

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Why the big turnout for
Million Man March?

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Rallies say 'No' to U.S. economic war on Cuba

Worldwide actions support Cuban sovereignty

Thousands of supporters of Cuba's right to survive took to the streets around the world on October 14. Following are some of the on-the-scene reports from *Militant* correspondents.

BY JEANNE TUOMEY
AND PAUL MAILHOT

SAN FRANCISCO — Crisscrossing three miles of San Francisco city streets, some 400 demonstrators showed their opposition to the U.S. economic war against Cuba and support for that country's sovereign rights on October 14. "Cuba sí, bloqueo no — U.S. out of Guantánamo," led the chants as scores of people came to their windows and balconies to watch, and sometimes wave to, the protesters marching through their neighborhoods. Demonstrators marched from the United Nations Plaza downtown to Jefferson Park. Along the route a number of people in cars also honked their horns in support of the action.

The demonstration in San Francisco, which included a significant number of young people newly active in the fight to defend Cuba, was part of regional protests



Demonstrators in San Francisco march through the streets demanding the U.S. government end its economic war against Cuba, lift the travel ban, and respect Cuba's sovereignty.

against U.S. policy called by the National Network on Cuba (NNOC) for October 14 here and in Chicago, and in New York City on October 21. These protests were called in response to an appeal made by an international conference in Havana in November 1994 for worldwide protests in

October against Washington's economic war on Cuba.

In welcoming opponents of the U.S. government policy, Renee Saucedo of the Freedom to Travel Campaign reported on the debate in the Senate on legislation that

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Mark Curtis to get parole hearing in November

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — On October 17, Barbara Binnie, vice chair of the Iowa State Board of Parole, informed William Kutmus, attorney for political activist Mark Curtis, that the board had decided to grant Curtis a hearing this year on his application for parole. This is the first time in three years that Iowa parole officials have agreed to meet with Curtis.

The hearing will be held November 21 at the Iowa State Penitentiary, where Curtis is imprisoned.

Curtis has been incarcerated since 1988, when he was framed by Des Moines police on charges of rape and burglary while defending 17 co-workers at the Monfort (formerly Swift) meatpacking company. The "Swift 17," from Mexico and El Salvador, had been seized in an immigration raid on the plant. Curtis was beaten in the city jail by cops who called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Three years ago, the Iowa legislature adopted a new parole law that abolished prisoners' right to a parole hearing each year. In 1993 and 1994 the board refused to meet with Curtis, even though he met the requirements for release on parole under Iowa law.

At the November 21 parole hearing, Curtis will be allowed to argue in front of the board why he should be freed. Kut-

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Thousands rally for affirmative action

BY JEANNE TUOMEY

BERKELEY, California — "We shall not be removed," sang the 5,000 students who gathered at the University of California here October 12 in support of affirmative action. Throughout the day, students across California walked out of classes and held rallies and teach-ins in protest of this past summer's decision by the regents of the University of California (UC) to eliminate affirmative action from the university's admissions and hiring practices.

The statewide actions demonstrated a broad show of support — from Asians, Blacks, Latinos, and whites — for affirmative action. The fight to maintain equal educational opportunities for minority students and women has spread in the past few months. Teach-ins, walkouts, and rallies were held at all nine UC campuses October 12.

Even at the UC San Francisco medical school, where students are not known for their activism, hundreds rallied in the streets for affirmative action. University officials asked the medical school students to demonstrate quietly out of respect for hospital patients, but a stream of drivers honked their car horns in support of the picketers.

Spokespeople from student organizations, ranging from groups representing oppressed nationalities to the Young Republicans, addressed the Berkeley rally. Leaders of labor unions and civil rights groups also spoke.

Graduate students working as teaching assistants and researchers, who have been involved in an ongoing struggle with the university for decent pay and benefits, made a strong showing at the rally wearing T-shirts that said, "I work for the university and I support affirmative action."

"This university is not color-blind," Richard Zach, a Berkeley graduate student researcher, said. "This country is not color-blind. To fight for affirmative action is to fight for social justice."

Hundreds of high school students in the Berkeley area walked out of classes to join the rally. Larry Lee, principal of Berkeley High School, estimated that one-third of the school's 2,400 students walked out.

Louis Rubio, a freshman at Berkeley High, walked out after being handed a flier on the demonstration at school. "I came because I wanted to know about affirmative action," he

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March to end the U.S. economic war against Cuba

- ♦ End the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba
- ♦ Lift the U.S. travel ban
- ♦ Normalize relations with Cuba
- ♦ Respect Cuba's right to self-determination

Sat., Oct. 21, NYC

Assemble 12 noon, 42nd St. and 1st Ave (across from UN)

Also:

Welcome Fidel Castro to NYC
Support Cuba in front of the Cuban Mission

38th St. and Lexington Ave.

Sunday, Oct 22 — 12 noon

Monday, Oct. 23 — 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 24 — 3 p.m.

For information contact the October 21 Cuba Coalition at Cuba Information Project (212) 227-3422

Sunday sales, weekday teams key to success of sub drive

BY LAURA GARZA

Nobody who visits the Socialist Workers Party headquarters in Brooklyn can miss the big, colorful chart that marks the progress of the campaign to sell 160 subscriptions to the *Militant*. Different colored post-it notes denote subscriptions sold on community sales, on the job, on campuses, at political events, or through other activities. Socialist workers and youth going out on sales teams check it daily for the latest figures.

The stepped-up pace of activity that is characteristic of a campaign effort to make a goal is what the chart in Brooklyn shows — and it's what is needed in every city to get on target to sell 1,950 subscriptions to new readers of the *Militant* over eight weeks. After three weeks we have 593 new subscribers, or 30 percent of the goal, putting us 8 percent behind where we should be. There are also 228 new subscribers to the monthly Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 187 copies of various editions of the Marxist magazine *New International* have been sold.

Taking advantage of Sunday, when most people can spend all day campaigning, has been the backbone of the subscription drive, says Marty Anderson, who is coordinating the campaign in Brooklyn. The day begins with at least two dozen

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Miners strike in Russia

Coal miners in the Kuzbas region of Russia went on strike October 12 demanding back wages, which have not been paid for several months. The same day, workers in other parts of Russia organized demonstrations in support of the miners.

The austere budget imposed by Moscow has struck pensioners and soldiers, as well as other workers. Trying to maintain a budget agreement arranged with the International Monetary Fund last spring, the government has accumulated massive debts to hundreds of enterprises. In addition, government officials say the country will experience its worst fall grain harvest in 30 years as a result of a summer-long drought, driving many farmers out of the market.

Labor strikes hit Italy

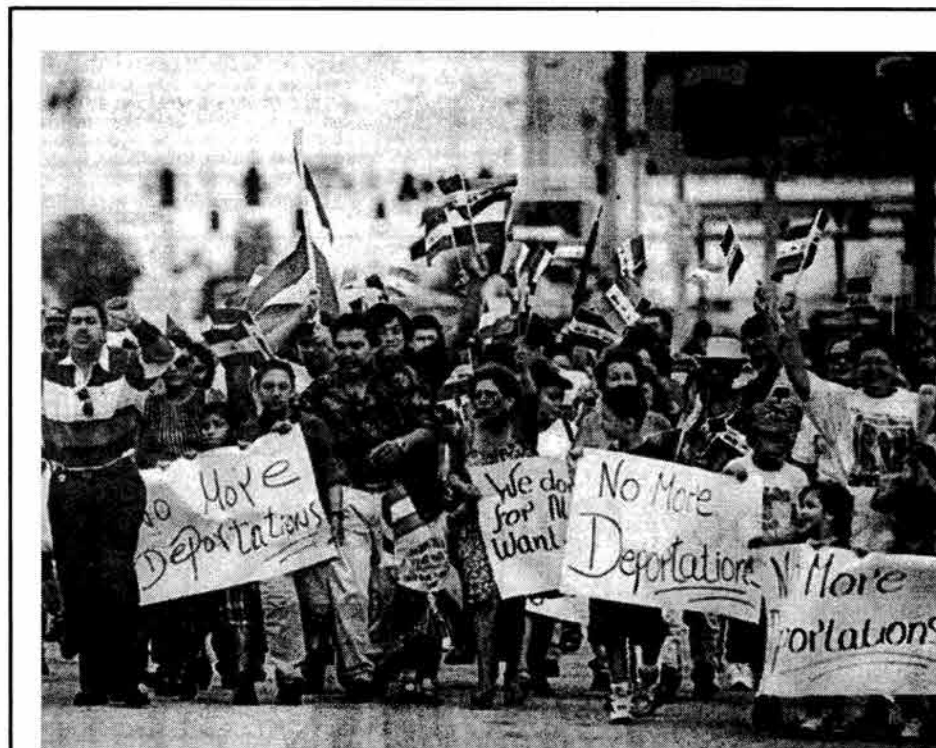
A strike by truckers in Italy, which began October 9, has crippled production in factories of the automaker Fiat. The road haulers are demanding to have their transport fees increased by 30 percent.

Air traffic controllers have also staged job actions over the last six weeks, including a four-hour strike September 18. Earlier, 1,300 controllers refused to work overtime and organized work-to-rule protests. In addition, the cabin staff of Italy's Alitalia airline called a four-hour strike October 13 to protest the company's restructuring plans.

Swaziland groups back Cuba

The Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) expressed support for the decision of the Swaziland government to establish a diplomatic "understanding" with Havana. "I do not see anything wrong if Swaziland enters an understanding with Cuba," said Benedict Tsabedze, president of SWAYOCO. "Swaziland does not need interference by other countries," he added in reference to pressure from Washington to isolate the Cuban government.

Dominic Mngomezulu, secretary-general of PUDEMO, said his organization was impressed with revolutionary Cuba's contribution to liberation struggles in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa. "This shows Cubans are



Hundreds of Nicaraguans protested pending deportations in front of the Miami office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service on October 13. They carried signs saying "We're not leaving, we're staying," and "We want to work with dignity." More than 40,000 Nicaraguans are facing possible deportation.

people who are committed to the struggle for liberation," he said.

Haiti's prime minister resigns

Haitian government officials said October 13 that prime minister Smarck Michel resigned after failing to get approval to sign an agreement for a \$100 million loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was restored to office in October 1994 with the invasion of 20,000 U.S. troops, appointed Michel to the post the same year.

According to the *New York Times*, Michel's departure, due on October 16, was also triggered by disagreements with Aristide and other government officials on privatizing state-owned banks, the country's main port, and the telephone and electricity utilities. Some protests in the country have been aimed at Michel and

the IMF.

Dominican workers protest

Dominican police attacked demonstrators October 9 who were demanding that dozens of factories that pollute Santo Domingo and endanger the residents' health be shut down. The protests took place in the poor neighborhoods of La Zurza and Capotillo, where according to news services some 20 people were injured, car windows were smashed, and a truck was trashed by students.

Pastor Vásquez, a 22-year-old street vendor, died of a gunshot while he was going to a market near the protests.

Political crisis wracks Ecuador

A political crisis engulfing Ecuador deepened as the country's vice-president, Alberto Dahik, fled following an arrest warrant issued against him on charges of corruption. President Sixto Durán Ballén's administration has already lost 23 ministers to impeachment or resignation.

The crisis has affected international investments as well the country's interest rates and currency. An international energy consortium recently withdrew its offer to build a hydroelectric plant. Ecuador is suffering from one of its worst energy crises ever.

Argentine workers demand pay

Around 200 angry demonstrators burned the house of the Edgar Massaccesi, former minister of finances in Argentina's southern province of Rio Negro, demanding back payment owed to government employees. Previously, the demonstrators

threw rocks at the headquarters of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), which has governed Rio Negro for over ten years.

These actions followed others called by the state unions that took place in the city of General Roca, where at least three people were injured and 30 arrested by the police.

Lying Philadelphia cops

Philadelphia judge Legrome Davis threw out the convictions of nine people October 11, agreeing with defense lawyers that their clients were framed up by corrupt cops. Six police officers confessed to lying on reports, stealing money from suspects, and planting drugs in some of the defendants' homes. Twelve other cops were implicated in the investigation.

"They put a gun in my face and robbed me of three and a half years of my life," Edwin Scott, whose conviction was overturned, told the *New York Times*.

New Jersey prison guards brutally beat immigrants

Six prison guards in New Jersey were arrested October 12 for abusive treatment of undocumented immigrants. The detainees had rebelled against the inhumane conditions at an Immigration and Naturalization detention center June 18, causing considerable property damage.

When they were transferred to the Union County Jail, 25 of the immigrants were forced to pass through a gauntlet of guards who beat and kicked them. Over the next four hours, the guards broke one inmate's collarbone, shoved others' heads into toilets, and carried out other abuses.

Prosecutors said more arrests are probable, since at least two dozen guards participated in the assault. "I don't doubt that the things we saw happen there go on all over the country," said Judy Rabinovitz, counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union Rights Project.

Court debates gay rights case

Justices in the U.S. Supreme Court debated the validity of an amendment added to Colorado's constitution three years ago that voided all state and local laws guaranteeing protection of gays against discrimination.

The Colorado Supreme Court ruled last year that the amendment violated the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution by restricting the right of homosexuals "to participate equally in the political process."

In the sharpening debate in Colorado, Kevin Tebedo, executive director of Colorado for Family Values, launched a petition drive in July to pressure county commissioners to "unconditionally advocate heterosexuality only."

A gay-rights group, Ground Zero was formed after the anti-gay measure passed in 1992. "People are getting very fed up with the religious right pushing the buttons on these issues," said Frank Whitworth, executive director of Ground Zero.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Defend affirmative action

From the campus to the factory floor working people face attacks on rights won through hard-fought struggles. How can affirmative action be defended? How can the working class overcome divisions along the lines of nationality and sex, between employed and unemployed, and fight for jobs for all? The 'Militant' covers today's battles and debates and offers the lessons from the past. Don't miss a single issue!



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12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A15 • Britain, £7 • Canada, Can\$12 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, £8 • Belgium, 375 BF • France, FF80 • Iceland, Kr1,300 • New Zealand, NZ\$15 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

Workers in France protest wage freeze

BY JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

PARIS — Some three and a half million workers staged a one day strike here October 10 in response to a call for a nation-wide walkout of public workers made by seven national trade unions.

The massive strike was in protest of a government-imposed wage freeze for 1996; the restructuring and privatisation of public services including rail and air transportation, gas and electric services, and the postal and telecommunications industries; and threats to the retirement benefits of public workers.

The strike included large numbers of workers in various state-run public services who are not considered civil servants including rail, gas, and electric workers; air traffic controllers and workers at the two state run airlines, Air France and Air Inter; workers in the Paris subways and buses; as well as production

workers in some armaments factories, and in aircraft and aircraft engine production.

"This shows that workers are nervous about the privatisation plans but that there is no resignation," Maryse Dumas, the secretary of the CGT federation of postal workers told the press. "Fifty-six percent on strike at the Post. It's never been seen before, it's historic." More than 100 local demonstrations were organised throughout France. Police estimate more than a quarter of a million workers participated in the actions. Some 50,000 took to the streets in Paris, with 20,000 marching in Marseille and Toulouse, 16,000 in Bordeaux, and 12,000 in Rennes.

Paris and most large cities were paralyzed by the strike. In spite of an intensive campaign by the media to discredit the strikers, polls taken on the eve of the walk out showed 57 percent supporting the strike and only 25 percent opposing it. A

1,000 Boeing strikers march in Seattle

BY BOB BRUNEAU

SEATTLE — More than 1,000 striking Boeing machinists, family members, and supporters marched to Boeing's corporate headquarters here October 11. Over 32,000 members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) are striking Boeing plants throughout the country.

The IAM filed several unfair labor practices charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against Boeing October 9. The union accused Boeing of bargaining in bad faith by making last-minute demands for massive changes in employee health insurance without providing ade-

quate time or information to examine the proposed changes. The union also charged that Boeing refused to provide details about company's plans for foreign and domestic subcontracting of work.

Workers are especially angry over reports that Boeing has mailed out "back to work" orders to laid-off IAM members, with the threat that they would lose their recall rights if they failed to cross the picketlines. There are nearly 11,000 laid-off Boeing workers.

Bob Bruneau, a striking Boeing machinist, is a member of IAM local 751A in Seattle.



Militant/Derek Jeffers

Hospital workers march in Paris during one-day protest strike

few calls by capitalist politicians for measures to force strikers to provide minimum service, that is to restrict the right to strike, received little response.

The strike was prolonged for two extra days on the rail network serving the southeastern suburbs of Paris as railworkers continued their action to protest job conditions. On October 12, the three rail unions called for a return to work after having obtained a wage bonus of 1,000 francs (\$200) and a promise from management to reevaluate job descriptions.

A growing debate has been taking place among capitalist politicians about the deepening resistance of the working class on the one hand, and the capitalists' need to raise profit levels on the other.

Prime Minister Alain Juppé's budget has been widely criticised in business circles. Presented to parliament at the end of September, the budget proposes to reduce the French government's annual 300 billion franc deficit by 60 billion.

"What this government lacks is courage," said Jean Gandois, a leading spokesperson for capitalist interests here. Most of the budget deficit reduction proposed by Juppé comes from tax increases.

"Raising taxes is not the solution for our country," complained René Monory, president of the Senate during debate on the budget. "The solution is to cut spending."

French and foreign capitalists sent a clear signal to the government after the budget was presented to parliament with the resignation of Finance Minister Alain Madelin, who had pushed for deep cuts in the social welfare system. The Paris stock market dropped, as did the franc.

The day after the public workers strike, an editorial in the business daily *La Tribune Desfossés* bitterly proclaimed "The unions have won." It also said, however, that Juppé has a chance to "catch up" as the upcoming debate on the social security system will give the government a chance to institute substantial structural cuts.

Time to catch up on 'Militant' fund drive

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

By end of the third week of the 10-week Militant Fund drive, it's clear *Militant* readers need to take several determined steps to get back on schedule. The fund campaign has slipped behind for the second week in a row — with \$29,592 in hand. We stand at 24 percent of our \$125,000 goal, whereas we should be at 30 percent.

In basketball, what does a team do to rally from an 8-point deficit? It starts playing "catchup ball." This means coming up with a game plan — making a number of special moves — to get ahead and win.

It's not so different in a fund drive. In this case, the *Militant* is asking its supporters in each city to set a catchup goal to get back on schedule by Sunday, November 5, the end of the sixth week. By then we should have collected 60 percent of the goal, or \$75,000 overall. November 5 also coincides with the end of the target week in the *Militant* subscription campaign.

Here are three elements that *Militant* readers report are key to picking up the campaign momentum:

Organize a fund meeting as early as possible. "We held a Militant Fund Meeting at the end of September — that's what really got the campaign going here," reports Jacquie Henderson from St. Paul, Minnesota, adding, "A number of people attending that event made pledges there, so we've had time since then to organize to get steady payments on them." Organizing public fund-raising meetings in late October and early November will be key to getting the needed momentum going.

"On November 18, in fact, we'll even hold a second fund meeting, to celebrate our progress and ensure a successful completion of the campaign," says Henderson.

Collect payments on pledges every week. "We're not doing anything spectacular here, but we've paid attention to regular payments from the beginning," Pat Grogan comments from Salt Lake City, where *Militant* readers are right on schedule. She notes, "One thing that creates a campaign atmosphere here is the beautiful chart we've made." The chart, displayed at public meetings sponsored by the Mi-

tant Labor Forum, indicates progress both on the local and the national drive. "It's accompanied by an attractive chart for the *Militant* subscription campaign, with space next to both charts to post the latest *Militant* articles on these campaigns."

Reach out to new contributors. "The other day, a member of the Steelworkers renewed her *Militant* subscription at a union meeting," Henderson reported. "She was asked for a contribution to the fund and she pulled out an extra two dollars. An auto worker who enjoys reading the paper recently gave a \$10 donation."

"In Brooklyn we started calling new *Militant* subscribers," Nancy Rosenstock reports. "It was a real pleasure. Many of the new readers just started telling us how much they loved getting this paper every week. So it seemed quite natural to them that we would ask them for a contribution help keep the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* coming out."

This underlines the importance of linking the fund campaign with the subscription drive, both of which are also vehicles to get involved more effectively in political activities such as those in defense of the Cuban revolution.

At the October 13 Militant Fund meeting in Brooklyn, a longtime Iranian political activist spoke about why, after many years of rethinking politics, he came to agree with many of the ideas presented in the *Militant*, particularly its forthright stance in defense of revolutionary Cuba. He encouraged everyone present to contribute to the fund and signed up to help sell subscriptions to the paper.

Readers will notice a few changes in the accompanying Militant Fund scoreboard this week. To highlight better the progress in the campaign, countries and cities are now ranked by the percentage paid on their goals. Those cities on or ahead of schedule are listed in bold type.

Many *Militant* supporters already send in new subscriptions by express delivery. Those who do so can also include payments on the Militant Fund to maximize the amount received in the *Militant* office by the Tuesday deadline for reporting results on the scoreboard.

\$125,000

End of week three

Militant Fund

| | Goal | Paid | Percent |
|------------------|-----------|----------|---------|
| \$125,000 | | | |
| Puerto Rico | \$100 | \$100 | 100% |
| New Zealand | | | |
| Christchurch | \$650 | \$418 | 64% |
| Auckland | \$2,470 | \$1,040 | 42% |
| Wellington | \$80 | | |
| \$95,000 | | | |
| NZ total | \$3,200 | \$1,458 | 46% |
| United States | | | |
| Atlanta | \$4,500 | \$2,209 | 49% |
| Twin Cities | \$6,500 | \$2,978 | 46% |
| Philadelphia | \$6,000 | \$2,510 | 42% |
| Salt Lake City | \$3,800 | \$1,275 | 34% |
| Birmingham | \$3,700 | \$1,087 | 29% |
| Houston | \$3,500 | \$950 | 27% |
| Miami | \$2,600 | \$700 | 27% |
| San Francisco | \$10,000 | \$2,550 | 26% |
| Peoria | \$2,000 | \$445 | 22% |
| Newark | \$8,000 | \$1,542 | 19% |
| Chicago | \$7,500 | \$1,405 | 19% |
| Brooklyn | \$8,000 | \$1,362 | 17% |
| Detroit | \$6,750 | \$1,100 | 16% |
| Los Angeles | \$10,000 | \$1,487 | 15% |
| Des Moines | \$3,200 | \$471 | 15% |
| Cleveland | \$2,100 | \$291 | 14% |
| Greensboro | \$2,100 | \$290 | 14% |
| Pittsburgh | \$5,000 | \$650 | 13% |
| Washington, DC | \$3,300 | \$410 | 12% |
| Seattle | \$7,000 | \$725 | 10% |
| New York | \$7,500 | \$758 | 10% |
| Boston | \$5,000 | \$475 | 10% |
| Morgantown | \$2,600 | \$235 | 9% |
| Other | | \$567 | |
| \$85,000 | | | |
| U.S. Total | \$117,350 | \$24,913 | 21% |
| Australia | \$400 | \$68 | 17% |
| Sweden | \$750 | | |
| Greece | \$130 | | |
| Britain | | \$20 | |
| Canada | | \$12 | |
| France | | \$4 | |
| \$75,000 | | | |
| TOTAL | \$125,230 | \$29,592 | 24% |
| SHOULD BE | \$125,000 | \$37,500 | 30% |
| \$65,000 | | | |
| \$55,000 | | | |
| \$45,000 | | | |
| 35,000 | | | |
| \$25,000 | | | |
| 10,000 | | | |

Enclosed is \$_____ I pledge ☐\$1,000 ☐\$500 ☐\$100 ☐Other_____

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Send contributions to The Militant, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Why big turnout for Million Man March?

BY DEREK BRACEY
AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Hundreds of thousands of African-American workers, youth, and middle-class men turned out here October 16 for the Million Man March. The rally has provoked debate and discussion on why so many people would attend, on the results of the day's event, and on what road forward in the fight for Black rights today.

The rally was overwhelmingly made up of working people, many of whom came with co-workers, with church or school-

NEWS ANALYSIS

organized groups, or with small groups of friends. Nearly everyone these reporters spoke with explained they participated to demonstrate Black pride and to reject an image in society of Black men as violent, criminals, and an irresponsible "under-class." A few argued that women have supplanted the role men should play in the family, echoing the themes of rally organizers.

U.S. government officials put the rally size at 400,000. Organizers of the event say some 1.5 million participated. It was among the largest events ever held in the nation's capital.

Editorials, news articles, and opinion columns in the big-business media have been generally favorable to the event, supporting the push for "family values" presented by the main speakers and the lack of protest directed against the government by rally organizers.

"One Magnificent Day," was the title of a major opinion column in the *Wall Street Journal* by editorial page writer Hugh Pearson. "Attendees proved that while most of the pundits and politicians who observed from afar were obsessed with the past racial and ethnic schisms encouraged by the principle organizer [Nation of Islam leader] Louis Farrakhan, unity was the issue for them," Pearson notes that Far-

rakhan, in a two-hour speech at the rally, "rather than preach a message of racial hate, preached a message of racial conciliation."

Pearson, calling "problematic" Farrakhan's anti-Semitic comments and "his sexism," notes a deeper and more unsettling problem from his point of view: the "gulf Mr. Farrakhan has stepped in to fill" and the "chasm that is the product of years of political grandstanding by both Democrats and Republicans, as well as other interest groups, resulting in the division of the nation across racial lines."

What Pearson merely touches on — and what he and the wealthy rulers in America are unsettled over — is what they face in pressing forward the assault on working people in the United States.

The turnout for the rally shows the intertwined realities of politics in the United States today.

This includes the impact of the employer/government offensive on the wages, social conditions, and democratic rights and its effects on the Black nationality, which remains in its large majority working class in composition. At the same time, the fact that the rulers have failed in their drive to break the resistance of working people or make African-Americans believe that to be Black in America means acceptance of the institutionalized racism and oppression that continues to be perpetuated in capitalist society.

Stark reality for Blacks

An article in *USA Today* the day of the rally highlighted some of the most glaring social indicators of this assault. The figures — for both Blacks and whites — are in "median" terms, which means half are below and half are above the figures cited.

According to the statistics, the median Black family has zero net financial assets. If houses and vehicles are included, the median Black family's net worth is \$8,300 compared with the median white family's worth of \$56,000. The jobless rate for Blacks was 11.3 per cent in September,

twice the rate of whites. Since 1960 Blacks on the average have earned 60 percent that of whites. The typical Black family has 11 cents of wealth compared with every \$1 owned by a white family.

These stark statistics are in the context of a two-decade long assault which has resulted in a decline in real wages for all working people, cutbacks in the social wage, speed-up and harsher conditions on the job, and permanent high levels of unemployment. This has not come about because of "political grandstanding" but a bipartisan offensive on the federal, state, and local level.

Farrakhan, in literature building the march and in speeches around the country, speaks to some aspects of this government and employer assault, such as attacks on affirmative action, Congressional action to "turn back the hands of time, depriving our Black community of many of the gains made through the suffering and sacrifice of our fellow advocates of change during the '50s and '60s," the rising numbers of Blacks in prison, and greater use of the death penalty across the country.

As with other demagogues, by addressing with radical rhetoric some of the real and perceived aspects of the economic and social crisis in the country, he gains a platform and a broader hearing for his proposals.

At the rally and in promotional material for the event, Farrakhan simply reiterated "self-help" proposals the Nation of Islam has raised since its inception. He does not present a political road forward, or advocate struggle in opposition to the offensive by the government.

For example, he raised that "The Asian doesn't say I'm better than the white man," Farrakhan said at the rally, "he just starts building his economy. All we got to do is go back home and turn our community into a productive place. Clean yourself up Black man, and the world will respect you."

His main proposals at the rally included each march participant adopting a prison inmate and contributing \$10 a month to a

National Economic Development Fund that could generate \$1.2 billion a year to help Black-owned businesses. He also noted 25,000 Black children are without families and need to be adopted.

The rally platform included a broad section of the established officials of civil rights organizations, government officials who are Black, and leaders of various religious denominations across the United States.

These included Congressional Black Caucus chair Donald Payne, who urged the gathering to take "our message to the voting booth;" Jesse Jackson; Washington, D.C., mayor Marion Barry; Southern Christian Leadership Conference president Joseph Lowery; poet Maya Angelou; Rosa Parks; widow of Malcolm X, Betty Shabazz; along with Congressmen Kweisi Mfume, Charles Rangel, and John Conyers.

No mention of struggles

Like Farrakhan, few made any mention of mounting a struggle against the bipartisan assault or to reaching out to those fighting against the effects of the economic depression and imperialist exploitation around the world. Brief mention was made of the fight to win a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal — the death-row inmate who recently won a stay of execution after international protests on his behalf.

Most accepted the false premise that those in the audience are, at least in part, responsible for the plight of Blacks today. Speakers repeatedly urged the men to stop being violent, build families, and respect women. Farrakhan and others urged participants to register eight million people to vote to "be prepared" for the next elections.

Expressions of Black pride and of determination to stand up for equality were evident throughout the crowd at the rally. The middle-class figures on the platform, though, offered nothing new or any break from the framework of capitalist politics they have been following.

The wealthy rulers have accomplished a great deal in their assault, but they are nowhere near their goal of defeating the unions and the social conquests of the Black and women's rights struggles.

In their pursuit of transforming the relations between labor and capital and thereby laying the basis for a new period of capitalist expansion, the ruling rich have run into strikes, protests, and rallies by those who want to resist these attacks.

Fight for Black rights today

There are real struggles today where the fight for Black rights can be seen, such as the battle to force the State of Pennsylvania to drop the death sentence against Mumia Abu-Jamal and grant him a new trial. Jamal, who is standing up and fighting against what seem to be overwhelming odds, has become an emblem in the fight for Black liberation. It can be seen in the fights to defend affirmative action from California to New Jersey.

All working people, and the organized labor movement in particular, have a stake in these struggles and in building a movement that can combat racism, national oppression, and the offensive by the wealthy families who run the United States.

We can join fights along with unionists on strike at Boeing and Caterpillar, youth and others marching for equality for immigrants and affirmative action, and protests against U.S. aggression directed at Cuba.

The Nation of Islam — as an organization and in the perspectives its spokespeople put forward — remains a dead end for anyone seeking to fight against racism, economic depression, and the effects of the bipartisan assault against working people today.

In the early 1960s Malcolm X had to break from the Nation in order to build an organization that could do politics, link up with fighters around the world, and take on the Democrats and Republicans and the social order they defend.

It is only through independent working-class political action that workers can begin to know our own capacities and worth. Through common action we build bonds of human solidarity, break down divisions organized and nurtured in class society, and create organizations capable of leading revolutionary struggles.

Thousands rally for affirmative action

Continued from front page

said. "Now I know a little more and it sounds like we should keep fighting for affirmative action to help fight discrimination."

Jesse Jackson was the featured speaker at the Berkeley rally. He urged the student protesters to turn their anger into the voting booth. While praising the students' action, Jackson said that students shared the blame for the attacks on affirmative action. "You students who aren't registered, you elected Pete Wilson and Newt Gingrich," he said.

"The students are showing by voting with their feet that they strongly disagree with the regents' decision," UC Berkeley professor Ronald Takaki told the press. "I'm euphoric. I'm really excited."

The demonstration here ended with 500 marchers weaving through the streets of downtown Berkeley. Horns honked, people waved, and on-lookers joined the march. Police in riot gear intervened as the marchers attempted to walk onto a freeway. While a shoving match erupted between the two sides and police batons were drawn, no arrests or injuries occurred. The marchers eventually dispersed.

2,200 at UCLA

Some 2,200 UCLA students marched down the main boulevard in Los Angeles October 12 in support of affirmative action. Many passing drivers honked in support.

The march, organized by the UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition, was also a protest against the California Civil Rights Initiative, a misnamed anti-affirmative action ballot measure.

The demonstration started at UCLA and grew in size as it wound around the campus. Many students walked out of their classes to join the march. "Out of the classroom and into the march," protesters chanted.

"We hope to send a clear signal to the regents: We will not allow them to take something away that we've fought so hard



Thousands of students rallied in defense of affirmative action in California October 12. Young people have begun to fight the bipartisan assaults on these programs.

to preserve," Max Espinoza, a Chicano studies major at UCLA, told the press. "This is the beginning of a strong and unified movement to fight back."

Unionists attend protest

Members of the hotel and restaurant workers union HERE Local 11, the Service Employees International Union Local 660, and the Justice for Janitors campaign participated and carried placards indicating their support for the affirmative action fight.

More than 120 cops, from four different police agencies, were on hand as the march reached Westwood and Wilshire boulevards. The cops donned helmets and shields, and some had tear gas shells at the ready.

Thirty-three students sat in the middle

of the street and carried out peaceful civil disobedience. The police arrested them one by one without incident. The rest of the demonstrators were pushed back by mounted police.

All nine University of California chancellors have come out against the regents' decision to prohibit the use of race and gender as criteria in admission, hiring, and contracting in the school system. Some 1,200 UC faculty members have signed a petition calling on the board to reconsider its decision.

Out of the success of the statewide actions, ongoing protests at regents' meetings and teach-ins on campuses are planned for the coming weeks.

John Evenhuis from Los Angeles contributed to this article.

Reach out for new readers!

Join the Militant subscription drive

Militant
Perspectiva Mundial
New International

1,950
525
750

Sold 30%
Should be
38%

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

Sunday mobilizations, weekday teams are key to meeting goals

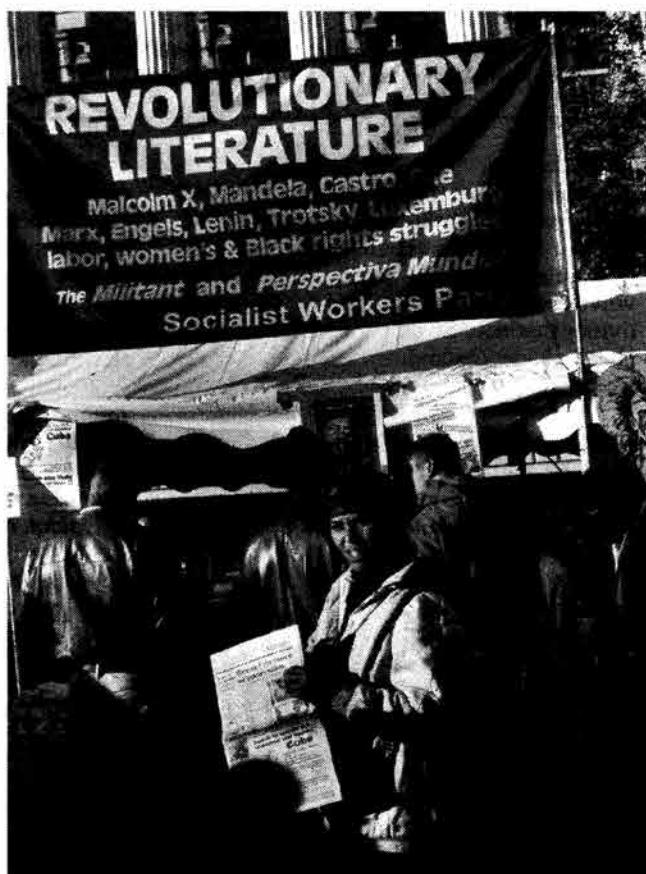
continued from front page
Militant supporters getting together for a brief huddle before being dispatched to working-class communities.

"The Sunday teams stay out four hours and it's common you will get a subscription near the end," Anderson said. "It's just a matter of the longer you're out, you meet people and have more chances of finding the ones who are interested in the paper."

Most teams in Brooklyn stay out until they meet their own subscription goal. At the end of the Sunday sales effort, all the teams get back together to assess collectively the results of the day.

In the last few weeks the sales activities have been combined with publicizing the October 21 demonstration in New York City against the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba. At the State University of New York in Stony Brook, Long Island, on October 9, a team from Brooklyn met a young Dominican who said he and some friends had organized 17 people to attend the march. Four people bought subs to the *Militant*, one to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and one *New International* was sold.

The Sunday mobilizations have accounted for the majority of subscriptions sold in the New York area. Socialist workers are now organizing to designate some weekday evenings as target sales times and to extend the Sunday spirit into the week. This means setting aside all meetings and other tasks to make a priority of winning new readers of the socialist press and campaigning to build events, from



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Selling the *Militant*, Pathfinder books, and other revolutionary literature at Million Man March October 16.

the march against the U.S. embargo of Cuba to demonstrations in support of affirmative action to protests against police brutality.

Martin Koppel, from Brooklyn reports, "If you don't sign up to participate in a sales team during the week, someone will ask you about your plans. That's good; that's how you know you're in a drive, when everyone is expected to join in."

These steps are necessary to shift into high gear and make plans for the nine-day target sales effort October 28-November 5.

Please fax the *Militant* office if

you have planned a special team or are organizing a visit to an area in your region and want to invite others to join you, so we can get this information into the next issue and help coordinate some of the efforts internationally.

In Seattle teams to the region have helped *Militant* supporters maximize the time spent out selling. They report that with the subscriptions that are on the way to our offices, they have reached 50 percent of their goal of winning 70 new *Militant* readers. Scott Breen

reported an all-day team at Washington State University in Pullman resulted in seven new *Militant* subscribers and one new subscriber to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Another result of that team's work, Breen said, is the October 20 meeting sponsored by the Chicano student organization MEChA at WSU on "Cuba Today: a report from the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival."

The visit by Fidel Castro to speak at the United Nations is an opportunity to sell the socialist press at a time when millions will be hearing the Cuban leader.

END OF WEEK THREE

| City | goal | Militant sold | % | PM goal | PM sold | NI goal | NI sold |
|---------------------|------|---------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Greece | 5 | 2 | 40% | 1 | | 4 | 1 |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| Chicago | 65 | 33 | 51% | 20 | 12 | 25 | 4 |
| Philadelphia | 75 | 37 | 49% | 15 | 1 | 15 | 1 |
| Cleveland | 40 | 17 | 43% | 10 | 4 | 15 | 1 |
| Indiana | 10 | 4 | 40% | 0 | | 0 | |
| New Haven | 5 | 2 | 40% | 1 | | 2 | |
| Salt Lake City | 50 | 20 | 40% | 15 | 3 | 15 | 2 |
| Seattle | 70 | 27 | 39% | 15 | 8 | 20 | 6 |
| Brooklyn | 160 | 58 | 36% | 50 | 22 | 50 | 22 |
| Boston | 40 | 14 | 35% | 8 | 4 | 16 | 8 |
| Birmingham, AL | 49 | 17 | 35% | 5 | 1 | 15 | |
| New York | 120 | 38 | 32% | 60 | 32 | 50 | 14 |
| Houston | 55 | 17 | 31% | 20 | 9 | 16 | 1 |
| San Francisco | 98 | 30 | 31% | 30 | 10 | 60 | 12 |
| Atlanta | 55 | 16 | 29% | 18 | 8 | 15 | |
| Denver | 7 | 2 | 29% | 3 | 2 | 3 | |
| Miami | 60 | 17 | 28% | 20 | 12 | 30 | 7 |
| Peoria, IL | 32 | 9 | 28% | 2 | | 10 | 1 |
| Des Moines | 50 | 14 | 28% | 25 | 8 | 20 | 2 |
| Greensboro, NC | 55 | 15 | 27% | 10 | 3 | 10 | |
| Detroit | 65 | 17 | 26% | 10 | 2 | 20 | 1 |
| Newark, NJ | 130 | 32 | 25% | 35 | 18 | 40 | 7 |
| Twin Cities, MN | 70 | 17 | 24% | 12 | 2 | 20 | 5 |
| Los Angeles | 120 | 27 | 23% | 75 | 29 | 75 | 18 |
| Tucson | 5 | 1 | 20% | 2 | | 2 | 1 |
| Morgantown, WV | 48 | 9 | 19% | 2 | | | |
| Washington, DC | 45 | 8 | 18% | 15 | 4 | 20 | 4 |
| Pittsburgh | 65 | 10 | 15% | 5 | 1 | 15 | 1 |
| Albany | 7 | | 0% | 1 | | 5 | |
| Cincinnati | 8 | | 0% | 2 | | 2 | |
| Total U.S. | 1659 | 508 | 31% | 486 | 195 | 586 | 118 |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| Vancouver | 45 | 18 | 40% | 6 | | 20 | 3 |
| Toronto | 50 | 14 | 28% | 10 | 3 | 25 | 4 |
| Montreal | 50 | 12 | 24% | 12 | 5 | 30 | 10 |
| Total | 145 | 44 | 30% | 28 | 8 | 75 | 17 |
| Britain | | | | | | | |
| London | 35 | 12 | 34% | 10 | 4 | 25 | 5 |
| Sheffield | 12 | 4 | 33% | 1 | | 3 | |
| Manchester | 40 | 9 | 23% | 1 | 1 | 20 | 8 |
| Total | 87 | 25 | 29% | 12 | 5 | 48 | 13 |
| Sweden | | | | | | | |
| Stockholm | 20 | 6 | 30% | 15 | 13 | 20 | 9 |
| Malmö | 2 | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| Total | 22 | 6 | 27% | 17 | 14 | 21 | 9 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| Auckland | 18 | 5 | 28% | 1 | | 15 | 12 |
| Christchurch | 8 | 1 | 13% | 1 | | 3 | |
| Wellington | 2 | | 0% | 0 | | 1 | |
| Total | 28 | 6 | 21% | 2 | 0 | 19 | 12 |
| Australia | 15 | 2 | 13% | 3 | 3 | 12 | 5 |
| France | 6 | | 0% | 5 | 1 | 20 | 11 |
| Iceland | 10 | | 0% | 1 | | 3 | |
| Puerto Rico | 2 | | 0% | 6 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| International Total | 1979 | 593 | 30% | 561 | 228 | 792 | 188 |
| Goal/Should be at | 1950 | 741 | 38% | 525 | 200 | 750 | 285 |

^ increased goal

IN THE UNIONS

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----|----|-----|----|---|----|---|
| Australia | | | | | | | |
| AWU-FIME | 2 | | | 0 | | 0 | |
| Canada | | | | | | | |
| CEP | 4 | | | 1 | | 2 | |
| IAM | 1 | | | | | 1 | |
| USWA | 5 | | 0% | 0 | | 2 | |
| Canada total | 10 | 0 | | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | |
| EU | | | | | | | |
| MWU | 2 | | 0% | 0 | | 0 | |
| New Zealand total | 2 | | 0% | 0 | | 0 | |
| Sweden | | | | | | | |
| Metal union | 1 | | | | | 2 | |
| United States | | | | | | | |
| IAM | 59 | 9 | 15% | 9 | 1 | 17 | |
| OCAW | 20 | 2 | 10% | | | | |
| UAW | 65 | 6 | 9% | 10 | 2 | 17 | |
| UFCW | | | | | | | |
| UMWA | | 3 | | | | | |
| UNITE | 20 | | 0% | 19 | | 8 | |
| USWA | 28 | | 0% | | | | |
| UTU | 58 | | 0% | 3 | | 17 | |
| U.S. Total | 250 | 20 | 8% | 41 | 3 | 59 | 0 |

Interest in Cuba, S. Africa at march

BY MARY MARTIN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Hey, What's that headline? 'Nelson Mandela: Cuba shared the trenches with us.' Tell me about this newspaper, I want to get one."

That kind of comment accompanied many sales of the *Militant* newspaper to participants in the Million Man March, according to John Staggs of Philadelphia. He was part of one *Militant* sales team that sold 70 copies of the paper throughout the day, including 43 copies at daybreak to march participants arriving on busses from Philadelphia, New York, and other East Coast cities. Two co-workers from his UAW-organized plant who Staggs didn't know well were surprised to see him there, asked him what the paper was about, and bought copies.

A bright blue banner above the Socialist Workers Party booth on Constitution Avenue announced that writings of Che, Lenin, Malcolm X, Mandela, Marx, and others were for sale and drew the attention of hundreds at the march.

Brian Taylor, a member of the Young Socialists in D.C., helped staff the SWP booth. "One person who looked at the *Militant*'s coverage of workers' struggles for freedom and dignity in Quebec and Ireland asked, 'What do the workers in Quebec and Ireland have to do with Black rights here in the United States? Can what they do help us here?' I told him yes, and why I thought so. In the course of the discussion, he decided to buy a copy of the *Militant* and learn more about the fights being waged by other workers around the world," Taylor said.

By the end of the day more than 300 copies of the *Militant* and some \$600 worth of Pathfinder books had been sold. About 50 volunteers participated in the sales. Books and the pamphlets sold included the *Communist Manifesto*, *Women's Liberation* and the *African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, and many books on Cuba and by Malcolm X. Six subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold by teams of sales-

persons from Brooklyn, New York, and Newark, New Jersey.

Most of those who approached the main SWP booth and several smaller Socialist Workers literature tables got a copy of the October 21 Cuba rally leaflet, often as an introduction to a discussion on Cuba's revolutionary role in helping to bring down apartheid in South Africa.

Janice Lynn from Washington, D.C., who staffed one of the satellite tables of revolutionary literature, described how one person who disagreed with the politics represented by the books tried to discourage people from stopping at the table. Lynn said, "He told people 'keep moving' and 'don't talk to them.' An older Black worker who purchased a *Militant* and our last copy of *Malcolm X on Afro-American History* went over to tell this individual that he had no right to tell people what they could or couldn't read, that Pathfinder Press has kept Malcolm X's writings in print, and that these books were important."

International rallies held to defend Cuba

The following are reports on demonstrations organized in several imperialist countries to protest the U.S. economic war against Cuba.

BY JACQUES SALFATI

PARIS — Rallies were held October 7 in several French cities to protest the economic warfare which the United States has been waging against the Cuban revolution. The national day of action against the embargo was called at the initiative of France-Cuba, the principle Cuba solidarity association in this country. The actions were in response to the decisions made at an international solidarity conference held in Havana in November 1994.

Rallies were held in Paris, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, and Marseilles. They were supported by various Cuba solidarity associations as well as by the CGT and the SNES-FSU trade union confederations, teachers unions, the French Communist Party and the Movement of Communist Youth of France, the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), and the Communist Organizing Committee.

Rallies were held in front of the U.S. embassy in Paris and at U.S. consulates in the other cities. Five hundred demonstrators rallied in Paris with banners denounc-

ing the blockade and the Helms-Burton bill, currently debated in U.S. Congress. This proposed legislation aims to significantly tighten Washington's embargo of the island. André Lajoine represented the French Communist Party at the Paris rally and Alain Krivine spoke for the LCR. It was an unusually sunny day in Paris and a loudspeaker truck playing Cuban music and selling drinks gave the event a festive atmosphere.

A number of the participants had recently attended the "Cuba Vive" youth festival held in Havana this summer.

BY EUGEN LEPOU

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Some 25 people picketed the US consulate here on October 10 to protest the 36-year-old economic blockade of Cuba, in particular a recent effort by Washington to tighten the blockade when the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Helms-Burton Bill.

James Robb, the Communist League candidate for mayor of Auckland, addressed the pickets. He was a participant in the "Cuba Lives" festival that took place in Havana, Cuba, in August of this year. Robb explained: "They say that the Cuban revolution is dying but while I was

in Cuba I participated in a half-a-million strong march in support of the revolution. If the revolution is dying why is Washington tightening the blockade around this country? It's because they realize that rather than the revolution becoming weaker it has proven its strength in recent times."

Some weeks before the picket, the Cuban Consul General to Australia, Marcellino Fajardo, addressed a public meeting in Auckland on October 1. Fajardo announced the visit of Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina to New Zealand scheduled for the first week of December. Robaina will visit Australia and New Zealand to meet with government officials of the two countries



Militant/Emiliano Sena
Demonstration of 10,000 people in Rome, Italy, October 7 defending the Cuban revolution. Opposition to Washington's economic war against Cuba is growing.

for trade talks.

Organizers of the picket encouraged participants at the protest to get out the word of Robaina's visit as broadly as possible and invited the picketers to get involved in helping to build any public activities that may be held for Robaina while he is in New Zealand.

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — On October 16 nearly 300 people marched to the U.S. embassy in Athens and rallied outside the

compound to oppose the Washington's embargo on Cuba. People chanted, "Hands off Cuba," "Cuba sí, Yankee no," and "The blockade will be broken by the people's struggle." The march and rally were called by the Greek-Cuba Friendship Society and supported by other groups, including the General Federation of Labor.

Jacques Salfati is an autoworker and member of the CGT in Paris; Eugen Lepou is a member of the United Food, Beverage and General workers union in Auckland, New Zealand.



Some 500 people waved Cuban flags during a march in El Salvador demanding an end to the U.S. embargo.

Cuban youth leaders begin speaking tour across Canada

BY PATRICIA O'BEIRNE

MONTREAL — Maria del Carmen Barroso, a leader of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba (UJC) and a member of the Federation of Cuban Women, and Joel Queipo, a leader of the Federation of University Students of Cuba (FEU), will arrive in Montreal October 29 to begin a three-week tour across Canada.

Barroso and Queipo will speak in public meetings on university and college campuses about how Cuban youth are defending the socialist revolution in a period of economic crisis. They will also learn first-

hand about the situation facing working people and youth in an imperialist country like Canada. They will go to picket lines, and meet with workers, Native people, and others.

Barroso and Queipo will begin their speaking tour with a five-day visit in Vancouver starting October 30. Meetings are planned at several campuses in Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia. At Langara College the student union building will have displays on Cuba and activities for the Cuban youth for an entire day. The youth leaders will also visit a picket line of workers on strike against Horizon Air.

As part of fund-raising efforts for the tour, the Cuban Youth Tour committee in Vancouver is showing videos on October 19 from the International Youth Festival, which took place in Cuba last August.

The next stop will be the Toronto area November 5-12. The Cuban youth leaders will meet with workers at the Ford Electronics factory, and will speak at meetings in Toronto, Guelph, London, Etobicoke, and Hamilton, Ontario.

Barroso and Queipo have also been invited to address the national convention of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) to be held in Ottawa at the end of their visit. The CFS was the main organizer of a nationwide student action last January that brought together 100,000 English-speaking and Quebecois youth to protest cuts to university funding.

The Cuban youth tour will be in the Montreal area November 12-19, where Barroso and Queipo will meet with some of the 750 workers on strike at the Kenworth truck assembly plant. Workers at Stylecraft, a watchband factory, have also invited the two Cuban youth leaders to a supper meeting. Several campus meetings are also scheduled, including at one college where a group of students are planning a study trip to Cuba next year.

Activists building the tour in Montreal and Toronto have been publicizing the project at demonstrations and other political events.

In Montreal some of the 9,000 students who protested cuts to education funding on September 20 picked up information on the tour, and several volunteered to help publicize it on their campuses.

To find out more information, or to help with any aspect of this project, call the Cuban Youth Tour in Canada, at (514) 284-0436 in Montreal, (416) 536-8901 in Toronto, or (604) 439-2451 in Vancouver.

Cuban student leader tours the UK

BY ROBERT CREASY
AND JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — "At every meeting at which I've spoken, people ask 'what will happen in Cuba when Fidel Castro dies?' But the Cuban revolution is more than one man. It couldn't have survived otherwise," said Cuban student leader, Kenia Serrano. Serrano was addressing a spirited 1,200-strong protest against the U.S. economic blockade here at the conclusion of her month-long tour of Britain. (See article facing page.)

"A majority of Cubans are under 30 years of age," Serrano went on. "The continuing support for the revolution shows that millions of young people in Cuba — not just the government, let alone one man — are committed to defending the revolution."

"What's so important about Fidel Castro are his ideas, his example, his leadership. These will never die. In this sense, great revolutionaries never die. Che Guevara will never die! José Martí will never die! Julio Antonio Mella will never die! Malcolm X will never die! Fidel Castro will never die!"

In the course of her tour, organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC), Serrano addressed college and public meetings and conducted interviews with the media. She attended the Labour Party conference and addressed a meeting there that attracted 70 people. In Sheffield, South Yorkshire, she was the featured speaker at a regional gathering that drew 60 people for in-depth discussions about the Cuban revolution.

Serrano spoke in Aberdeen in the north

of Scotland, in Birmingham in the Midlands, and in Brighton on the south coast. She met with thousands, including members of parliament, trade unionists, Latin Americans living in Britain, and fighters for democratic rights.

As international relations secretary of the Federation of University Students in Cuba, she said she was particularly pleased to be able to make contact with student leaders. On October 20 she will meet with Jim Murphy, president of the National Union of Students. At South Bank University, where Serrano spoke to a meeting of 50 hosted by the college Afrikan Society, she was able to meet with local student union vice-president Ruhul Tarafder. Following the meeting, Tarafder said he would seek to deepen links between their two organizations, and will support an international youth brigade to Cuba scheduled for the summer of 1996.

Lively question-and-answer sessions were a feature of all the meetings at which she spoke. Many people wanted to know if young people were as committed to defending the revolution as the older generation. At the first meeting of the tour on September 22, hosted by North-West London CSC, Serrano explained that young people were not ignorant of conditions in the world. By word of mouth, films and TV, people were aware. Through internationalist missions, hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers have worked abroad as doctors, teachers, and soldiers.

During the tour, news of the new foreign investment law adopted by the Cuban national assembly in September hit Britain. Several people asked about the

implications of this law — giving foreigners the right to own real estate and enterprises in most sectors of the economy.

At a meeting hosted by North-East London CSC, Serrano said that she didn't anticipate a rush of foreign capital into the country to buy the place up. "Fidel Castro has explained that the problem isn't too much but too little," she said, emphasizing that many Cubans were aware of the risks involved. "That's why the Cuban government retains the right to decide on each and every proposal. Every case of foreign investment is scrutinized at the highest level before proceeding. The Cuban labor code must be respected. The state will continue to defend the interests of working people."

"There is a big discussion around this in Cuba. A recent conference discussed the problem of corruption involving Cubans working in joint ventures," she noted. "There is also a lot of discussion around measures to cut excess labor in attempts to make enterprises more efficient."

The student leader said that discussion continues on the introduction of taxes on wages as part of a new tax system. "This decision has not yet been implemented because most working people are not ready for it," she said. "There are many suggestions about what a tax system would be like. Personally I believe the country is not prepared for any system, and I don't think one should be implemented — after all the workers produce all the wealth, all the goods and services."

At each meeting, Serrano appealed for the maximum pressure on the U.S. government to defeat the measure.

October 14 actions

Continued from front page

would significantly tighten the U.S. embargo. "Our demonstration is timely in protesting the blockade and the [Helms-Burton] bill and urging Clinton to veto it," said Saucedo as she asked the demonstration participants to sign a huge banner that will be sent to Washington, D.C., in protest of U.S. government policy.

Rallying around four demands directed against Washington — "End the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba," "Lift the U.S. travel ban," "Normalize relations with Cuba," and "Respect Cuba's self-determination" — participants in the October 14 march traveled to San Francisco from around the Western region of the United States and Canada.

A host of speakers addressed the crowd both at the UN Plaza and later at Jefferson Park. Walter Johnson, president of the San Francisco Labor Council, expressed his opposition to the blockade against Cuba. Johnson has long supported exchanges between trade unionists in the United States and those in Cuba to break down the barriers between working people put up by the U.S. government. Other speakers included Holly Fincke, one of the four national coordinators of the NNOC; local leaders of the Cuba solidarity movement; and a number of youth representatives who had recently traveled to Cuba.

Among those participating in the rally was a group of 40 who made the trip down to San Francisco from the Seattle area. Many of them had heard about the demonstration through reportback meetings for those returning from the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival in August.

Marcie Larrson from Fairhaven College in Bellingham, Washington, got interested in Cuba through her experiences working in Argentina last year. "There is a lot of sympathy for Cuba in Argentina, not among the upper classes of course, but among the people there is," Larrson said. "Young people there really support Cuba, and look to it as an example."

Larrson, along with other young people on her campus, is trying to get a Cuba solidarity committee off the ground in Bellingham. "It's only a few people right now," she said, but they are working to get more involved.

Members of the San Francisco-based October 14th Coalition to End the U.S. Blockade of Cuba leafleted a demonstration of 5,000 at the University of California, Berkeley, October 12.

Susanna Telles, a student at Berkeley High School who walked out of class to join in the demonstration, noticed coalition members passing out fliers about the October 14 action.

"I came for the affirmative action rally, but I want the blockade ended too," Telles

said as she took a stack of fliers to distribute.

A group of 25, mostly young people, also made the trip to San Francisco from Salt Lake City, Utah. Among them were more than half a dozen high school students. Contingents also joined the march from Portland, Oregon; Vancouver, British Columbia; and other cities.

Closing the rally, Miguel Nuñez, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., expressed his gratitude for the solidarity shown by people here for the struggle of the Cuban people.

After the rally 40 young people met to make plans to build a youth brigade to Cuba in August 1996.

BY NAOMI CRAINE
AND CATHY SEDWICK

CHICAGO — "I hadn't thought it was possible to organize this kind of action," said Victor Avis, one of 200 people who rallied at the Federal building here October 14 to protest the U.S. government's policies against Cuba. "Now I see a lot of possibilities," he added, saying he wants to do more to defend Cuba. Avis is a community college student from Minneapolis.

Participants drove from Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and elsewhere, including a number who were attending their first demonstration in defense of Cuba.

Reid Craig, a student at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, explained, "I want to find out more about what's going on in Cuba. This is my first demonstration and my first trip to Chicago."

Several speakers at the rally and a teach-in afterward denounced the Helms-Burton bill. Rev. Lucius Walker, executive director of IFCO, told the rally that an executive order by Clinton supposedly easing the travel ban on Cuba "is simply a further act of aggression."

Floyd Davis, a striking member of GCIU Local 13 that organizes the embattled newspaper strikers in Detroit, said, "We have a lot of corporate greed in this country. They want to bust all the unions. They're demanding our unconditional surrender. I'm here to speak out against all of Corporate America."

Gisela Lopez from the Chicago Cuba Coalition, who chaired the rally, read greetings from farm activist Larry Ginter and UAW Local 270 president Harold Ruggless, both from Iowa.

Most participants then marched over to a nearby church for lunch and to continue discussion at the teach-in. Others showed up for the teach-in itself.

To a standing ovation, José Ponce, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Protesters march in London against Washington's embargo on Cuba October 14

Cuban people for this successful activity organized against the blockade.

In his talk Ponce described how workers and farmers in Cuba are organizing to face the serious economic challenges there, triggered by the collapse of aid and trade at preferential prices with the former Soviet bloc countries.

"There were people who thought in 1989 that the revolution was over," he said. "We have proved them wrong."

The discussion that followed covered a wide range of questions.

"Why is it that Cubans in the United States speak so badly of their country?" asked David Ochoa, a meatpacker in Perry, Iowa, originally from Guatemala, who came to Chicago with his wife.

"It depends which Cubans you talk to," Ponce replied. "There are Cubans here today who think highly of the revolution. There are others who lost all their wealth, because the revolution took it from them. They are tiny minority."

Armando, an activist in the Chicago Cuba Coalition who came from Cuba in 1980 with the Mariel boatlift, explained, "In 1980, of 100,000 Cubans who came there was not one case of tuberculosis. In my neighborhood in Chicago, 10 people died last year from tuberculosis."

Stephen Bloodworth from Peoria contributed to this article.

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — "Clinton, Major, Hands off Cuba!" "Cuba Sí, Bloqueo No!" and "U.S. out of Guantánamo!" were among the slogans posted on placards and chanted by a noisy, colorful demonstration of 1,000 people through central London October 14. The action, organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC), called for an end to Washington's economic blockade.

"Great success" was how Mark Holding, political events officer of the CSC, described the protest — the first-ever national demonstration in the United Kingdom in defense of Cuba's sovereignty.

Among the marchers, who were joined by another 200 people at Trafalgar Square for a rally, were contingents from local CSC groups from most major cities and other parts of the country. Many of these groups have only begun organizing in the last year or two.

Also marching with their banners were members of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) 1107 branch at the Ford car plant in Dagenham, and National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) members from Tower Colliery in South Wales. A Cuban flag was draped around the miners' banner. NUM president Arthur Scargill addressed the closing rally along with John McFaden of the public employees union, Unison. TGWU general secretary Bill Morris and three other national union leaders sent messages of support.

Hundreds of young people joined the protest. Chris Southworth, 25, who had never been on a demonstration before, was helping to lead the chanting. "I'm here to take a stand against the United States and what it is doing to Cuba. We get so much disinformation," he said.

Speakers from several organizations addressed the marchers at the beginning of the demonstration. Opening the rally at the end of the march, Ken Gill, chair of the

CSC, condemned "35 years of bullying and blackmail" and announced a year of protest activity by his organization. He demanded that London vote against Washington's sanctions against Cuba in the United Nations next month. A giant postcard to British prime minister John Major, with this message, was signed by platform speakers and march participants.

Peter Middleton brought greetings from the Wolfe Tone Society — an Irish republican organization in Britain. He compared Cuba's fight to the struggle for "peace, justice, and freedom in Ireland." On October 12, Cuban student leader Kenia Serrano had addressed London supporters of Saoirse, the campaign to free Irish political prisoners.

Serrano has been on a month-long speaking tour of the United Kingdom, sponsored by the CSC, and was the last speaker at the Trafalgar Square rally. Washington, she said, is denying the Cuban people "our right to self-determination.... Nineteen fifty-nine has to be remembered as the year that Cuba gained its independence, when the dream came true for the first time in history. Now we say we are the owners of our country."

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM — "Cuba is not like the picture we get in the mass media here," said Hans Göran Franck from the Social Democratic Party, speaking at a demonstration of 1,000 here October 14. "If it were like that, we would not have seen more than 1,000 young people from almost 70 countries assemble at a youth festival in Havana in August. They went to offer solidarity to the people of Cuba."

The demonstration, initiated by the Sweden-Cuba Friendship Association after a call for international actions at a solidarity conference in Havana last November, had been built for several months and gained the support of more than 50 organizations. People came in buses from as far away as Malmö in the south of Sweden.

"Solidarity has always been associated with Cuba, which has offered solidarity all over the world," said Hans Andersson, member of parliament from the Left Party.

Eva Björklund, president of the Sweden-Cuba Friendship Association, wound up the rally before the march, pointing to the different solidarity actions in Chicago, San Francisco, and London taking place the same day.

Slogans like "Cuba, Cuba Solidarity," "U.S. Out of Guantánamo," and "End the blockade against Cuba" echoed on the streets of central Stockholm during the busy shopping hours of Saturday afternoon, as the march wound toward the U.S. embassy.

At the end of the demonstration more than 100 participants responded to the call to join a Solidarity Forum to discuss future work in defense of Cuba. Martín Mora, the Cuban ambassador to Sweden, spoke and answered questions for over an hour. Music and food were interspersed with presentations, including on an upcoming tour of Union of Young Communists leader Jonathan Quirós, whose arrival in Sweden has been delayed by tightened visa conditions imposed on Cubans visiting Europe. Participants also heard information on a container to be shipped by boat to Cuba, as well as presentations by two participants at the recent Cuba Lives youth festival.

Activists in Midwest discuss future actions to defend Cuba

BY NORTON SANDLER

CHICAGO — Activists from around the Midwest met here October 15 to evaluate the demonstration and teach-in held the day before. They noted several positive examples of how the action had helped strengthen work in defense of the Cuban revolution in this geographic area.

This regional meeting of the National Network on Cuba (NNOC) was attended by some 35 representatives and activists from Cuba solidarity coalitions and organizations in Chicago; Detroit; Des Moines, Iowa; Louisville, Kentucky; Kansas City, Missouri; Milwaukee; Pittsburgh; and the Twin Cities, Minnesota.

Participants at the Midwest evaluation meeting noted that the Chicago event the previous day helped attract new forces into activity as well as providing important education on the Cuban revolution to those who attended. Others commented on the increased collaboration between Cuba solidarity groups in cities in the area, and how their respective local coalitions had been strengthened through this activity.

The first order of business following the evaluation was discussion of the upcoming October 21 Cuba demonstration in New York City. Ignacio Meneses, one of the four national NNOC coordinators and an activist in the Justice for Cuba Coalition in Detroit, urged the largest possible

turnout from the Midwest. Several activists discussed plans to get people from their area to the New York demonstration.

After that discussion, Meneses reported that the Detroit-based U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange is organizing delegations of trade unionists to Cuba November 18-25 and again in April. The spring trip will coincide with the national convention of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers.

Aislinn Pulley, a high school student in the Chicago Cuba Coalition, reported on the Cuba Lives festival in August that was attended by some 1,300 participants, including a delegation of more than 200 young people from the United States.

Activists also reported on the initial progress of a newly established NNOC task force that is organizing a youth brigade to Cuba in August 1996, and on an upcoming tour of Cuban youth to the United States early next year.

An activist from Louisville reported that Global Exchange is organizing a Veterans Tour to Cuba in early November and that there is still space available.

The next national meeting of the National Network on Cuba will be in Los Angeles on February 10-11. The Chicago participants decided that Midwest representatives will caucus at that meeting, if needed, to help coordinate upcoming activities.

Discussion on 'Marx's Marxism' in Cuba

The following are excerpts of an article that appeared in the July-August issue of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the magazine of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC). It appeared under the title, "On the 100th anniversary of Frederick Engels's death: History and Marxism."

The article was based on a talk given at the Department of Philosophy and History of the University of Havana in January 1994. The translation and subtitles are by the *Militant*.

BY FERNANDO MARTÍNEZ HEREDIA

The question of what constitutes the Marxism of Marx in Cuba is very difficult. This is true for at least five reasons: the lack of enough direct sources; the limited use of adequate studies on this subject; a thick, accumulated layer of vulgar interpretations and absurd arguments pretending to be Marxist that were imposed on us as ideological requirements; little real use of Marx's Marxism in the theoretical realm of our ideas and scientific work; and the recent loss of interest in Marxism....

The socialist parties and labor federations in Europe that constituted the Second International sponsored the first Marxism, proclaimed as the official doctrine of socialism, its organizations, and its body of ideas. This socialism "of the golden age" alternated with bourgeois cultural domination and gradually adapted to it.

In social-democratic Marxism, the dominant current — although not the only one — was evolutionism and scientism of the "materialist conception of history" variety, represented by Kautsky (and Plekhanov), for whom society was a corollary of nature and socialism was a consequence of the advance of the civilization that the bourgeoisie imposed on the world. Orthodoxy (Kautsky) and revisionism (Bernstein) were its two faces, complementary in politics although conflicting in theory. Edward Bernstein not only theorized revisionism; he proclaimed the ideological importance of moral conscience and advocated a return to Kant.

From a different political position, foreign to both of those, Rosa Luxemburg advocated mass, democratic revolution, based on "the firm ground of objective historic necessity" that she believed she demonstrated in trying to finish Marx's economic theory.

Lenin and the Bolshevik revolution

Revolution, economic theory, political theory, Marxism, and materialism were Lenin's themes, who — without expressly questioning the theoretical basis of orthodoxy — produced the most important work of the whole period. Lenin established a communist anti-revisionism, defended the dictatorship of the proletariat, advocated the theory of the state of Marx and the Commune, although not its spontaneism.

He elaborated a more developed theory of capitalism, made more contributions than anyone to the complex analysis — from a revolutionary political

standpoint — of concrete situations in European societies, and presented with total consistency the anticolonial struggle as part of the revolution. But above all he was a practical politician, the indisputable leader of an effectively organized party that resolved to take power in Russia and carry out a communist revolution and did so.

The Bolshevik victory modified and broadened the object of Marxism, and created a veritable cultural pole for revolutionaries in Europe and other countries. It is impossible to speak of Marxism or understand it without taking into account this stage. Ernesto Guevara left us the intelligent advice to read everything — "right up to the last page" — written by Lenin

since the beginning of the experience of Soviet power in 1917.

It is also necessary to study Leon Trotsky, a theoretician devoted to Marx and a profound political analyst, who was sometimes visionary, as a historian, above all in his master work, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, which combines an extraordinary historical tableau with a great analytical richness and valuable methodology.

It is necessary to appropriate for ourselves the theoretical contributions of the Marxist and revolutionary dialectical philosophy of Karl Korsch and of Lukacs, author of *History and Class Consciousness*, of the thinking of a left that considered the events in theory as functions of the histori-

cal movement. To take up the rich variety of positions and courses advanced by Ernst Bloch, Wilhelm Reich, or the Frankfurt Institute. To study and discuss the powerful and open work of Antonio Gramsci, the most outstanding and last great European thinker of the current opened by Lenin. To critically study and adopt the complex flourishing of intellectual practices and social thinking carried out by many Europeans in the heat of the struggles, needs, most diverse influences, experiments, polemics, and limits of revolutionary efforts.

The end of that process and the establishment of a post-revolutionary regime in the Soviet Union in the 1930s

Continued on Page 12

Cuban poet discusses artistic freedom

BY VANESSA KNAPTON

LOS ANGELES — "Despite the increased economic hardships caused by the U.S. embargo, there is greater artistic freedom than ever before in Cuba today," Norberto Codina explained. He was speaking to a group of students who had turned out to a meeting at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) to hear the Cuban poet and editor.

Codina, editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, a cultural magazine published by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), spoke at several events in Los Angeles as part of a four-week lecture tour that began in Washington, D.C., and continues in Houston and New York. Carlos Ugalde, a professor at Glendale Community College, and John Shapley, president of UCLA's Graduate Students Association, gave introductory remarks at the meeting. Both are part of the Norberto Codina Lectures Committee, which sponsored his four-city tour.

Codina noted that in the United States there is a perception that the Cuban government interferes with artistic freedom and that artists in Cuba must either be underground or on the payroll of the government, and that they have to be members of the Communist Party to travel abroad.

"This is not true," Codina said. "I myself am not a member of the Communist Party and though I am an employee of the government, I am not a docile one." As editor of *La Gaceta*, Codina added, "I face no censorship board; I answer to no censors." In fact, he stated, artists and "art have never been more audacious, have never been freer in Cuba than they are today."

About 80 people turned out to hear the Cuban writer speak at Macondo Cultural Center on the economic and political conditions artists face in Cuba. The event was chaired by Paula Solomon, co-chair of the Los Angeles Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba.

Even with the current economic crisis, exacerbated by the added restrictions on trade and travel imposed last year by the Clinton administration, Cuba still has been able to maintain its most important cultural institutions. It continues to sponsor



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Codina (second from right) at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

numerous cultural events — international film festivals, the Havana Book Fair, and international photography exhibits — and provide scholarships for artists.

This is only possible, Codina underlined, "because of the generalization of culture and art at all levels of society." He explained that one of the significant achievements of the Cuban revolution of 1959 was the encouragement of artistic and cultural development for students, workers, and peasants. This began, he said, with the literacy campaigns of the early 1960s through which virtually all workers and peasants in Cuba learned to read and continued with systematic efforts to raise the level of schooling of the entire population, young and old. These campaigns opened up academic possibilities for Cubans that are unparalleled in Latin America and even in much wealthier countries.

With the creation of art schools all over the country from primary to high school level, Cubans "fought against the concept of art only for the elite," Codina emphasized. It became possible for artists, even for those who were from working-class or peasant families, to "become professionals and travel to other countries to show their work."

Many of the current discussions in Cuba on art and culture are reflected in the pages of *La Gaceta*. Hotly debated topics like gays, religion, and the problem of prostitution in Cuba are all discussed in the magazine.

Cuba is not a dreamland, as some people may want to say, Codina remarked, but also it is not as bad as some portray it. "Cuba is not a paradise, and it is not a hell." Cuban artists are conscious of these realities and they reflect that in their art.

For example, the recent phenomenon of beggars in Cuba has been a shock to him as it is to other Cubans, Codina commented, and he incorporated it into one of his poems. "Until recently, I had only heard stories about homeless Cubans in prerevolutionary Cuba. Still, the small number of beggars in all of Cuba today would pale in comparison to the beggars

in Washington, D.C. alone."

During his one-week visit in this area, the editor of *La Gaceta* was sponsored by faculty members at California State University-Los Angeles, UCLA, and Glendale Community College. He also spoke at two bookstores, including a meeting of about 30 at Arroyo Bookstore, which was attended by a number of people from the largely Mexican community.

Codina met with Mayor William Papparian of Pasadena and some of his staff. Papparian expressed his strong opposition to the U.S. embargo of Cuba. He extended an open invitation to other Cubans to visit the city and expressed interest in visiting Cuba himself. Also at the meeting were the city manager and the director of the Pasadena city libraries.

By the end of the week, Cuba solidarity activists had sold 25 copies of *La Gaceta* at Codina's meetings. They also made plans to systematically contact a number of people who expressed interest in subscribing to the magazine, which is distributed in the United States by Pathfinder.

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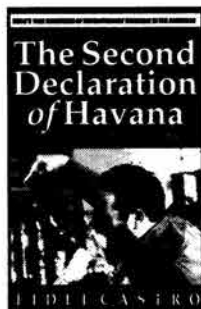
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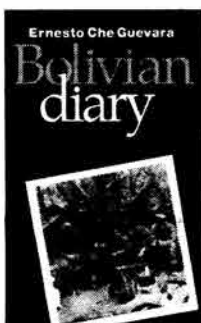
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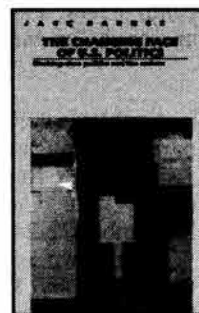
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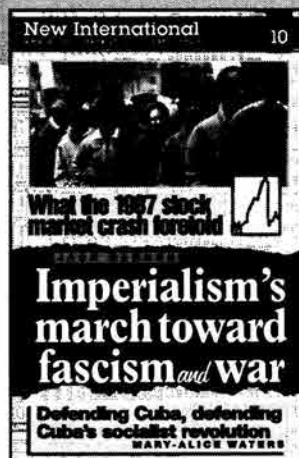
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BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

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In S. Africa, India, books on Cuba are best-sellers

"I depend on Pathfinder books and the *New International* to get a scientific understanding of the world." That's how Huudu Yahaya explained why he spent every penny he could afford to buy four Pathfinder books and two issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*. Ya-

books and pamphlets and 10 copies of the *New International*. The best seller was *To Speak the Truth* with four copies sold. This book contains speeches by Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara. Eighteen of the 41 titles sold were on the Cuban revolution. Other popular sellers were *Lenin's*



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Sara Lobman

haya, from Accra, Ghana, met socialists from the United States who had set up a table with Pathfinder books and other literature at the Southern Africa-Cuba solidarity conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, October 6-8.

Yahaya said he had met Pathfinder supporters in Cuba a couple of years ago and bought some books. This time he purchased *Lenin's Final Fight*, Malcolm X: *The Last Speeches*, *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*, *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End*, and copies of *New International* nos. 9 and 10. He also subscribed to the *Militant*.

A few other people who had seen Pathfinder books before had a similar reaction to Yahaya. Derrick Moyo, for example, a member of the Cuba solidarity group FOCUS in Pretoria, had picked up several titles in the United States a year ago. This time he purchased five titles, most of them on Cuba, and renewed his subscription to the *Militant*.

Altogether, \$375 worth of socialist literature was sold to many of the participants in the meeting, including 41 Pathfinder

Final Fight, *The Communist Manifesto*, and books by Malcolm X.

A table featuring Pathfinder books and pamphlets attracted much interest at the Asian-Pacific Region Conference for Solidarity with Cuba in Calcutta, India, September 22-24.

Within two hours of it being set up, all the books by Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian revolution, had been sold. Especially in demand were Trotsky's writings on the degeneration of the revolution, contained in *The Revolution Betrayed* and *In Defense of Marxism*. Several of those interested in the books explained that they were seeking to understand what is happening in politics since the collapse of the former Soviet Union.

Two union officials from Nepal combined their money to buy *Teamster Rebellion*. An Indian delegate involved in the bank workers union came by one day and purchased *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*. The next day he was back to discuss the contents of the book.

"The push to expose GW [George Washington University] students to socialism started off with a bang in September as the Pathfinder bookstore, a 'center for books, discussion, and working class political activity' had its Grand Opening at a new location," began an article in the *Authority*, a newspaper at the Washington, D.C., university.

"Pathfinder carries revolutionary writings, including books about the Cuban revolution, the Russian revolution, and many books about or by revolutionary leaders, many of which express socialist ideals," the article notes.

Mary Martin, a member of the Socialist Workers Party who volunteers at the Pathfinder bookstore, explained to *Authority* correspondent Jeff Baxter that she often helps set up tables at the university that include Pathfinder books. "It's a way to get the truth out about the Cuban revolution, the South African revolution, the women's movement, and all these ideas are kept in print in the books that Pathfinder prints and distributes," she said.

A recent table on the campus, for example, staffed by Martin and several students, "showcase[d] a selection of books including *In Defense of Socialism* by Fidel



Selling socialist literature at Cuba solidarity conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa, October 6-8.

Castro, several books by Malcolm X, *The Communist Manifesto*, *Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and War*, and pamphlets including *Socialism and Man in Cuba*.

Several GW students visited the new Pathfinder bookstore the night of the grand opening to participate in a Militant Labor Forum by the editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, Martín Koppel, on "working-class resistance in Latin America," the article reports.

Argiris Malapanis, reporting from Johannesburg, South Africa, and Brigid Rotherham, reporting from Calcutta, India, contributed to this column. Rotherham is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Auckland, New Zealand.

Miners discuss organizing at UMW A convention

BY JOHN HAWKINS

MIAMI BEACH, Florida — Nearly 700 delegates attended the fifty-first constitutional convention of the United Mine Workers of America here September 25-29. Discussion at the gathering reflected growing concern among union members of the need to organize coal miners in order to fend off the bosses attacks on working people.

UMWA membership figures graphically point up the reason for this concern. Of the 200,000 members the union claims, 75,000 are active members, a figure that includes those recently laid off.

Also, productivity in the coal mining industry in the United States and Canada has increased significantly during the last twenty years. As a result, the number of workers employed in the industry — and thereby the potential membership of the union in the two countries — has continued to decline. From 233,000 in 1980, the number has fallen to 100,000 today.

Committee reports, and much of the delegate discussion, were directed at what the union should do to increase organizing, as well as how to fight Congressional attacks on entitlements.

Unfortunately, discussion of these questions among the delegates themselves took a back seat to the parade of politicians and union officials invited to speak. Their purpose, by and large, was to generate some enthusiasm for the Democratic Party in the 1996 elections and for the new leadership that will most likely be elected at the upcoming convention of the AFL-CIO.

Among the politicians addressing the convention were U.S. senator John D. Rockefeller from West Virginia, and Georgia congressman and former civil rights activist, John Lewis. Rockefeller, sponsor of a 1992 bill that guaranteed pension benefits and health coverage for thousands of retired miners, criticized legislation currently before Congress that would in essence repeal the 1992 measure, known as the Coal Act.

President Bill Clinton spoke to the delegates via satellite. Clinton's speech cen-

tered on the rift between Congress and the White House over the budget. Mindful of his audience, he played up his administration's opposition to Congressional efforts to gut the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the Coal Act. Both Rockefeller and Clinton were made honorary members of the union.

Speeches by UMWA president Richard Trumka, Vice-President Cecil Roberts, and Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Jones all keyed in on the UMWA's tradition of combativeness. Noting the union's historic role in the formation of the industrial unions, they pointed to Trumka's likely election as secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO as opening a similar chapter in the union's history.

John Sweeny and Linda Chávez-Thompson, Trumka's running mates in the AFL-CIO leadership contest, struck similar themes the last day of the gathering.

The willingness among thousands of coal miners to resist company and government assaults on their union, and what they have come to regard as their rights, was reflected in the contributions of many delegates during the discussion.

At the center of the report of the Organizing Committee was the proposal to launch a GOAL 2000 (Growth On All Levels). This program would increase the strength of the UMWA and lend active support to building and strengthening other unions, according to its supporters.

The report noted victories won by the UMWA over the last several years at coal mines and other work places, including the Marrowbone, Wolf Creek, Cyprus Mountain, and Buck Creek mines — in West Virginia and eastern Kentucky.

A resolution opposing the Ballenger bill, legislation before Congress that would gut the enforcement powers of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and eliminate the MSHA, was passed. It called for organizing demonstrations of miners and their supporters locally and in Washington, D.C. to ensure that MSHA and OSHA are not gutted.

The report of the Health and Safety

Committee noted that while fatalities continued to decline in the last decade — especially the last five years — another disturbing trend was taking shape. An increasing number of workers in the mines nowadays are employees of contractors, and an increasing percentage of all mine fatalities are suffered by these workers.

This is directly attributable, the report noted, to the unfulfilled mandate under the Mine Safety and Health Act of 1969 to set regulations specifically governing training and safety standards to cover this cross section of the mine work force.

Under the report of the Constitution and Grievances Committee debate broke out on amendments to the constitution that would make it more difficult for candidates to qualify for the union's top offices.

Over significant opposition, the number of local nominations needed to qualify as a candidate for international office was raised from 25 to one fifth of all locals.

Among the union officials invited to address the convention were James Motlatsi, president of the National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa; and Peter Michalzik, General Secretary of the Miners International Federation. Motlatsi was voted in as a UMWA honorary member.

The convention also voted to condemn Exxon and the Columbian government for forcing striking coal miners at the El Cerrejon mine back to work at gunpoint.

John Hawkins is a member of UMWA Local 2368. Alyson Kennedy, member of the same local, also contributed to the article.

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Revolutionary Continuity Marxist Leadership in the U.S.

By Farrell Dobbs



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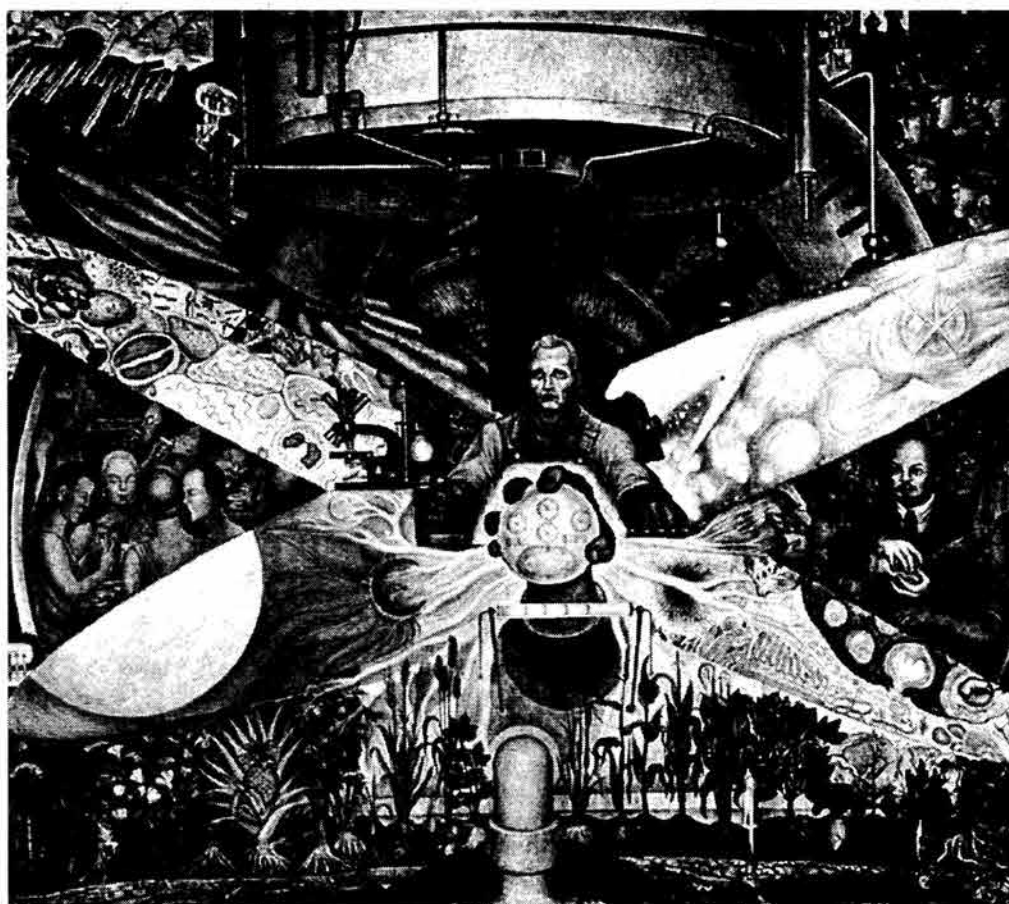
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SOCIALISM: A FUTURE WORTH FIGHTING FOR

By Farrell Dobbs



"Man at the Crossroads," mural by Mexican artist Diego Rivera

The following is the concluding portion of a speech given in 1966 by Farrell Dobbs, a longtime leader of the communist movement in the United States. It is reprinted from the June 1975 issue of the *Young Socialist*.

Dobbs (1907-1983), joined the Communist League of America (predecessor of the Socialist Workers Party) in 1934 while working in a Minneapolis coal yard. A rank-and-file leader of the 1934 Teamsters strikes and organizing drive, he was subsequently elected secretary-treasurer of Local 574 (later 544). In the late 1930s he was a central leader of the 11-state over-the-road campaign that organized tens of thousands of workers in the trucking industry. In 1939 he was appointed general organizer for the Teamsters international; he resigned the post in 1940 to become SWP national labor secretary.

In 1941 Dobbs was indicted and convicted with 17 other leaders of Local 544 and of the SWP under the thought-control Smith Act for their opposition to the imperialist aims of the U.S. government in World War II. He spent 12 months in federal prison in 1944-45.

Dobbs served as editor of the *Militant* from 1943 to 1948. He was SWP national chairman from 1949 to 1953, and national secretary from 1953 to 1972. He was the party's candidate for president in 1948, 1952, 1956, and 1960, using these campaigns to actively oppose the Korean and Vietnam wars, the anticommunist witch-hunt, and to support the civil rights movement and the Cuban revolution.

In addition to his four-volume series on the Teamster battles of the 1930s (see ad

below), he is author of *Revolutionary Continuity: Marxist Leadership in the United States*.

We must be constantly aware of the key role of the United States in the world. United States imperialism is today the powerhouse of world reaction, as the war in Vietnam is abundantly demonstrating.

It is an iron fact that until capitalism is overturned here in the United States of America, the gang of imperialist mad dogs that rule this country are going to remain a mortal threat to all humankind. We must never forget that.

The showdown battle

That means the showdown battle for world socialism is going to be fought right here in the United States of America. And when the revolutionary victory is won, outlived, decadent capitalism is going to disappear literally overnight from the face of our planet. Humanity is going to march forward to the building of an enlightened socialist society where people for the first time can really live together on this planet in peace and in security and with freedom. Humanity will finally realize the type of rewarding life that human intelligence is so abundantly capable of making, even at the present level of technological development. Once humanity learns how to conduct itself politically, organizationally, and socially, it can take advantage of these wonders.

That's what we dedicate our lives to. We of the party, we revolutionaries in the



Farrell Dobbs: "Don't adopt the criterion that the revolutionary change must happen in your time."

United States — acting as best we can in solidarity with the revolutionary fighters across the world — must always keep in mind that in the last analysis the fate of humanity rests on the socialist revolution in the United States. Our task is to build a party capable of leading that revolution, going up against the most heinous of the reactionary, monstrous ruling class regimes that exist on the face of this planet: the imperialist ruling class of the United States.

Now the road ahead in that struggle is going to be strewn with obstacles, and there are going to be many pitfalls. There's no roadmap, no way you can find some kind of a detailed handbook that's going to tell you what to do at each juncture. Our task is to chart a revolutionary course, based on a fundamental understanding of our program — a basic feel of our revolutionary strategy — and to hammer out the tactics in that direction as we go along.

There's no timetable. Nobody can say how long it's going to take or when it's going to happen. I personally feel that those of you sitting in this room today, who have got all your youth going for you, have got at least Damon Runyon's six-to-five¹ chance of seeing that explosion. I personally believe that.

But in saying so I want to add immediately: *don't make that a criterion. Don't adopt the criterion that the revolutionary change must happen in your time.* Don't take as a guide to your personal life that narrow, provincial, self-centered notion that if it doesn't happen during the time of your own subjective existence on this planet, it's not important.

Always remember that history is magnificently indifferent to the problems of the individual. 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 Goethe² once said, "History marches like a drunken beggar on horseback."

A lot can happen during your limited life span, or you can live a dull life. Some people have had the good fortune to live more life in a year than others at a different historical juncture could live in their whole lifetime. Or, as Plekhanov³ once put it, "If it hadn't been for the French Revolution, Napoleon would probably have ended up as a corporal in the French artillery."

Don't make it a condition that the socialist revolution must come in your lifetime. 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.

And what's the alternative? The alternative is to make a compromise with this rotten capitalist system. Do you know what people who do that are like? You remember the play, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*?⁴ Jabez Stone, you know, sold his soul to Scratch, the devil. He did so on the promise that his personal ambitions would thus be served. Later he regretted the action and asked to have his soul returned. Scratch, who was played by Walter Huston, that magnificent actor, finally said all right, he'd give it back.

So Scratch took a small matchbox from his pocket. He opened the box and began poking around in it with his stubby finger trying to find the mean little soul of Jabez Stone to give it back to him.

That's symbolic of what you do to your own soul if you make a compromise with this rotten system.

Stand in the front ranks

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.

¹ Damon Runyon (1884-1946) was a U.S. author, among whose most famous writings is the short story on which the musical *Guys and Dolls* was based.

² Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) was a prominent German poet, novelist, and playwright.

³ George Plekhanov (1856-1918) was the founder of Russian Marxism and the teacher of Lenin, Trotsky, and many other Russian revolutionary figures. Plekhanov later degenerated, supporting the czarist government in World War I and opposing the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

⁴ *The Devil and Daniel Webster* is a screenplay based on the 1937 short story of the same name by Stephen Vincent Benét.

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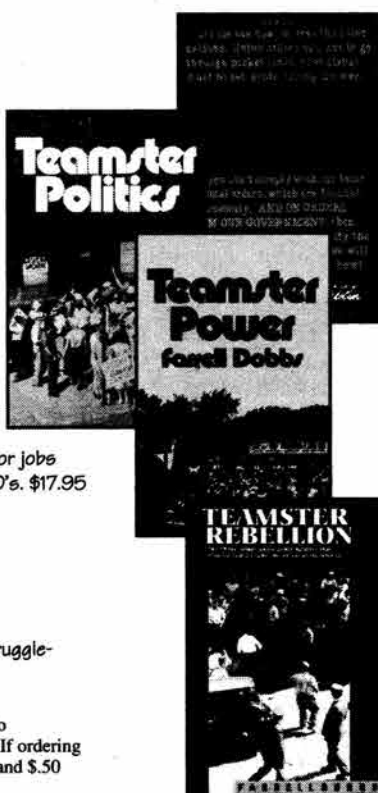
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Continued from Page 8

had deadly consequences for Marxism. Thinking was liquidated or terrorized in name of the state and a system of vulgarization was created that combined caricatures of the old speculative philosophy with distortions of Lenin, Marx, and Engels as well as all sorts of doctrinaire and pragmatic elements. This ideology of obedience and justification was imposed in an exclusive and dogmatic manner in all spheres of relevant social life, including history and other intellectual disciplines.

The damage later became chronic, because this institutionalized ideological body dominated for a half a century. It weakened and gradually wore down in its most aggressive aspects, but it extended its scope to countries, institutions, and individuals where the influence of the Soviet Union reached. Today its source has dried up, which is potentially very positive for the development of liberation thought in the world, but there is still a ways to go before we can overcome the negative consequences of what it left behind....

Rise of Marxism in Cuba after 1959

After the triumph of the revolution in 1959, Marxism rose greatly in Cuban society, a development that was inevitably very controversial, above all for three reasons, in my opinion: the incongruity between international Marxism and the content and character of the deep-going anti-capitalist revolution and communist ideals of the Cuban process, the achievements, strengths, and problems of the prior accumulation of Cuban culture, and the close relations Cuba had to establish with the Soviet Union....

The situation facing the revolution after 1970 caused deep changes that cannot be elaborated on here. Regarding the present topic, the issue became complicated because social thought was smashed and Marxism thus became underdeveloped. It was turned into an aggressive "general science" and "guide" for social thought, and became dominant and exclusive. Among other very negative consequences, this process led to an increasing rejection of that doctrine by researchers and students of social studies (or rather the distancing and aversion that occur when rejection is impossible)....

Need for theory

I believe that in Cuba today, the study of history requires theory and ideological affinity, and that Marxism vitally needs to be revolutionized. We have already seen that Marxism can be useful for liberation, but also for domination. Abandoning it today for the latter reason would mean not taking advantage of such costly lessons, and it would mean losing a tremendous aid to the scientific work of historians and an integral social vision of that work on a broader horizon that gives social meaning to professional research and studies.

Not abandoning Marxism can mean also finding a more effective defense against discouragement, against history made for tourists, against the failure to choose those topics that are most valuable and necessary, against the domination of conservative ideas about historical material, which perhaps can be explained as ideological reactions but which seriously prejudice historiography and the Cuban conscience.

I have only written "can mean," because Marxism is not a magic wand. There is no reason to expect Marxism to really be useful, or attractive, unless it shakes off the heavy load that has weighed it down and turned it into a burden for all. It is true that today it has to regain prestige, but it can also count on some favorable factors.

Our most outstanding historians are Marxists, and we have very capable professionals in other social fields that are too. There are historians and Marxist thinkers with high-quality works and valuable ideas in many countries of Latin America, and also in the United States and other continents. We must get to know more about their ideas and works. And — it's surprising but true — we Cubans must get to know each other better and exchange views, ideas, works, projects, information, and opinions among ourselves.

History and Marxism in Cuba need different things, but also they need each other.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation are welcome to attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

FLORIDA

Miami

Socialist Campaign Rally. Hear Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers candidate for Miami City Commission Group 2. Fri., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Help Raise Funds and Celebrate 66 Years of The Militant Newspaper. Speaker: Doug Jenness, recently returned from a trip to Japan where he participated in activities commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sat., Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Reception: 6 p.m. 545 West Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$7 program and reception. Tel: (312) 829-6815.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The International Struggle for Women's Liberation: Report Back from U.N. Conferences in China. Speaker: Maggie Trowe, Militant correspondent at conferences in Huairou and Beijing. Fri., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

The Million Man March: Where Does the Black Struggle Go From Here. Speakers: Leroy Watson, Socialist Workers Party; member, United Steelworkers of America, who attended the march; Malcolm Jarrett, Socialist Workers candidate for Pittsburgh City Controller. Fri., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

An Evening in Celebration of The 'Militant' Newspaper. Speaker Joe Swanson, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Transportation Union Local 1732. Sat., Oct. 28, 7:30

p.m. C.A.M.P. David T. Hunter Memorial Room, 722 18th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 281 3297.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Fight for Black Rights Today. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party, member of the United Transportation Union. Fri., Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m. 1930 18th St., N.W. (Florida and 18th, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Travesty of Waitangi. Discussion around the publication of the controversial rightist book attacking the struggle for Maori rights today. Speaker: Russell Johnson, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 27, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Christchurch

Cuba and India. A reportback from the Asia-Pacific Region Conference in Solidarity with Cuba. Featuring a participant in the conference. Fri., Oct. 27, 7 p.m.

Curtis to get parole hearing in Iowa

Continued from front page

mus will also be able to make a presentation imploring the board to grant Curtis his release.

John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, said in an October 18 press statement, "The Board's decision to meet with Mark registers progress in the fight to secure his release. Up until now, the Board repeatedly raised new obstacles to his fight for freedom. As each year passed, these efforts have become rawer, more transparent, and have made it clearer that the treatment of Curtis and his continuing imprisonment are a product of political prejudice. More and more people are asking, 'Why is Mark Curtis still in prison?'"

Studer said the length of time served — 85 months, or more than 7 years — along with other factors contributed to the parole board's decision to grant Curtis a hearing this time. He noted that 298 Curtis supporters from around the world have written the board urging his release. About 75 percent of these letters are from the United States. "The letters have had an impact on the Board; they show that this case is not going to go away and that important new support for Curtis is steadily being assembled."

In September, a delegation of more than 20 trade unionists, political activists, local clergy, a farmer, former neighbors of Curtis, and other defense committee backers

met with members of the parole board and delivered letters urging he be freed. At that time they delivered 163 letters, most from the United States. Included also were 5,000 letters from landless Brazilian peasants who had demonstrated in July at the U.S. embassy in Brasilia around Curtis's case. When the delegation arrived at the parole board office, they were met by television news crews from Des Moines area stations. An article on the meeting, entitled "World watches inmate in Iowa," was published in the September 8 *Des Moines Register*, the area's only daily paper.

On the day the parole board decided to grant Curtis a hearing, his supporters delivered another 126 letters urging his release. In the few hours since they were delivered, Studer reported that seven more letters have come over the defense committee's fax machine.

"I am joining the other hundreds of individuals, friends, and union activists in making a personal plea that you FREE MARK CURTIS NOW!" stated Sixto Medina, recording secretary of United Auto Workers Local 664 in Tarrytown, New York, in one of the recent letters.

Another factor contributing to the Board's decision to meet with Curtis, according to Studer, "is the climate in the country where millions today are dubious about the veracity of the testimony of cops who railroad thousands in the U.S. to prison every year."

Curtis's supporters have already begun to assemble a delegation to attend the parole hearing on his behalf. In addition to his attorney, Kutmus, the delegation will be led by Frankie Travis, a "road warrior" locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, Illinois; working farmer Larry Ginter from Rhodes, Iowa; Kitty Loepker, a steelworker in Granite City, Illinois; defense committee officers John Studer and Hazel Zimmerman; and Kate Kaku, Curtis's wife. In previous years, prison authorities have limited those able to attend to nine participants.

In a letter faxed out October 18, the defense committee asks supporters of Curtis to use the time between now and the hearing to gather some additional letters urging the board to grant Curtis his parole.

"We want to take the opportunity this hearing offers to continue to win support," Studer said. He urged Curtis backers to give attention to collecting "a handful of letters from each area that can help in having an impact on what the board decides five weeks from now."

"Most important," said Studer, "are letters that focus on why Mark Curtis should be paroled, and that don't attempt to retry his case."

For more information, or to send a letter to the Iowa Parole Board on Curtis's behalf, write the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; or phone (515) 246-1695.

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Fool proof? — "Last year, a B-52 crashed and narrowly missed a nuclear weapons bunker after its pilot — apparently for the thrill of it — turned too sharply." — News



Harry Ring

item on growing number of Air Force "mishaps."

In tune with the times — New Mexico officials are right on the stick on cutbacks. They're moving toward grabbing assets of deceased Medicaid recipients.

Meanwhile, the gov asked the feds to reduce the amount of cell space required for prison inmates. He wants to build a 2,800-bed prison that would provide 80 square feet for two prisoners, instead of the required 60 square feet for one.

Wait, there's more — Los Alamos National Laboratory, the nuke research center, has assured residents of the town of Los Alamos, New Mexico, not to worry about strontium 90 in their drinking water. They said a test made last year must have been false. That test found a strontium presence in a testing well four times the state "safe" level.

Curb on market economy — The Russian government iced a regulation permitting energy com-

panies to cut off power at military bases and weapons plants when they fall 30 days behind on their bills. The government acted after armed sailors had to force restoration of power at a submarine base to avert a nuclear disaster.

Three a-bombs for the jackpot — The Greenbrier, a ritzy, West Virginia mountain resort has inherited a nuclear bomb shelter situated deep under a wing of its hotel. It was built by the feds during the '50s to store Congress members and their families during an atomic attack. A spokesperson for the resort said they would like to convert part of the shelter into a gambling casino.

The plate glass ceiling — According to the UN's International

Labor Organization, if women continue to climb the corporate ladder at the present pace, it will take them 475 years to achieve parity with men in top-level managerial and administrative positions.

More = less, less = less — Corporate mergers mean job cutbacks? Right. Corporate division means more jobs? Wrong. When AT&T announced it was reorganizing into three companies it said its computer manufacturing firm would immediately chop 8,500 jobs. Now it's reported that by late next year, a total of 20,000 jobs may vanish.

You went to the wrong school — Thomas Sowell, a syndicated columnist of conservative persua-

sion, complains that when he checks out college reading material he finds "all sorts of books by and about Karl Marx," plus all students get about "the American form of government is from people who hate it and have political axes to grind, often books based on the new trinity of race, class and gender."

Better have a food stash — Denise Lawrence was busted in Spotsylvania, Virginia, for failing to return three rented videos and a video game. She was slated to face a judge October 12 and could get up to a year in jail plus a \$2,500 fine. Spotsylvania is where a guy spent five days in the courthouse holding cell without food when the bailiff took a long Labor Day weekend.

Socialist candidate gets hearing in N. Carolina

BY M.J. RAHN
AND PAUL YOUNG

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — The Dudley High School homecoming parade at the predominately Black eastside here September 27 featured a marching band, a homecoming queen, Democratic Party officials, and the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor Joan Paltrineri.

"Hey guys! I'm running for mayor. I'm the socialist," Paltrineri shouted out as she rode past and waved to some 2,000 people who lined the streets. "Working people need to stick together and fightback! Let's send a message to city hall!"

Signs saying "Defend affirmative action," "Full equality for women," "Defend workers' rights," "No to racism," "No cuts in Medicaid," "Jobs for all," "Stop police brutality," and "Joan Paltrineri, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor" were plastered all over the candidate's parade car. In contrast, Democrats threw candy at the crowd as they passed.

The socialist campaign message was one that few expected to hear or see at the homecoming parade, but many welcomed it. "October 10, we'll remember!" one senior citizen yelled to Paltrineri.

October 10 is the date of the non-partisan primary election here. The two candidates with the highest vote face off in the general election in November.

"That's right honey!" beamed a woman responding to the demand for full equality for women. Several young women congregated nearby also agreed and cheered.

"I was struck by how many women, especially young women, responded to the demand for full equality," Paltrineri said after the parade. "It was especially noticeable because the parade came less than a week after a '1,000 Black Man March.'"

Black Man March

Several hundred people participated in the September 23 "1,000 Black Man March" despite bone-chilling rain. A spirited contingent of more than 100 unionists from the Kmart Distribution Center and their families took part.

Paltrineri marched with her coworkers who chanted "No justice, no peace!" Kmart workers are currently engaged in a fight for their first union contract. It was the most racially integrated contingent in the march with as many women as men.

Together with campaign supporters, Paltrineri distributed hundreds of campaign flyers and sold several issues of the *Militant* to marchers.

The march was organized by a coalition of the Nation of Islam, the *Peacemaker* — the local Black newspaper, and the Poor People's Organization headed by Nelson Johnson, a minister and longtime political activist. No political demands were advanced by the action. Organizers said the march was needed to bring attention to the plight of Black men in the U.S.

In a statement distributed to marchers, Paltrineri pointed to solidarity and unity of Kmart workers as an example for all working people to follow.

"The company has attempted to convince us that wage increases are not justified because wages for most workers in this area are low," Paltrineri said. "Low wages are a legacy of Jim Crow segregation in the South which undermined the

struggle of workers to organize unions. Kmart sees this legacy as money in the bank. But Kmart workers remain united and determined. They are showing how to fight by reaching out to other unions, churches, and the community."

Kmart unionists held a rally of their own October 5 to press their demand for a contract. Paltrineri spoke to 150 workers at the main entrance of the center.

The socialist candidate called for solidarity with immigrant workers, mostly Mexican, who have been hired by temporary agencies to work at Kmart. She explained how she assisted one Mexican worker in winning wages owed him because the temporary agency had cheated him on his paycheck, a practice apparently not uncommon.

Kmart supervisors reprimanded Paltrineri for interfering in a matter which they said should not have concerned her. Her call for solidarity with these coworkers was echoed by other unionists at the rally. Two coworkers distributed the socialist's campaign literature at the rally.

Candidate's socialist beliefs

One indication that the socialist campaign is having an impact was a September 25 front-page photo and article in the *Greensboro News and Record*. "Joan Paltrineri wears her socialist beliefs like a badge of honor," the feature said.

Some people on the street recognize Paltrineri because of the coverage. During recent door-to-door campaigning, the candidate was invited into several homes for discussions about her program. One woman volunteered to help campaign.

In the last two weeks, Paltrineri has participated in many candidates' nights sponsored by community organizations and at college campuses in the area. Young activists from the Committee to save Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Greensboro Cuba Committee, and the Women's Leadership Coalition have accompanied Paltrineri to some of the events.

"I don't have all the solutions to the Nealtown Farms problem," Paltrineri told residents of a housing subdivision here October 4. "But I know a solution will be found, if you decide to take to the streets like students who fought tuition hikes and put demands on the government."

The socialist was the only mayoral candidate to show up to speak to the mostly Black residents of the subdivision. Residents had low-income homes built there recently but had not been informed that city officials plan to expand a landfill in the area. The scandal has enraged many. Toward the end of the forum, several residents began to air their anger at the city. One bought a subscription to the *Militant*.

Paltrineri's socialist views sharply polarized a candidates' meeting sponsored by student environmental activists, Young Republicans, and libertarians at the University of North Carolina. Her defense of Kmart workers, socialist Cuba, abortion rights, and opposition to the death penalty brought the loudest applause for any candidate, while Young Republicans signaled the chairperson to cut the candidate off.

The Young Republicans then attempted to counter Paltrineri's support by clapping for their candidate, David Philips, who said he was "the capitalist" in the race.



Militant/Karen Kopperud

Joan Paltrineri (center), campaigning for mayor of Greensboro, N. Carolina.

"Joan, you're too pugilistic!" said Sallie Clotfelter, a candidate for city council irked by Paltrineri's defense of working-class interests, after the meeting.

A group of students thought otherwise and gathered to thank her. An informal discussion with the socialist candidate continued at a pub nearby. By the end of

the evening, several decided to join her on October 21 for a march in New York City against the U.S. economic war on Cuba.

M.J. Rahn is a member of the United Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) Local 2603 at Kmart Distribution Center in Greensboro.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

October 30, 1970

Price 10¢

MONTREAL, Oct. 21 — Strong protest against the abrogation of all civil liberties throughout the province of Quebec was being heard here today as Quebecois and Canadians alike reacted to the imposition of Canada's sweeping war measures act.

Quebec has no government, declared Rene Levesque, leader of the bourgeois separatist Parti Quebecois (PQ), after the federal government imposed the sweeping war measures act on Oct. 16.

The people have been told they will be ruled by federal decree with no legal recourse and with all civil liberties abolished.

Resentments run strong against this latest manifestation of the contempt of Canada's rulers for the basic rights of the Quebecois, who have been oppressed and discriminated against since Canada became a British colony several hundred years ago. As one person expressed it, Quebec is an entire nation of hostages kidnapped three hundred years ago.

Poverty, unemployment, suppression of the Quebecois cultural heritage, attempts to impose English as the single or dominant language — all have been part of the bitter history of Quebec. But resistance to English Canadian oppression is also part of the historical record and in recent years there has been a significant growth of sentiment in favor of an

independent Quebec, separate from English Canada.

This tremendous rise of nationalist sentiment is in many ways similar to the growth of Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican nationalism in the United States, with the same revolutionary implications for the rulers of Canada and the U.S.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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

October 27, 1945

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 18 — More than 20,000 workers, veterans, servicemen, and youth of every race, creed and color, last night picketed fascist Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith's meeting here at the John H. Francis Polytechnic High School for three hours in the most powerful demonstration of antifascist solidarity in America since the Trotskyist-led 1939 action against the Nazi Bund rally at Madison Square Garden in New York.

The decision to picket Smith's meeting reflected the widespread hatred of fascism in the ranks of the local labor movement. Last July when Smith announced his intention to establish his national headquarters in Los Angeles, 17,000 determined anti-fascists staged a giant protest meeting at the Olympic Auditorium. Smith left town announcing he would return. Shortly before his ill-fated meeting at Northern High School in Detroit on September 27, when an army of club-wielding police defended Smith from the wrath of union pickets, he announced plans for a tour of 30 meetings in California starting October 15.

Obtain parole letters for Curtis!

Supporters of Mark Curtis in the United States and around the world scored a victory October 17 when Iowa parole officials informed Curtis's attorney William Kutmus that they will grant the imprisoned trade unionist and socialist activist a formal parole hearing on November 21. This is the first time in three years the Parole Board has agreed to meet with Curtis, who was framed-up on rape and burglary charges in 1988.

Curtis supporters should take note of this victory and the change it registers by backing the effort being organized by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to collect some additional letters in each area before November 21.

Priority can be given to talking about Curtis's fight for parole with those individuals whose letters will likely have the most impact on the Board's decision that day. The defense committee is explaining that the most effective letters are those from individuals that focus on why Curtis should be paroled and don't try to reargue with the Board the facts of the trial that took place more than seven years ago — important as these facts are.

Curtis completed the sentence for the phony rape charge he was convicted of more than two years ago. The average time served for the burglary charge cops and prosecutors tacked on several weeks after his original arrest is 76.2 months. Curtis has already served 85 months in prison. Every month that passes more and more people are asking, "Why is Mark Curtis still in prison?" Growing numbers of workers, farmers, and young people view his continuing imprisonment as being based on political prejudice. This fact weighed on the Board's decision to grant Curtis a hearing.

The 298 letters sent to the Board since mid-July had an impact on them as well. The big majority of these letters are from the United States, including a substantial number from Iowa and the Midwest.

In the last month in particular, several letters have come in from some dozen countries around the world. Earlier in July 5,000 letters of support from landless Brazilian peasants were sent to Curtis, who in turn passed them on to the parole officials.

Also making it difficult for the Board to continue to justify holding Curtis in prison is the growing awareness in the U.S. that cops lie. This was especially highlighted during the recently concluded O. J. Simpson trial where the Los Angeles cops were exposed as liars and racists. The key witness against Curtis was a Des Moines police officer who had lied and beaten a witness in a previous case. This fact was hidden from Curtis's jury by the actions of the judge who presided at his trial.

While there is no way to predict the parole board's decision on November 21, granting the hearing reflects progress in the fight to win Curtis's release. The authorities hoped to break the political activist and to use his victimization to intimidate others. This effort has failed. Curtis's fight has and will continue to serve as an inspiration to others.

Mark Curtis is entitled to parole.

Iowa parole officials have made their first step in that direction.

Curtis supporters everywhere should now act accordingly by winning additional letters urging the parole board to grant Curtis his release!

Speaking for most of humanity

"I speak on behalf of the children of the world who don't even have a piece of bread. I speak on behalf of the sick who lack medicine. I speak on behalf of those who have been denied the right to life and to human dignity."

— Fidel Castro at the United Nations, Oct. 12, 1979

The last time Cuban president Fidel Castro visited the United Nations he spoke there for the "immense majority of humanity." Today revolutionary Cuba continues to maintain its place in the world fighting for the rights of the oppressed and exploited, and presenting an example worth emulating. That is why Washington hates Cuba and why thousands around the world have mobilized in actions this October in solidarity with Cuba and to demand an end to the U.S. economic war against that Caribbean island.

As this issue of the *Militant* goes to press, activists in the Northeast of the United States are making the last efforts to mobilize support for the October 21 demonstration in New York City to counter Washington's aggression.

The successful actions so far in South Africa, India, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and in Chicago and San Francisco in the United States, are testament to the fact that Cuba is not alone in the world.

From the earliest days of the Cuban revolution, Washington has attempted to weaken, divide, and plot to overthrow the government and the communist leadership of Cuba. But at every turn its plans have been thwarted by the fact that the working class of Cuba has confidence in itself and its revolutionary leadership. And in spite of the obstacles put in their way, the working people of Cuba remain capable and determined to defend the revolution's socialist course and their government.

Washington must also contend with the vocal opposition to its policies around the world. The U.S. rulers have been unable to isolate the Cuban revolution from the workers, farmers, and youth of the globe. In fact, more and more young people today are becoming interested in why Washington's cold war against Cuba doesn't end.

All who oppose Washington's economic embargo and travel ban directed against Cuba, support normal relations between the United States and the Caribbean island, and respect Cuba's right to self-determination have an opportunity to do more.

Besides making last-minute efforts to maximize the turnout at the October 21 march, defenders of Cuba have a chance and an obligation to mobilize to welcome the Cuban delegation to the United Nations at the Cuban Mission in New York and to counter right-wing mobilizations called for the same time period against the revolutionary government in Havana.

In coming months, activists in many countries will be involved in bringing Cuban youth and others to their countries to learn about the revolution. These tours can be built in a big way with an eye toward involving new forces. Visits and brigades to Cuba are also in the works and can help to spread the knowledge and solidarity with socialist Cuba.

For the same reasons that Clinton, Helms, and company loathe and attack the Cuban revolution, working people and youth should come to its defense. The best way to do this is to continue the day-to-day work of building activities and coalitions in defense of Cuba in every city.

In the next few days, the task is clear:

All out for October 21 and the mobilizations at the Cuban Mission in New York City!

Simpson verdict causes a stir

Militant reader Evelyn Spencer has decided to cancel her subscription over our coverage of the O.J. Simpson verdict. "I am sickened both by the verdict and by your response to it," she writes in response to the article "Simpson jury rejects word of racist, lying cops."

Former reader Spencer's basic argument is: Simpson beat his wife and we know he killed her, so he should be convicted, regardless of the evidence and cops' actions. That's a dangerous position for the working class to fall into, and one that doesn't advance women's right to be free from domestic violence either.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

The presumption of innocence, the ability to challenge your accuser, and democratic safeguards against police manipulation of "evidence" are rights that the working class has fought for and jealously defends. Once the cops' behavior was exposed, the jury decided to not just take their word in the O.J. Simpson trial. They decided the evidence wasn't good enough, and they were right to return a not guilty verdict.

Simpson's attorneys pointed to the cops' records — including detective Mark Fuhrman's racist comments and the mishandling of evidence by various officers — and challenged their testimony. The police searched Simpson's home without a warrant, haphazardly carried a vile of his blood around, and covered up Fuhrman's racist record.

The police, by their actions, have made it virtually impossible for whoever killed Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman to ever be brought to justice.

Many reporters and columnists present the verdict as a reflection of the "racial divide" — a decision by a mostly Black jury to acquit Simpson because he is Black. Spencer criticizes defense attorney Cochran for "playing the race card." The jurors' sensitivity to racism did have something to do with the verdict, but the exposure of the standard operating procedure of the Los Angeles police was the most compelling factor.

Simpson's lawyers put their finger on the frame-up methods that the cops routinely use against thousands of working people who they assume must be guilty of something. For instance, nine more people in Philadelphia just had criminal convictions overturned after six cops confessed that they lied on reports and planted drugs in people's homes in order to ensure convictions. Thousands of other arrests there are now under review. These abuses, which are not at all unique to Philadelphia, occurred largely in the city's Black and Puerto Rican neighborhoods.

The cops routinely victimize and frame up working people of all nationalities. But workers who are Black receive especially harsh, racist treatment, which leads many more of them to draw the conclusion that a cop's word can't be trusted.

Many workers who are white distrust the cops too, as they learn from experience how common police frame-ups and beatings are against working people — white and Black. A poll by *Newsweek* right after the Simpson verdict found that one-third of whites agreed with the jury's decision and half thought the jury was fair and impartial — hardly a solid "racial divide."

It's important to remember that workers don't get the same kind of "day in court" O.J. Simpson got. The jury made the right decision, but that doesn't mean the justice system is any fairer to working people today.

In regard to the other letters, reader Robbie Scherr is correct in noting that the *Militant's* previous article on the Simpson verdict was not simply a news item. It was a news analysis, which should have been indicated.

Fred Feldman points out that the *Militant* should have been more accurate in attributing statements by a juror and her daughter. All of the quotations cited were indeed from the daughter. Ascherback herself has made similar statements since, however. And while jurors pointed to a range of problems with the cops' evidence and behavior, Fuhrman's record did play a key, if not decisive, role in the verdict.

— NAOMI CRAINE

Recordings for the Blind

The last issue of the *Militant* included an article by Toba Singer on Recordings for the Blind, a service that records books, including some 48 Pathfinder titles. The information printed below was inadvertently left out of the article.

• To become a member of RFB send a Certified Print Disability Form from a doctor, teacher, or psychologist, and a check for \$37.50 made out to "RFB," 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540. After January 1, 1996, the membership fee will increase to \$50. There is no fee for tapes. Orders can be placed by calling 1-800-221-4792.

To volunteer as a reader or a monitor (someone who reads silently as the reader reads aloud to note errors), call 1-800-803-7201.

Twin Cities bus drivers say 'no' to part-time

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or

insurance. The company is offering a 4 percent raise over two years. "The new medical costs alone will eat that up," said a driver at the Snelling Ave. barn. Workers are upset that managers gave themselves raises of up to 11 percent.

Ogilvie workers win contract, end walkout

Following a difficult 16-month

cause it eliminates a salary guarantee for those with more than 15 years' seniority.

In addition, only 62 of the 116 unionists have been called back to work. Those not recalled have 90 days to decide between a severance package of 90 hours' pay for each year of service or being placed on a two-year right-of-recall list.

ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Some 2,100 bus drivers, members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005, went on strike in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, October 9. It is the first bus strike in the region since 1969.

Both sides agree the key issue is part-time workers. These drivers are paid less and have almost no benefits. They can be scheduled for either morning or afternoon rush hours.

The union says 23 percent of the drivers are already part-time, and that management wants to increase this to 52 percent. The Metropolitan Council Transit Operations (MCTO) claims 15 percent are now part-time, and they want to double this figure.

A full-time job as a bus driver is a rough schedule. Currently, about 70 percent of the drivers work a split shift. "It takes us about 12 hours to make our 8 hours' pay," said a driver on the Lake St. bus barn picket line. "It takes almost 30 years' seniority now to get a non-split schedule."

In addition, the MCTO wants to introduce copayments for medical

strike, workers at the ADM-Ogilvie flour mill in Montreal returned to work September 25 with a three-year collective agreement.

The new agreement maintains two rights that workers said were essential when they walked out on June 6, 1994 — respect of seniority rights in the case of layoffs or job promotion, and no contracting-out of maintenance work while members who are trades workers are laid off. The company had said it would never bow on those issues.

"The goal of ADM from the beginning was to have total control over our rights and work conditions," explained striker Serge Bérubé. "They have failed to achieve that. Our union is stronger than they thought."

Workers will receive a \$1500 payment in each of the first two years, and a 2.7 percent wage increase in the third. None of the scabs who ran the mill during the strike will have a job.

"We're going back with our heads high," said Bérubé. "But they have weakened us."

There is now a two-tier wage in the mill, with new hires earning \$4 per hour less. Some workers voted against the agreement be-

Liverpool dockers locked out

Five hundred Liverpool dockers have been fired and locked out by their employer, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Co., for taking action in defense of some workers wrongfully dismissed. At the heart of the conflict is the employer's long-term offensive against the dockers' rights on the job, and resistance to attempts to use more "casual" workers.

Management dismissed a handful of young workers who refused to unload a ship under conditions outside a standing agreement on overtime. Eighty recently hired dockers immediately stopped working in support of their fellow workers and picketed the port. After a mass meeting, all the 500 refused to cross the picket lines.

Management responded by locking them out, charging that the dispute was in breach of contract, and followed up with dismissal notices. Mike Camden, a member of the Port Shop Stewards Committee, said at a mass meeting, "We fully understood what we were doing when we responded to the attacks on these young workers. We knew that

they would threaten us with loss of jobs, pension rights, everything. But we were not going to cross those picket lines."

Into the third week of the dispute, the dock bosses are meeting a growing resistance they probably never anticipated. Some 2,000 people marched in Liverpool city center in support of the dockers and local firefighters who are also involved in a labor dispute.

Detroit newspapers reject union offer

Six newspaper unions offered October 5 to suspend their walk-out, return to work under expired contracts, negotiate for 30 days, and submit unresolved issues to binding arbitration.

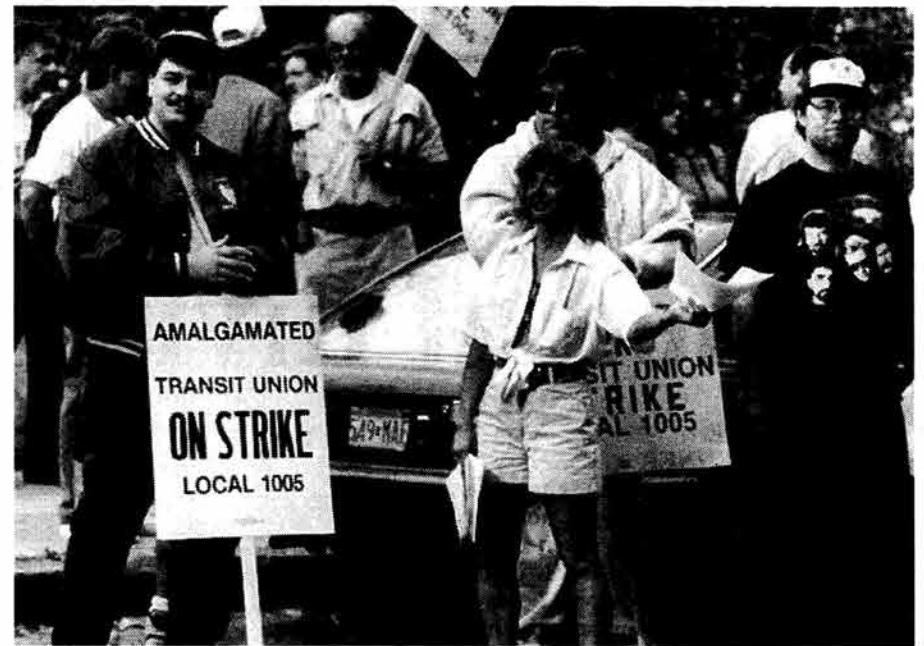
Officials of the Detroit News Agency (DNA), which prints and distributes the Detroit News and Free Press, called the unions' proposal "unrealistic." News editor and publisher Robert Giles

said the papers intend to retain the scabs hired during the strike, claiming, "Our commitment to them is a very high priority."

The strike began July 13, when 2,500 workers walked off the job over management's refusal to engage in serious bargaining toward new contracts. The unions have won wide support among working people in Detroit and elsewhere.

Five hundred strikers and supporters picketed two distribution centers in Detroit and Oak Park the night of October 7, delaying delivery of 85,000 papers. Oak Park cops attacked, bloodying one woman and arresting five pickets.

Michael Pennock in Minneapolis; Roger Annis, member of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 841 in Montreal; Pete Kennedy in Manchester, England; and Steve Marshall, a member of the United Transportation Union in Detroit, contributed to this column.



Some 2,100 bus drivers went on strike in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, Oct. 9.

Militant/Jon Hillson

LETTERS

O. J. Simpson verdict I

I am herewith canceling my subscription to the *Militant* and do not wish any of the 36 copies left.

This is my reason: I am outraged at your support of the jury verdict in the O. J. Simpson case. That Fuhrman was and is a racist has nothing to do with the fact of Simpson's guilt as wife-beater and ultimately wife-murderer, and how you can glibly conclude there was a reasonable doubt as to his guilt is beyond me.

And what about Johnny Cochran's playing the race card to the exclusion of all the evidence? And what about Cochran's racism in accepting the support of the Fruit of Islam bodyguards who are known anti-Semites and anti-whites?

I am sickened both by the verdict and by your response to it.

Evelyn Spencer
Jackson Heights, New York

O. J. Simpson verdict II

I really agreed with the article beginning on page one about the O. J. Simpson verdict. I believe it was an error, however, for this to be run as a news article. Clearly this was an opinion piece that should have been identified as such. Was this an error?

Robbie Scherr
Houston, Texas

O. J. Simpson verdict III

I thought a very good article on Simpson was marred by an editorial misjudgment which touches on striving to make the *Militant* a consistently reliable source of information for workers.

The third paragraph [of the arti-

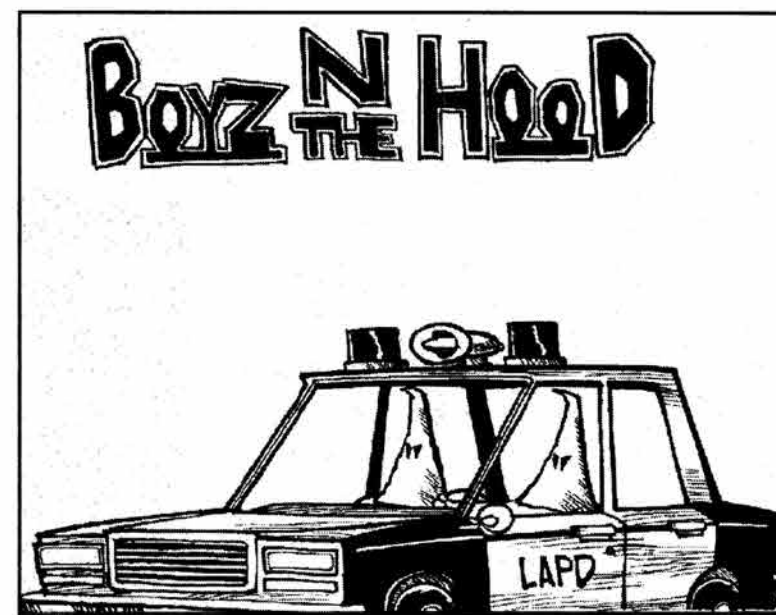
cle "Simpson jury rejects word of racist, lying cop" in Oct. 16 *Militant*] reads, "I think [Simpson] probably did do it," the daughter of juror Anise Ascherback quoted her mother as saying. But "there wasn't enough evidence." The jury voted for acquittal, Ascherback said, "because of Mark Fuhrman."

The quotes, despite the "Ascherback said," are from the daughter, not from the juror. According to news reports I began hearing shortly after the Tuesday afternoon verdict, the daughter said her mother had made these statements in a phone call immediately after the jury was released. Reporters had spoken to the daughter, not to Ascherback, and I have seen no indication that any tried to confirm the wording of the attributed quotes with Ascherback.

We don't know whether any element of paraphrase, summary or misunderstanding affected the quotes. Had Ascherback authorized her daughter to speak to the media in her name? Did the daughter record the statements, hand-copy them, or simply repeat them from memory? Did we attempt to check the accuracy of the attributions with the former juror?

This is third-hand quotation — hearsay — which we should use only when there is no alternative. And when we use such quotes, we should describe them accurately: "Ascherback reportedly said," not "Ascherback said."

There were alternatives, in addition to simply not using the quote, although these would have been very difficult for the *Militant* schedule. By the time her daughter's statement appeared in the



N.Y. papers, Ascherback was speaking for herself. For example, she appeared Wednesday night on the ABC interview program 20/20. Barbara Walters asked whether Ascherback had worried that Simpson "might be guilty." Ascherback said that she had and that several other jurors had been concerned also. Of course "might be guilty" is not the same as "probably did it."

Ascherback stressed that it was her duty as a juror to avoid convicting an innocent man even at the risk of freeing someone who "might be guilty." She clearly understood that Simpson might be guilty but she also understood that, based on the same evidence, he might be innocent. Ascherback explained that her concerns about evidence were broader than the Fuhrman tapes, although his racist statements and lies had convinced her it was "very possible" that he

planted the glove.

Ascherback said she was one of two jurors (and apparently the only white) who voted guilty on the first ballot. She said she did so to stimulate discussion and that she was completely convinced by the end of the trial that Simpson had to be acquitted.

Ascherback has neither confirmed or denied the wording attributed to her by her daughter, but she has not repeated it since she began speaking for herself publicly.

The statement attributed to her seems to present the jury's reasons for acquitting. But so far no juror, speaking for themselves, has said that Simpson "probably did it" or that the acquittal was solely "because of Mark Fuhrman."

Quoting jurors precisely is also important because they are under fire from the prosecution, parts of

the media and rightists who portray the jury as willfully allowing an "obvious" double murderer to go free because of outrage at racist remarks by a cop. The comments that Ascherback has made when speaking for herself leave no room for misinterpretation along these lines.

Fred Feldman
Brooklyn, New York

Irish rally

One hundred people participated in a rally at the Federal Building in New York on September 30, called by the Irish Political Prisoners Amnesty Coalition.

The rally called for freeing Irish political prisoners in U.S. jails, and an end to the politically motivated deportations of Irish activists. Despite President Clinton's high profile support to the peace talks, there are now more Irish Republicans in U.S. jails or facing deportation than there were before the Irish Republican Army cease-fire started a year ago.

Three activists — Gabriel Magahey, Gerry McGeogh, and Jimmy Smith — could face deportation very soon.

Speakers at the rally included former New York City mayor David Dinkins and Paul Hill, who was framed up and jailed for years in the United Kingdom as one of the Guildford Four.

Marc Lichtman
New York, New York

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.

Ottawa's anti-Quebec campaign aimed at dividing working people

BY HEIDI ROSE
AND STEVE PENNER

TORONTO — "Ottawa's chauvinist offensive against Quebec is not only directed against the right of Quebecois to freely decide their own future. It is also aimed at deepening divisions between working people in predominantly French-speaking Quebec and those in the rest of Canada. This would strengthen the capitalist rulers' offensive against the wages, social programs, and democratic rights of working people," explained Michel Dugré, a Montreal garment worker and member of the Central Committee of the Communist League. He was addressing the Militant Labor Forum here October 13, where he was the featured speaker.

Dugré pointed to the massive propaganda campaign unleashed by the federalist forces in Canada. In Quebec the campaign aims to make working people fear the consequences of voting yes in the October 30 referendum, which calls for giving Quebec "exclusive powers to pass its laws, levy all its taxes, and conclude all its treaties" in the framework of a "new economic and political partnership" with the rest of Canada.

Full-page ads warn workers that a "yes" vote would mean 90,000 workers losing their jobs.

In the rest of Canada, workers are incited against Quebec as the big-business press hammers away at the theme that a yes vote will lead to the breakup of the country and a severe economic crisis. Dugré pointed to articles blaming Quebec for everything from the falling Canadian dollar to stock market instability.

He explained that Quebecois were being scapegoated for an economic crisis which, far from being a consequence of the referendum, is a result of the deepening worldwide depression of the capitalist system. Workers in Quebec are



Some of biggest protests against hospital closings, tuition fee increases, and attacks on rights have been in Quebec. Above, Montreal youth protest education cuts.

facing the same assault on their living conditions as other working people across the country, he pointed out. Moreover, some of the biggest protests against hospital closings, tuition fee increases, and attacks on democratic rights have taken place in Quebec.

"That's because the fight in defense of workers' rights in Quebec is completely intertwined with the fight against the national oppression of Quebecois. It's a fight for dignity, justice, and equality. The referendum reflects the continuing desire

of working people and youth across Quebec to end the discrimination and injustice they face as a nationality," Dugré stated.

This systematic discrimination is completely hidden in the debate on the referendum among capitalist politicians. French-speaking Quebecois have been oppressed for more than 150 years on the basis of language, and continue to face discrimination in jobs, education, and health care.

"For example," Dugré said, "despite

major gains by Quebecois over the past half century in closing the wage gap with workers whose first language is English, they still earn 16 percent less. Quebec has the greatest numbers living below the poverty line of any province, and the highest level of illiteracy. The infant mortality rate is higher among those whose mother tongue is French.

"The Canadian constitution imposes a school system in Quebec that is divided along religious lines and is profoundly undemocratic" he noted.

One participant asked whether the Quebec government gaining greater powers "would be a blow against national oppression, given that the Quebec government is capitalist and has no perspective for fighting against national oppression."

Dugré argued that working people should support a yes vote, regardless of the character of Quebec's current government. "Firstly, it's a question of the right of Quebecois, an oppressed nation, to have the powers needed to combat national oppression, regardless of the character or intentions of the current government. Moreover, the decades-long fight by Quebecois to win these powers is at the center of the fight against national oppression, and is the concrete expression today of the fight for national self-determination. Winning these demands won't bring national oppression to an end. But it will unquestionably strengthen the fight to do so."

Dugré urged participants at the meeting to campaign to get out the truth about the Quebec referendum, and win support for the "yes" vote in workplaces, neighborhoods, and political meetings.

Heidi Rose is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1295. Steve Penner is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338.

Exposures shake 'kind' image of Canada military

BY GEORGE ROSE

TORONTO — The image of the Canadian military as "humanitarian peacekeepers" is fraying as new evidence comes to light that racist abuse of Somali civilians was directed and approved by the top command of Canadian troops, who were in Somalia from 1992-93. The main concern of the army brass and Defense Department officials was to cover up — or failing that, to downplay and justify — the beatings and shootings of unarmed Somalis by the Canadian military.

It proved impossible, however, to suppress the fact that Shidane Arone, a Somali teenager, was tortured and beaten to death by soldiers of the Canadian Airborne Regiment in Belet Huen on March 16, 1993. Arone's killers took "trophy" pictures of themselves shoving a club into the mouth of the bound Somali youth and holding guns to his head, as blood dripped from his face. These photos were later printed on the front pages of Canadian newspapers, sparking widespread outrage.

Several soldiers were court-martialed, but only enlisted men were held responsible for Arone's murder. Officers of the Airborne were exonerated or given slaps on the wrist. The Defense Department later decided to disband the regiment after homemade videos were shown on television of brutal and racist "hazing" rituals at its home base in Ontario.

Now some 1,200 pages of internal military documents have been released as a public inquiry gets under way into the Airborne's actions in Somalia.

The documents reveal that the initial military police investigation into Arone's torture and murder reported evidence of "a deliberate cover-up" by top officers of the Airborne's 2 Commando unit. But the final military police report merely said that the officers denied any conspiracy and that the investigation was closed.

Racist abuse of Somali citizens

As summarized by the October 6 *Toronto Star*, the new documents show "soldiers beat, abused, humiliated and took trophy photographs of numerous Somali civilian captives." Their commander, Col. Serge Labbé, is reported to have told soldiers, "I'm looking forward to my first dead Somali," and "A case of champagne to the first person ... who gets or kills a Somali."

Censored files from an earlier military inquiry in 1993 reported that a Canadian soldier, possibly an officer, bragged that he went to Somalia "to shoot me a nigger," and that troops talked about "beating up niggers" and sported white supremacist tattoos. The 1993 report asserted that racists were a "tiny minority" in the regiment. But the latest revelations make that claim hard to swallow.

The *Toronto Star* listed several other incidents that were internally investigated but kept secret until now:

- Throughout their six-month deployment, soldiers put urine and Tabasco sauce in water bottles that were then given to Somalis.
- On Jan. 27, 1993, five Somalis were

tied up, photographed, and put on public display with signs saying "thieves" around their necks. Another Somali was captured and photographed with a knife and a gun to his head. The next day a senior officer ordered the destruction of photos of the abuse.

- On an unknown date in 1993, other Somalis were captured and beaten. One corporal told investigators he heard a soldier kicking a detainee and telling him, "Shut up, you f--- n---, go ahead, pray to Allah."

The internal reports show that some photos of Somalis being abused were viewed at defense headquarters in Ottawa as early as February 1993, a month before Arone was murdered. Brig.-Gen. Ernie Beno merely warned Labbé that "if such photographs were shown to the press, it could disturb the Canadian population."

No charges ever laid

No charges were ever laid for these incidents.

On March 4, 1993, two unarmed Somalis were shot in the back, one fatally, as they fled from the perimeter of the Canadian forces compound. Major Barry Armstrong, a doctor in the Canadian regiment who has played a big role in exposing Arone's murder and other killings in Somalia, told his superiors that "it was a criminal shooting in the back of two unarmed Somalis by our soldiers." But on March 5, the Airborne commander wired Ottawa that the shootings were justified to stop possible looters.

In a recent television interview, Matt McKay, a former corporal in the Airborne, stated that Canadian soldiers actually set out to entrap Somalis by leaving the outside gates of their compound open. McKay said soldiers were hiding in the sand when Shidane Arone entered the area. They jumped him, then threw him across some razor wire and into the camp, where he was tortured and murdered.

Meanwhile top Canadian politicians are scrambling to avoid responsibility for the multiple cover-ups. Former Conservative prime minister Kim Campbell, who was defense minister at the time of the killings in Somalia, insists that "I was not being properly briefed," and that her deputy minister, Robert Fowler, "tended to downplay" the seriousness of events. Fowler, who is now Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, refuses to comment. And top military staff directly contradict Campbell, saying that she was kept fully informed.

The newly released documents also show that Col. Peter Kenward, the last commander of the Airborne, ordered the destruction of two videotapes showing a brutal Airborne "initiation ceremony" in 1994, hoping to keep them out of the news media. (He was unsuccessful — there was a third copy.) His order came in the midst of an investigation into a 1992 hazing video. Nevertheless, Kenward was later promoted by Chief of Defense Staff Gen. John de Chastelain, with the agreement of David Collenette, defense minister in the current Liberal Party government.