder bookstore at the address listed on page 12; they can be faxed to (718) 399-3492.

Payments received by Tuesday 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time at the *Militant* business office will be reflected on the weekly chart.

Edwin Fruit, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Pittsburgh, contributed to this article.

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Goal	Paid	Percent		
Australia	\$20			
Britain				
London				
Manchester	\$20			
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Montreal	\$7			
Toronto	\$5			
Vancouver				
France	\$4			
Greece				
New Zealand	\$50			
Auckland	\$2,470	\$138	6%	
Christchurch	\$650	\$216	33%	
Wellington	\$80			
Puerto Rico	\$100	\$100	100%	
Sweden	\$750			
United States				
Philadelphia	\$6,000	\$2,310	39%	
Twin Cities	\$6,500	\$1,463	23%	
Atlanta	\$4,500	\$800	18%	
Salt Lake City	\$3,800	\$625	16%	
Newark	\$6,300	\$782	12%	
San Francisco	\$10,000	\$1,005	10%	
Greensboro	\$1,800	\$170	9%	
Boston	\$5,000	\$425	9%	
Seattle	\$7,000	\$525	8%	
Miami	\$2,500	\$155	6%	
Brooklyn	\$6,500	\$325	5%	
New York	\$7,500	\$285	4%	
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$150	3%	
Cleveland	\$2,100	\$50	2%	
Detroit	\$6,750	\$150	2%	
Washington, DC	\$3,300	\$60	2%	
Des Moines	\$3,200	\$50	2%	
Houston	\$3,500	\$50	1%	
Chicago	\$7,500	\$100	1%	
Morgantown	\$2,600	\$25	1%	
Los Angeles	\$10,000	\$12	0%	
Birmingham	\$3,700			
Peoria	\$2,000			
Other		\$66		
TOTAL	\$121,150	\$10,093	8%	

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Rob Cahalane: a proletarian revolutionary who helped turn rebels into communists

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts — "Rob Cahalane was one of the leaders of the Young Socialist Alliance who helped turn us from rebels to proletarian revolutionaries," Joan Paltrineri recalled.

"And let me tell you," she added, "we were tough nuts to crack!"

Paltrineri was describing her experience in the late 1960s as a young member of Boston Female Liberation — a group that organized demonstrations in defense of abortion rights and for equal pay and child care, as well as lessons in karate in order to be prepared to learn men who demonstrated they weren't able to be taught. She recounted how she had been won to the communist movement through a youth organization of which Cahalane, then a high school student, was one of the leaders.

Today a textile worker and Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Greensboro, North Carolina, Paltrineri was one of the featured speakers at a meeting held here August 27 to celebrate the life and political contributions of Rob Cahalane.

Cahalane was a longtime member of the SWP, and he had been a cadre of the YSA throughout most of the 1970s. He died in July at the age of 42 of complications stemming from AIDS. Cahalane was born with the blood-clotting disorder hemophilia. In the period before the blood merchants were finally forced to test for AIDS virus contamination, Cahalane, like thousands of other hemophiliacs, received infected blood products.

While the first cases of AIDS were recorded in the early 1980s, it was not until 1985 that the companies profiting from the sale of blood products began to carry out standardized blood testing. Even then the blood banks, including the Red Cross, were allowed to keep their existing untested products on the market until they were used up.

According to the 1993 estimates of the National Hemophilia Foundation, 9,000 of the 19,840 people with hemophilia living in the United States were thought to be HIV positive. Rob Cahalane's brothers — Rich, Dave, and John — who had also been members of the socialist movement, all died earlier as a result of the blood profiteers' murderous greed. Rich and Dave had been longtime SWP cadres and activists in the YSA.

Gary Cohen, who joined the Young Socialist Alliance in 1960 and has been a member of the communist movement in Boston ever since, opened the August 27 meeting and welcomed everyone on behalf of the Boston branch of the Socialist Workers party. The 90 people who turned out to honor Rob Cahalane's political example spanned several generations of revolutionary fighters. They ranged from Cecilia Ortega, a 17-year-old member of the Young Socialists who traveled by bus from Cleveland, to Ben Fishman, an 85-year-old retired garment and electrical worker who first joined the communist movement in 1936.

The audience included many friends and relatives of Cahalane, who was born, grew up, and attended school in the Boston area. There were also many who had worked alongside him in the big political battles that took place in Boston in the late 1960s and early 1970s — battles against racism, war, and for women's rights, battles that left an indelible imprint on Cahalane.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party branch in Boston took responsibility for preparing an expansive buffet of food for the event, which was held at the Cambridge meeting house of the Society of Friends.

'Seasoned leader'

Rob Cahalane joined the Young Socialist Alliance in 1969 when he was 16 years old and a junior in high school. Earlier that year, Paltrineri noted, he had helped lead a student strike against the Vietnam War. By the time Cahalane graduated a year later, he was already a "seasoned leader" of the young socialists in Boston.

Paltrineri related her personal experience with Cahalane and other leaders of the YSA when she, as a young member of



Thousands of young people at 1975 demonstration in Boston to support efforts to desegregate the city's public schools. Cahalane "never wavered in explaining the government's responsibility for the segregation of the schools and racist violence in the streets."

Female Liberation, came into contact with the socialist youth organization.

The feminists who formed Female Liberation were tired of being "second-class citizens," Paltrineri said. "We hated capitalism but it was very hard to convince us that it was possible to build something better, and that it was necessary to do that through building a working-class, communist organization — and one that included men at that. The challenge to the YSA and Socialist Workers Party was how to win young fighters like us to socialism. That was quite a challenge!"

Looked to work together

Cahalane, she said, was "particularly creative" in coming up with political work we could participate in together. "For example, Rob would always invite us to take part in defense at antiwar demonstrations and conferences. And he helped convince us that you didn't have to rely on physical strength alone to defend the right to do politics, that if a problem comes up you try



Rob Cahalane in 1993

to work things out, that a 'round kick' was not the first thing you do when there's a disagreement."

Paltrineri told of Cahalane's response to an incident in which a member of Female Liberation had been raped by someone she knew. "Our initial response," Paltrineri said, was "an eye for an eye." Cahalane also was outraged at the attack and explained in no uncertain terms that the rapist should be arrested, tried, convicted, and jailed. But he also proposed to the members of the organization what he considered a more effective response than retaliation, which was to organize a public meeting in defense of women's rights. "I can't say we took his advice then," Paltrineri said. "But it got us thinking."

"We started joining the YSA later," she said, "as we began to realize that the fight for women's liberation was totally connected with the fight for socialism."

Paul Mailhot, today a staff writer for the *Militant*, got to know Cahalane in 1974, shortly after joining the YSA and moving to Boston. Mailhot chaired the meeting and spoke about his political work together with Rob in that period.

In September 1974 racist mobs began to attack buses carrying Black children to

schools in Boston neighborhoods that were predominantly white. The fight to halt these assaults and desegregate the schools dominated politics in Boston for the next several years. Its impact, as several speakers noted, is still felt today.

"I came to Boston ready to change the world, but I didn't have much of an idea how to go about it," Mailhot said. "At that time there were people in the YSA, like Rob, who were already veterans, cadres — and that made all the difference."

"Rob was the first person who taught me it wasn't enough to know how to do things and do them yourself, that to be effective you had to involve others and that you could learn together as you carried out work together."

The battle to desegregate the schools was a fight that had a "big impact on our lives," Mailhot said, "but it was also a fight we influenced."

"The struggle broke out in earnest at the end of 1974," he continued, "but the important thing to realize is that what we did before the battle of Boston was what was decisive. How strong our organization was. How much we understood the stakes in the fight for Black rights in Boston — a fight that was all of a sudden being forced by the bitter enemies of civil rights. Those things were important, and Rob played no small part in our being prepared. When the rocks started flying at buses and the contest for the streets opened, we were politically ready for effective action."

Duty to tell the truth

For several weeks, Mailhot said, it proved impossible to get anyone who supported the rights of the Black schoolchildren to mobilize against the racists. There were no demonstrations, no big public meetings. In that situation, communists in Boston sought to counter the lies of the racists — who sought to hide behind the "fight for quality education" — by getting out the truth about what was really happening.

"While looking for every opening to build a march or a speak out in support of desegregation we also sold a lot of *Militants* and built Militant Labor Forums," Mailhot explained. "It was our duty. We knew that if we didn't get out the truth, no one else would at that point."

Cahalane was an organizer of the *Militant* sales campaign. Following an incident in which a Black worker barely escaped being lynched by a racist mob, communists in Boston took on a goal of selling more than 3,000 copies of the issue of the *Militant* bearing the banner headline "Stop Boston lynch mobs!"

"Rob was one of the comrades who announced he would sell 150 himself and challenged others to do the same or better. That type of example led to a tremendous success as socialists in the Boston area sold over 3,200 copies of that issue of the paper."

Maceo Dixon, an airline worker who is currently an SWP candidate for Boston City Council and who in the mid-1970s became a leader in Boston of the battle to defend busing, stressed the political con-

tribution made by Cahalane and the other young fighters leading the YSA.

Dixon told the story of seeing the news reports from Boston the first days schools opened in the fall of 1974, while he was in St. Louis on a national speaking tour. "I myself, like some other young militants who were Black, had doubts about desegregation as an effective way to advance Black rights at the time," Dixon said. "But when I saw racist mobs throwing rocks at those school buses, that was it, I was for busing."

Dixon had been living in New York at the time, and didn't waste a moment when leaders of the SWP and YSA phoned him in St. Louis to propose that he move to Boston to participate in the struggle. He had one foot out the door before hanging up the phone, he said.

Dixon went on to explain the impact it had on him, and on other young Blacks, to meet the Cahalane brothers. "The situation was tense and all the Irish — and all the Italians too for that matter — were portrayed as being against busing and Black rights. But then you had Rob Cahalane, who was a communist youth and who was as committed to the fight for Black rights as anyone," Dixon said.

"Rob never wavered in explaining the government's responsibility for both the segregation of the schools and the racist violence in the streets. He never rationalized the actions of anyone who bent one inch toward the racist arguments. He explained the need to oppose by any means necessary those who initiated violent threats against Black people."

Dixon also recounted the pride Cahalane and others felt when Irish freedom fighter Bernadette Devlin McAliskey visited the Boston area and gave a speech to a big public conference in defense of busing.

"Devlin at the time was the most recognized leader of the struggle against British military occupation and for civil rights in northern Ireland," Dixon said. "When she came to Boston and explained that the Irish were the Blacks of the United Kingdom, and that the struggle in Ireland was directly connected with the struggle for civil rights in the United States, the racists went nuts!"

Earlier in the meeting, Joan Paltrineri told a similar story about how the busing struggle divided families of Italian origin, with some younger whites from East Boston identifying with the fight against racism.

"Fight was worth it"

Dixon cited two events in the struggle that helped steel Cahalane, and other YSA leaders, including Dixon himself. The first was helping to organize a conference that formed the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) in early 1975. The conference of 2,000 backed the NAACP's call for a national march for busing in May of that year. Dixon recounted how YSA members led a political fight there to get the student gathering behind the march.

The second event Dixon pointed to was

the battle to desegregate Carson Beach in South Boston. At the end of July 1975 a group of bible salesmen who were Black were attacked at the beach by racists armed with pipes and clubs. The following weekend a mob armed with bats and clubs gathered in response to rumors that Blacks were coming to "invade" the beach.

NSCAR and the Boston NAACP called for a two-hour "picnic" at the beach August 10 in response. Some 1,500 opponents of segregation joined in the action and held their ground despite attacks by racists who, behind a shield of cops, hurled rocks and bottles at the demonstrators.

"Many ask today whether the fight for school desegregation was worth it," Dixon concluded. "The fight was worth it. By answering the racists with countermobilizations, our side won the fight on school busing and changed not only the schools, but Boston forever. I myself, and many other Blacks, now live in a housing complex adjacent to Carson Beach."

Jason Coughlin, a member of the Young Socialists in New York and earlier in Boston, also spoke at the meeting. He had just recently returned from the Cuba Lives! International Youth Festival in Cuba and shared his experiences with the participants at the Boston meeting. Several other young people at the meeting had also just recently gotten back from Cuba.

Coughlin related how he was radicalized in the air force in the early 1990s to the experiences of Rob Cahalane as a high school student organizing to stop the war in Vietnam.

"Rob believed that the most important thing young people can do with their lives is to join the fight, and begin to transform yourself," Coughlin said. He urged all the young people in attendance to follow the example set by Cahalane by joining the Young Socialists, an organization whose efforts and progress Rob Cahalane followed in detail up to his death.

Moves to Atlanta

In late 1975, at the age of 22, Cahalane joined several other members of the Boston branch of the SWP in taking the experiences of the busing struggle and party building there to help advance the party's efforts in a number of other cities. Rob moved to Atlanta where he spent the next three years actively engaged in the tasks of building a party branch there. Three years later, in 1978, he transferred to the Albany branch.

While in Albany Cahalane joined the effort being made by SWP members around the country to get industrial jobs and center the party's work in the mines, mills, and factories, and among the strongest industrial unions. In a letter sent to the meeting, Larry Lane, who was in the Albany branch of the SWP with Cahalane at the time, recalled that important part of Rob's political experience. "Given Rob's physical condition, many of us suggested that it might not be the best idea," Lane said, "that he might not be able to do the work, that not everyone could be in industry."

"But Rob persisted," Lane said, "and got a job at a Steelworkers organized plant that made engineering instruments."

"Rob was elated as were we all... We worked together in the plant to approach co-workers about the Weber case, then an important battle in the affirmative action fight. We were also able to be part of the battle to organize USWA Local 8888 at Newport News." As members of the Steelworkers union in Albany, Cahalane and Lane helped organize solidarity with the embattled workers at Newport News.

Lane's message to the meeting was one of more than a dozen that were received from friends and comrades from around the country and the world. These included letters from Jon Hillson and Susan LaMont, who worked with Rob in Boston during the busing struggle; Dave Wulp and Toba Singer, who remembered Rob's contributions to building a strong YSA in Boston in the early 1970s; and others. (Excerpts of some of the messages are printed in the box on this page.)

Cadre of a communist organization

By the late 1970s, Rob had had many experiences and accomplishments in leading the Young Socialist Alliance, building party branches in several cities, and being part of the party's work in industry. As a member of the SWP and YSA for nearly a decade, he had shouldered executive responsibility as a member of elected leader-



Steelworkers on strike in Newport News, Virginia, in 1979. Cahalane, then a member of the Steelworkers union in Albany, N.Y., helped organize solidarity for the strike.

ship committees. Because of this rounded experience as a worker cadre of the party, Cahalane was asked at the end of 1979 to take an assignment as part of the secretarial staff in the party's national office in New York City.

"I knew and worked with Rob Cahalane as closely as anyone I've worked with in the time I've been a socialist," Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, told the meeting.

During much of that time, Barnes explained, Cahalane was one of the secretaries in the national office of the SWP Political Committee. This involved "the secretarial and administrative support of a consistently high caliber and competence that made possible maximizing the political gains in our work in the trade unions, work with fighters internationally preparing to face combat situations, work with other communists in Cuba and elsewhere, developing a school of Marxist education, and working to gather the forces to organize an apparatus to keep available, organized, in print, and usable all the lessons the workers movement has gained."

"For a dozen years Rob's work and Rob's friendship was inextricably connected with these things," Barnes said. After having worked as part of the secretarial staff of the party's Political Committee for several years Cahalane served as Barnes's secretary from 1985 through late 1990.

Barnes stressed: "What you've heard from the other speakers are the events, the life, the facts that made Rob what he was. By the time I came to know Rob he was already an experienced cadre of a communist organization — and that he remained for the rest of his life. Practicing working-class politics as a cadre of the party — that was what he considered to be the most important thing in the world."

When Cahalane began his work as a Political Committee secretary, Barnes said, "Rob had already gone through a concentrated experience that many people, be-

cause of the accident of events, have to wait a long time to have.

"Rob had absorbed the role and fighting spirit of youth in battles — their irreplacability. He absorbed and took for granted that the age at which youth join social battles against reaction gets lower as the battle heats up."

"He had absorbed in his bones an attitude toward the fight for women's rights that came from the experiences he had already gone through and from the fighters he had learned from. He took for granted that if this didn't become part of the fiber of your being, there was no way to be a revolutionist."

Cahalane also understood what fascism was, Barnes said. "He had seen elements of it as a teenager in the faces and the deeds of rightists in the streets here in Boston, and he had to decide how to fight incipient fascist currents where the very right of Afro-Americans to walk in the streets and take the buses and subways to work was being challenged with deadly violence."

"All the qualities that others have pointed to that made Rob valuable in organizing the flow of work in the Socialist Workers Party national office and the work of the leadership of the party, were all lessons and attributes he gained when he was very young from the tasks he had done — and he had done them because he had the imagination and discipline to see they had to be done, if the practical goals he lived for were to be realized."

Cahalane learned that "you choose tasks," Barnes said. "And you prioritize simultaneously. You decide quickly in what order to do, not the things you want to do, but the things your goals demand. You consistently work at them if they are to be accomplished not by you alone but by many fellow workers and fighters. You finish them on time, because it can make a difference between success and failure."

"These are all the attributes of a fine ex-

ecutive organizer. But what made them possible was what Rob learned through political activity before he came to New York, and long before he took on those responsibilities. It is very important to know that he didn't come to New York with or because of specialized skills, and he didn't learn anything qualitatively different as a political cadre along these lines in those twelve years."

The one exception, Barnes said, was that Cahalane became an even "stronger internationalist" in the course of his political assignments in New York. He learned something that very few people think about, Barnes said. He learned about the weight and political leverage of the Socialist Workers Party in its political relations with other revolutionists around the world, and the resulting duty to always act consciously and carefully with those considerations in mind. And Cahalane, Barnes said, learned "something that secretaries and organizers of apparatuses in the revolutionary movement face."

"Rob understood that one misaddressed letter, one incorrectly addressed *Militant* to someone in a place like South Africa under the former apartheid regime, or in Argentina in the late 1970s, could cost someone their life. And you have to have these ingrained habits of responsibility and timeliness before they become necessary."

Political continuity

One of the things Cahalane had come to hold most important by the time he came to New York was the continuity of the communist movement, Barnes said. "Rob understood that what we are able to do as revolutionary workers does not have as much to do with ourselves as we originally think. It has to do with the fact that for years and years, for decades, working humanity has been fighting to better its condition and end its oppression."

"Rob often explained to new and younger people that by their millions — going back to the origins of human society — more people than you can count fought, gave their lives, made some advances, made retreats and suffered defeats, and came forward again. And what revolutionary workers inherit this late in the history of humanity is a marvelous collection of the lessons, of the mistakes not to make, and the way to move forward."

Cahalane understood that workers—unlike propertied classes in history—have no property, no great universities, no large church hierarchies, and no way of corrupting layers of people, Barnes said. "Rob knew that the only thing workers have is organization; not organization reduced to administration but a political organization that must be served by disciplined and competent administration, political organization based on absorbing the lessons of the past contained in books and files, and in the people who, from one generation to the next, make up a revolutionary movement."

"A crime, in Rob's view was not making a mistake the first time, it was repeat-

Continued on page 6

'Cahalane was a disciplined soldier'

Following are excerpts from some of the greetings sent to the meeting to celebrate the life of Rob Cahalane.

Dave Wulp
Salt Lake City

"Rob became politically active in the movement against the U.S. war in Vietnam. In that struggle he met comrades of the YSA and the SWP and found, in our communist movement, a cause worth a lifetime of devotion."

"I was privileged to work with Rob from the time I arrived in Boston in early 1970 until I was asked to take on party responsibilities outside of Boston in the summer of 1973. During those years, because of our participation in the anti-war movement, the women's liberation movement, and our uncompromising hostility to capitalism, the Boston branch grew from 35 to 70. The YSA in Boston grew from one chapter of 25 to three chapters of 30 each.... Throughout these years, Rob was in the thick of the struggles."

Jon Hillson
St. Paul, Minnesota

"Rob Cahalane was a disciplined soldier in the battle of Boston. I served with him in the Boston Young Socialist Alliance chapter, and the Boston branch of the SWP during this important struggle, which helped educate, train, and inspire so many of us..."

"Rob helped build the institutions of the movement, the campus fractions of the YSA, particularly at Boston University, where he was a student. He was an organizer of the party and YSA's financial work, the Militant Labor Forum and a regional organizer of the YSA. He was on full-time in this latter capacity..."

"Carrying out all these duties helped enable us to have all-sided functioning units of the SWP and the YSA in Boston. These were essential for us to be able to recruit, develop, and assimilate new members, by participating in the busing struggle and in defense of Black equality, with rounded political organizations which could withstand the ups and

downs of developments of a sustained fight. Rob was a bulwark, dependable and organized, in enthusiastically shouldering these responsibilities."

Susan LaMont
Birmingham, Alabama

"Boston during the mid-70s, starting in 1974, was the center of an important battle for school desegregation, and the SWP and YSA were in the thick of that fight. The 'battle of Boston' proved an invaluable training ground for a whole layer of young party and YSA leaders, including Rob. He and others learned what it meant to shoulder daily responsibility as part of a broader movement — in that case, the movement to defend desegregation against racist violence — while working to build the party and recruit the best young fighters to the YSA. We learned in life what it means to be part of a party that can bring the hard-fought lessons of earlier generations of working-class struggles to bear in the struggles of today."

March leaders offer no way forward

Continued from front page ment.

Publicity for the march emphasizes the themes of reinforcing faith, family, and country in an effort to "uplift" Black men. Farrakhan's political and religious demagoguery in promoting the action echoes many of the same reactionary themes often used by capitalist politicians to justify attacks on the working class — particularly immigrants, oppressed nationalities, and women.

'Crisis of the Black family'

In speeches across the country Farrakhan has pointed to "fatherless" families as a central cause of deteriorating conditions in Black communities. "If you want to test the mettle of a nation you must test its men," he told a rally in Houston, Texas. The call for the march, penned by Farrakhan, states that "We are ready to take our place as the head of our families and our communities and that we, as Black men, are ready to shoulder the responsibility of being the maintainers of our women and children."

In the August 30 issue of the *Final Call*, newspaper of the Nation of Islam, columnist Abdul Allah Muhammad exclaimed, "As the time for the Million Man March rapidly approaches, Black communities across America have come to fit the description of the Old West — 'Where the men are men and the women are glad of it.'"

While many liberal supporters of the march embrace Farrakhan's emphasis on the father-headed family and "uplifting" the Black man, they have tried to sidestep the broad anti-woman overtones of the action.

In recent weeks organizers of the event have said that women are not encouraged but will not be prevented from participating in the event.

"As a Black woman, I'm proud to see the Black man stand up for us," said Linda Greene, the October 16 national fundraising coordinator. "They are coming to the forefront for us. They are recommitting their lives to us as the provider of their families."

The march is called as part of a "Day of

Atonement," after a Jewish holiday with the same name, in which Black men are called on to rededicate themselves to their communities. March organizers are asking supporters unable to travel to Washington to stay at home, pray, fast, and teach their children. The march has received the endorsement of many church organizations that have decried the "moral decline" of the Black community.

"It is our intention in the Nation of Islam and among concerned Black clergy, politicians, and other leaders to reduce crime and violence in our community by increasing the level of productivity, particularly in the Black male," states the call for the action.

March organizers call for expanded economic entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency among Blacks. "We will begin to see as never before the value of pooling our resources to buy farmland, to set up factories, to enter into international trade and commerce, to petition the government that they should not cede manufacturing to Third World countries but the Black community," states the call.

The document castigates the government for allowing goods imported from "China, Japan, Korea, and Italy," stressing that "we will take the responsibility for food, clothing, and shelter for our people, with a partnership with the government, a partnership for mutual progress. This army will be the true army of salvation of the Black nation and the army of salvation of America and the salvation army of the world."

Contract with America

Some march supporters present the "Million Man March" as a viable response to the Republican-sponsored legislation of social cuts known as the Contract with America.

Indeed, while the march initiators' central purpose was — and is — to build the Nation of Islam financially and politically, a raft of political groups and individuals who are moving to the right have found cause to associate themselves with the action.

At a September 7 meeting of the Hispanic/Latino Coalition in this city's



Ben Chavis (left) and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. Perspective of organizers of 'Million Man March' highlights atonement not struggle.

Adams Morgan district, several political activists responded favorably to an appeal by Bob Brown to support the "populist movement" represented by the march. Brown is a leader of the All-African Peoples' Revolutionary Party and national logistics coordinator for the march.

Other march endorsers include Philadelphia managing director Joe Certaine; Rosa Parks; Washington D.C. delegate to the House of Representatives Eleanor Holmes Norton; C. DeLores Tucker of the National Political Caucus of Black Women; the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity; Dorothy Leavell, president of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, the trade association of Black-owned newspapers; the National Black Police Officers Association; and Blacks in Government.

Farrakhan and former NAACP executive director Benjamin Chavis, the central spokespeople for the march, are barnstorming the country to drum up support.

Among the most enthusiastic partisans of the action are supporters of the organization headed by fascist Lyndon LaRouche and its newspaper, the *New Federalist*.

Chavis granted a lengthy interview to the *New Federalist* that appeared in its August 31 edition in which he plugs the October 16 demonstration. Chavis credits former civil rights activist James Bevel, now associated with the LaRouche outfit,

with coming up with the original idea for the "Day of Atonement." Chavis also praises the "strength" of LaRouche, and the *New Federalist*'s "importance... to the struggle of Black Americans."

Repeated references by the interviewer, Dennis Speed, to a Jewish conspiracy to oust Chavis as head of the NAACP were unanswered in the printed version of the interview.

Independent politics?

Some liberals and radicals supporting the march present it as the opening salvo in a new movement for independent Black politics.

"I support the march," said Rep. Kweisi Mfume. "I feel strongly that it is one of many things we need to do to mobilize people of color in this country. I think it is going to galvanize people in a way that is unprecedented."

"We will present a Black agenda for the candidate of either party to address forthrightly," states the call for the march, "since both parties, Democrat and Republican, have never addressed the real needs of the Black people of America. I will therefore ask all Black men to register or re-register as independents, holding our vote to be given to whomsoever will address the Black agenda."

As a bargaining chip in this process, organizers are calling for a voter registration drive to accompany the march.

Boston meeting celebrates life of Rob Cahalane

Continued from Page 5

ing a mistake the working-class movement had already paid a dear price to learn."

A deep respect for ideas was part of Rob Cahalane's makeup, Barnes said. "He respected not only the books but the various forms in which ideas conquered in the past were set down so they could be transmitted, organized, and used and absorbed by anyone who needed them."

"But he never had the notion that revolutionary ideas simply flowed or could be deduced from other revolutionary ideas. They come from absorbing what has been bequeathed to you from struggles that came before you, entering into new struggles, adjusting and amending strategic ideas and lessons, as an entire fabric of the revolutionary lessons of humanity is put

together over time."

Cahalane's work in helping to organize the availability of ideas, in helping to make them more accessible, in finding ways you could get at them, was based on the knowledge that "without this you can't conquer, that it would be unconscionable not to pass these on to those who were coming after you."

'Broaden your scope'

Cahalane loved art and music. When he traveled abroad on political assignments, Barnes pointed out, he always sought to organize his ticket (and often convinced others to do the same) to "broaden your scope," as Malcolm X put it, and spend an extra day or two taking in the best in art and culture that humanity has created.

Rob's interest in culture was mentioned

in a number of the messages that were sent to the meeting. "Rob loved the ballet," wrote Doug Cooper, now a member of the communist movement in Australia. "A couple of times he and Robin [Rob's long-time companion, Robin Mace] invited me to go with them... and once or twice I was able to make it... Their simple act of generosity in inviting me is something I've never forgotten."

Cahalane was admired by some of the oldest veteran leaders of our movement who he worked with, Barnes said. "Reba Hansen was a good example. She came to be very close to Rob. His qualities were something that she recognized and deeply appreciated, having been trained by Trotsky in how you organize the secretarial work and support team of a communist leadership."

Another person who held Rob in high esteem was Farrell Dobbs, the central leader of the Minneapolis Teamster strikes of the 1930s and for many years the national secretary of the party. Barnes explained that Dobbs considered the experience of Boston, what young fighters were going through in the battle around busing, to be one of the most important experiences of the generation of which Rob was a part. Dobbs never missed a chance to discuss these experiences with those who were going through the fight, especially the combat leaders.

In closing his remarks, Barnes pointed to a short speech Farrell Dobbs gave in 1966.

"History is magnificently indifferent to the problems of the individual," Dobbs said. "History doesn't care whether you die at six or live to be seven hundred years old, if that were possible, or what happens

during your particular life time. As Goethe once said, 'History marches like a drunken beggar on horseback.'..."

"Be not only a citizen of the planet; be a citizen of time. Recognize that what is fundamental is to be in rapport with the human race from the dawn of history on to the heights that we can only vaguely begin to dream of..."

"Our job is to build a movement of men and women who emulate the seasoned fighters of the Continental line in the first American Revolution. Learn to be professional revolutionary fighters. Don't be summer soldiers. Don't dawdle; don't vacillate. Put nothing above the considerations of the movement. Maintain your place in the front ranks of the revolutionary fighters, and stand in that place for the duration."

"There is no other way in which you can find so rich, so rewarding, so fruitful, and so purposeful a life."

That, Barnes said, was the conviction that had guided Rob Cahalane's political activity ever since the experiences in Boston that first made him a party cadre.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Wendy Schwartz, a member of National Association of Letter Carriers Local 34 and a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party in Boston, made an appeal for donations to the Capital Fund of the SWP in honor of Rob Cahalane. Some \$2,000 was contributed at the meeting to help continue publishing the revolutionary books Cahalane valued so much.

A donation of some of Rob's books was also made by Robin Mace for a special sale to Young Socialists in the New York area. The sale netted an additional \$725 for the Capital Fund.

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S E P T E M B E R 2 3 - N O V E M B E R 1 9

Socialists fan out to win new subscribers as sales drive starts

BY LAURA GARZA

NEW YORK — From a table on a street corner in Chinatown in Manhattan to the Puerto Rican Day parade in downtown Newark, New Jersey, dozens of *Militant* distributors fanned out in this area on Sunday, September 24, to introduce new readers to the socialist newsweekly and the monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*. Teams of three, four, and five were dispatched to working class communities in Brooklyn; Queens; Patterson, New Jersey; and elsewhere to go door to door to sell subscriptions to the *Militant*. Sunday was picked as the best day to get all the supporters out on the streets since many people in this area work on Saturdays.

The campaign day in the New York/northern New Jersey area was a great success with some 90 people participating in weekend teams. Eleven *Militant* subscriptions were sold, and 17 new people signed up to subscribe to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Close to 200 single issues of the *Militant* were sold, with a couple dozen people asking to be called back about a subscription.

This effort kicked off the first of an eight-week international campaign to sell 1,950 introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*, 525 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 750 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Reports from cities around the world have begun to come in on the initial efforts in the international sales drive. We will print the results of the first week in the next issue of the *Militant*. In the meantime, we print below a few reports on the first fruits of our efforts.

DETROIT — Distributors of the *Militant* here arranged to have additional copies of issues no. 35 and no. 36 flown in just before the weekend because single-issue sales were going so well. The *Militant*'s feature coverage of the battle being waged by newspaper workers in Detroit to defend their union has made it a popular item.

On Saturday, September 23 a team sold 12 singles and 1 subscription while introducing the paper in student housing in East Lansing. At Saturday night picket lines two renewals were sold to members of the United Steelworkers union and the United Auto Workers union who had come out to support the newspaper strike. On Sunday a door-to-door sales team near the Sterling Heights newspaper printing plant sold two subscriptions and four single issues in an hour.

— Steve Marshall

TWIN CITIES, Minnesota — "I want that paper, I have to have that paper," said a middle-aged Black guy who answered the door and listened to about 30 seconds of a description of the *Militant*. He explained that he is a Teamsters

union steward at the University of Minnesota Hospital and they have been working without a contract since July. He wanted first-hand information about how his union brothers and sisters were doing in

ful day of sales at the activities to commemorate the 127th anniversary of the Grito de Lares — the uprising on September 23, 1868, to declare independence from Spain. Two subscriptions were



Militant/Monica Jones

Militant supporter sells the paper at September 20 student demonstration against education cutbacks in Montreal.

Detroit and what he could learn from them. Four teams went door-to-door and sold four subscriptions to the *Militant* on the first weekend of the drive. And a team to Austin, Minnesota, won a new reader to *Perspectiva Mundial*. A copy of *New International* was sold to a coworker also.

— Michael Pennock

CLEVELAND, Ohio — An AIDS Walk here, Oberlin College, John Carroll University, and working class neighborhoods in Cleveland were the sites for discussions as *Militant* supporters in this area joined the effort to win new subscribers. A woman who overheard someone explaining that it was a socialist newspaper called out to her husband on the porch "Buy it!" The retired couple are long-time trade unionists. Her father worked in the steel mill at WCI, where workers are now locked out by the company. They are looking forward to reading coverage of the events at WCI and to getting a working-class point of view.

A team went out to the picket line and to neighborhoods in Warren, Ohio, where the WCI workers are locked out. Supporters from Pittsburgh joined in the sales effort and in building solidarity for the WCI workers.

Another subscription was sold to a college student who said he is questioning the value of what is being taught in college classes and what students are being trained to become.

— Carol James

LAJES, Puerto Rico — The international sales drive was kicked off in Puerto Rico with a success-

ful day of sales at the activities to commemorate the 127th anniversary of the Grito de Lares — the uprising on September 23, 1868, to declare independence from Spain. Two subscriptions were

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ful day of sales at the activities to commemorate the 127th anniversary of the Grito de Lares — the uprising on September 23, 1868, to declare independence from Spain. Two subscriptions were

— Ron Richards

PARIS — Some \$1,100 of Pathfinder literature was sold at a table set up at the giant annual fair organized by the French Communist Party newspaper *L'Humanité* September 15-17. Despite the steep decline of the French CP, tens of thousands attend the fair. *L'Humanité* reported 300,000 tickets were purchased this year.

Seventeen copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 5 were sold, as well as nine other issues of *Nouvelle Internationale* and its sister publications in Spanish and Farsi. Six trial subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and one to the *Militant* were also sold. In addition, a good start was made on a special month-long drive in France to sell 30 copies of the newly issued French-language Pathfinder pamphlet *The Second Declaration of Havana*; nine copies were sold.

A number of Spanish-language titles were also sold for a total of \$160, including many items that had the writings or speeches of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

— Derek Jeffers

GOALS

	Militant	Perspectiva Mundial	New International
United States			
Atlanta	55	18	15
*Birmingham, AL	49	5	15
Boston	40	8	16
Brooklyn	160	50	50
Chicago	65	20	25
Cincinnati	8	2	2
Cleveland	40	10	15
Denver	7	3	3
Des Moines	50	25	20
Detroit	65	10	20
Greensboro, NC	55	10	10
Houston	55	20	16
Indiana	10	0	0
Los Angeles	120	75	75
Miami	60	20	30
Morgantown, WV	48	2	
New Haven	5	1	2
New York	120	40	55
Newark, NJ	130	35	40
Peoria, IL	32	2	8
Philadelphia	75	15	15
Pittsburgh	65	5	15
Salt Lake City	50	15	15
*San Francisco	98	30	60
Seattle	70	15	20
Tucson	5	2	2
Twin Cities, MN	70	12	20
Washington, DC	45	15	20
Total U.S.	1652	465	584
Australia	15	3	12
Britain			
London	35	10	25
Manchester	40	1	20
Sheffield	12	1	3
Total	87	12	48
Canada			
Toronto	35	5	20
Vancouver	45	6	20
Montreal	50	12	30
Total	130	23	70
France	6	5	20
Greece	5	1	4
*Iceland	10	1	3
New Zealand			
Auckland	18	1	5
Christchurch	8	1	3
Wellington	2	0	1
Total	26	2	8
Puerto Rico	2	6	4
Sweden			
Malmö	2	2	1
Stockholm	20	15	20
Total	22	17	21
International Total	1945	534	771
Drive goals	1950	525	750
* tentative goal			

IN THE UNIONS

	Militant	Perspectiva Mundial	New International
United States			
IAM	59	9	17
UAW	65	10	17
USWA	28	—	—
UTU	58	3	17
U.S. Total	210	22	51
Canada			
USWA	5	0	2
New Zealand			
EU	2	0	0
MWU	2	0	0
New Zealand total	2	0	0

EU-Engineers Union; IAM-International Association of Machinists; MWU-Meat Workers Union; UAW-United Auto Workers; USWA-United Steel Workers of America; UTU-United Transportation Union

Activists build for October Cuba actions

BY MACEO DIXON

NEW YORK — Some 35 political activists met at Casa de las Americas here September 17 to make final preparations for the October 21 march and rally in New York City in opposition to U.S. policy toward Cuba. The meeting included representatives of political organizations and local Cuba coalitions in the Northeast affiliated to the National Network on Cuba (NNOC).

Earlier this year, the Network called actions in October demanding an end to the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba, lifting Washington's travel ban to the Caribbean nation, normalizing relations between the two countries, and respect for Cuba's right to self-determination.

There will be regional mobilizations in Chicago and San Francisco October 14 as well as local actions in Atlanta, Miami, Oklahoma City, and other places on that date. The New York action was set for October 21 to coincide with the opening of

the United Nations's 50th anniversary commemoration. U.S. president Bill Clinton and the representative of the Cuban government, possibly president Fidel Castro, are both scheduled to address the UN General Assembly October 22. Cuba coalitions from throughout the East Coast are organizing busses to bring people to the New York march. The events on the 14th will also be used to maximize the numbers of people from throughout the country who will go to New York the following weekend.

At the Northeast regional meeting here, Mildred Colón of the U.S. Health Care Committee of Local 1199 of the hospital workers union in New York said her union will print an initial run of 10,000 leaflets for the October 21 action. The executive board of Local 1199 has endorsed the march. Dennis Rivera, president of the union, will be a speaker at the rally.

Leslie Cagan of the Cuba Information Project announced that organizers in New

York had obtained permits from the police for the route of the demonstration. Protesters will assemble at 12:00 noon at the corner of 42nd Street and First Avenue across from the United Nations building. They will then march through midtown Manhattan, stopping briefly at the Rockefeller center that houses U.S. government offices, for a rally at Columbus Circle.

Rosina Rodríguez of the Dominican Friends of Cuba said that her organization is distributing 5,000 leaflets in Spanish for the October 21 action in the Dominican community and other Spanish-speaking areas in the city. The National Congress of Puerto Rican rights has produced a newsletter announcing the action.

The march is being publicized at meetings on campuses and elsewhere to report back on the Cuba Lives international youth festival that took place in early August. One such meeting took place at Casa de las Americas the night before the regional conference. The event, attended by

110 people, was sponsored by Casa de las Americas, the Cuba Information Project, Committees of Correspondence, Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, Venceremos Brigade, Workers World Party, and the Young Socialists. Report-back events from the Cuba Lives festival throughout the region are also being used to build the demonstration.

The regional NNOC meeting voted to call a mobilization October 7 for mass distribution of flyers and pasting up of posters in New York City. Groups from throughout the Northeast are encouraged to send teams to participate in the outreach effort. Activists will also pass out leaflets that day among the crowd that will turn out to hear Pope John Paul II, who will be speaking at Central Park in New York, and at an abortion rights demonstration that will coincide with the pope's visit in the city.

Representatives of NNOC affiliates at

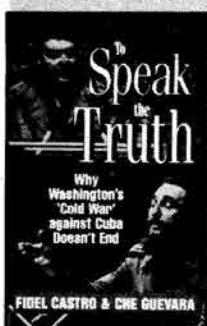
Continued on Page 14

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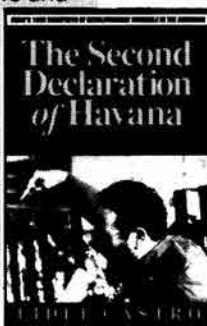
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Reprinted from the

Deseret News

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

DESERET NEWS, SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 1995



Joellyn Manville was in Cuba for Cuba Lives International Youth Fest.

CUBA YOUTH FEST

Heart transplants free, toilet paper at premium

By Marjorie Cortez
Deseret News staff writer

Like most Americans, Joellyn Manville's perceptions of Cuba have been shaped by a media that portrays the socialist island nation as hobbled by economic crisis and divided loyalties to Cuban President Fidel Castro.

"It was surprising. You go down there thinking there are three people in support of the Cuban

government and instead, it's everybody," said Manville, who will be a junior at East High School this fall.

Earlier this month, Manville, 16, spent a week in Cuba as a participant of the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. Manville and Nelson Gonzalez, a Kennecott smelter worker and Socialist Workers Party candidate for Salt Lake mayor, were the lone Utahns among about 3,000 delegates worldwide who attended the

gathering.

Gonzalez, who visited Cuba 15 years ago, said he was struck by the high morale of the workers, despite the economic pressures due in part to the longtime U.S. trade embargo of the island.

Part of the pride comes from being empowered to work through the economic crisis, he said.

"Cuba has always turned to the workers and professionals in a crisis. They've gone and asked the workers what to do. In every crisis they've had, they've turned to the farmers and mobilized them. It indicates it's still a revolutionary government. The workers themselves figure out what to do, and government facilitates it," Gonzalez said.

In addition to an address by Fidel Castro, which capped a demonstration involving a reported 500,000 Cubans, Manville and Gonzalez visited hospitals, schools and farms and stayed with Cuban families during the visit.

"They are extremely proud. Even though they are in the midst of a special crisis, not one hospital, not one school has been closed. You've got a people and government there that puts human needs first," Gonzalez said.

Manville said the Cubans' societal values were evident in the poor condition of domestic animals. Manville recalled she saw a bone-thin horse in Cuba's countryside. "You'd never see that here. But all the people there had plenty to eat. Here you see unhealthy people. You don't see that there," she said.

While the Cuban government provides free health care, education and ample food to its citizens, toiletries are at a premium. "You can get a heart transplant for free, but there isn't toilet paper in every bathroom," Manville said.

Manville, who is also active in Socialist Workers politics, said Americans perceive that vast numbers of Cubans are clamoring to immigrate to the United States.

"They (media) must show every person who comes off one of the boats. What they don't show is there are a lot of people who come here and are very disappointed. They think the United States is a great place to live, that everybody in the United States has a car and home. They get here and find it's not true," Manville said.

The highlight of the weeklong stay was Castro's address to the young delegates, Manville said.

"It's great to hear him speak. You could sleep through just about anybody, but not Fidel Castro," she said.

Cuban leader speaks out against embargo at UN

Continued from front page
unlicensed travel to Cuba by U.S. citizens.

During debate on the legislation, the House of Representatives also rejected in a 283-138 vote an amendment that would have eased the embargo by allowing the sale of food and medicine to Cuba, which are barred under current law.

Robaina said the Helms-Burton bill is being pushed as Cuba is experiencing an economic stabilization for the first time since 1990, when the collapse of aid and trade at preferential prices with the former Soviet Union triggered a formidable economic crisis. Havana has implemented a series of fiscal and other steps in the last two years to reverse the economic slide.

As part of these economic measures the Cuban government has been trying to attract more foreign investment. The country's National Assembly approved a new law September 5 that allows investors from abroad to wholly own business and property in Cuba and permits foreign investment in many sectors of the economy for the first time.

The big-business press, however, reacted with skepticism. "Foreign investment hurdles remain despite Cuban reform," said a headline in the September 25 *Financial Times* of London. The article complained that "President Fidel Castro said the law was part of a process of economic reform intended to improve the country's socialist system, not destroy it."

Capitalists divided

The unflinching determination of the majority of the working class in Cuba and its communist leadership to stay on the revolution's socialist course, combined with a small improvement in Cuba's economy this year, are feeding divisions among ruling circles in Washington and elsewhere on how best to go about weakening and eventually dealing a mortal blow to the Cuban revolution.

U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher said in a letter to House Speaker Newt Gingrich he would recommend a presidential veto of the Helms-Burton bill if the legislation is approved by the House and the Senate.

Many opponents of the Cuban revolution have concluded that the methods being pursued by supporters of measures like the Helms-Burton bill simply aren't the most effective to undermine the revolutionary government in Havana.

Opposition to the moves to tighten the embargo spans the spectrum of capitalist politicians and spokespeople, from William Buckley, editor-at-large of the conservative *National Review*, to the editors of the *Washington Post*. An editorial in the September 22 *Post* argues that the Clinton administration "has a better idea than Sen. Jesse Helms and Rep. Dan Burton" about how to pressure Cuba into following the dictates of Washington. This includes maintaining the embargo but holding out the carrot of easing it if the Cuban people begin to accede to U.S. government demands.

As that debate continues, opponents of Washington's economic war against Cuba who support Cuba's sovereignty and independence will hold rallies and marches on October 14 in Chicago and San Francisco, and on October 21 in New York (see article on facing page).

In his UN speech, Robaina praised those in the United States and millions around the world who have stood with Cuba in its fight against imperialist aggression and domination.

Robaina noted that conditions in the world today include the greater threat of war, the resurgence of rightist movements, and the continued domination of the economies of Third World countries by the imperialist powers with the imposition of harsher austerity measures against working people and no relief from growing poverty. He also stated, "We should definitively support the approval of treaties completely banning atomic weapons.... All nuclear powers, without exception, should embrace such treaties."

Robaina went on to discuss the battle Cuba is engaged in to survive in the face of a world economic crisis, and the unceasing aggression by the U.S. government.

The following are excerpts from Robaina's September 25 speech to the UN General Assembly. The translation from the transcript of the entire speech, provided by the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, is by the *Militant*.

BY ROBERTO ROBAINA

At the threshold of the 21st century, the criminal economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States for 36 years is still on. We have survived the experiment of making us disappear, which has been ridiculed by the tenacious resistance of my people.

After several years of crisis the Cuban economy had a 0.7 percent growth by the end of last year, while the budgetary defi-

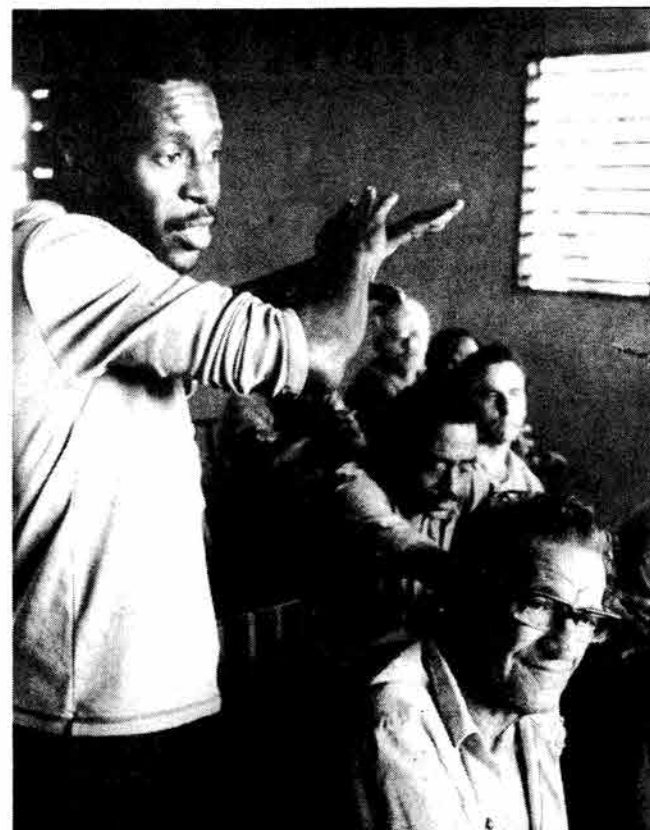
cit was reduced almost by half. Inflation, measured taking into consideration the informal exchange market, was reduced more than 90 percent, and near the end of the first semester of 1995 the economy had grown 2 percent.

Important economic measures have allowed those results, measures which did not deviate at any moment from the traditional attention and assistance of our government to education, health, employment, and social security.

All this has been possible because since 1959 we have defended, jealously and firmly, the commitment made by the founders of our nation: that of keeping it free and sovereign, just 90 miles from the great power that has always looked at us as its backyard and as an appendix of its soil.

This has been possible because in this world, determined even to buy and sell souls, and to profit from them, we have persisted and proved that you can live with ethics of principles, national unity, justice, respect for human dignity, equality, morals and loyalty; and nobody, absolutely nobody, has the right to question those ethics....

I would be ungrateful if, while speaking about the incredible feats of the Cuban people, I do not refer to the millions of people who have accompanied us throughout these difficult years, to the dozens of countries and governments which did not break relations with Cuba, to those who strengthen their relations with us, and those who had the courage of opening their arms to us for the first time under un-



Juventud Rebelde/Angelito Baldrich
A May 1994 Workers Parliament in a Havana factory. Workers discussed measures to stem economic crisis.

heard of pressures and threats.

It is now, when trade and foreign investments contribute to boosting the Cuban economy, that the U.S. Congress is in a race to adopt legislation that defies the will of the majority of nations, violates free trade and all civilized forms of relations between peoples and governments....

Only a few days ago the House of Representatives took the first step of this announced crime by passing this bill which, among other absurd things, suggests an international blockade against Cuba, which in fact is against humanity itself.

This is no surprise to us, because with the exception of those gestures from the many friends we have in that great nation, those who have led it have offered us nothing pleasant in the last 36 years.

However, I am confident that there are honest people there who, even while they

Continued on Page 14

Editor of Cuban literary journal begins United States speaking tour

BY VANESSA KNAPTON

LOS ANGELES — After receiving more than 20 invitations for campus speaking engagements from university professors and student groups nationwide, Norberto Codina, a Cuban poet and editor of the magazine *La Gaceta de Cuba*, received a visa from the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

The renowned writer arrived in Miami September 26. From there he flew to Washington, D.C., to attend the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference. Codina, who is also a member of the national council of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), was invited to participate in the September 28-30 LASA event by the organization's president, Cynthia McClintock.

After the conference, Codina will spend four days in the Washington area. His visit there will begin with a talk on art and culture today at an introductory class on Latin American Studies at George Washington University. The tour will include poetry readings on campuses in Washington and Gettysburg, Maryland, and at El Centro de Arte (The Art Center) in D.C.

His stay in the U.S. capital will conclude with a public lecture on literature and culture in Cuba at George Washington University, sponsored by the campus International Cultural Affairs Committee, the Multi-Cultural Affairs Committee, and the Arts Committee of the Program Board. The D.C. Hands Off Cuba Coalition is helping to publicize this event.

From Washington, Codina will travel to Los Angeles. The program here includes lectures on arts and culture in Cuba at Midnight Special and Arroyo Books, two well-known bookstores in Los Angeles. He will also speak on a number of college campuses, including California State University in Los Angeles and Long Beach

and the Otis College of Art and Design.

In a special event on October 10, the Cuban poet will speak at the University of California Los Angeles on the role of art in revolutionary politics. October 10, which coincides with the anniversary of the initiation of the struggle for Cuban independence from Spain in 1868, was declared an international day in solidarity with Cuba by a 3,000-strong international solidarity conference that took place in Havana last November. This year's celebration will focus on the commemoration of the centennial of the death in combat of Cuba's national hero José Martí, who was killed during a battle in the war against Spanish colonialism.

After Los Angeles, Codina is scheduled to visit Houston and the Rio Grande Valley area in Texas. He will end his tour with a visit to the New York area.

The UNEAC leader, 43, has been the editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the foremost journal of arts and letters in the Caribbean country, since 1988. The magazine is distributed by Pathfinder Press in the United States. In the past 20 years several collections of Codina's poetry have been published. *A este tiempo llamarán antiguo* (In A Time They Will Call Old-Fashioned) won the David Poetry Award in Cuba. This year the Cuban publisher *Unión* will print a poetry anthology edited by Codina, titled *Los ríos de la mañana* (The Morning Rivers).

Those interested in the tour of the Cuban writer and editor can contact the Norberto Codina Lectures Committee, c/o John Shapley, Graduate Students Association, 301 Kerckhoff, UCLA, 310 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Tel: (310) 206-8512; fax: (310) 206-7612.

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A-bomb: part of U.S. imperialist war drive

Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb by Ronald Takaki. 193 pp. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995. \$16.95 paper.

With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination by Joseph Gerson. 203 pp. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1995. \$19.95 hardcover.

BY PATTI IYAMA

At 8:15 on the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, a U.S. bomber dropped an atomic bomb over Hiroshima. Some 70,000 people,

IN REVIEW

many of them school children who had been mobilized to build firebreaks, died instantly. Birds in flight ignited. The heat of the blast kindled a raging fire that seared the city. It was followed by a black rain. More than 60,000 died within months from burns, radiation poisoning, and shock. Another 70,000 died by 1950.

The 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in August, revealed a deepening debate in this country over why the U.S. government dropped this new, horrible weapon. The big-business press launched a campaign to defend the use of the bomb.

On one hand most editors, commentators, and politicians have argued that the bomb "helped save lives" by making a U.S. invasion of Japan's main islands unnecessary.

On the other hand, a recent Gallup poll cited in *Newsweek* shows that people over the age of 50 narrowly approve the use of the atomic bomb, and that most younger Americans, especially those under 30, believe that using the atomic bomb was wrong. Moreover, an increasing number of historians and academics say the traditional accounts of the bombings, based on the government's version, should be revised. They argue that dropping the bomb was militarily unnecessary.

Many books have been published on this 50th anniversary. Among those defending the "revisionist" school are: Ronald Takaki's *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb* and Joseph Gerson's *With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination*. Both summarize the facts that show the bomb was not needed to force Japan's military regime to surrender.

Takaki and Gerson point to Washington's "anxiety" about Soviet domination in China and other Asian countries, as well its occupation of eastern Europe. The dropping of the atom bomb, they say, was primarily a political warning to the Soviet Union and heralded the beginning of the Cold War.

The truth, however, is more complex. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was the opening shot in a new "hot" war Washington was preparing: to crush the massive revolt against colonial oppression from China to India beginning to sweep the world, prevent the spread of the socialist revolution, and to move toward rolling back the conquests working people had won in the Soviet Union in order to restore capitalism there. The U.S. rulers boasted that they were launching the "American Century."

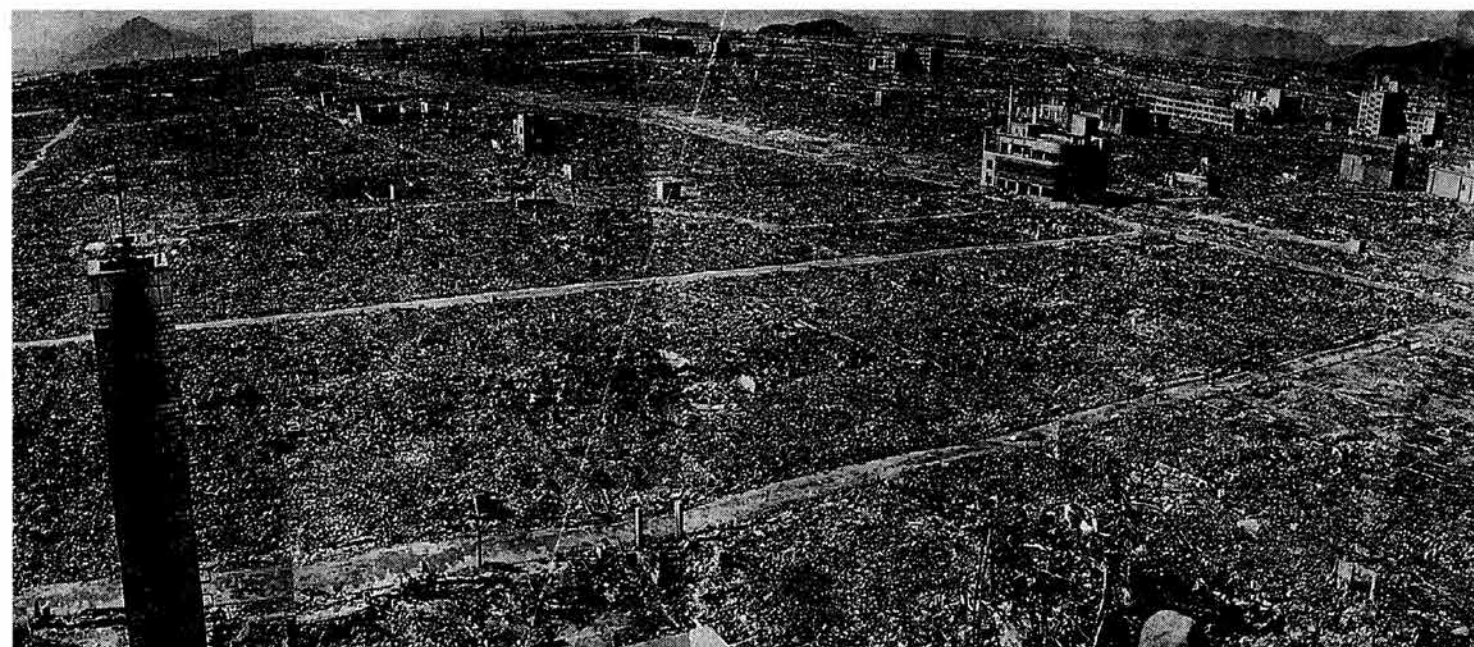
In spite of its initial monopoly of this new and terrible means of mass destruction, however, Washington quickly ran into insurmountable roadblocks in its war drive. It was forced to retreat to conducting what it called a "cold war."

Origins of Pacific War

In order to understand why the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were sacrificed, it is important to know why the war in the Pacific was fought. Washington said the Japanese military regime's aggression in Asia had to be stopped and the bombing of the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, had to be avenged.

The real driving force behind the war in the Pacific, however, was the fight between the profit-hungry predators in the United States and Japan over, as Gerson states, "the expansion and maintenance of empire in the Pacific and Asia."

Since capitalism developed relatively late in Japan, its rulers were not able to participate in the earliest imperialist divi-



Devastation of Hiroshima after U.S. warplane dropped atomic bomb on August 6, 1945. Some 70,000 people died instantly from the blast while Washington was making preparations to launch a new "hot" war to establish the "American Century."

sions of Asia. But with the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, Tokyo began to wrest colonies from other imperialist powers by seizing control of Taiwan, Korea, and parts of northern China. In 1932 the Japanese imperialists invaded Manchuria and established a puppet government there.

Their major rival for control of Asia was the capitalist ruling class in the United States, who had long been eyeing China as a huge market for selling goods and investing capital. In the 1930s, the growing protectionist trade barriers imposed by the U.S. and European governments fueled the Japanese drive to conquer China and Southeast Asia in order to obtain oil, rubber, iron ore, and other raw materials.

By the spring of 1942, Tokyo, in a series of stunning victories, had conquered Indonesia, Indochina, the Philippines, Malaya, and Burma. Its troops were at the threshold of invading Australia, India, and Laos and controlled most of eastern China. But by the end of 1942, the tide was beginning to turn.

The overwhelming industrial and military might of the U.S. capitalists crushed their Japanese rivals. By the end of 1944 oil shipments from the East Indies had almost stopped, imports had fallen by 40 percent, half of Japan's merchant fleet and two-thirds of her tankers were destroyed.

On March 9, 1945, the U.S. military began firebombing Japanese cities, starting with Tokyo. City after city came under attack. Virtually every industrial center was destroyed. A report by the Japanese cabinet acknowledged that the steel and chemical industries were about to collapse, the railway system would soon cease functioning, and shipping was insufficient even to maintain transportation between the main islands of Japan.

Recognizing that the war was lost, Tokyo began to send out peace feelers to governments in Europe. Then, in early July, the Japanese government requested the Soviet Union, which had not yet entered the Pacific war, to mediate between Tokyo and Washington to end the war. The only condition the Japanese officials placed on their surrender was that Hirohito and the emperor system be preserved.

In spite of a recommendation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the cabinet that the U.S. government accept conditional surrender, U.S. president Harry Truman and British prime minister Winston Churchill rejected the Japanese government's efforts to end the war. Instead, they issued a joint statement on July 25 saying that they would accept only "unconditional surrender" from the Japanese regime.

Three weeks later, Washington accepted the Japanese surrender on the same terms that Tokyo had proposed in July. The only change was the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As early as 1946, two U.S. government studies concluded that the bombings were not a military necessity. In addition to the recently discovered War Department Operations Division study, the official U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey judged that "certainly prior to 31 December 1945 and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945 [the date of the planned Kyushu invasion], Japan would have surrendered

even if the bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."

Takaki points out that Tokyo exhorted Asians to unite in a race war against the white "brutes," "wild beasts," and "hairy savages" of Europe and the United States. This demonization of the enemy justified atrocities like the infamous Bataan Death March, which occurred in 1942 after 76,000 American and Filipino soldiers surrendered to the Japanese in the Philippines. On the 65-mile forced march to their internment camp, 7,000 were bayoneted or clubbed to death or buried alive when they fell behind.

At the same time, Washington stereotyped the Japanese as "loathsome buck-toothed little yellow savages." This racist dismissal of the Japanese as less than human was the propaganda used to get acceptance in the United States for Washington's war against Japan and for its bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Takaki puts forward the view that Truman's racism and psychological insecurities are the key to understanding why the U.S. government dropped A-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Truman's policies were racist, but singling this out throws Takaki's book off balance. The U.S. capitalist ruling class had larger political considerations in mind when it decided to incinerate the populations of two Japanese cities.

Preparations for a 'hot' war

Soon after the Japanese government surrendered on August 14, President Truman halted all lend-lease shipments, including food, to the Soviet Union, one of its war-time allies. Takaki quotes Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew as saying, "A future war with Soviet Russia is as certain as anything can be certain."

By October, Truman was attempting to rally the people of the United States for a confrontation with the USSR. There "can be no compromise with the forces of evil....[The] atomic bombs which fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki must be a signal," the president asserted.

The U.S. rulers were preparing for a new war. By dropping the bombs on human beings, they showed that they had no qualms about using this incredibly destructive weapon, over which they had a monopoly. One of their immediate aims was crushing the democratic revolution in China that they feared could overturn capitalist rule there. This was the prize for which they had waged a bloody war with their Japanese rivals for nearly four years. At the same time they wanted to drive the Soviet Union out of Eastern Europe.

Although Washington had started to put everything into place to fight another war, it was prevented from doing so for two reasons beyond its control: the refusal of Chinese workers and peasants to be cowed into submission, and the mass protests of U.S. troops after the war demanding, "Bring us home now."

Thus, the U.S. warmakers were not able to launch the "hot" war to establish the American Century.

Since 1945 Washington has threatened or considered using nuclear weapons many times. Gerson details a few of these

occasions: during the Korean war, at the end of the Indochina war in 1954; the 1962 missile crisis; the Vietnam War, and in the Middle East from 1946 through the Gulf War in 1991. It weighed the political price it would pay for using nuclear bombs in each instance and decided not to do so.

In the course of documenting the U.S. government's "nuclear extortion" over the last 50 years, Gerson aims his guns at the Cuban government for its "contribution to the intensity of the [1962 missile] crisis." He states that during that crisis, "Fidel Castro pressed Nikita Khrushchev to launch a preemptive nuclear attack against the United States in the event of a U.S. invasion of Cuba." Gerson repeated the same slander during the July 31-August 2 International Symposium in Hiroshima where he was a featured speaker. That gathering marked the 50th anniversary of Washington's A-bomb attacks on Japan.

Gerson fails to mention that the proposal to place missiles and tactical nuclear weapons on Cuban soil was not Cuba's, but the Soviet government's for its own foreign policy goals. At a January 1992 conference in Havana that brought together participants from Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the United States to discuss the 1962 missile crisis, Castro said: "We were not too pleased with the missiles actually. If it had been a matter only of our defense, we would not have accepted the emplacement of the missiles here." This was not because of the dangers involved, Castro said, "but rather because this would damage the image of the revolution....The presence of the missiles would in fact turn us into a Soviet military base and that had a high political cost."

Orlando Fundora López, the Cuban representative participating in the Hiroshima conference, refuted Gerson by explaining that the Cuban revolution has never relied on Soviet missiles or weapons, but the armed power of the Cuban people, for its defense. It was, in fact, the massive mobilization of the Cuban people during the missile crisis that convinced the Kennedy administration of the difficulties of invading the island and the political price that would be paid.

Neither Takaki nor Gerson, while agreeing that nuclear weapons must be banned and dismantled, can suggest a realistic solution, other than placing political pressure on the governments with nuclear weapons.

But the question of nuclear weapons and their use is connected to the drive of the capitalist rulers toward war. Today — as the competition between the capitalist profiteers has become more intense — political, economic, and military conflicts are growing. Since the 1991 Gulf War, the possibilities of a third imperialist world war are clearer.

Only if working people wrest power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters and establish their own government can workers and farmers bring an end to horrible predatory wars for profits and get rid of all nuclear weapons.

Patti Iiyama is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4227 in Houston, Texas. She had relatives who were killed by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Marx, Engels books are political treasure

Pathfinder, located in New York, with distributors in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, publishes books and pamphlets by revolutionary and working-class leaders. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Pathfinder is becoming increasingly known as one of the main sources of essential works by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of the modern revolutionary working-class movement. Pathfinder publishes several works by Marx and Engels, including the *Communist Manifesto* in English and Spanish, and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* and *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the*

colony." The book consists of letters between the two, as well as to political collaborators around the world; articles for several different newspapers; and minutes and addresses of the first international mass organization of the workers movement, the International Working Men's Association, which Marx and Engels helped found and lead.

A succinct description of the history of British colonial oppression is included in the record of a speech delivered by Marx to the German Workers' Educational Association in 1867. The Irish question is "not simply a nationality question," Marx says, "but a question of land and existence. Ruin or revolution is the watchword."

the banner of Armed Revolt," he wrote, "on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great Democratic Republic had first sprung up, whence the first Declaration of the Rights of Man [the Declaration of Independence] was issued, and the first impulse given to the European revolution of the 18th century."

One of the excerpts in this collection is Engels's 1887 preface to the American edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (this entire book is also available from Pathfinder). Referring to the general strike of 1886 for the eight-hour workday, which began on May 1, and to the hanging in November 1887 of activists in this movement in Chicago who later became known as the Haymarket Martyrs, Engels writes: "May and November have hitherto reminded the American bourgeoisie only of the payment of coupons of US bonds; henceforth May and November will remind them, too, of the dates on which the American working class presented their coupons for payment."

"The Civil War in France," contained in the collection *On the Paris Commune*, is the product of Marx's painstaking political assessment of the historic importance and lessons of the Commune, which lasted from March to May 1871. The Commune was the first time the working class held political power and "stormed the heavens," as Marx wrote at the time of the uprising in Paris.

"Its true secret was this," Marx writes. "It was essentially a working-class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor." Marx pointed to the Commune's practical experience in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the form of government in that period.

The Civil War in France was first published in 1871 in English. In that year alone, nearly 30 editions of the book were produced in 11 languages. The revolution in Paris found an echo among working people around the world. During the Commune's existence, mass meetings in sup-

port of the revolutionary movement, and, later in protest against the atrocities committed against it, were held in Britain, Germany, Belgium, the United States, and other countries. This solidarity movement was led by the First International.

Marx describes the Commune as "the bold champion of the emancipation of labor, emphatically international....The Commune admitted all foreigners to the honor of dying for an immortal cause." (A good companion to the writings of Marx and Engels on the Paris Commune is *The History of the Paris Commune of 1871*, by Prosper-Olivier Hippolyte Lissagaray, a barricade fighter and journalist who covered the course of the Commune's existence. This book is also available from Pathfinder.)

Other works by Marx and Engels available through Pathfinder include, *On Colonialism*, *The First Indian War of Independence*, and the first and third volumes of the *Selected Works* (in three volumes). Among the items in Volume One of the *Selected Works* are Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach" and "Wage Labor and Capital," and Engels's "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany." Volume Three contains "Critique of the Gotha Programme" by Marx and several writings by Engels, including "The Part Played by Labor in the Transition From Ape to Man" and "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific."

Pathfinder also distributes more than 30 titles by Marx and Engels in Spanish. These include *Crítica del programa de Gotha*, (Critique of the Gotha Programme), *Miseria de la filosofía* (Poverty of Philosophy), and *El origen de la familia, la propiedad privada y el estado* (Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State) by Engels.

Fourteen titles are available in French including *Anti-Dühring* by Engels and *Contribution à la critique de l'économie politique* (Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy) by Marx.

The *Communist Manifesto* is available in all three languages.

For a complete list of titles available from Pathfinder, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014 or visit a Pathfinder bookstore near you.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Maggie Pucci

State, both by Engels. In addition, the New York-based publisher carries and distributes some 110 titles by these two communist leaders in English, Spanish, and French.

Pathfinder bookstores around the world can promote these titles with special offers and displays that call attention to these indispensable resources and encourage readers of Pathfinder books to build up their libraries.

Among the titles by Marx and Engels distributed by Pathfinder is the entire available set of the *Collected Works*, comprised of 44 volumes so far. (Six more are awaiting publication to complete the 50-volume set.) In addition, all three volumes of *Capital* by Marx, still to be published as part of the *Collected Works*, are available separately.

Several books collect together essential readings on particular topics that can help fighters gain a deeper understanding of contemporary issues and communist politics and strategy. In *Ireland and the Irish Question*, readers are treated to the writings of these working-class leaders on what Engels describes as "England's first

These writings offer a chronicle of the first modern national liberation movement in Ireland, with a thorough account of the Fenian movement. Marx and Engels describe and condemn the brutality of the English police in Ireland against the captured Fenians when that movement was defeated.

The American Revolutionary War, the U.S. Civil War from 1861 to 1865, and the development of the working class and labor movement in the latter half of the 1800's are the subjects of Marx and Engels' *On the United States*.

Marx and Engels provide detailed descriptions of events in the Civil War as they were unfolding. Writing on behalf of the Central Council of the International Working Men's Association to Abraham Lincoln upon his re-election as president in 1864, Marx congratulates him, saying, "If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant warcry of your re-election is, Death to Slavery." Later in the same letter, Marx denounces the Southern slaveholders. "An oligarchy of 300,000 slaveholders dared to inscribe... 'slavery' on

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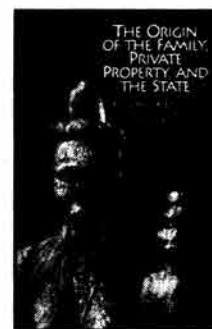
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Los Angeles

Health Care Crisis — Is it over? Speakers: Hesham Regab, Coordinator, Pediatricians and Parents for Peace, County emergency room doctor; representative, Emergency Coalition to Save L.A.; representative, United Nurses, union of L.A. nurses. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. (2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

The Fight to Build the Unions: Yesterday and Today. Video show of *The Uprising of 1934*, a documentary of the 1934 strike by

thousands of textile workers across the United States. Speakers: Rollande Girard, chairperson of Miami Socialist Workers Party, member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

IOWA

Des Moines

Eyewitness Report from Detroit News Picket Line. Speaker: John Cox, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Des Moines. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m.
International Protests Slam Nuclear Bomb Tests in South Pacific. Speakers: Rev. Ken Studer; Larry Ginter, farm activist. Fri., Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m.
All events held at 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

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Cuba Today: In Defense of Cuba's Right to Self-Determination. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. 780

Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

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No To U.S. Bombing. No to U.S. Partition of Bosnia. Speaker: Doug Jenness, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. (east side of Hwy 280, on 16A bus line). Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The International Struggle for Women's Rights. Reportback from the Fourth UN Conference on Women in Beijing, China. Panel will include Laura Garza, staff writer for the Militant. Fri., Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

The International Fight for Women's Rights

Today. Panel discussion with Samantha Lee, participant in Huairou NGO Forum, and Marnie Kennedy, participant in NOW annual conference. Fri., Oct. 6, 7 p.m. 66 Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 281-3297.

BRITAIN

Manchester

The Beijing Women's Conference. A Participant's View. Speaker: Shellia Kennedy, participant at the conference. Sat., Oct. 7, 6 p.m. First floor, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £2. Tel: (0161)-839-1766.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Struggle for Self-Determination in Bougainville. Speakers: David Alley, recently captain of a yacht taking medical aid to Bougainville; representative of the Communist League. Fri., Oct. 6, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Arson on Tehran bookstore sparks wide debate

BY FARHAD SALMI

FRANKFURT, Germany — Morgh-e-Amin, a bookstore and a publishing house in central Tehran, Iran, that stays open 24 hours a day, was set ablaze at half past midnight (Tehran time) August 23. The five assailants took the store attendant as a hostage, poured gasoline on stacks of books, and set the shop on fire. No one was injured but the store attendant was severely beaten before being released because he refused to disclose the whereabouts of Ebrahim Rahimi Khamenee, the store owner.

The arson of this bookstore has sparked widespread opposition and debate.

One of the recent titles carried by Morgh-e-Amin, *Gods Laugh Only on Mondays*, had come under attack earlier in some newspapers as insulting Islam and the efforts of young volunteers who fought during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. (The author's name was not disclosed in Tehran dailies, but the weekly *Iran Times*, published in Washington, D.C., identified the author by his pen name as Mohammad Reza Khoshbin Khoshnazar.) Under pressure, the Ministry of Islamic Guidance had rescinded its permit for the sale of the book and had already confiscated all the copies before the attack took place on Morgh-e-Amin.

The day after the assault, Seyyed Ataollah Mohajerani, deputy to President Hashemi Rafsanjani on legal matters, wrote a column in the Tehran semi-official daily *Ettelaat* condemning the burning of the store. He wrote that the arson was either the work of "clever enemies" who want to portray Iran as a country of book

burners backed by its government, or the work of "ignorant friends" who burn a bookstore because they are opposed to one title sold there. Mohajerani wrote, "This fire, smoke, and ignorance can neither silence ideas nor undermine the Islamic Republic."

In addition to literary works the Morgh-e-Amin bookstore has also carried political books. They include titles with speeches by Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X, leaders of the Cuban Revolution, and some revolutionary classics. The bookstore had not encountered any problems on those accounts.

Forty-three publishers, distributors, and bookstores have sent a petition to President Rafsanjani protesting the attack on Morgh-e-Amin and calling for the arrest and prosecution of the assailants and compensation for damages. In solidarity, publishers from around the country have started sending stacks of books to Morgh-e-Amin and have made financial contributions. Most dailies in Tehran have taken editorial positions against the bookstore burning.

Some of the opposition to the arson, however, has been conditional. The semi-official Tehran daily *Kayhan* opposed the attack because the "offensive" book had already been taken out of circulation and there should have been no need to burn a bookstore.

The weekly *Sobh*, while not condoning the attack, characterized the publishers who had petitioned Rafsanjani as "Westomaniacs," dazzled by the "Western

world." The Tehran daily *Salam*, which has strongly condemned the burning, stated that the book itself is "worthless" and "banal" and should not have been published in the first place.

Nevertheless, this is the first time that such a wide opposition is being voiced against these kinds of extralegal attacks, which sometimes are carried out under the name of Hezbollah. Even some of the semi-official papers that voice the views of different tendencies in the ruling circles have not been immune to attacks. In his *Ettelaat* column Mohajerani referred to a sound bomb that had been placed at the entrance of the paper earlier by unknown assailants.

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, a powerful figure in the regime and secretary of the Supreme Council of Guardians, which has veto power over all legislation, spoke at the weekly Friday prayer meeting in Tehran on August 25.

Referring to Ayatollah Khomeini's directives in his will, Jannati said that "if Hezbollah comes across a wrong doing and complains to the judicial authorities, and they do not pay any attention, then the Hezbollah people can act on their own initiative and the judicial system does not have the right to prosecute those who have taken the necessary actions."

Coming three days after the assault on Morgh-e-Amin and the young man working there, Ayatollah Jannati's remarks have been viewed as sanctioning those violent actions.

Salam criticized Jannati for these re-

marks and named some of the publications — *Gardoon*, *Farad*, and *Donyaye Sokhan* — that had been violently attacked after similar speeches at Friday prayer meetings in the past. *Salam's* list of assailed publications includes *Payame Daneshjoo* (Students' Message), which is known to represent the continuation of the current Students Following Imam's Line. This group led the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979 in opposition to Washington's moves against the Iranian revolution. After *Payame Daneshjoo* ran documents on financial corruption of high level state functionaries, its offices were ransacked. The paper was later suppressed by legal authorities.

After *Salam* criticized Jannati's speech for justifying extra-legal acts of violence, a debate has ensued between *Salam* and *Kayhan*. The second paper sided with Jannati.

A writer in *Kayhan* accused *Salam* of trying to get a "feeble" head start in the coming election campaign for the fifth Majles (parliament) by taking up the defense of Morgh-e-Amin and other such issues. Supporters of *Salam*, who were called "radicals," had a majority in the third Majles, but many of them were disqualified in running for the fourth Majles and lost out in the elections.

Salam has pointed to the "almost absolute majority" that supporters of Jannati have in the Majles and have rhetorically asked why don't they pass legislation to ban things legally, rather than resorting to illegal attacks.

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CALENDAR

CONNECTICUT

Hartford

Rumba por Cuba. Fund-raiser for the Greater Hartford Coalition on Cuba. Live music, food. Presentation by Esteban Pérez with video on the international youth festival held in Cuba in August. Proceeds to support October 21 demonstration against the U.S. economic blockade and to send medical aid to Cuba. Sat., Oct. 7, 5 to 8 p.m. Central Baptist Church, 457 Main St. Donation: \$10. For more information, call (860) 286-9963.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

An Evening of Middle East Solidarity With Cuba. Speakers: Teresa Gutiérrez, International Peace for Cuba Appeal; Samori Marksman, program director, WBAI; Antonio Maestre, Casa de las Americas. Middle Eastern dinner and music. Sat., Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m. Organized by United Campaign in Solidarity with the People of Iran. Casa de las Americas, 104 West 14 St. (Between 6th and 7th Ave.). Admission: \$5, dinner \$7. For more information and tickets, call: (212) 620-4283.

CANADA

Vancouver

International Day of Solidarity With Cuba. Demonstration against the blockade at the U.S. consulate, Tue., Oct. 10, 5 p.m. 1095 W. Pender. Solidarity meeting at Chilean Co-op, 7:30 p.m., 3390 School Ave.

The blind leading the lame — Responding to complaints by German and Danish pilots about the lack of safety at Greek airports, air controllers and pilots



Harry Ring

joined the government there in charging this was false and aimed at hurting Greek tourism. The charges coincided with a plane crash that killed six near the city of Thessaloniki.

Clearing the air — Athens International Airport is the only one

in Greece equipped with terminal radar. Declared the chairman of the controllers' association: "It is a fact that the lack of radars does create problems. But this does not compromise safety."

No mug shot? — Workers at Roger Hamblin's restaurants in Utah face a new punch-the-clock technology. To prove it's not a co-worker punching in for you, place your finger over a lens that reads your fingerprint into a computer. Then swipe through the machine your new plastic card with a digitized version of your fingerprint for a match-up.

Heresy defined — Walter Righter, a former Episcopalian bishop, faces heresy charges for having appointed a non-celibate

homosexual as a deacon. A church official said he knew of only one other heresy case that actually went to trial. A former bishop was convicted of heresy for his support to the Russian revolution. In 1920, he declared it was time to "banish the Gods from the skies and capitalists from the earth and make the world safe for Industrial Communism."

Pie in the sky more rational — About the pro-Communist reverend. A book on Episcopal history advises that, "most Episcopalians assigned his aberrant behavior to insanity."

Managed care — A nurse who assisted the doctor who removed the wrong leg of a patient told a Florida hearing board that during

the operation she realized the mistake and pointed it out to the doctor. He responded: "There's nothing we can do now. It's half way finished." The patient, Willie King, testified that a hospital administrator told him that the leg they amputated "was worse than the other." He had had no problem with it.

Not most, but some — A right-wing newsletter, *Dispatches*, gives two thumbs down to "Babe," the movie starring the talking pig. It sees the film as a "most successful effort by animal-rights activists to make vegetarians out of our kids." Plus, it "indoctrinated with the message that animals are kinder, smarter and braver than most humans."

They do care — Some folks may grouse that the Canadian government has a callous attitude toward pensioners. Not Irene Mulroney. Her monthly check was hand delivered by Priority Post. If she didn't answer the bell, the postal worker had a special number which summoned a Mountie with a house key to check that she was OK. That was when her son Brian was prime minister.

Join the club — In good measure this column is sustained by the clippings sent in by readers. You're cordially invited to do likewise. Clippings (include name of paper and date of item) should be sent c/o Pathfinder Books, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90006. Fax: 213-380-1268.

Curtis parole demanded 'in the interest of justice'

Continued from front page

ceived a letter signed by 35 participants in the Nongovernmental Forum on Women held in conjunction with the Fourth World Conference on Women in China in early September. Among the signers were women from Tanzania, Morocco, New Zealand, Germany, India, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Venezuela, Sweden, Korea, Israel, Ireland, and Italy, as well as the United States. Ene Obi, from the Department of Information and International Relations of the Nigeria Labour Congress, wrote, "The struggle continues" under her name.

'Served a lot of time for conviction'

"I am fully aware of all the charges against Mark Curtis. My purpose in writing this letter is not to argue the charges with you, I have already done that," wrote Larry Solomon, president of United Auto Workers Local 751, on strike against Caterpillar in Decatur, Illinois. "Mark Curtis has already served a lot of time for his conviction. Now is the time to give some credence to all of his support and do the decent thing and seriously consider immediate parole. It would be the right thing to do."

Other unionists from around the world have also addressed the board. "As retired editor-in-chief of the German metalworkers paper *Metall* (circulation more than 3 million) I join all those who ask to liberate Mr. Mark Curtis," wrote Jakob Moneta, from Frankfurt, Germany.

"I would like to respectfully urge you to grant parole to Mr. Mark Curtis," wrote Mark Flanigan, vice local chairperson of United Transportation Union Local 117 in Everett, Washington. "After studying his case I believe he has suffered long enough." Flanigan also told the defense committee that he was writing letters to Iowa's elected state representatives to "let them know that in the land of the free we have a person being victimized for his political beliefs."

J. Carey wrote to the parole board from Drancy, France, on behalf of the General Labor Confederation (CGT) local at ELM Leblanc. The CGT is one of the two largest national union federations in France. "We are writing to request that you free Mark Curtis on parole as rapidly as possible," Carey wrote. "We have been following the 'Mark Curtis Affair' for many years and believe that he should be freed now."

Carey also sent a letter to Curtis on behalf of his local. "We support your struggle as well as that of the committee which is fighting for your liberation. We live very far from each other but our struggles are the same: it is the fight for freedom of workers, for the oppressed whatever their country or the color of their skins."

Ronald Von Scyoc, recording secretary of United Paperworkers International Union Local 7837, locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, Illinois, wrote "To hold Mark any longer would only increase the injustice of an already unjust action. I fully realize that to seek justice is not something a Parole Board is usually interested in, but in the interest of justice — Release Mark Curtis."

John Zippert, the co-publisher of the *Greene County Democrat*, published in

Eutaw, Alabama, and influential throughout the South among supporters of Black rights, wrote the board, "Simple justice and common sense suggest that it is time to grant Mark Curtis a fair parole hearing and release him from jail. While I have grave doubts about his guilt, he has served his time in Iowa's prisons, and it is now well past time to release him."

"On behalf of our 3,000 readers who have also been following this case in our weekly community newspaper, we urge you to have compassion and concern for the well-being of Mark Curtis."

Many of Curtis's relatives have also written. "I am absolutely astounded" that he has not been paroled, wrote Allen Funk, a doctor in Silver Spring, Maryland, and a cousin of Curtis. "Many other prisoners convicted of the same or worse crimes have long since been paroled."

"Recent events certainly support the fact that the police in this country can be less than honest," Funk adds. "Simply take a look at the newspapers and read about detective Mark Fuhrman or the ugly incident at Ruby Ridge."

"This is in regards to my brother-in-law, Mark Curtis, who is currently serving time in the Iowa State Penitentiary," wrote Patricia Kaku, the sister of Kate Kaku, Curtis's wife. "On behalf of my family, we fully believe he is innocent. In addition, based on the time he has served and his good behavior while incarcerated, we respectfully request that he be paroled."

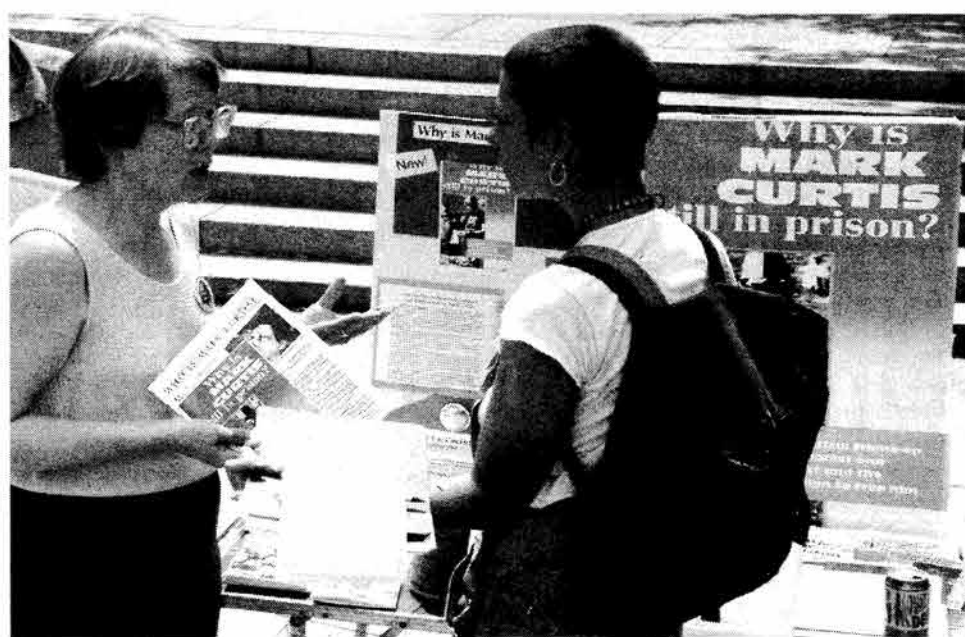
Dozens of letters have come from the Des Moines area. "We write to join others in requesting parole for Mark Curtis," wrote Jane Magers-Fionof and Edna Griffin of Des Moines. Fionof is a long-time peace and justice activist in Iowa and Griffin is a veteran civil rights fighter who was chosen for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. "The longer he is incarcerated," they add, "the longer legitimate protests can be made about the Iowa prison system — the discrimination and unfair treatment that seems to be ongoing behind the bars."

Last August, prison authorities brought charges against Curtis, claiming he had assaulted another inmate. Even though they admitted there were no physical marks to indicate an assault had actually occurred, the authorities subjected Curtis to a special prison trial, in which he was denied the right to have an attorney or to present evidence to contradict the charges of prison guards. He was convicted and sentenced to serve 30 days in the "hole" and a year in segregated lock-up.

Curtis was released from lock-up two months ago, having received time off his sentence for good behavior. Prison and parole officials have used this victimization to justify refusing to consider him for parole in 1994.

Legal challenge to lock-up

Curtis filed a legal challenge to this victimization in Iowa state court earlier this year. On September 8, William Kutmus and Jeanne Johnson, Curtis's attorneys, were notified that a trial on this suit has been scheduled for November 30. The trial will be held in a trailer on the grounds of the state penitentiary. Six trials involving inmate challenges to prison discipline are scheduled for the same day, indicating



Militant/Nancy Cole

Curtis supporter explains case at a rally supporting freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal

how much time the courts allot to prisoners seeking justice. These lawsuits are accorded a special judicial status, which gives inmates less legal rights than usual.

Curtis met with his counselor inside the prison this week to discuss his parole plan. He was told that the parole board will review his case on October 18 to decide

whether to grant him a hearing this November or take any other action on his situation.

The defense committee is continuing to gather letters through the October parole board meeting. Letters can be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

October 9, 1970

Price 10¢

SEATTLE — The strike of migrant hop workers in the Yakima Valley continues and is scoring victories. The strike began Sept. 4, when 30 migrant families spontaneously walked off work on one of the Yakima Chief ranches at the height of the hop season. The strike spread quickly, until 250 field workers and their families joined the strike.

The role of the Chicana women has been very significant in this strike. Traditionally, the Chicana has not taken part in political activity, but this is changing. Señora Treviño, for instance, who has played an important role in the strike, described to us the special problems of women in the valley, which involved more than equal pay: "A woman, if she has children, can't take them to the day-care centers because the people in the city take all the places. We don't have babysitters. We don't have bathrooms. Our stoves burn wood, but we can't find any wood or else the wood is green. The children get soot in their eyes and noses. We don't have any refrigerators, so the milk spoils and you can't keep meat."

María Elena Villanueva is another Chicana activist. No one will rent to her because of her political activity, so she lives in a three-room cabin with no heat. She is typical of the new Chicana in her outlook,

moving cautiously but steadily toward a more active role in La Causa.

The activity of these women, and the stamina and insight of such woman as Graciella Cisneros, who ran the office in Granger almost single-handedly, has begun to change the traditional concept of Chicanas.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

October 6, 1945

Thirty thousand Australian dock workers have struck in support of Indonesian Nationalists. The stoppage was called in sympathy with Indonesian crews who refused to sail ships for the Netherlands East Indies loaded with military supplies for use against the independence movement.

The dock workers' strike quickly spread from Sidney to Brisbane and Melbourne. The New South Wales trades labor council officially supported the strike, placing "a total ban on Dutch ships loading for the East Indies."

Sidney dock workers demonstrated on September 28 in support of the Indonesia Nationalist "struggle for independence." Thirty banners were carried among a crowd of 3,000 bearing such inscriptions as 'Hands Off Our Allies, the Indonesians,' and 'Down With Dutch Imperialism.'

Representatives of the longshoremen also protested the use of Japanese troops by British authorities against the Nationalist Government in Java. Police broke up the demonstration.

'Yes' on Quebec referendum

The Quebecois fight for national rights, for equality and dignity, has been at the center of politics in Canada for most of the past five decades. When compared to those who speak English, the French-speaking Quebecois earn less on average, have half the chances of getting a university diploma, and are twice as likely to be illiterate. In three strikes in the Montreal area over the last year, workers have demanded the right to work and communicate with their bosses in French.

The Quebecois struggle against language discrimination, for the improvement of health and education services, and against wage inequalities has inspired working people throughout the country. It has strengthened the fight of Native people for their national rights. And it has intertwined with major labor battles by industrial and public service unions.

Through decades of resistance, a majority of Quebecois have come to support the call for greater Quebec autonomy as a way of fighting against national oppression. This demand has become the concrete expression of their right to self-determination. That's why communist workers in Quebec are calling for a "yes" vote in the October 30 referendum.

The referendum calls for a "new economic and political partnership" between Quebec and the rest of Canada that would give more autonomy to Quebec, including "the exclusive power to pass its laws, levy all its taxes, and conclude all its treaties."

Working people across Canada should support this demand and reject the chauvinist, antidemocratic campaign

led by the Canadian government against the legality of the referendum and its refusal beforehand to negotiate a new relationship with Quebec.

Supporting this demand has nothing to do with supporting the Parti Quebecois government. Its attacks on working people only serve the interests of the small layer of capitalists it represents. Its cuts in social services undermine some of the most important gains made by the Quebecois against their national oppression. And its denial of Native peoples' right to self-determination is as reactionary as Ottawa's.

Fighting against Ottawa's cuts in education and calling for an end to its interference in Quebec's affairs, the thousands of students who demonstrated in Montreal on September 20 showed the way forward for all working people across Canada. The same is true of the teachers who were on strike a week earlier to defend their jobs and working conditions against the Quebec government.

The struggle for Quebec sovereignty is key to uniting working people across the country. Support for this fight helps to build the kind of working-class movement that can effectively defend our social wage, lead the fight for jobs for all, oppose the scapegoating of working people on welfare, and defend the rights of women, immigrants, and Natives.

This is the only road that can lead working people in Canada to take power out of the hands of their exploiters — both in Ottawa and Quebec — and start building a new society without national oppression and prejudices.

Support tour of Cuban poet

Norberto Codina, a Cuban poet and editor of the magazine *La Gaceta de Cuba*, has begun a speaking tour of several U.S. cities. His first stop is the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference in Washington, D.C.

LASA president Cynthia McClintock, the many other professors and student representatives who extended an invitation to the Cuban poet, and the Norberto Codina Lectures Committee deserve praise for their success in obtaining a visa for the well-known leader of the Cuban union of writers and artists. Many Cubans who identify with the socialist revolution in their country are denied entry into the United States as part of Washington's unceasing cold war against Cuba. So this victory is a cause for celebration.

Young people, workers, farmers, and all those who abhor Wall Street's efforts to bring the Cuban people to their knees now have an important opportunity to learn about the Cuban revolution by meeting the renowned poet.

Building participation at campus meetings, poetry readings, encounters with working people, and other events during the tour will help thousands of youth and others to find out the truth about Cuba and broaden opposition to the U.S. economic war against the people of the island.

The visit by Codina coincides with efforts by affiliates of the National Network on Cuba to build regional mobilizations in Chicago and San Francisco October 14, as well as local actions in several other cities on that date, and in New York City October 21. These marches and rallies will demand an end to the U.S. embargo of Cuba, lifting Washington's travel ban, normalization of relations between the two countries, and respect for Cuba's right to self-determination.

The October mobilizations have the potential to attract youth and working people as Cuba continues to be in the news because of the ongoing debate and divisions within U.S. ruling circles over how best to weaken and eventually overthrow the Cuban revolution. The Helms-Burton bill, which would significantly tighten the U.S. embargo, was recently approved by a sizable bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives. It is soon slated to come up for debate in the Senate. The protests in October will

help broaden opposition to this bill and other bipartisan policies by Washington against the Cuban people.

Many of those who will be attracted to meetings for Norberto Codina can help swell the ranks of protesters at the October actions.

Supporters of his tour must also grab the opportunity to sell dozens of subscriptions to the magazine Codina edits — *La Gaceta de Cuba*, published six times a year by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC).

La Gaceta is a leading forum for discussion on culture, politics, and the challenges facing the Cuban revolution today. Its pages reflect the wide range of viewpoints being considered and debated in Cuba and throughout the Americas.

Recent issues of the magazine have included:

- an exchange of articles on Cuba's cultural policy, its history, and the political debates that have surrounded it since the early years of the revolution;
- discussion on the need for a fresh examination of Marxism, freed from the straitjacket of concepts copied from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe;
- an interview with film director Tomás Gutiérrez Alea discussing his award-winning film *Strawberry and Chocolate* and questions of artistic freedom;
- articles by and interviews with prominent writers, musicians, artists, and political figures such as UNEAC president Abel Prieto and singers Silvio Rodríguez and Carlos Varela;
- news of recent developments in Cuban literature, music, and the visual arts;
- plus essays, short stories, and poems.

Because of a tiny but important exemption in the U.S. economic embargo, which allows trade in educational materials, Cuban books and magazines can be imported and sold freely in the United States. Let's take advantage of it and spread the message of this invaluable publication. Significantly expanding the readership of *La Gaceta* will be an important aid to the fighting people of Cuba. The tour of its editor is the perfect opportunity to make big headway toward this goal. (For information on how to subscribe see ad on page 9.)

All out to build support for and participation in meetings for Norberto Codina and to sell subscriptions to *La Gaceta*!

Quebec vote

Continued from Page 16

cided to organize a boycott of Quebec's referendum.

Neither the Quebec nationalist forces nor the federal government recognize Native peoples' right to self-determination. Commenting on the Inuits' decision to hold their own referendum, Bloc Quebecois leader Lucien Bouchard claimed, "There is a single state in Quebec, and it is the state of Quebec.... There is only one single authoritative referendum: the one involving the overall population of Quebec."

Canada's Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin made clear in a policy paper released in August that Ottawa has no intention whatsoever of recognizing the Native peoples' demand for self-government. Hoping to undermine the struggle of the Quebecois, however, Irwin stated that he is willing to recognize the so-called right of Native people in Quebec to stay in Canada, with their territories, if the province "separates."

Roger Annis, Brigitte Groulx, Katy LeRougetelle, Rose Marie Ray, and Jim Upton contributed to this article.

Robaina speech

Continued from Page 9

are not friends of the Cuban government, have the minimum rationale to realize which side reason is on.

There is still time to stop in the Senate and the executive branch the hand that wants to stab in the back the future of any attempt to come closer between Cuba and the United States, and to add new tensions to the already difficult relations....

What can be expected then from the next century if this rehearsal of world government against Cuba succeeds?

We need something more than the reiteration of the condemnation of the blockade in this assembly. Cuba has the right to demand actions that put an end to such madness, because if they are successful, any one of you could be the new victim tomorrow....

In contrast to the lying and pathetic chronicles of alleged violations of human rights in Cuba, the world should know that there has been no lack of love and sacrifice devoted to saving the millions of children and mothers who, because of the blockade against our markets, do not have enough food.

It should know of the efforts, sometimes heroic and painful, to obtain medicines for the sick, insulin for diabetics, aminophylline for asthmatics, pacemakers for heart patients, because the suppliers of those drugs and equipment have been warned, boycotted, or proscribed by the United States Treasury Department....

If truth had a better price on the market, the world would clearly identify the loudest victims of alleged human rights [violations] in Cuba as what they really are: common servants of a foreign power from which they receive encouragement and resources for raising their voices and taking action against the very country where they were born, favoring the annexationist hopes of our powerful neighbor.

The honest people of the world will be able to differentiate among the community of Cuban emigrants residing in this country. An ever-growing majority defends the sovereignty of Cuba, demands their rights, which have also been blockaded, and work with all of our support and respect to normalize relations with the homeland....

It should be well understood: Cuba wishes normal relations with the United States, if and when a true sentiment of good will between neighbors, respect, and equality prevails between both countries.

But Cuba will never give up in the face of threats, and it will survive in any case, as there are always ways out from a crisis, but not from the dishonor of living on our knees.

Cuba demonstration

Continued from Page 8

the meeting reported that their local groups had already reserved some 15 busses from several cities in the Northeast to bring people to the march. In addition, the Cuba coalition in Miami has reserved 3 busses and some 40 people are expected to come from Montreal.

Tim Craine from the Greater Hartford Cuba Coalition reported that his group is planning a dance to raise funds for the October 21 action. Similar fund-raisers are being held throughout the region, like a potluck dinner by the Unitarian Fellowship of Newark, Delaware.

Craine said that his group has also called a protest October 15 when Clinton will be speaking at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, which they will use to recruit people to go to New York the following weekend.

Malcolm Kena of the D.C. Hands Off Cuba Coalition in Washington, D.C., said his organization will be publicizing the action at the Latin America Studies Association (LASA) national conference, which will take place at the U.S. capital September 28-30. More than 2,000 university professors and others are expected to attend the LASA event.

To endorse the march, send donations, or for more information contact the October 21st Cuba Coalition, c/o Cuba Information Project, 198 Broadway, Suite 800, NY, NY 10038. Tel: (212) 227-3422 or 633-6646.

Detroit strikers ask a little 'care' from Roslyn Carter

BY CINDY JAQUITH

DETROIT — Support for the newspaper workers on strike takes many forms here beyond the picket lines seen nationwide on television. Below are a few of the creative actions of strikers and their supporters to get out the truth about their struggle.

When Roslyn Carter, wife of former president Jimmy Carter, came to town,

REPORTERS NOTEBOOK

strikers were ready for her. Roslyn Carter serves on the board of Gannett, owner of the *Detroit News*. Her visit featured a lecture on "care-giving" at a fancy event cosponsored by the *Detroit Free Press*.

Some 1,000 people turned out for the September 12 lecture in Southfield, a suburb of Detroit.

Each person received a brochure from striking journalists of the Newspaper Guild explaining their battle with Gannett and Knight-Ridder, according to Kate DeSmet, a striker who used to write on religion for the *News*. The brochure suggested Carter consider "care-giving" by adopting a striker's family with five children.

Several striking journalists and photographers also attended a press conference by Carter. One striker, well-known columnist Susan Watson, asked Carter if she would bring the strike to the attention of the Gannett board and if she would meet with the strikers.

Carter responded with "a frozen look," said DeSmet, and said she "would consider it."

Many participants in the strike have been disturbed by incidents where scabs, cops, or security guards are called racist or sexist names by some individuals on the picket line. The words "cotton-picker" and "boy" have been occasionally directed at Blacks, while some scabs thought to be from Mexico have had such things as "Show us your green card" yelled at them as they are bussed past the picket line.

The problem has been discussed at several meetings of the Labor/Religious/Community Coalition to Support the Newspaper Strike, which has organized mass pickets on Saturdays and other activ-

ities.

At the Saturday, September 23, picket line, a flyer from the coalition was distributed. "We are union!" the flyer began. "Think about what that means, sisters and brothers."

"It means black, white, brown, yellow or red; man or woman; foreign born or American born; christian, muslim, or jew; gay or straight; autoworker, Teamster, communications worker or whatever..."

"What we do must build this unity," the flyer explained. Strike supporters must "build our fight against the [Detroit Newspaper Agency] and its corporate and political allies, not divide ourselves and play into their hands."

"When some of us in anger call out to scabs using racial or ethnic slurs, degrade them as women or for being foreign born; the scabs aren't hurt, but our sense of unity, our ability to be strong in Union, is hurt."

"This isn't some politically correct sermon, this is common sense."

Musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra said "no way" when a photographer for the scab *Free Press* tried to take pictures of their rehearsal September 13.

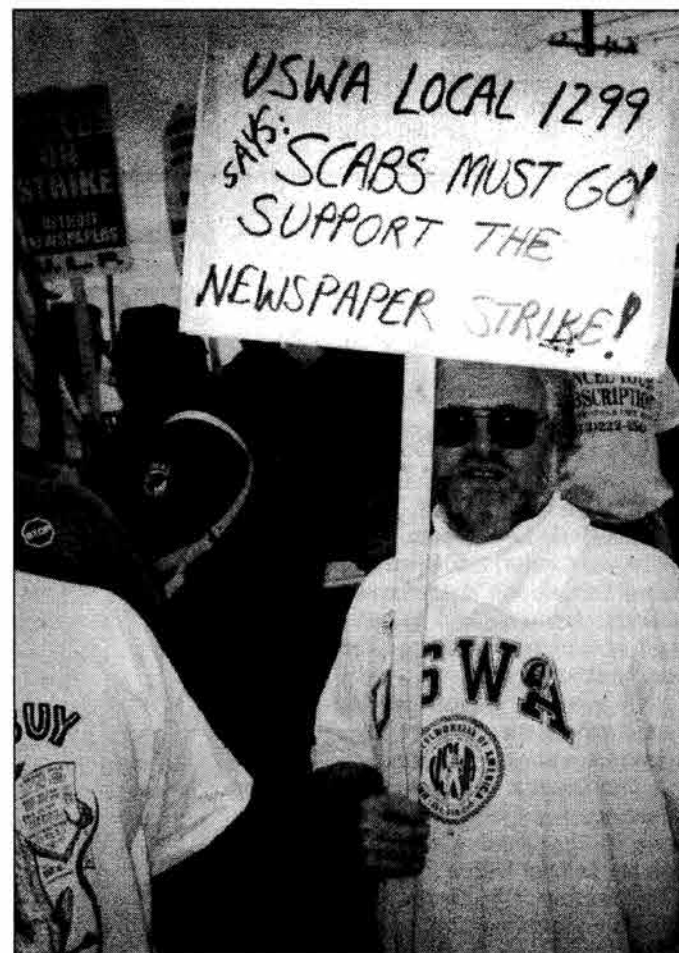
When the photographer was identified as a scab, the musicians held a meeting and decided they would not permit any photos of themselves to appear in the *Free*

Press. They also decided to donate \$1,000 to the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper unions. The musicians are organized by Local 5 of the Detroit Federation of Musicians.

Some 100 Catholic priests and nuns, along with Thomas Gumbleton, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit, signed a half-page ad printed in the *Macomb Daily*, circulated in Sterling Heights and other suburbs.

The ad stated, "Viewed from our Catholic teachings, the permanent replacement of striking workers by the Detroit newspapers in wrong."

Three prominent ministers who are Black — Wendell Anthony of Fellowship Chapel and a leader of the Detroit NAACP, Jim Holley of Little Rock Missionary Baptist Church, and Robert Smith of New Bethel Church — sponsored an ad supporting the strike in the *Michigan*



Militant/John Sarge

Steelworker shows support for newspaper strike

Chronicle, one of Detroit's two Black newspapers.

Cindy Jaquith is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1299.

Newspaper unions keep up the fight

Continued from front page

able to open the depot at 5:45 a.m. Dozens of area residents gathered for hours to cheer the strikers and shout insults at the cops. "We won tonight," James Selley, a striking member of Teamsters Local 372, explained. "Since the strike started, they have had to get the first trucks out of here by 2 a.m.," he said. "They're over three hours late already."

As the strike entered its 11th week, the Newspaper Guild called for an expanded picket line in front of the editorial offices in downtown Detroit every Thursday.

On September 21 a mass meeting was held for members of all six striking unions. Hundreds turned out to hear reports on the negotiations that had just resumed. This was the first time that the members of all six unions had met together.

Mailers union president Al Young re-

ported that his union had agreed to \$10.7 million in concessions before the strike, but the Detroit Newspaper Agency (DNA), which manages both papers, was now demanding more. Al Derey, chairman of the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, told the meeting that his local had agreed on 153 contract items before the strike, but the company now only agrees to 140 of them.

Participants reported that much of the discussion at the strikers' meeting focused on continued outreach activities by strikers and their supporters. Derey said that the unions have vowed to keep fighting. "Our goal is to put whatever political, economic and social pressure on the company, and that's what it's going to take, to force them into good-faith bargaining."

In other developments, the strikers published the first edition of a strike newspaper, the *Detroit Union*, which is being cir-

culated in the labor movement and around the area. Teamsters who ran the distribution of the newspapers before the strike are organizing a broader circulation for the next issue.

The unions are also organizing a "Bring the Strike home" campaign to get the families of strikers more solidly behind the walkout. On September 17 they organized a walk-by and a sing-along outside the home of Frank Vega, the head of the DNA. United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 412, which represents workers at the Chrysler Technical Center, among others, is targeting an auto dealership that continues to advertise in the struck newspapers. UAW Local 900, which represents Ford workers, has set up a committee to pressure businesses that sell the newspapers.

John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900 in Wayne, Michigan.

LETTERS

Kmart workers walk out

The Kmart distribution center where I work, where there's been an almost two-year fight for a union contract, was abuzz the afternoon of September 15. The story was filtering around of how Mexican contract workers, who rebuild pallets Kmart uses and work outside year-round for \$6 an hour, had struck the other day at 2:00 in the afternoon for the rest of the day. They were back at work the next day. They had demanded of their contract boss a raise of 25 cents an hour, and 50 cents for their leadwoman, by 2:00, or they were stopping work. The boss said he had no money for a raise, and the workers made good on their promise.

New contract bosses were there the next day, but the Mexican workers were back at their same jobs. They didn't get their raise, but they didn't lose their jobs either. They have no union. They are the second group of immigrant workers in the area—the others were Guatemalans in Morgan-ton—to strike without a union.

The Guatemalans recently voted to affiliate with the Laborers International Union after a week-long strike in May at a poultry processing factory.

People inside the warehouse were impressed by the Mexican workers taking immediate action on their demands, and having the guts to strike without a union. Billy Key, a maintenance worker who told me the week before that the government's immigration laws should be more strictly enforced, exclaimed the day after the strike, "Boy, talk about union organization. The Mexicans know how to do it!"

M.J. Rahn
Greensboro, North Carolina

Rally for Abu-Jamal

Members of the Western Pennsylvania Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal organized an emergency protest on Saturday, September 16 on the University of Pittsburgh campus in response to the news that Judge Albert Sabo had denied Abu-Jamal's appeal to have his conviction overturned and obtain a new trial. Overnight, through phone calls, close to 100 people gathered to express their outrage at Judge Sabo's recent decision. Speakers at the rally included Dennis Brutus, formerly imprisoned and exiled South African poet and anti-apartheid activist; Billy Jordan of the Ser-



vice Employees International Union (SEIU); and Tim Stevens, President of the Pittsburgh branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Stevens told the crowd that his branch is requesting that all NAACP branches send letters to the state Supreme Court asking for a new trial. "All of us are not free until each one of us is free," he said.

After the rally the protesters marched down Fifth Avenue, a

major thoroughfare, carrying signs and chanting. Several march participants carried signs that urged passing traffic to honk for a new trial for Abu-Jamal.

Lorraine Starsky
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Native Americans protest

On August 21 over 300 people came to a demonstration organized by the Lummi Nation in front of the Federal Building here.

The demonstration, as well as other protests organized in Bellingham and Portland the next day, was organized in response to a bill passed by the U.S. Senate that cuts federal funding for programs for Native Americans by \$200 million.

Funding for the Lummi Nation in particular would be cut if they take any action restricting access to groundwater by non-Indian homeowners on their land. Native Americans and their supporters carried signs saying, "No more broken treaties!" "Take back your promises, give back our land!" "Protect Native children!" and "1492...1996 — American Holocaust." About twenty young people marched around the perimeter of the demonstration, chanting "Native pride — is alive!" and waving to the many cars that honked their horns in solidarity.

Jeff Hamill
Seattle, Washington

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.

Quebec vote challenges injustice

Communist League calls for 'yes' vote as part of struggle for national rights

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — Meeting here September 24, the Central Committee of the Communist League in Canada issued a call for workers, farmers, and youth to cast a "yes" vote in the upcoming referendum on Quebec sovereignty.

"All working people in this country should reject the Federal government's chauvinist campaign against the Quebecers and support the demand for greater autonomy for Quebec," explained garment worker and Central Committee member Michel Dugré in a report adopted at the meeting. "That is the real content of the referendum question."

"This demand embodies the long-standing and legitimate aspirations of the French-speaking majority in this province for equality and justice. Backing Quebec's right to self-determination is crucial for the entire labor movement in making it possible to unite working people across Canada against the capitalist rulers' attacks on our unions, our social services, and our rights."

"In the five weeks leading up to the referendum," explained Dugré, "communist workers and youth will join in the discussions among working people throughout the country on how to advance the fight for Quebec national rights and the struggles of workers and farmers across Canada."

Fight for a sovereign Quebec

On October 30 people in this province will vote on the question: "Do you agree that Quebec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new economic and political partnership...?" The referendum reflects the continuing desire of working people and youth across Quebec to end the discrimination and injustices they face as a nationality.

Eighty percent of Quebec's 7 million inhabitants constitute a French-speaking oppressed nationality. And the current crisis of the international capitalist system deepens the oppression and discrimination of Quebecois. French speakers face higher unemployment, earn less, and have fewer opportunities to advance their education.

In the last year alone there have been three strikes in the Montreal area where workers have made one of their demands the right to work in French.

If a majority vote yes in the referendum, the bill sets a deadline of one year for the Quebec government to come to an agreement on a new partnership with the rest of Canada, after which the National Assembly will have the power to proclaim Quebec a sovereign country.

The capitalist Parti Quebecois (PQ)



Some 20,000 students rallied in Quebec September 20 to protest against cutbacks in post-secondary education. Many also expressed their support for sovereignty.

government, which is sponsoring the referendum, hopes to gain some leverage through the vote against its rivals in English-speaking Canada. The Bloc Quebecois (BQ) and the Democratic Action in Quebec (ADQ) are also part of the leadership of the "yes" campaign. The BQ is the official opposition in the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa. Quebec's three main labor federations are also calling for a yes vote.

While unable to prevent the Quebec government from holding the referendum, federal authorities have denounced it as illegal. "There is nothing in the Canadian constitution that allows a province to separate itself from the rest of the country," said Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien.

Both Ottawa and the Liberal Party of Quebec, which is heading up the "no" campaign here, argue that the referendum will lead to the split-up of Canada, and have launched a scare campaign about the economic and political "disaster" that would be precipitated by a "yes" majority.

In the week leading up to the referendum campaign, Prime Minister Chrétien stated that he would not recognize a "yes" victory in the referendum unless it is "a clearly expressed majority." Polls indicate that the "yes" and "no" are running neck-and-neck, with the "no" slightly ahead.

Ottawa's antidemocratic stance is reinforced by the positions taken by all provincial premiers outside Quebec, who say they will refuse to take part in any negotiations with the Quebec government in the event of a "yes" victory. "Quebeckers should simply know that if they vote yes for this, they are voting for sovereignty and that there is no mandate to negotiate thereafter," said Saskatchewan New Democratic Party leader Roy Romanow.

Protests against cuts in social services

In the midst of the referendum campaign workers and students in Quebec have staged a series of protests against cuts in social services by the Canadian and Quebec governments.

Up to 20,000 students took to the streets across the province September 20 to denounce plans by the federal government to cut CAN\$650 million (CAN\$1-US\$.76) in post-secondary education in 1996 and 1997, including CAN\$150 million in Quebec alone. As a result of the proposed government measures, tuition fees could increase to CAN\$3,330 a year from the current average of \$1,700 — a raise of 94 percent.

In Montreal, some 5,000 students from

more than 20 colleges and universities participated in a lively and colorful demonstration that day, holding aloft hundreds of placards denouncing the cuts. Many also carried Quebec's blue and white national flag, a symbol of support for sovereignty.

A roar of "Yes! Yes! Yes!" rang from the crowd when Patricio Salgado, president of the main student association at University of Quebec in Montreal, said, "We don't want Jean Chrétien's cuts, we don't want any more of his interference in the lives of us Quebecois."

"I see this as a march for sovereignty," said Carole Tremblay, who was handing out "Yes" buttons to the demonstrators. She said, "The cuts are the federal government's fault, not the Parizeau government's."

But other students in the march didn't agree with her view. "I think that [Quebec premier Jacques] Parizeau is also responsible for the cutbacks," said Julien Lajeunesse, a student activist at De Maisonneuve college.

While there is widespread support for Quebecois rights throughout the province, the referendum campaign is not translating into a similar level of backing for the PQ government or its policies.

At the September 13 demonstration of some 10,000 workers and supporters against the closing of Queen Elizabeth Hospital hundreds of marchers carried signs saying "No, no Parizeau; yes, yes Queen Elizabeth." It was the largest of many protests since last spring against the PQ government's intention to close seven hospitals in this city.

The day after, 26 of the province's 47 community colleges (CEGEPs) were closed in a one-day strike by 8,000 members of the National Federation of Quebec Teachers (FNÉE-QCSN) who were protesting proposed cuts of CAN\$48 million to the college system. These would result in the loss of 1,200 teaching jobs.

These cuts are part of a new collective agreement tentatively concluded in the second week of September between the PQ government and officials of the public workers unions, which represent some 350,000 workers. The accord includes concessions of up to half a billion dollars.

Michelle Rolland, a professor at CEGEP du Vieux-Montreal, joined the one-day strike at her campus. "I am told," she said, "that the referendum vote is not a vote for the government in power, but a vote for a new constitutional arrangement. But I am not so sure. I'm very angry at this government for the cuts and deterioration

of education, health care, and other services."

On September 17, some 2,000 primary and high school teachers from the public Catholic Network in Montreal rejected the cuts of \$150 million initially agreed to by the officialdom of the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ). Hundreds of them held picket lines in front of their schools September 21 early in the morning and at lunch time.

A few days later, the CEQ leadership signed a new tentative agreement with the Quebec government containing concessions of CAN\$100 million.

Workers debate sovereignty vote

Meanwhile, workers in the plants are discussing the meaning of the referendum. According to the polls, workers who are Quebecois are evenly divided between the yes and no sides. Some are still undecided. By contrast, the majority of English-speaking and immigrant workers support the no. One important feature that marks the debate is the openness and civil tone of the discussion. Workers are freely expressing their opinions.

Richard, a Quebecois worker at the MacMillan Bathurst cardboard plant organized by the Communication, Energy and Paper Workers Union, said it would be good to have Quebec as a separate country because he wouldn't have to pay taxes to the federal government — a view expressed by many workers.

At Canadair, an aerospace plant organized by the International Association Machinists union, some workers have started wearing "Oui" (yes) buttons. Many are PQ supporters. Gilles, however, explained that when he votes yes, "It won't be a yes for the Parti Quebecois. It's not a vote for Parizeau. It's a yes for autonomy for Quebec."

Separation "would cause a lot of economic confusion," said Danny Lynch, an English-speaking fitter at the Rolls-Royce aerospace plant. In many factories, workers who say they plan to vote no point to the drop of the Canadian dollar, which lost two cents to the U.S. dollar in the days following the call for the referendum.

"I think Quebec should have more autonomy and should be treated as first-class and not second-class," explained Mike Codogan, a progress controller at Rolls-Royce. "But I don't want to see the country split up.... English will cease to exist in Quebec as a result of government decisions."

At Jack Victor, a garment plant organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), the majority of workers are immigrants, many of whom say they plan to vote no in the referendum. These workers have been deeply affected by the chauvinist statements of some bourgeois leaders of the Quebec sovereignty campaign.

"If the yes wins," said Judith during a lunch discussion, "the Quebecois won't like the immigrants because they have their own country."

Reaction among Native people

The question of Native rights has become an important aspect of the referendum discussion.

The referendum stipulates that Quebec's new constitution will recognize "the right of aboriginal nations to self-government on lands over which they have full ownership." But Gyslain Picard, chief of the Assembly of First Nations in Quebec and Labrador, explained that very few Natives in Quebec own their land.

On August 22, Inuit leaders announced that they will hold their own referendum on the political status of Inuit Natives in Quebec. Some Native leaders have de-

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