

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Militant Fund over the top!
\$138,000 collected**

— PAGE 2

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 59 NO. 47 DECEMBER 18, 1995

UAW officials end strike at Caterpillar

BY ANGEL LARISCY
AND STEPHEN BLOODWORTH

PEORIA, Illinois — Top officials of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union called off the 17-month strike against Caterpillar, Inc., the world's largest producer of earth-moving equipment, December 2. Union officials made the announcement to striking workers as they assembled to vote on a company contract offer that day. The

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Special feature on Cuban revolution

- Interview with Cuban brigadier general on Che Guevara and internationalism
- A reply to lies in *N.Y. Times*
- New edition announced of Guevara's *Episodes of Cuban Revolutionary War*

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U.S. troops begin Bosnia intervention

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. president Bill Clinton is moving at full steam to implement Washington's decision to send 20,000 troops to Bosnia as part of a 60,000-strong NATO occupation force. "This task force is ready to roll," he told U.S. soldiers in Germany December 2. They will be among the first of the NATO units in Bosnia.

Gearing up for war, Clinton told the GIs they would be heavily armed and could respond "immediately and with decisive force" to hostilities.

The White House is deploying such a

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France: 700,000 rally against gov't austerity

Students join striking workers in mass actions

BY DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS — "We have to see this through to the end. It's either them or us," said a striking worker from an airplane engine plant at a 70,000-strong demonstration in Paris protesting the government's plans to cut social welfare benefits.

The December 5 protest was part of a strike movement begun 12 days earlier against the government's planned "reform" of the social security system. An estimated 700,000 demonstrated across the country that day.

Like capitalist governments everywhere, Paris is attempting to cut deeply into the social wage. Under the banner of reducing the deficit and maintaining a strong currency, the rulers in France are moving to slash social benefits, lengthen the number of years before workers can retire, and cut jobs. And they are attempting to accomplish this rapidly, as they seek to catch up to their capitalist rivals abroad.

The rally in Paris took place despite the total absence of public transportation due to strikes. In freezing weather the demonstrators danced, chanted, sang, and shouted their demands. Wave after wave of striking rail, Metro, and postal workers and thousands of students poured into the demonstration. "We are more important



Rail workers with fireworks join student protest against government austerity in Paris November 30

than armaments," Arnaud, a 22-year-old student demanding more funding for the universities, told reporters.

Teachers and metal workers who were on strike for the day also joined the protest. Outside Paris 40,000 demonstrated in Bordeaux, and 30,000 rallied in Rouen, one-tenth of that city's population.

As of December 5, almost half of all telecommunications workers had joined the strike, along with workers in some 60 French hospitals, and increasing numbers of teachers.

In response to the workers' protests, Prime Minister Alain Juppé gave a major speech to the National Assembly reaffirming his reform plan. "France is at a crossroads between the road of reform and that of decline," he said. "That is why I will maintain my reform projects." The parliamentary majority gave a standing ovation.

At the same time Juppé offered to negotiate with the unions organizing the protest actions.

The General Confederation of Labor

Continued on Page 4

Supporters press for Mark Curtis's release

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — On December 7 Iowa parole officials will initiate the process of an interstate parole to Illinois for

imprisoned union and political activist Mark Curtis. At his November 21 parole hearing, Curtis was told the process could take a couple months.

Since the hearing, Curtis supporters have begun to follow through on the parole board's decision by organizing to continue to campaign until he walks out the door of the Iowa State Penitentiary and beyond. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has urged supporters around the world to focus their activities on four central tasks — informing all those who helped make the victory possible, continuing to reach out to win broader support by circulating the Pathfinder pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still In Prison?*, organizing meetings to spread the word about the parole decision, and contributing to a special \$25,000 fund to be raised by the end of the year.

In a December 5 mailing sent out to more than 400 key supporters on the need for vigilance and organizing to guarantee that Mark actually wins his freedom, the committee explained, "Our goal is to minimize the time this takes, maximize the likelihood that he will be accepted and paroled to Illinois, and minimize the conditions authorities there can impose on Mark."

In the last 10 days, the defense commit-

tee has received \$4,970 in contributions and an additional \$1,200 in pledges.

In addition, meetings have been held or are planned in a number of cities around the world.

Fifty-six people gathered December 3 at an event sponsored by local supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Newark, New Jersey, for a celebration.

Gerry Coleman, a leader of Irish Northern Aid, spoke at the meeting, along with three fighters against police brutality: Wilma Hernández, who was beaten by the cops in Elizabeth, New Jersey, on September 3; Margarita Rosario of Parents Against Police Brutality in the Bronx, New York, whose son and nephew were shot in the back by police; and Venus Hannah, a longtime Curtis supporter whose son was hanged while in police custody.

Shepard McDaniel, a leader of the Mumia Abu-Jamal coalition in New York and New Jersey, and Naomi Craine, a reporter for the *Militant* who attended Curtis's parole hearing, also spoke. Over \$1,000 was raised for the ongoing defense effort.

Over the next two weeks, meetings are scheduled in Houston, San Francisco, Chicago, and Des Moines. Curtis supporters in San Francisco sent out a 425-piece

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You are invited to ...

New Year's Weekend Regional Socialist Educational Conferences

December 30-January 1

Atlanta ♦ Boston
Detroit ♦ Seattle

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the Young Socialists
and Socialist Workers Party

For more information on classes,
presentations, and travel to events, see
listing on page 12.



Summit shows discontent in Black communities — page 13

UAW officials end strike at Caterpillar

Continued from front page
contract itself was voted down by 81 percent of union members.

Caterpillar has said it will call back strikers in small groups over the coming weeks, excluding 150 workers fired or indefinitely suspended for union activities during the strike and the in-plant skirmishes leading up to it.

The big-business press has been quick to gloat over the strike outcome. "Union on the Run," read a December 4 article in *Business Week*. "Union capitulation shows strike is now dull sword," was the headline the next day in the *New York Times*.

"The company said it would take the workers back in its own good time," the *Times* stated. This will not include all strikers, the article said, "in view of changes in operations during the strike." It quoted Caterpillar vice president Wayne Zimmerman as saying, "An immediate return to prestrike staffing of nearly a year and a half ago is simply not practical."

At the contract meetings UAW officials told strikers that if they voted down the contract union members would return to work under the less onerous conditions in existence in 1994, before the strike began. They explained that under National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rules, the company will not be able to impose provisions of their new contract until issues brought before the NLRB by the union are resolved. Many strikers, however, doubt the company will abide by this.

At UAW locals in Pontiac and Aurora, Illinois, strikers reported that local union officials argued that the company's offer was the best that could be gotten under the circumstances. Local 2096 in Pontiac was split down the middle with 52 percent voting against the offer. In Aurora and Denver, Colorado, workers voted to approve

it. The contract Caterpillar proposed to UAW members included a two-tier wage scale, no pay increase aside from cost-of-living raises for the life of the six-year agreement, and concessions in health care.

The day after the vote, Tom, a striker on the picket line in Pontiac, said the contract represented a "defeat for the whole labor movement. We had Firestone, Staley, and now this."

"It leaves us with no rights. There is nothing good about it," said striker Perry Brabham of UAW Local 786 in York, Pennsylvania. "It's the worst contract I've ever seen."

The company plans to implement schedules forcing union members to work more than eight hours a day and on weekends without overtime pay, until they have completed 40 hours in a pay period. The contract also allows the company to hire up to 15 percent of the workforce as part-time and temporary workers.

The contract Caterpillar plans to implement also establishes a strict "code of conduct." During the first eight weeks after strikers return to work, UAW members can be fired without recourse if they do, say, or display anything related to their strike unless it is "non-controversial and inoffensive." This includes a ban on the use of the word "scab."

History of fight

The more than four-year-old labor battle between Caterpillar and the UAW began in November 1991 when the company attempted to impose its "final offer," a concessionary contract.

Union members went on strike for five and a half months. UAW officials ended the walkout after Caterpillar announced it would hire permanent replacement workers.

Although UAW members returned to work under the company's terms from April 1992 until the current strike began in June 1994, the fight continued within the company's facilities. Workers campaigned for a decent contract by wearing pronoun T-shirts and buttons, and carrying out coordinated rallies in the plants and parking lots to make their cause known.

Caterpillar management retaliated by suspending and firing workers. These events sparked 10 walkouts beginning in the fall of 1993.

On June 21, 1994, more than 13,000 workers at eight plants in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Colorado began a system-wide strike demanding reinstatement of 14 fired workers and the resolution of almost 100 outstanding unfair-labor-practice complaints filed against the company by the NLRB.

Caterpillar has been running its factories with some 25 percent of union members who have crossed the picket lines, management and office personnel, as well as temporary workers and permanent new hires.

Discussion at contract meetings

More than 8,000 strikers, spouses, and retirees from Peoria-area Local 974 met on December 3. On his way into the meeting, Paul Miller, a union steward at the Mossville engine plant, said he thought the contract was a "setback for us entirely." At the same time, "I don't think it was worthless to strike," he remarked. "I think we should stay out."

According to a Peoria *Journal Star* reporter who attended the meeting, UAW international administrative assistant Richard Atwood, who is also a member of the local union, told the crowd, "The only people being hurt by this strike are our

good members. We can't keep them on strike through another winter, through another holiday."

Local 974 president Jerry Brown said the union was "doing what we think is best. We're recessing the strike."

For over two hours union members reviewed the proposals and asked pointed questions.

Many workers were angry that the contract didn't rectify the situation of workers fired by Caterpillar for union activity. Others expressed concern about more firings when they return to work as the company attempts to curtail democratic rights and victimize people because of their union activity.

Some voiced disagreement with the decision to end the strike.

Angel Lariscy is a member of UAW Local 1494 in Peoria. John Staggs, a member of the UAW in Philadelphia, contributed to this article.

Changes in this issue

Due to our decision to run a special 8-page *International Socialist Review* supplement this week we are not running several regular columns, including "In Brief." We also did not run any of the calendar or Militant Labor Forum listings.

\$138,224 total

\$125,000 goal

Militant Fund

	Goal	Paid	Percent
CANADA			
Vancouver	\$200	\$648	324%
Montreal	\$750	\$1,090	145%
Toronto	\$1,500	\$1,505	100%
Canada Total	\$2,450	\$3,243	132%
NEW ZEALAND			
Wellington	\$80	\$98	123%
Christchurch	\$650	\$766	118%
Auckland	\$2,470	\$2,640	107%
New Zealand Total	\$3,200	\$3,504	110%
UNITED STATES			
Boston	\$5,000	\$5,827	117%
Twin Cities	\$7,000	\$7,735	111%
Miami	\$2,600	\$2,860	110%
Philadelphia	\$6,000	\$6,490	108%
Birmingham	\$3,700	\$4,000	108%
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$5,360	107%
Atlanta	\$4,500	\$4,780	106%
Washington, DC	\$3,000	\$3,146	105%
Chicago	\$7,500	\$7,860	105%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$7,301	104%
Greensboro	\$2,100	\$2,186	104%
Los Angeles	\$10,000	\$10,357	104%
Cleveland	\$2,100	\$2,173	103%
Peoria	\$2,400	\$2,470	103%
Detroit	\$6,750	\$6,925	103%
San Francisco	\$10,000	\$10,208	102%
Des Moines	\$3,200	\$3,262	102%
Houston	\$4,250	\$4,325	102%
New York	\$7,500	\$7,592	101%
Brooklyn	\$8,000	\$8,080	101%
Salt Lake City	\$3,800	\$3,830	101%
Morgantown	\$2,600	\$2,609	100%
Cincinnati	\$250	\$250	100%
Newark	\$8,000	\$8,004	100%
Denver	\$500	\$480	96%
Albuquerque	\$550	\$300	55%
Other		\$620	
U.S. Total	\$123,300	\$129,029	105%
AUSTRALIA	\$400	\$408	102%
PUERTO RICO	\$100	\$100	100%
MEXICO	\$60	\$60	100%
GREECE	\$130	\$110	85%
SWEDEN	\$700	\$592	85%
FRANCE	\$300	\$244	81%
BRITAIN			
Sheffield	\$150	\$157	105%
Manchester	\$375	\$376	100%
London	\$525	\$300	57%
Britain Total	\$1,050	\$833	79%
Int'l Other		\$101	
Goal	\$131,530	\$138,224	111%
Should Be	\$125,000	\$125,000	100%

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

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ Zip_____ Country_____

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

Militant Fund over top!

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

BROOKLYN, New York — Over the top! The Militant Fund drive ended with a smashing victory. When the final tally was completed on Tuesday, December 5, \$138,224 had been collected, surpassing the \$130,000 needed to sustain the publication of the *Militant* and its sister Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Among supporters who took on goals in 41 cities around the world, 35 areas made or surpassed their goal. *Militant* readers in Canada took the lead with a final tally of 132 percent of their target.

Contributors from Boston head the chart of areas in the United States, with 117 percent of their goal. "Outside regular contributors, donations were received from 44 *Militant* supporters in sums ranging from \$5 to \$500," said Andrea Morell, who coordinated the drive in Boston.

Outreach to a broad range of new and longtime *Militant* subscribers and others was a feature of this fund drive. More than 950 people in the United States made con-

tributions. Last-minute phone calling, including in areas where readers had surpassed their goals before the December 3 deadline, as well as several fund-raising events the last weekend of the campaign, made the success possible.

Supporters in Atlanta, for example, went over the top by organizing a successful fund-raiser on December 3. The event featured Betsy Farley, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party; Bernardo Gómez, a member of the Atlanta Network on Cuba; and Robert Shields, a member of United Auto Workers Local 882.

The *Militant* editorial staff and the team of worker and youth volunteers from Brooklyn who helped coordinate the organization of the international drive congratulate and send our deep thanks to all the readers who helped ensure that this tribune of the working class will continue to reach thousands the world over.

Nancy Rosenstock is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1445.

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

Bolivian general reveals Che Guevara's burial site

BY LAURA GARZA

Twenty-eight years after Ernesto Che Guevara was murdered on orders of the Bolivian government, a retired Bolivian general who was part of the operation has revealed what was done with the body of the guerrilla commander and communist leader. Mario Vargas Salinas, who was an officer with Bolivia's Eighth Army Division when Guevara was captured and killed, told a U.S. journalist last month that Guevara's body is buried in a mass grave in the town of Vallegrande.

Vallegrande is a provincial capital in the mountains of southern Bolivia and is 30 miles from La Higuera, where Guevara and three other members of his guerrilla column were held after they were captured on Oct. 8, 1967. The Argentine-born revolutionary was murdered the next day. His body was flown to Vallegrande and publicly displayed in a hospital through October 10. Then, in the early hours of October 11, Vargas said he was ordered to accompany a dump truck carrying the bodies of six dead guerrillas to the town's airstrip. "He is buried under the airstrip at Vallegrande," said Vargas. The retired general said he believed "enough time has passed, and it's time the world knows."

The account of the interview with Vargas by Jon Lee Anderson appeared in the November 21 *New York Times*. Vargas is also cited as saying he spoke with Guevara's executioner, who riddled his lower body with bullets so the regime could claim he had been killed in combat, not murdered in cold blood. He was told Guevara's last words were "Shoot, coward! You are going to kill a man."

This confirms an account given by Fidel Castro in a June 1968 introduction to Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*. In it Castro explained the details of Guevara's murder known at that time, including the fact that the orders to kill him were given by U.S.-trained officers. Castro stated that when the officer assigned to shoot the wounded guerrilla hesitated, Guevara said, "Shoot! Don't be afraid!"

Another officer involved in the operation to wipe out the guerrilla fighters, Gary Prado Salmón, who commanded the army patrol that captured Guevara after he had been wounded in battle, confirmed that the revolutionary's partially burned and mutilated body was dumped in the hurriedly dug grave at the end of the airstrip. Prado is also a retired general now.

The final burial site of the guerrillas was kept secret. Anderson wrote, "The Bolivian Government had decided to 'disappear' Guevara's body, apparently to deny him a burial site that could become a place of public homage." Anderson noted the steps taken to prove that Guevara was dead after his murder and before his body was finally disposed of. Vargas, Anderson said, "witnessed the grisly events that followed: the making of a wax death mask of Guevara, the amputation of his hands by Argentine agents [for fingerprint identification] and his nighttime burial."

Anderson stated that the hands and death mask eventually found their way into the hands of the Cuban government. He cited the source as Antonio Arguedas, then Bolivia's interior minister, who is known to be responsible for turning over to Havana microfilm of photocopied pages of Guevara's captured diary of the Bolivian campaign.

Cuba-Bolivia relations

"If the Israelis and Palestinians can make peace, why can't we?" said Vargas, referring to the governments of Cuba and Bolivia. The two governments re-established diplomatic relations in 1985. The Bolivian government has always claimed it did not know where Guevara's body was and thus refused to respond to Havana's requests that his remains be returned to Cuba.

The army high command tried to downplay the revelations. Reynaldo Cáceres, a general and commander in chief of Bolivia's Armed Forces, said the report had no basis, adding, "We don't know anything about the matter." But others in the government quickly moved to acknowledge the report.

On November 22, the president of the

Chamber of Deputies, Guillermo Bedregal, said that as a matter of state policy the Bolivian government would undertake "to deliver the remains of that man, who fought and died for his ideals, to the family."

Also within days of the interview the president of a legislative commission on human rights, Deputy Juan del Granado, said he would undertake legal action to exhume Guevara's remains.

Bedregal noted that once the site of the burial is found, identifying Guevara's body should be "easy" since his hands were cut off. The recovery of the body, Bedregal said, "will bring to an end a harmful military period of our country, about which, after all this time, almost 30 years, it is necessary to overcome any kind of resentment that could exist." He said returning the body would aid relations between Bolivia and Cuba.

Bolivia's president, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, quickly ordered the body exhumed and said it should be returned to Guevara's family.

A government-appointed commission was formed and, accompanied by Vargas, flew to Vallegrande and began digging at the site on December 1. Hugo San Martín, a member of the commission, said they planned to speak with other soldiers who were involved in fighting the guerrillas at the time. He also said other witnesses had confirmed the burial location.

Bolivian defense minister Jorge Ostacevic said a report on the matter was being prepared for the president.

Del Granado said the government's action in finding Guevara's body would be heading down the right road to the discovery, exhumation, and return of the remains of other guerrilla fighters who were also killed by the Bolivian regime. They include Cubans, Peruvians, and Bolivians who had participated in the campaign led by Guevara, he noted. Del Granado also mentioned those killed who had been part of another guerrilla movement that failed in 1970 and operated in a mountainous zone north of La Paz.

Anderson's article also notes the potential for the issue to turn into a bigger problem for Bolivia's current rulers. "Bolivian human rights groups estimate that as many as 150 suspected leftist activists remain classified as 'disappeared,' most of them dating from the right-wing military rule of Gen. Hugo Banzer Suárez in the 1970s,"

he writes.

The fact that the whereabouts of those who died has remained unknown is a situation "that cannot continue," said Del Granado. "They should be found, and turned over as an ethical, humanitarian, and religious question."

Officials in Vallegrande decided to designate the landing strip a "historical heritage," along with other areas where Guevara's fighters operated. A town meeting of 3,000 on November 30 agreed to ask that the remains not be removed. Mayor Hoover Cabrera said the town would ask the Guevara family for the

"honor" of keeping the remains and Cabrera has proposed establishing a museum dedicated to the revolutionary leader.

Reacting to initial reports on Vargas's revelation, Canet Sánchez Guevara, a grandson of the revolutionary hero, said he wasn't sure whether to believe the report or not, but added "what is important is not where he is buried, but where his ideas are best understood."

Guevara's daughter Aleida cited her father as saying, "Wherever a man falls, that's where he remains."

Rodolfo Saldaña, one of the Bolivian combatants who fought with Che and currently lives in Cuba, said a version of Vargas's story had been "whispered a while ago." It's important now, he said, "that it has been confirmed by the participants."

Che Guevara led an 11-month guerrilla campaign in Bolivia in 1966-67 to forge a movement of workers and peasants capable of winning the battle for land and national sovereignty and opening the socialist revolution in South America. At the time, Bolivia was ruled by a military dictatorship that came to power in 1964 and was led by Gen. René Barrientos.

Class struggle heats up in Bolivia

Currently, the government headed by President Sánchez de Lozada is facing growing resistance to the austerity policies the capitalist regime is implementing. At



Map by Eric Simpson/courtesy Pathfinder Press

the same time the revelations about Guevara's body were being publicized, a major strike called by Bolivia's main union federation shut down schools, public transportation, banks, and air and rail transport November 21. It was the third major action called since the government lifted a six-month state of siege on October 18. Two cities, Cochabamba and Sucre, are now under control of the police and military troops.

The unions are opposing plans for further privatization of state-owned companies, especially the petroleum enterprise. Up to now the government has transferred to foreign companies about 50 percent of the activities of state-run enterprises in electricity, telecommunications, and the airlines. The unions have also joined with coca growers opposed to the recently announced government plan to eradicate more than 13,000 acres of coca in an area where 250,000 people depend on income from the crop. The unions are demanding the government put in place alternative programs for the farmers in the region.

The strikers also supported demands by thousands of students who are opposing a new proposal to link educational funding to an evaluation program. Demonstrations against the measure have taken place in La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz de la Sierra and some 1,600 people have joined a hunger strike.

Celebration of Ed Shaw's life held in Miami

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—The atmosphere at the Pathfinder bookstore in the Little Haiti neighborhood here was festive as dozens of people streamed in on Sunday afternoon, December 3, past the sparkling storefront, freshly painted in flamingo pink.

Entering the building, which also houses the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party branch, you could not miss a large sign on the wall in the back of the meeting room. It read: "Celebrate the life and political contributions of Ed Shaw (1923-1995); 50 years in the fight for socialism."

The celebration of the life of this longtime leader of the SWP, who died in Hialeah, Florida, on November 9 at age 72, was sponsored by the Miami party branch.

An appetizing food spread, set on tables in the middle of the room, became a center for socializing during a reception that lasted an hour before the program began.

Among the major attractions were extensive photographic displays on the walls, each one capturing big pieces of modern revolutionary history. Laid out in chronological order, the exhibition included a photo of Shaw when he joined the merchant marine in 1943. Maps depicted some of the trips merchant sailors took during World War II. Shaw made the run to Murmansk in the arctic region of the Soviet Union in 1943, on a ship carrying arms and supplies for the Soviet armed forces.

Shaw joined the SWP in 1944 after be-

ing introduced to socialist literature by other seamen and meeting party members during a layover in New York. Shaw was particularly attracted to the campaign to defend 18 leaders of the SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters Union who were imprisoned for their communist views and opposition to Washington's entry into

World War II.

Copies of pages of the *Militant* from the mid-1940s on showed Shaw's involvement in the class struggle and in numerous campaigns the party helped organize—from efforts to combat the McCarthyite witch-hunt in the early 50s to defense of

Continued on page 4

Celebrate the life and political contributions of Ed Shaw

New York
Sun., Dec. 10, 1 p.m.
Earl Hall—Columbia University
117th and Broadway

San Francisco
Sun., Dec. 17, 2 p.m.
Bayview Opera House
4705 Third Street

Speakers:

Jack Barnes,
SWP national secretary
Tony Thomas,
member, Transportation Workers Union

Tom Leonard,
veteran SWP leader, former seaman
Mary-Alice Waters,
editor, *New International*

Also in New York:
Virginia Garza,
longtime socialist
Jack Willey,
Young Socialists

Also in San Francisco:
Tami Peterson,
Young Socialists
Harry Ring,
former *Militant* editor

For more information call the SWP in New York at (212) 388-9475
in San Francisco at (415) 282-6255.

Protests shake up France

Continued from front page

(CGT) and the Workers Force (FO) labor unions are backing the strike action. The French Confederation of Democratic Labor (CFDT) leadership has taken Juppé's proposal for talks as an opening to end the strikes and is urging workers to return to work.

Rail workers spearhead strike action

Rail workers have completely shut down rail transportation since November 24. Their special retirement system, which enables train crew workers to retire at age 50 after 25 years of service, is to be gutted under the "Juppé plan." Over decades of struggle, workers whose jobs carry a "particular risk or exceptional fatigue" have won special entitlements to retire earlier than age 60, which is the normal age when workers in France receive their pensions.

A rail engineer at the deserted Saint Lazare train station in Paris explained to *Militant* reporters, "For those of us in our 30s, the only thing that keeps us going is retirement at age 50. And how are they going to hire any of the 3 million unemployed if we work until age 60?"

Currently, the entire French rail system is run by one state-owned company, the SNCF, employing 180,000 workers. The government plans to turn big hunks of it over to regional and local public authorities, who would likely privatize the system. Estimates are that 30,000 jobs will be cut.

Striking telecommunications workers are fighting against the government plan to put between 20 and 60 percent of France Télécom up for sale. Workers at the state-owned electric power company, EDF, are also fighting against privatization. Union officials report that over half of EDF workers were striking.

Workers in the Paris Metro system, who have shut down all subway and regional trains as well as most bus service, are also fighting to defend their pension system, as are postal workers in the mail sorting centers, who massively joined the strike wave November 30 and December 1.

Although the strike movement is centered among public workers, those in the private sector have also participated in demonstrations and protest strikes against Juppé's proposals to gut major features of the social security system. Truck drivers began to block highways December 4. Truckers are demanding not only the withdrawal of Juppé's plan, but the lowering of the retirement age for truck drivers from 60 to 55.

Students join action

Students are demanding 6,000 more teachers, 2,000 more university personnel and 4 billion francs (US\$1=5francs) for students' educational needs. After meeting with representatives of the national student mobilizations December 3, Education Minister François Bayrou announced substantial concessions in an attempt to divide the students from striking workers.

He promised 569 million francs in increased credits for the universities, 2 billion francs for building repairs and improved safety, and the hiring of 4,000 additional teachers and university personnel. During general assemblies at one campus after another, students voted to reject Bayrou's proposals and continue organizing the December 5 demonstrations with striking workers.

The massive strikes are seriously disrupting economic activity, particularly in the Paris region, which contains one-fifth of France's 58 million people and is heavily dependent on mass transportation. Many workers are simply unable to get to their jobs. Traffic jams have broken all records. Three to four hours commuting to and from work is not uncommon. Bicycle sales have skyrocketed.

The widening strikes here enjoy broad public support. An opinion poll published December 1 showed that, despite the enormous practical difficulties many workers and others face, 62 percent of people in France support the strikes. "The government hasn't explained anything," Frédéric Vivier, an accountant, told reporters. "I understand the strikers completely."

In an attempt to regain the initiative and

win public support, the government announced December 3 that it was arranging for 1,700 private buses to begin transporting workers to and from the capital. The buses are free, but thus far have done very little to alleviate traffic jams.

The national leadership of striking students organized demonstrations throughout France November 30 in support of their demands, mobilizing 160,000 high school and college students, according to the Agence France-Presse. In many cities rail workers joined the demonstrations, along with EDF strikers. Unemployed workers also figured prominently in many of the protests. While participation in the Paris action was limited to some 15,000 by transportation difficulties, many actions in the rest of the country were large — 30,000 marched in the southern city of Toulouse, for example.

Signs and slogans expressing, "Students, workers — solidarity!" dominated these actions. Other prominent slogans included, "French, Immigrants — Equal Rights!" and "Money for the campuses, not for Vigipirate!"

The Vigipirate plan, in effect since September 7, has mobilized 32,000 soldiers, riot police, regular cops, and customs officers to control and survey the population, particularly Arab immigrants. It has been an important factor in limiting immigrant participation in the demonstrations against the Juppé plan. The government maintains this is a necessity because of terrorist bombings that took place in France between July and November.

Unionists in France receive no strike pay. When workers strike, they quickly



Militant/Derek Jeffers

Nov. 24 march in Paris against cuts in social welfare. Sign says, "Funds for public service, not atomic bombs."

face difficulties paying off their mortgages and car loans. This gives a sense of urgency to the movement as workers quickly seek means to reinforce their struggle. In the current strikes, rail workers were instrumental in encouraging postal workers to take strike action by organizing delegations to fan out to different mail sorting centers.

All workers inspired

Rail workers are also organizing regular pickets to ensure that no trains move. *Militant* reporters witnessed one such action at the Saint Lazare train station as management tried to get a train moving. In the empty station, nine striking rail engineers stood on the track in front of the train, arguing with various supervisors who came to persuade them that they were merely "getting rust off the rails."

After an hour-long confrontation, management backed off and shut the train down. Rail workers told *Militant* reporters that this was the fifth time that day they had to prevent a train from running. The workers hold general assemblies daily to vote on the continuation of the strike and organize actions.

In another blow to Prime Minister Juppé, Bordeaux, the city of which he is also mayor, was completely paralyzed December 4 by a strike of bus drivers, garbage collectors, and actions by truck drivers blocking the highways leading to the city.

Derek Jeffers is a member of the CGT at the GEC-Alsthom transformer plant in Saint Ouen.

Celebration of Ed Shaw's life held in Miami

Continued from Page 3

Robert F. Williams, a militant from North Carolina who was framed-up for organizing armed self-defense of the Black community in Monroe, North Carolina, against the Klan. Many participants took particular interest in the *Militant* coverage and brochures displayed from 1964, when Shaw campaigned for vice-president of the United States on the SWP ticket with Clifton DeBerry.

The most popular display, however, was the one titled "Ed Shaw: partisan of the Cuban revolution." A number of people, especially youth, gathered around it before and after the program to look at rare photos of the Cuban revolutionary movement from 1950 to the early 1960s. The photos were reproduced courtesy of Pathfinder Press, which gathered them for publication in a new English-language edition of the book *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58* by Ernesto

Che Guevara (see ad on page 9).

Shaw traveled to Cuba in the fall of 1960, as the Cuban workers and peasants were deepening their anticapitalist revolution and nationalizing major foreign- and Cuban-owned factories, mines, and utilities. He then did a speaking tour for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the United States with Robert Williams, using slides from his trip. Color reproductions of several of Shaw's slides were on display, along with materials produced by Fair Play. In the early 1960s, Shaw was a leader and Midwest director of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which organized activities to oppose Washington's attempts to crush the Cuban revolution.

By the time the program started, some 70 people had filled the meeting hall coming from Atlanta, Tampa, and Dade and Broward counties.

Ernie Mailhot, a member of the SWP National Committee from Miami, welcomed participants. He introduced Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and longtime SWP leader, who chaired the program.

"The fact that so many people came to the celebration is the best tribute to Ed Shaw who devoted the bulk of his adult life to building a communist party capable of leading workers and farmers to power," said Waters.

The audience included friends and coworkers of Shaw; Andrés Gómez and other members of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Miami-based organization of Cubans who support the Cuban revolution; Orlando Collado and other activists in the Miami Coalition to End the Economic Embargo of Cuba; a number of activists in the West Palm Beach Cuba coalition; Haitian rights activists; a Dominican worker who found out about the event at a Pathfinder booth at the recent Miami book fair; and many of Shaw's comrades.

Six members of the local Young Socialists chapter were also present, as well as several other youth, including a college student from Swaziland and two students

from Uruguay. The friends and admirers of Ed Shaw who were present came from a rainbow of Latin American countries.

In addition to introducing the four speakers, Waters read excerpts from some of the more than a dozen messages sent to the meeting. They included a message from Mirta Vidal of New York who worked with Shaw to defend political prisoners in Latin America. She traveled with him to Argentina as part of a reporting team there in the early 1970s during the prerevolutionary upsurge in that country. During much of that period Shaw shouldered many responsibilities as a leader of the SWP's international work.

Tom Leonard, a veteran party leader who was also a seaman in the 1940s, spoke of Shaw's contributions during the period he worked in the merchant marine and about his childhood in Zion, Illinois. Since 1992 Shaw had been working with Leonard to compile the party's experiences in the maritime industry and unions.

Tony Thomas, a member of Transport Workers Union Local 291 in Miami and longtime member and supporter of the SWP, and Veronica Póses, coordinator of the Miami Young Socialists, also addressed the meeting.

SWP national secretary Jack Barnes was the last speaker. He discussed how Shaw assumed responsibility as the party's organizational secretary between 1965 and 1968, making possible the transition in the party leadership to a younger generation. He explained how Shaw's work in defense of Cuba had been prepared by his previous political work and life experience.

At the conclusion of the program Mailhot made a fund appeal in honor of Shaw's life. Those present contributed \$855 to Pathfinder's English- and Spanish-language publishing program to produce the definitive record of the Cuban revolution and its leadership.

Similar meetings are scheduled to take place in New York and San Francisco on December 10 and 17 respectively.

Mark Curtis

Continued from front page

mailing to promote the meeting and seek contributions. Among those scheduled to speak in the Bay Area are Michael Parenti, author of *Against Empire* and other books; Hazel Zimmerman, secretary-treasurer of the defense committee from Des Moines; Ron Lind, organizer for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 478; political activist Mel Mason; and Patsy Behrend, Curtis's cousin.

Contributions to aid the fight to free Curtis can be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Letters to Curtis can be sent to Mark Curtis, #805338, Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 316, Fort Madison, IA 52627. Please send copies to the defense committee.

Chris Remple and Mike Galati in Newark contributed to this article.

MARCH AND RALLY IN BOSTON TO DEFEND ABORTION RIGHTS

Saturday, December 30

March on the first anniversary of the murders of clinic workers Shannon Lowney and Leann Nichols and the wounding of five others by right-wing activist John Salvi. March to demand an end to the attacks and harassment of patients at clinics across the country, and full prosecution of Salvi, whose trial is scheduled to begin February 5, 1996.

Assemble at 12:30 p.m.
Boylston and Tremont Street.
March: 1:00 p.m.
Rally: 2:00 p.m.
at Arlington Street Church,
351 Boylston Street.

Speakers: David Gunn Jr., whose father, Dr. David Gunn, was killed outside a clinic in Florida; author Marge Piercy; poet Rosario Morales and others.

Sponsored by National Organization for Women. For more information call (617) 782-9183.

'Che's example opened up for us a broader concept of internationalism'

Interview with Brigadier General Harry Villegas (Pombo)
of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS
AND LUIS MADRID

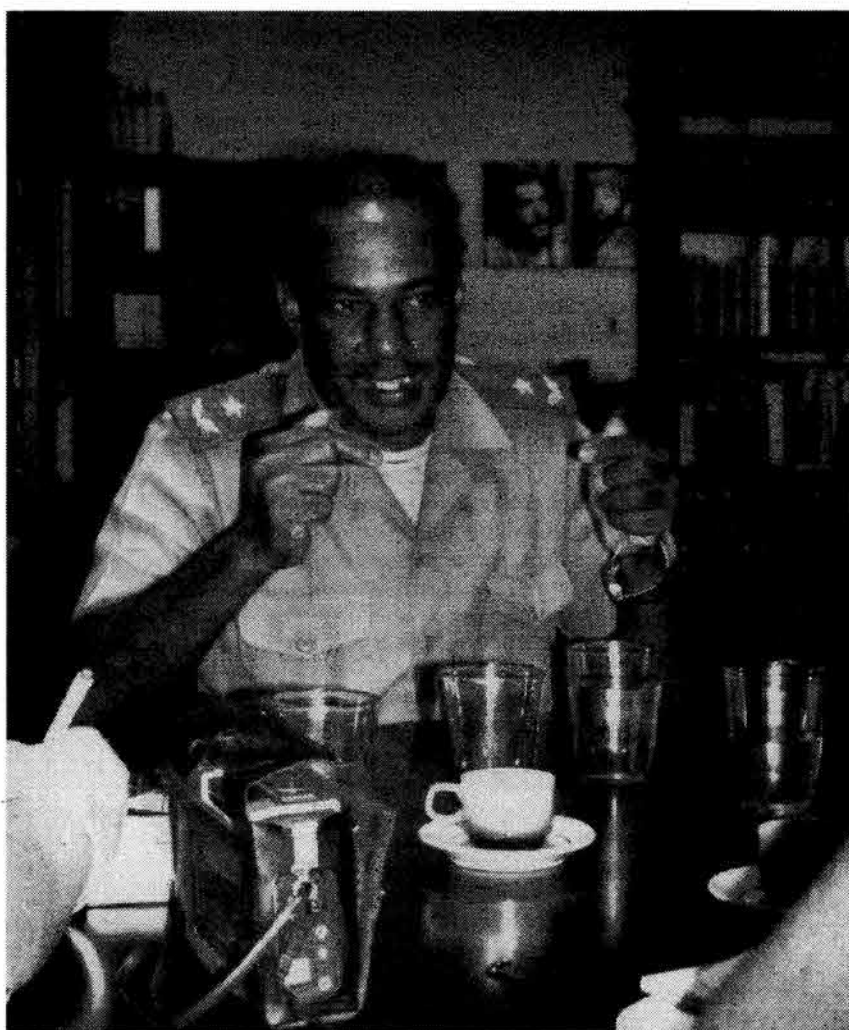
HAVANA, Cuba—When he first met Ernesto Che Guevara in 1957 in the Sierra Maestra mountains of eastern Cuba, Harry Villegas told us, "Che was already a legend. He was known throughout the Sierra as the Argentine commander who was fighting together with Fidel, admired and respected by the peasants and the guerrillas alike because he was very honest, straightforward, and audacious, very human."

Today Villegas is a brigadier general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, a veteran of multiple internationalist aid missions to Angola between 1975 and 1990 — during which he took part in the historic defeat of South Africa's invading forces at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 — and the officer in charge of political education for the Western Army. Around the world, however, he is more likely to be known as Pombo, the nom de guerre he used as a member of the general staff of the guerrilla forces that fought with Che Guevara first in the Congo in 1965 and then in the mountains of Bolivia in 1966 and 1967. Following Guevara's capture and murder by CIA-organized Bolivian special forces, Pombo led the six Cuban and Bolivian combatants who broke out of the encirclement and eluded the intense manhunt mounted by the regime for weeks. After almost five months, the three Cubans eventually made their way to Chile and from there back to Cuba.

Following publication in 1994 by Pathfinder Press of a new English-language edition of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, we arranged to talk with Villegas about the Bolivian campaign and other struggles he participated in at Guevara's side. Excerpts from Pombo's own daily journal and later accounts by him of the Bolivian campaign are included in that new edition.

In February 1996 the Cuban publishing house Editora Política will bring out the complete Bolivian diary of Pombo, under the title, *Pombo: Un hombre de la guerrilla del Che* (Pombo: a guerilla with Che). It will include documents and correspondence from the Bolivian campaign never before released for publication, as well as Pombo's own account of the months immediately before and after Che's death, based on Villegas's carefully kept diary.

The "honest, straightforward, and audacious" young Argentine commander who Villegas first encountered 38 years ago in the Sierra Maestra mountains was to become a central leader of the Cuban revolution, known



Harry Villegas became part of Che Guevara's column shortly after joining the Rebel Army in 1957 during Cuba's revolutionary war. Here, the Cuban internationalist recounts some of the rich lessons and highlights of his nearly four decades of revolutionary experience.

to save enough money to allow Harry to attend school.

In December 1956 a small band of armed revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro landed on the coast of Oriente province at the eastern end of Cuba. Castro was already a well-known political figure in Cuba. He had been a student leader at the University of Havana, a leader of the opposition Orthodox Party youth beginning in the late 1940s and one of the party's candidates for the house of representatives prior to Batista's military coup on March 10, 1952. A little more than a year later, Castro burst into national, and international, prominence when

he organized an armed assault on the Moncada army barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953.¹

Released from prison in response to a growing popular amnesty campaign, Castro and other surviving veterans of the Moncada attack founded the July 26 Movement and from Mexico organized an expedition of 82 combatants who, with their relatively few weapons, returned to Cuba aboard the yacht *Granma*. They were vir-

¹ Some 160 combatants took part in the simultaneous attacks on the military garrisons in Santiago de Cuba and nearby Bayamo, launching the revolutionary armed struggle against Batista. The attacks failed, and over 50 revolutionaries were captured, brutally tortured, and murdered; 28 were tried and sentenced to up to 15 years in prison.

tually annihilated during their first encounter with government troops a few days after the landing. Those who survived and escaped imprisonment—20 in all—regrouped and started guerrilla operations in the Sierra Maestra in early 1957.

Word spread rapidly throughout Oriente and the rest of Cuba that the July 26 Movement had launched an armed insurrection against the Batista dictatorship, and that Castro was in the Sierras commanding a rebel army. The news had a big impact on Harry Villegas, then a 16-year-old student in Manzanillo. He joined the movement, becoming a member of an underground cell in the city. Soon he was taking part in guerrilla operations in the nearby Cauto River valley.

"We had two skirmishes with the army," Villegas recounted. The second time "we went to the main road and attacked the soldiers, inflicting a few casualties." The army unit counterattacked and surrounded the combatants. When they broke out of the encirclement, they had to head into the mountains to escape, and there they made contact with a squad led by Chino Figueredo that was part of a column commanded by Che Guevara.

Guevara had joined the July 26 Movement in Mexico in the summer of 1955. Che, as he was called by his Cuban comrades, had graduated from medical school in Argentina two years earlier, and he signed on to the *Granma* expedition as the troop's doctor. Che was the third confirmed member of the expedition to be accepted by Fidel; Raúl Castro had been the second. His combativity, courage and leadership capacities rapidly won him the respect of his fellow fighters; he was the first of the combatants to be promoted to the rank of commander.

While they were with Figueredo's detachment, Villegas said, he met Che for the first time.

"Che arrived on his mule, alone, wearing his lopsided beret. He made an extraordinary impression on us. In this first encounter he was very brusque. He asked us what we were doing in the Sierra Maestra, which was very characteristic of him. 'What have you come here for? Why are you here?'"

"We answered, 'We have come to fight for the independence of Cuba, to fight the tyranny.'"

"With what?" he asked. "I showed him a little single-shot .22 caliber hunting rifle. 'You are planning to defeat the tyranny with that? No, no, no. You are mistaken. You must go down and disarm some soldiers.'"

Villegas told how they returned to the village to ambush and disarm some soldiers but were betrayed by an informer and failed in their mission. They returned to the Sierra a few days later, however, better armed than before, having persuaded some peasants to give them their pistols and hunting rifles.

"At that point Che accepted us," Villegas continued. "He said we had not completed the mission, but that we had shown our resolve to fight."

"Along with another comrade I was assigned to the command post squad and began carrying out the most elementary tasks of a guerrilla unit—going back and forth with messages, carrying backpacks, all those kinds of things—until we had acquired experience. In this way we began to be integrated into the Rebel Army."

Read, study, work, fight

"We became part of Che's personal escort and accompanied him when he was assigned by Fidel to head up the first military school in revolutionary Cuba," Villegas continued. The school for new recruits, established at Minas del Frío in April 1958, was a gigantic undertaking. In addition to receiving training and instruction, the first recruits to attend the school also had the job of con-

"Imagine a person who is not from your country coming to offer his life for your country. Today, after deepening our understanding, we say it is an expression of internationalism..."

and respected in Cuba and internationally as one of the outstanding communists of the 20th century. For over a decade he would occupy a more and more central place in the struggles through which Cuba's workers and peasants transformed themselves and their society. Mobilizing by the millions they expropriated the interests of U.S. imperialism and Cuba's propertied classes and broke capital's domination. In doing so they opened the socialist revolution in the Americas.

Villegas, the tenth and youngest child of a family living in the foothills of the Sierras, was an early recruit to the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the hated military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. His father was a carpenter; his mother, who ran a couple of small stores and a bakery in the villages of Yara and Palma, managed



GRANMA

In final two weeks of 1958, revolutionaries captured virtually all major cities in Las Villas province. The offensive culminated at turn of the year, as workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement, took control of Santa Clara, Santiago de Cuba, and Havana, securing the triumph of the revolution.

structing the necessary facilities. "We were to build three large barracks, including one for a school and another for a hospital. This was a gigantic effort, because we had to chop down the trees and carry the logs over the hills on our shoulders. And on top of that we had to go to class."

At the time, Villegas said, the school had two instructors. "One was an American named Herman Mark, a big, strong man, very demanding, who was a veteran of the Korean War. The other, named Evelio Laferté, was a young Cuban, a former military school cadet who had been a first lieutenant in Batista's army. He had been won over after being taken prisoner in the second battle of Pino del Agua, if I remember correctly. This was part of the character of our revolution, to win people from the army itself."

Che's authority with those under his command grew with time, Villegas stressed. Guevara's internationalism was an example that struck them all. "Imagine a person who is not from your country coming to offer his life for your country. A man who is capable of that is a man of extraordinary human dimension."

During Cuba's wars of independence against Spanish colonial rule in 1868-78 and 1895-98, many non-Cubans had joined the struggle. "For us at that time, we viewed them as foreigners who had come to fight with us," Villegas commented. "Today, after deepening our understanding, we say it is an expression of internationalism. At that time, we saw Che as similar to Máximo Gómez, who was the most prominent of the all the internationalists who assisted us." Gómez, a native of Santo Domingo (in what is today the Dominican Republic) who emigrated to Cuba, served as commander in chief of the independence armies during both independence wars. "In Che we saw someone similar to Gómez, a person who was one of our own, even though he was not born in Cuba. He had come to help us, to share with us all the vicissitudes and dangers of the struggle."

"Che looked for men and women made of good timber. Then, as Fidel says, the wood can be shaped..."

"Che was a lover of history," Pombo noted, "a tireless reader, a tireless student. The first thing Che did was try to get us to study. Do you understand? It was the very first thing! Che liked to surround himself with youth and force us to improve ourselves."

"We combined reading with study: mathematics, Spanish, tactics, guerrilla warfare, novels. The method we used was reading combined with discussion."

"We looked at many aspects of our history, but above all we examined the need for unity in the face of imperialist aggression. We studied the lessons of the revolutionary struggles of 1868 and 1895 against Spanish colonial domination, and the writings of José Martí.² We saw

² José Martí (1853-1895) is Cuba's national hero. He founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party in 1892 and was the central leader of the war of independence from Spain launched in 1895. He was killed in battle later that year. Martí was a noted poet, writer, and journalist.

how Fidel was able to bring many groups, many revolutionary organizations together in support of a single aim, thus guaranteeing unity of action. In Che's study of Cuban history, he thoroughly studied the question of unity; he analyzed it, and used this history to guide us. At that time we didn't understand the question of unity very well. Today we understand it much more deeply."

This was the process, Pombo explained, through which "we began to become seasoned cadres, to be forged as guerrillas, even though we still had not received our baptism of fire. I had fought as part of a guerrilla unit before joining the Rebel Army, but we still had not been in combat under Che's leadership."

That baptism of fire came only a few months later, in July 1958, when Pombo and others took part in the battles that turned back the Batista regime's final military offensive aimed at defeating the guerrillas in the Sierra. Then, in early September, Villegas joined the westward march of Rebel Army column no. 8, under Guevara's command, that culminated in the New Year's victory over government forces in Santa Clara, Cuba's third largest city, and the nationwide general strike and triumphant revolutionary insurrection the first week of January 1959.

The Bolivia campaign

We turned to a discussion of the guerrilla struggle in Bolivia where Pombo accompanied Che nearly a decade later. For eleven months, until he was wounded, captured, and executed by CIA-organized military forces in October 1967, Guevara led a group of some 40 combat-



CUBAN COUNCIL OF STATE, OFFICE OF HISTORICAL AFFAIRS

Some of the leaders of the Rebel Army in May 1957. The Rebel Army led the revolutionary war in the Sierra Maestra mountains and the political struggle across Cuba to victory. From left: Ernesto Che Guevara, Universo Sánchez, Raúl Castro, and Fidel Castro.

ants in Bolivia, attempting to forge the nucleus of a revolutionary movement that could bring down the military dictatorship in Bolivia and open the road to deepening anticapitalist struggle across Latin America.

Throughout this entire campaign, Pombo was one of its central cadres.

In Bolivia, too, Villegas commented, Che never stopped pressing those he worked with and led to study and broaden their cultural horizons. The combatants in Bolivia developed a library of some 300-400 books and established a system whereby everyone carried one or two of them in his knapsack, read them, and then passed them on to another fighter.

"For Che, raising the cultural level of the combatants was a constant," Pombo explained. "Che saw the combatants as future leaders and viewed the guerrilla unit as a school for forging revolutionaries and leaders. Being part of a social environment where abject poverty prevails, as it does among the peasantry, allows one to acquire a deeper awareness of the need for revolutionary change, to become more human, more humanistic, more conscious of the need to transform society. Out of that kind of experience come men who can be counted on politically, and that is the foundation."

"Che looked for men and women who are made of good timber. Then, as Fidel says, the wood can be shaped. Leaders who are forged in adverse conditions develop a deep sense of fraternity, of comradeship, knowing that human beings need each other, cannot live as hermits like Robinson Crusoe. In order to withstand the hostile environment of the Sierra, to really be able to fight, one has to be part of a collective effort. In such a context human qualities are born, allowing future leaders to be forged."

There is no necessary contradiction between comradeship and friendship, Villegas added. We can take Martí as our guide in this too. For Martí, "comradeship exists between human beings who are fighting for the same cause, who are fighting for the same objective. But

"Wherever Che went there was a school: there was a school in Africa, in Bolivia, in the Sierra Maestra, in Las Villas..."

within this bond there is also Martí's concept of friendship as presented in his 'Simple Verses,' where he says, 'The president has a treasure of gold and wheat, but I have something more, I have a friend. The leopard has a shelter, but in the forest I have more than the leopard, because I have a friend.'

"Friendship is a feeling that develops through human contact."

Che sought to instill these human qualities in future leaders, Pombo emphasized, "And part of this process was precisely encouraging them to raise their educational and cultural level. For this he created a school. Wherever Che went, there was a school; there was a school in Africa, a school in Bolivia, a school in the Sierra Maestra, a school in Las Villas. Wherever Che began a campaign, alongside it came instruction, education."

"The study of mathematics was also obligatory," Pombo continued. Che considered it the basis for mastering any science.

"And even while we were still in the Sierra, Che taught us the art of irregular warfare. We read Clausewitz's *On War* and discussed it. We read Mao Zedong on guerrilla warfare.⁴ Che was preparing himself through self-education, as well as teaching us."

³ "The leopard has a shelter / in his forest brown and dry: / I have more than the leopard, / Because I have a good friend.... / The president has / a garden with a fountain, / and a treasure of gold and wheat: / I have more; I have a friend." José Martí, "Versos sencillos" in *Obras completas*, vol. 16 (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), p. 122.

⁴ Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) was a Prussian general who served under both the Prussian and Russian monarchies in the wars against Napoleon. He was the author of *On War*, long considered a classic of military strategy.

Mao Zedong, the central leader of the Chinese Communist Party from the mid-1930s until his death in 1976, was the dominant strategist of the People's Liberation Army that triumphed over the landlord-capitalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek in the Chinese revolution of 1949. Mao was the author of numerous articles on guerrilla warfare and other military writings.

Later, Villegas noted, when Che wrote his own book, *Guerrilla Warfare*, published in Cuba in 1960, "the North Americans used it as a textbook to prepare their special forces to confront the guerrilla movements in Latin America. They considered it the most finished document on irregular warfare from the military point of view, the most practical, the most objective."

Land, peasants, and revolution

In Bolivia the Cuban internationalist volunteers "confronted a world very different from our own," Pombo observed, even though both countries are part of Latin America. "Cuba is an island, where virtually no indigenous population survived. The Spaniards exterminated them. We had no idea of the life of the Indian, of their psychology. We tried to learn about it by reading novels dealing with everyday life."

Guevara was closer to the local population in Bolivia, Villegas noted, because he himself was from that part of the world. "Che had lived side by side with the indigenous people, and he was able to transmit some of his understanding to us."

"Che had gone through an important experience in Africa too," Pombo continued, referring to the six months Guevara spent during 1965 helping to advance the national liberation struggle in the Congo (now Zaire).⁵ "It is not easy to assimilate a culture overnight," he said. "One must have a grounding. It requires a broadly cultured person, someone capable of assimilating that culture without being assimilated by it. Che became very conscious of this in Africa."

"In Bolivia he struggled to have us understand the indigenous people's world view, their life, traditions, and rich history. Despite having lived through a revolution in Cuba, we did not have this understanding."

Che had "studied the combative traditions of the Bolivians, their history of struggles," Pombo said. "He went looking for it, and this was one of the things he explained to us. Che knew the characteristics of the Indians, in the same way he knew the peasants in Cuba."

"Peasants are conservative," Pombo continued. "In the Sierra, despite all the work that had been done by Celia [Sánchez]⁶, who had already recruited peasants and organized them into a cell of the movement, this was true. The peasant is not inclined to support a movement until he sees possibilities of success in that movement. This is even more true when the movement is not completely an agrarian one—as the July 26 Movement was not; most of its initial cadres and leaders were from cities or small towns."

"When it is an agrarian movement, in which the peasant is defending his little plot of land, he develops somewhat more rapidly. Che knew this," Villegas said. "This was what he explained to us." It was to advance this process that Che paid special attention to the leadership development of the Bolivian combatants.

In Bolivia, as earlier in Cuba, Che's goal was to bring all the diverse forces together in action to overthrow the Bolivian dictatorship and advance the struggle against imperialist domination throughout the entire region.

Bolivia and Vietnam

"The foundations of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia were very broad," Pombo noted. Che never conceived of the war in a sectarian manner. He worked primarily with the Communist Party; it was our job to work with them. But he also worked with the factions within the Communist Party.⁷ He called on the party of Juan Lechín for support.⁸ He worked with all the organizations that supported Bolivia's freedom. He always worked for the participation of all honest people, all revolutionaries, everyone who wanted to fight for independence, for the liberation of Latin America—because his conception in Bolivia involved not only Bolivia, but Latin America."

It is necessary to remember what was happening in

⁵ In January 1961 Patrice Lumumba, central leader of the Congo's independence movement, who was under "protection" by United Nations troops, was murdered by imperialist-backed forces loyal to rightist figure Moïse Tshombe. When Tshombe became the Congo's prime minister in 1964, Lumumba's forces revolted and appealed to the Cuban leadership for help in defeating the Belgian and South African mercenary armies (politically and militarily backed by Washington) whose assignment was to prevent the vast mineral wealth of the Congo from escaping imperialist control.

⁶ Celia Sánchez (1920-1980) was a founding leader of the July 26 Movement in Oriente Province and the first woman combatant in the Rebel Army.

⁷ A split occurred in the Bolivian Communist Party in early 1965, leading to the formation of a rival party sympathetic to Maoism. Members of both groups participated in the guerrilla unit led by Guevara. For more on the Bolivian Communist Party and the treacherous role of its central leadership in relationship to the Bolivian guerrilla front led by Guevara, see Che's own account in the Bolivian Diary; Fidel Castro's June 1968 "A Necessary Introduction" to the diary (pp. 51-70); and the appendix "My Campaign with Che," by Inti Peredo (pp. 330-346).

⁸ In 1964 Juan Lechín, the central leader of Bolivia's trade union federation since the 1940s, organized the Revolutionary Party of the National Left (PRIN).

Latin America and the world at the time Che decided to go to Bolivia, Pombo continued. "As combatants we studied the world situation that Che evaluates in his 'Message to the Tricontinental.' That was part of the school, the training of future leaders. Above all, the world situation was marked by the genocidal war being waged against the people of Vietnam."

"The war in Vietnam, as you know better than we do, shook the world. It shook U.S. society—the Vietnam syndrome, the economic crisis generated by the war and from which imperialism has never completely recovered."

"Che was a man who analyzed things deeply. He was convinced that it was necessary to take advantage of that conjuncture to inflict defeats on imperialism, to take advantage of the war's political and economic impact. That was the most effective way to assist the heroic people of Vietnam. Out of these considerations came the call contained in the message Che sent to the Tricontinental to create 'two, three, many Vietnams,' right here on the doorstep of U.S. imperialism. The peoples of Latin America were the ones who had already taken the first step."

Throughout Latin America, Pombo explained, there were guerrilla movements fighting in Venezuela, in Colombia, Guatemala, Peru. "It was a propitious moment. Vietnam was the center, but revolutionary movements were flowering throughout the world; other forces too were standing up to oppression. Che was aware of this, and that is how he

"José Martí says: 'Create a republic where the first law will be respect for the dignity of man.' That cannot be achieved under capitalism..."

developed the strategy he elaborated in the 'Message to the Tricontinental.'"

This was not just Che's evaluation, however, Villegas stressed. "In all honesty, we must say that the Cuban revolution supported this course entirely. This is what Fidel was teaching too. Remember what Che said in his letter to Fidel: that he was leaving to do 'that which is denied you owing to your responsibility at the head of Cuba.'¹⁰ Che was completely convinced that Fidel would have been the first to go, had he been able. And for this reason we also participated. We had Cuban comrades in Venezuela at the time; others were in Guatemala, or on their way to Colombia. The Cuban revolution gave support to all these movements that sought liberation for the world's hungry masses."

In launching the Bolivian campaign, Villegas said, Guevara was "looking for an integration of the peoples, not only of revolutionaries, not only of honest people as individuals, but of nations that truly need to achieve their independence in all regards—economically and socially. There were Peruvians, Argentines, Bolivians and Cubans fighting together, shoulder to shoulder."

⁹ In 1966, on the eve of his departure to Bolivia, Guevara wrote a message to the Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—better known as OSPAAAL, or, at the time, the Tricontinental—which had been formed earlier that year following an international conference in Havana. The message was published in April 1967—shortly after the existence of Guevara's guerrilla front in Bolivia had become public knowledge—in the magazine *Tricontinental*, under the title, "Create Two, Three...Many Vietnams, That is the Watchword." See *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, p. 347-360.

¹⁰ See Guevara's 1965 letter to Fidel Castro, published in the Bolivian Diary under the title, "Other nations of the world summon my assistance," pp. 71-73.



BOHEMIA

The revolutionary triumph on Jan. 1, 1959, opened the doors for a deep-going transformation of property and social relations in Cuba. Above, workers, peasants, youth, and others organize the "Burial of the monopolies," a march in August 1960. Each major imperialist-owned corporation was represented by a coffin with the company's name on it that was thrown into the sea. During August 6-13, 1960, most foreign-owned mines, land, factories, and utilities were nationalized.

"The idea of Latin American unity is not an idea dreamed up by Che; it is an idea with a history. It has a basis in the history of struggle of our America. It was the program of Simón Bolívar¹¹ and José Martí that Che was trying to make a reality because the question of unity has never been resolved. To be strong and equal with the other America, the integration of the Latin American peoples is needed."

"Martí's program for Latin America," Villegas explained, "has never been achieved, and this is not only a question of unity. In his writings, Martí says: 'Create a republic where the first law will be respect for the dignity of man.' This cannot be achieved under capitalism. He was thinking of a different society. And when he says: 'This is a republic including all and for the welfare of all,' he is talking of a more universal republic, where men are truly equal in rights, in possibilities, and this can be achieved only under socialism."

"In other words, one of the things Che discovered through his study of Cuba's history is that the goals of Martí converge with the course of Marxism-Leninism. This is true even with regard to the party, and the conception of how to lead, how to conduct the struggle. Martí's ideas are not at all separate from the conceptions of Marxism."

"This is an indigenous part of Cuba's history, an extraordinarily profound phenomenon. That is what gives us greater strength."

"That is why today we can say that all our political work must deepen patriotism," Villegas added. Not nationalism, but patriotism, a pride in our history of struggle. "Because patriotism has very deep roots in Martí, and we can go back even further, to Céspedes; to Maceo.¹² Martí fought hard for unity between the veterans of the war of 1868 and the 'new pines,' as he called the next generation."

"All this is part of Martí's body of ideas, and you can see how it has been put into practice by Fidel, and how Che was totally connected with it. We can say that, in a real sense, drawing on this body of ideas, Che matures in Cuba."

To construct the republic that Martí "dreamed about," Pombo said, "it could be nothing but a socialist republic—one without exploitation, without inequalities. There would be no other way, and this is part of our

¹¹ Simón Bolívar, (1783-1830)—Led the armed rebellion that helped win independence from Spain for much of Latin America.

¹² Carlos Manuel de Céspedes was the central leader of the Cuban independence war launched in 1868; he was ambushed by Spanish troops and killed in 1874. Antonio Maceo was a military leader of both independence wars who was killed in battle in 1896.

roots, of our history, of our own conceptions.... That is why we always say, 'What Martí promised, Fidel carried out.' That is the truth."

Revolutionary upheaval in Southern Cone

Che's military plan in Bolivia aimed at achieving an element of strategic surprise, Pombo noted, by launching a guerrilla struggle where U.S. imperialism was least prepared.

Strategic surprise, Villegas explained, is different from tactical surprise. The U.S. forces attacking Iraq in 1991, he noted, based their military plan on their fire power and numerical superiority. "They could afford to say, 'We are going to attack Iraq' and begin to prepare, to assemble their forces openly six months in advance. There was no strategic surprise, even though they could have achieved a tactical surprise. No one knew the moment when the war was to be unleashed."

"But Che wanted strategic surprise. Why? Because with the flowering of revolutionary struggles throughout Latin America in the wake of imperialism's defeat in Cuba, the North American government had spent millions looking for a way to respond. They established the Alliance for Progress¹³ in the economic sphere, and in the military realm they gave massive assistance with their Green Berets, creating powerful counterinsurgency forces. No one knows how much the Pentagon and the CIA spent to defeat the revolutionary movements in Latin America."

"But the imperialists were not expecting the rise of a guerrilla movement in Bolivia. They considered it im-

"Vietnam was at the center, but revolutionary movements were flowering throughout the world; other forces too were standing up to oppression..."

possible, as did the Bolivian generals at that time, because they thought there had already been a revolution in Bolivia. That is how they looked at the revolt of 1952."¹⁴

Che, however, had traveled through Bolivia in 1953,

¹³ The Alliance for Progress, announced by Washington in 1961 in hopes of countering the example of the Cuban revolution, allocated \$20 billion in loans to Latin American governments over a 10 year period, and millions more in gratuities to line the pockets of willing political allies, in exchange for their compliance in measures to isolate Cuba. Guevara dissected this imperialist maneuver and denounced it in a speech to an August 1961 conference sponsored by the Organization of American States in Punta del Este, Uruguay. See "The Real Meaning of the Alliance for Progress" in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*.

¹⁴ A powerful mass upsurge in Bolivia in 1952 resulted in nationalization of the largest tin mines, legalization of the trade unions, initiation of land reform, and the elimination of the literacy requirement that had effectively disenfranchised the majority of Bolivia's people, the Aymará- and Quechua-speaking population. But Bolivia remained one of the most impoverished countries of the Americas. The increasingly corrupt and fractured government of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), a bourgeois party that initially had strong support from Bolivia's superexploited tin miners, was overthrown by a military coup in 1964.



Above, some of the Cubans who fought alongside Guevara in Bolivia. From left: Gustavo Machín (Alejandro), Harry Villegas (Pombo), Leonardo Tamayo (Urbano), Eliseo Reyes (Rolando), Guevara, Carlos Coello (Tuma), René Martínez (Arturo), and Octavio de la Concepción (Moro).

At the time there were revolutionary upheavals throughout the Southern Cone. At right, March 1959 demonstration in front of Bolivia's presidential palace, part of a wave of anti-imperialist protests, including one by 24,000 tin miners. The sign on the left reads "Down with the Yankee Octopus."



Pombo noted, and "he knew that this revolution had begun to deteriorate from the moment of its birth. He knew that the needs of the peasantry, of the miners, of the poor, had not been met. That the agrarian reform had never had any technical assistance, any economic backing. He knew that [Víctor] Paz Estenssoro, the leader of the MNR, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement, was not a real revolutionary. He was not a man of the people."

Che with his typically biting humor called the Bolivian revolution of 1952 the "DDT revolution," Pombo remarked, because "before Paz Estenssoro would meet with an Indian, with a worker, he would have the person fumigated so they could not infect him with any diseases."

Washington and the Pentagon didn't understand any of this, however, Villegas said. "They thought there could not be a revolution where there had been a revolu-

tion. Che's military plan was unquestionably well conceived. It was a total surprise. They had to scurry to get the counterinsurgency troops prepared."

Che's plan assumed, as a condition for success, the participation and support of the Bolivian Communist Party, Pombo noted. But the commitments made by that party's general secretary, Mario Monje, were never fulfilled. The guerrilla forces were annihilated before they could reach the area they intended to operate from and establish lines of communication and supply. Yet, politically, Che's assessment of the social explosion building in Bolivia was accurate. A profound new revolutionary upsurge did occur in Bolivia—and elsewhere in Latin America's Southern Cone¹⁵—in the years just following the movement's defeat.

"Imagine if things had gone as planned," Pombo remarked, "if a general uprising had occurred when the guerrillas were already operating in their zones, and had been able to incorporate new forces. If that had happened, it would not have taken long to seize power in Bolivia."

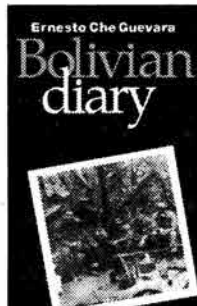
"And after taking power, to defend their revolution the Bolivian masses would have been compelled to come to the aid of revolutionary struggles in surrounding countries. They would have had to do so to survive, because Bolivia is a landlocked country, and this was another element in Che's thinking. Bolivia is a *mediterranean* country, one without access to the sea—which is not the way the term *mediterranean* is used in other parts of the world to signify a sea surrounded by land."¹⁶

This fact of Bolivia's geographical location, Pombo said, "was involved from the beginning in Che's strategy. Che was convinced the U.S. forces would become involved in the attempt to destroy the revolutionary movement. In fact, the objective was to draw them in."

"But first we had to take an area and then establish political power in a country. The point was not to begin everything at the same time, but to begin in one place and extend outward to other areas. The Peruvians fighting with us would go to Peru, and so forth. Che's aim was to develop political and military leaders among the Bolivians and others. He saw Inti [Peredo] as a man with

Continued on ISR6

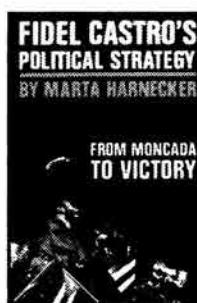
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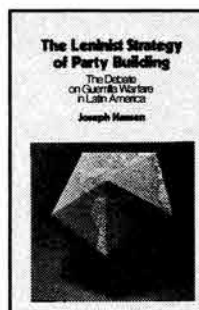
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A reply to lies in the 'New York Times' on Che and the Cuban revolution

BY STEVE CLARK

In this *International Socialist Review* supplement to the *Militant*, we are printing in full the letter to the editor of the *New York Times* submitted by Mary-Alice Waters in reply to the article "Mysteries of Bolivia: The Revised Che Guevara" by Thomas H. Lipscomb. Lipscomb's article was featured November 26 on page 3 of the *Times*'s Sunday supplement, the "Week in Review." We are also reproducing the letter as it was abridged by the editors of the *Times* and run in its letters column Saturday, December 2.

The *Militant* had planned to reproduce Lipscomb's article in this issue as well, so our readers could examine the entire record and make up their own minds. Our request for permission was rejected by the *Times*, however.

Mary-Alice Waters is the editor and author of the introduction to *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, published in a new translation by Pathfinder Press in 1994. She is also editor of a new and complete English-language edition of Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-1958* to be published early next year. The *Episodes* is Guevara's account of major military battles and political events through which the leadership of the Cuban revolution was forged in the

Continued on ISR7

Letter to the 'Times' by editor of 'The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara'

November 29, 1995

Editor
New York Times

The article "Mysteries of Bolivia: The Revised Che Guevara" by Thomas H. Lipscomb ("Week in Review," November 26) makes several additions to the litany of lies about Guevara that have been spread over the past three decades. These fabrications, as always, attempt to demonstrate a deep division that supposedly existed between Guevara and Fidel Castro.



MARY-ALICE WATERS

the source of this direct quotation.

In Guevara's February 1961 introduction to his series in the Cuban armed forces magazine *Verde Olivo*, later compiled under the title *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, he explained that he was beginning the series with an account of "the first battle, the only one Fidel participated in that went against our forces: the surprise attack at Alegria de Pio" on December 5, 1956 [emphasis added]. That battle took place just three days after the group of guerrillas led by Castro had landed in eastern Cuba to launch the revolutionary struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains.

The truth is, as Guevara detailed in his *Episodes*, that Fidel Castro directly participated as field commander in many battles in the Sierra Maestra in 1957-58, most of them ending in defeats of Batista's armed forces. These battles culminated in the January 1959 island-wide uprising and general strike that secured the triumph of the revolution.

A new English edition of Guevara's *Episodes*, of which I am the editor, allows *Times* readers to check the facts for themselves. They will discover that Lipscomb's "quotation" is made up out of whole cloth.

What about Lipscomb's claim that "The Bolivian Army officer who captured Guevara, Captain Gary Prado Salmon, has stated that Guevara said Castro failed him at a crucial time?" Once again, Lipscomb cites no source. Prado, however, did write down an eight-page account of his supposed conversations with Guevara in his 1987 book, *How I Captured Che*. This is hardly a reliable account, of course, since the other party in the

The New York Times

Guevara Never Lost Castro's Respect in Revolutionary Struggle

To the Editor:

"The Revised Che Guevara" (Week in Review, Nov. 26) attempts to demonstrate a division that supposedly existed between Guevara and Fidel Castro.

Thomas H. Lipscomb writes that Guevara, during the struggle to bring down the Batista dictatorship in Cuba, "went so far as to point out that of all of the battles in the Sierra Maestra, 'Fidel Castro participated in only one, and it was a complete failure.'"

Guevara, in a 1961 introduction to his series in the Cuban armed forces magazine *Verde Olivo*, explained that he was beginning with an account of the "first battle, the only one Fidel participated in that went against our forces: the surprise attack at Alegria de Pio" on Dec. 5, 1956

That took place three days after the guerrillas led by Fidel Castro landed in eastern Cuba to launch the revolutionary struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains.

As Guevara detailed, Mr. Castro participated as field commander in many battles in the Sierra Maestra in 1957-58, most ending in defeats of Fulgencio Batista's forces. These battles culminated in the January 1959 uprising and strike that secured the revolution.

What about Mr. Lipscomb's claim that "the Bolivian Army officer who captured Guevara, Capt. Gary Prado

Salmon, has stated that Guevara said Castro failed him at a crucial time?"

Mr. Lipscomb cites no source. Prado did write an account of his supposed conversation with Guevara in his 1987 book, "How I Captured Che." But nowhere does Prado say anything even vaguely similar to what Mr. Lipscomb claims.

"There is no record," Mr. Lipscomb writes, "of any attempt by Castro to break through to Guevara's force" in Guevara's Bolivian expedition, "although it was destroyed less than 50 miles from its first base of operations."

In a 1987 interview Fidel Castro provided the reply. "What could we

have done?" he said. "Sent a battalion? ... The laws of guerrilla warfare are different; everything depends on what the guerrilla unit itself does. They really carried out an epic struggle."

Mr. Lipscomb's reference to Guevara's "disastrous posting as Minister of Industries" in the revolutionary Cuban Government is no more accurate. Guevara's activity not only as industry minister but also as head of the national bank and his writings and speeches are among his most enduring contributions to the Cuban revolution.

MARY-ALICE WATERS
New York, Nov. 29, 1995

The writer is the editor of "The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara."

This is the letter by Mary-Alice Waters to the *New York Times* as it appeared in the letters section of the December 2 issue of that paper.

alleged exchange was murdered by Prado's cohorts the next day. But nowhere does Prado say anything even vaguely similar to what Lipscomb claims. In fact, in his preface to the book, Prado says: "There are no sensational revelations here, rather a series of small details."

Lipscomb also recycles some other fabrications with a longer lineage. "[T]here is no record," he writes, "of any attempt by Castro to break through to Guevara's force, although it was destroyed less than 50 miles from its first base of operations."

In an extensive June 1987 television interview with Italian journalist Gianni Minà, later published in full in book form, Fidel Castro provided the appropriate reply to this absurd charge, which Minà says circulated widely, especially in Europe, following Guevara's death, including among demoralized intellectuals who had once expressed support for the Cuban revolution. "What could we have done?" Castro said. "Sent a battalion, a company, a regular army? The laws of guerrilla warfare

are different; everything depends on what the guerrilla unit itself does. They really carried out an epic struggle. Some day the things they accomplished will be recounted more objectively."

"We believed in what [Che] was doing," Castro added in that 1987 interview, "and we believed he could carry out what he proposed."

That same opinion was expressed by Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas in an interview I conducted with him last summer, scheduled for publication in the December 18 issue of the *Militant* newsweekly. Villegas, using the nom de guerre "Pombo," led the six Bolivian and Cuban combatants who survived the Bolivian army's encirclement in 1967. Villegas had also served under Guevara's command in the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra and in the Congo.

"The Cuban revolution supported this course entirely," Villegas said, speaking of Guevara's plans to

Continued on ISR8

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When Che organized the Bolivian campaign, Villegas said, "the world situation was marked by a genocidal war being waged against the people of Vietnam." Above, U.S. B-52's on a bombing raid over Indochina. Che's conviction that the Vietnamese people's courage, dignity, and tenacity would prevail became reality with defeat of U.S. imperialism in Indochina, less than a decade after Bolivian campaign.

Continued from ISR4

extraordinary potential to lead the entire movement, for example. He noted that Coco [Peredo] was beginning to show signs of military leadership.¹⁷

Che rarely talked about the Cuban cadres in his *Diary*, Pombo recalled, because "he took it for granted that we were there to play the roll of a catalyst, to transmit experiences and knowledge." The composition of the general staff of the Bolivian campaign is important. "Notice the assignments Che made: how there was a political officer to attend to the Cubans, but also a political officer for the Bolivians."¹⁸ This was the integration he conceived of. In other words, his aim was not to lead the Bolivians. His aim was to coordinate the whole movement in the Southern Cone. That was his aim.

"Sooner or later," Pombo said, "Che aimed to go to Argentina. He considered himself an Argentine."

Had Washington eventually been drawn in and intervened with its own forces, Villegas explained, "they

¹⁷ Inti Peredo (1937-1969) was a member of the Central Committee of the Bolivian Communist Party in November 1966 when he joined the guerrilla unit being organized by Che. Peredo was a member of the unit's general staff and one of the two Bolivian veterans who escaped the regime's encirclement and manhunt following the murder of Che in October 1967. Peredo's 1969 account *My campaign with Che*, which includes his assessment of the Bolivian CP's betrayal of the effort, appears in English for the first time in Pathfinder's edition of the *Bolivian Diary*. Peredo attempted to organize new forces to relaunch an armed struggle to bring down the Bolivian dictatorship, but in September 1969 the army, tipped off by an informer, raided the house in La Paz where he was staying. Wounded while resisting the assault, Inti Peredo was captured and murdered by the military.

Coco Peredo, brother of Inti, was a founder of the Bolivian Communist Youth and one of the original cadres assigned to begin guerrilla preparations in Bolivia. He was killed in battle in September 1967.

¹⁸ As a member of the general staff, Inti Peredo was one of two officers assigned as a political commissar of the unit, responsible for political leadership of the combatants. The other was Eliseo Reyes (nom de guerre, Rolando), a veteran of Che's column in the Rebel Army and previously a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba who volunteered for the internationalist mission in Bolivia and was killed in combat in April 1967.

would have had to establish overland supply lines that would have been extremely vulnerable. If they entered through Argentina, for example, they would have been unable to protect their supply lines without an enormous investment of men. In this way alone, we would have already achieved an objective: they eventually would have had to send in even more troops than went to Vietnam.

"The North American people would not have put up with that. The U.S. military, even today, does not want to fight anywhere their troops would be at risk. They need technical superiority, with maximum assurance that there will be no deaths. That is a legacy of Vietnam.

"But while they might have a high level of technology, they have not been able to invent anything to destroy homemade weapons—like a Vietnamese trap, where a man simply falls into a hole and is buried. What can they invent to use against a man in hiding, who resists for days? Against a man who, when the enemy comes in to get him, has laid a mine for them?

"Against a man who is willing to give his life, they have not been able to find an answer in technology—nor will they ever.

"This is the conviction that guides our concept of the war of the entire people here in Cuba today." Che was very clear on this; he had thought about it deeply.

Recalling Fidel Castro's reaffirmation in December 1988 that "whoever is incapable of fighting for others will never be capable of fighting for himself,"²⁰ we asked Villegas to return to the question of internationalism, of

Guevara's example, and the contribution of the Cuban revolution in helping to bring down the apartheid regime in South Africa.

From 1975 to 1989 nearly half a million Cuban volunteers took part in internationalist missions in the former Portuguese colony of Angola. They were responding to the request from the newly independent government there to help defeat the invading troops of South Africa and Zaire and the rightist Angolan forces led by Jonas Savimbi, which were financed and aided not only by the apartheid regime but by Washington as well.

The defeat of the South African armed forces and their allies at the historic battle of Cuito Cuanavale in March 1988—a battle in which Villegas participated—was a decisive turning point in the history of all southern Africa. It led to negotiations later that year involving the

¹⁹ The "war of the entire people" is the name by which the defense strategy of the Cuban revolution is popularly known there. Every adult Cuban is trained to fight and has an assigned post to report for duty in case of imperialist aggression.

²⁰ See Fidel Castro's December 5, 1988, speech, "As Long as the Empire Exists, We Will Never Lower Our Guard," in Pathfinder's *In Defense of Socialism: Four Speeches on the 30th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 28.



The definitive defeat of South Africa's invading forces in Angola at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in March of 1988 gave a tremendous boost to the antiapartheid struggle, said Villegas. He is seen here on the right as part of an internationalist mission during the Angolan campaign.

Cuban, South African, and U.S. governments that opened the door to ending the civil war in Angola; achieving independence for the South African-controlled territory of Namibia; and bringing Cuba's internationalist mission in Angola to a close. The victory at Cuito Cuanavale gave a powerful boost to the mass antiapartheid struggle in South Africa as well.

The internationalist aid to Angola over a 13-year period was an enormous effort for a relatively small and economically underdeveloped nation such as Cuba. Beginning in 1989, almost simultaneous with the end of the Angolan mission, the disintegration of the Eastern European and Soviet regimes led to the collapse of most of Cuba's foreign trade agreements and many aid projects. Amid the severe economic crisis that has marked Cuba for the last half decade, it has not been unusual to hear some Cubans express the view that the resources that

"If we did nothing more in Angola than indirectly help defeat apartheid, our effort was unquestionably worthwhile..."

went to help Angola would have been better utilized at home.

We asked Villegas, who spent most of his life from 1981 to 1990 in Angola, for his opinion.

"Cuba's aid to Angola was not only worthwhile," he replied, "but if we were capable of doing it again, we would do so."

"More than half a million Cubans carried out internationalist missions in Africa, between Angola and Ethiopia²¹ and elsewhere—some 375,000 military personnel, plus those who went as public health workers, to teach, and to do other work. It is a large number. We can say that Cuba is a nation of internationalists. And when one speaks of internationalism in Cuba, what people see is Che. That is, Che's example opened up for us a broader concept of internationalism."

"Fidel said that when we go to Africa, we go to pay our debt to the African peoples. And in large measure that is true. But I think that the justice of the sacrifice—of the effort made in Angola, in particular—has borne fruit. Why is this so?

"In the first place, do you believe we could be speaking today of a South Africa led by Nelson Mandela had it not been for this effort? That the Black majority of 75 percent or 85 percent would be in power? Do you think that if the South Africans had not been defeated militarily and economically, apartheid would have been eliminated? If we did nothing more than indirectly help defeat apartheid, our effort was unquestionably worthwhile.

"Millions of human beings have been given the possibility to realize their human potential. This is why Che fought, why all progressive humanity has fought, why men and women of dignity have fought everywhere. This is what Fidel is fighting for. This is why the Cuban people resist.

"And that battle was won. Not only do we see what has been conquered in South Africa, we also see the independence of Namibia that has been established, and the right of the African peoples there to speak as full human beings. "In the case of Angola, independence was achieved, with whatever qualifications, and it could not have been realized any other way. Perhaps it was a dream of ours to think that socialism could be built in

Angola. But South Africa was prevented from dominating Angola; its aim of carving up Angola, in connivance with the regime in Zaire, could not be carried out.

"For these reasons, I am totally convinced that there is no work of greater value than the internationalism of Cuba in Africa, and not only in Africa, in Latin America too. Whether or not the final objectives were achieved, these are glorious pages in the history of the peoples that have created the foundations for the future."

The interview took place June 23, 1995, in Havana, Cuba. Copyright © Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

²¹ In 1977, Cuba responded to a request by the government of Ethiopia to help defeat a U.S.-backed invasion by the regime in neighboring Somalia aimed at seizing the Ogaden region. Washington hoped a Somali victory would help turn back land redistribution and other measures that had been taken in Ethiopia following the overthrow of the landlord-based monarchy of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974.

A reply to lies in the 'Times'

Continued from ISR5

course of the popular war and mass uprising that brought down the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959.

A few days prior to Lipscomb's article in the "Week in Review," the *Times* had carried a dispatch from La Paz, Bolivia, headlined "Where is Che Guevara Buried? A Bolivian Tells." It was a news account by Jon Lee Anderson, identified by the *Times* as a U.S. journalist working on a biography of Guevara to be published by Atlantic Monthly Press.

Anderson reported that Bolivian Gen. Mario Vargas Salinas had revealed what was done with Guevara's body in October 1967 following his capture and murder by the Bolivian army in a CIA-organized operation. Vargas said he had participated in dumping the bodies of Guevara and five other slain guerrillas into a mass grave under the airstrip in the town of Vallegrande on October 11, two days after Guevara had been shot and killed in the rural mountain village of La Higuera.

Lies about Cuban leadership

Anderson wrote a relatively straightforward article echoing none of the long-standing stories about alleged divisions between Guevara and Cuban leader Fidel Castro. These lies have circulated ever since April 1965 when Guevara, with Castro's agreement, resigned his government, party, and military posts in Cuba in order to return to South America to help advance the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggles that were sharpening in several countries, especially in the continent's Southern Cone.

Having spent much of the latter half of 1965 in Africa aiding the national liberation movement in the Congo (now Zaire), Guevara, after several intermediate stops, returned to Cuba in secret in December. There he prepared to leave for Bolivia within a few months to lead a guerrilla movement of Bolivian, Cuban, and other volunteers against that country's military dictatorship. Guevara was in Bolivia from November 1966 until his death 11 months later.

In October 1965, a few months after Guevara dropped from public view, Castro released a letter Guevara had written him. In that letter, which Castro read in full to a rally that was broadcast over Cuban television, Guevara said that "other nations of the world summon my modest efforts of assistance. I can do that which is denied you owing to your responsibility as the head of Cuba, and the time has come for us to part...."

"I state once more that I free Cuba from all responsibility, except that which stems from its example," Guevara wrote to Castro. "...I have always been identified with the foreign policy of our revolution, and I continue to be. Wherever I am, I will feel the responsibility of being a Cuban revolutionary, and I shall behave as such."

Despite Guevara's letter, the falsifications about his political divergence with the leadership of the Cuban revolution continued to be spread. As Waters points out in a portion of her letter not printed by the *Times*, this hearsay fell on particularly fertile ground among liberals and middle-class radicals who had turned against the Cuban revolution by the mid-1960s under mounting pressures of bourgeois public opinion.

Self-serving 'accounts'

With Guevara's capture and murder in October 1967, enemies of the Cuban revolution from La Paz to Washington seized the opportunity to stoke these lies. Bolivian Gen. Alfredo Ovando, for example, had initially told the press that "Che could not be questioned since he was fatally wounded when he was captured." But several weeks later, as the regime's story that Guevara had fallen in battle was already coming unstuck, Ovando took a different tack. He presented the first in a string of self-serving accounts of alleged "final conversations" with the captured communist leader.

"Che Guevara had ample opportunity to talk after he was captured. And actually he talked for several hours," Ovando told the press. "You understand why I can't reveal what he said don't you? It is for reasons of security. But I can reveal that he was worried about two things: the error of judgment committed by Fidel Castro as a result of his desire for the success of the guerrilla war and the courage of Bolivian soldiers." At the same time, Ovando continued to insist that Guevara had died of battle wounds. This lie was rapidly exposed as news leaked out from the autopsy that Guevara had been shot through the heart the day after his capture.

Thomas Lipscomb was evidently incensed that lies that had been fertilized for years had simply been disregarded by journalist Jon Lee Anderson in filing his dispatch on General Vargas's revelations. The *Times* editors, true to their 35 years of support to overturning the socialist revolution in Cuba, gave Lipscomb a prominent spot in the Sunday "Week in Review" to rectify this oversight.

Lipscomb's article — lacking, as Waters points out, even a semblance of routine fact-checking and honesty in citation — reads from start to finish like a placement from "higher up." It is the kind of "run-it-because-I-say-so" hack work that must irritate at least some of the more conscientious professional copy editors at the *Times*.

'Serious questions remain'

"A report from Bolivia last week by the journalist Jon Lee Anderson may have cleared up the question of what happened to the body of the Communist guerrilla leader Che Guevara," Lipscomb writes. "But some serious questions still remain about Guevara's fatal expedition. Among them is how much support Fidel Castro really gave Guevara's Bolivian expedition, and how well this second most famous guerrilla in the Cuban Revolution of 1959 carried out his task."

Lipscomb then enumerates the allegations refuted by Waters in the accompanying letter. Several points should be made about the *Times*'s abridgment and treatment of Waters's letter.

First was their decision to print it in the Saturday edition, rather than the Sunday "Week in Review" where Lipscomb's article had appeared. The Sunday *Times* has a substantially larger circulation than either the weekday or especially Saturday editions; it is regularly bought across the United States and around the world by readers who don't follow that paper on a daily basis. And the "Week in Review," which contains the editorial and letters pages, is among the features for which the Sunday *Times* is most widely known. (During the six months ending Sept. 30, 1995, the Sunday *Times* had an average weekly circulation of 1,667,780, compared to 1,081,541 Monday through Friday and 1,003,411 on Saturdays.)

Where's the source?

Second, while the *Times* editors carefully changed each of Waters's references from "Castro" to "Mr. Castro" and from "Lipscomb" to "Mr. Lipscomb" (although "Guevara" remained "Guevara"), they were immeasurably more scrupulous in removing each and every sentence by Waters that called attention to their failure to observe even the most minimal standards of verifying facts and citations in Lipscomb's article.

Pointing to one of Lipscomb's most flagrant misrepresentations, for example, Waters wrote that "the *Times* evidently didn't bother to ask Lipscomb for the source of this direct quotation." But that sentence, as *Militant* readers can see, was dropped from her letter. Waters added that "a new English edition of Guevara's *Episodes*, of which I am the editor, allows *Times* readers to check the facts for themselves. They will discover that Lipscomb's 'quotation' is made up out of whole cloth." That, too, was simply dropped by the *Times*.

At the same time, the *Times*'s lapse in copyediting brought to light a useful revelation about the publishing history of Guevara's Bolivian diary. The *Times* identifies Lipscomb as "the editor of 'The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Che Guevara and Other Captured Documents' (Stein & Day, 1968)." The cover and title page of the Stein and Day edition itself, however, clearly state, "Edited with an introduction by Daniel James." James, who died a year ago, was a U.S. journalist who for a time was editor of *The New Leader*, a pro-State Department social democratic magazine.

In her introduction to the 1994 Pathfinder edition of *The Bolivian Diary*, Mary-Alice Waters explains that Stein and Day "claimed they had been granted 'exclusive literary rights' by Bolivia's military dictatorship.... Publisher Sol Stein told the press he had undertaken the project 'as an act of conscience,' because the Cuban edition [published in English earlier in 1968 in *Ramparts* magazine and as a Bantam paperback] was 'a clear attempt to build Guevara as the Robin Hood of the 20th century.'"

Lipscomb was an editor at Stein and Day in 1968, according to *Who's Who*. It is possible, even likely, that he actually did edit Che's diary, perhaps under the aegis of institutions beyond Stein and Day itself. Those in the *Times* management who, upon request, placed Lipscomb's article in the "Week in Review" undoubtedly know who edited the Stein and Day edition, and under what auspices. This information, however, is not likely to be provided to the readers of the *New York Times*.

Bay of Pigs and October Crisis

Any reader of the *Militant* who doubts that the editors of the *New York Times* might falsify events about the Cuban revolution can refer to the documented record of at least two instances: the 1961 U.S.-backed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, and the October 1962 "missile crisis."

In his 1969 book *The Kingdom and the Power*, former *Times* reporter Gay Talese recounts how the newspaper's publisher Orvil Dryfoos and Washington bureau chief James Reston put a stop to a preinvasion story by

reporter Tad Szulc on the planned 1961 assault that had been scheduled as the front-page lead the following day.

According to Talese, Dryfoos "ordered the story toned down, moved to a less prominent place on the page, its headline minimized, and any reference to the imminence of the invasion eliminated. It was in the national interest to withhold certain vital facts from the American people, including the CIA involvement, Dryfoos and Reston felt...."

Commenting on this decision by the *Times* "not to publish all it knew about the Bay of Pigs invasion," Talese continued: "The *Times* was the bible, emerging each morning with a view of life that thousands of readers accepted as reality. They accepted it on the simple theory that what appeared in *The Times* must be true, and this blind faith made monks of many men on *The Times*. Many. Not all. There had been *Times*men who were less than truthful, or truthful in their fashion, or not truthful in the journalistic sense, which is a truth that is limited but verifiable. Or they had perhaps been too truthful, so controversial as not to be in the national interest or the newspaper's interest, which was often the same thing. *The New York Times*, after all, grew with the nation during the two great wars, prospered with it, and *The Times* and the nation were equally committed to capitalism and democracy, and what was bad for the nation was often just as bad for *The Times*."

October 1962 'missile crisis'


The very next year, in October 1962, the administration of President John Kennedy photographically confirmed the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba. The Cuban government had agreed to this installation earlier that year in face of Washington's escalating aggression. Economic sabotage against Cuba was on the rise. Washington had implemented its Operation Mongoose campaign of terror against the Cuban people and their leaders. And large-scale preparations for a U.S. assault aimed at crushing the revolution had already been set in motion by the Kennedy administration. All this has been confirmed by previously secret documents released by the U.S. government in recent years.

In light of its information about the Soviet missile sites, the National Security Council in October 1962 was meeting long hours in secret in the White House to discuss what course to take. They eventually settled on an armed naval blockade of Cuba and put the U.S. military on nuclear alert.

According to government documents and tapes declassified in recent years, when news of the White House discussions was leaked to Reston on October 20, the *Times*'s chief Washington correspondent, Kennedy administration officials asked him to hold the story in the "interests of national security," and Reston agreed. The following day Kennedy himself called the editors of the *Times* and the *Washington Post*, telling them not to go into print with what they knew, and neither did so. (See Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*, New York: The New Press, 1992.)

Continued on ISR8

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Lies about Che, Cuban revolution

Continued from ISR7

Three years ago, on the 30th anniversary of the October 1962 crisis, the *Times* featured a column by Fedor Burlatsky, an adviser to former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, on the Op-Ed page of its October 23 issue, under the patently false and dangerously provocative headline, "Castro Wanted a Nuclear Strike." Once again with no cited sources, Burlatsky quoted Castro as having written in a cable to Khrushchev during the missile crisis that "I propose the immediate launching of a nuclear strike on the United States."

"Neither the supposed quotation nor the *Times*'s rather eye-catching headline...squares with well-documented facts," wrote Waters in a letter to the editor at the time. She pointed out that the Cuban government itself had published the relevant correspondence between Castro and Khrushchev in the Dec. 2, 1990, issue of *Granma Weekly Review* in Spanish, English, and French, and that these documents had subsequently been reproduced in numerous other publications as well.

"No document contains the sentences Burlatsky 'quotes,' nor any even resembling them," Waters said.

Waters quoted the Oct. 26, 1962, cable from Castro to Khrushchev "that Burlatsky is presumably referring to," showing that it included no proposal for "the immediate launching of a nuclear strike." She also cited an Oct. 31 cable from Castro to Khrushchev, whose reply to the Cuban leader's earlier message was the source of the unfounded rumor. "I did not suggest to you, Comrade Khrushchev, that the USSR should be the aggressor, because that would be more than incorrect," Castro had written. "It would be immoral and contemptible on my part."

In summing up her letter, Waters said: "The documentary record is clear: (1) the correspondence between Castro and Khrushchev contains no passage resembling Burlatsky's quotation; (2) no other, unreleased message

has ever been referred to that might contain the passage; and (3) no other version of the October 26 cable different from the one released by Cuba has been offered that supports Burlatsky's story."

Yet, the *Times* rejected Waters's letter, and the falsifications by Burlatsky remained unanswered. (The entire text of Waters's reply, together with a feature article on the truth about the U.S.-instigated October "missile crisis," was published in the December 1992 issue of the *ISR* supplement to the *Militant*. Readers can obtain a copy by sending \$3 to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.)

Support for Bolivian operation

The third point worth noting about the *Times* editors' abridgment of the letter submitted by Waters is their deletion of the final sentence of a short quotation from a 1987 interview by Fidel Castro with Italian journalist Gianni Minà. Waters had cited this passage in reply to Lipscomb's charge that "there is no record of any attempt by Castro to break through to Guevara's force" in Bolivia to save him.

The *Times* included part of the Castro response but deleted his statement, "We believed in what [Che] was doing, and we believed he could carry out what he proposed." Given Lipscomb's opening remark that among the key remaining questions "is how much support Fidel Castro really gave Guevara's Bolivian expedition," these words by Castro seem relevant to the matters under dispute.

In her letter, Waters clearly establishes the falsity of Lipscomb's assertion that Bolivian Captain Gary Prado Salmón "has stated that Guevara said Castro failed him at a crucial time." The record shows that Prado never made any such statement.

CIA called the shots

Felix Rodriguez, the CIA officer who by his own account issued the order to kill Guevara, has also written his version of a supposed final conversation with Guevara.

Rodriguez, using the name Félix Ramos, was on the scene in La Higuera and Vallegrande directing the operation in October 1967, and he was photographed standing beside Guevara shortly before the revolutionary leader was murdered. Following official retirement from the CIA some time ago, Rodriguez sought to capitalize on his involvement by releasing an autobiographical potboiler entitled, *Shadow Warrior* (Simon and Schuster, 1989). Rodriguez is the Cuban-born son of a wealthy family who went into exile in Miami following the 1959 victory over the Batista regime.

Rodriguez claims that his "instructions from the United States Government were to try to keep [Guevara] alive under any circumstances." On the other hand, he

says, "I also remembered some pertinent Cuban history: Fidel Castro had once been thrown into jail by Batista, only to be subsequently released. 'And look at what we have today, in Cuba and Latin America,' I thought to myself."

So when the regime in La Paz decided Guevara should be executed, Rodriguez claims, he ordered Bolivian soldier Mario Terán to shoot Guevara — not "in the face, but from the neck down. Then I walked up the hill and began making notes. When I heard the shots I checked my watch. It was 1:10 P.M. [on October 9]. Che was dead." (Rodriguez's account, of course, is no more reliable than that of several Bolivian army officers. All of them seek to portray themselves in the best possible light in the eyes of those whose class interests they serve.)

Even this professional CIA killer and liar, however, apparently concluded he could not credibly quote Guevara saying he felt betrayed by his long-time comrade and fellow communist leader, Fidel Castro. Here is what Rodriguez concocts instead:

[Che] refused to speak badly about Fidel, although he damned him with faint praise. Actually, Che was evasive when Fidel's name came up. It became apparent to me that he was bitter over the Cuban dictator's lack of support for the Bolivian incursion....

When I asked him if he had any message for his family, he said, 'Tell Fidel that he will soon see a triumphant revolution in America.' He said it in a way that, to me, seemed to mock the Cuban dictator for abandoning him here in the Bolivian jungle."

It "became apparent" to Rodriguez that Che felt abandoned. That's how it "seemed" to him.

In fact, Rodriguez's entire account of his alleged talks with Guevara has been repudiated by Captain Gary Prado, the Bolivian officer who captured Guevara and to whom Lipscomb falsely attributed this statement. So, even on the part of those competing among themselves for a fast buck and passing mention in history books, there is simply no source for Lipscomb's assertion in the *Times* "that Guevara said Castro failed him at a crucial time."

* * *

By printing this exchange, the *Militant* encourages our readers to take the advice excised by the editors of the *New York Times* from Waters's letter: to read the documentary record and find out for yourselves.

Pick up the books by Guevara cited by Waters.

Read the interview with Cuban Brigadier General Harry Villegas that is quoted by Waters and that appears in this issue of the *International Socialist Review* supplement to the *Militant*.

And buy some of the books and pamphlets on the Cuban revolution and on working-class politics that are advertised on these pages.

Letter to N.Y. 'Times'

Continued from ISR5

link the struggle in Bolivia to the developing prerevolutionary situation in the Southern Cone and elsewhere in Latin America. "We had Cuban comrades in Venezuela at the time; others were in Guatemala, or on their way to Colombia. The Cuban revolution gave support to all these movements."

Pombo's diary of the Bolivian campaign, including parts not captured and previously released by the Bolivian regime, will be published by the Havana publishing house Editora Política for the first time early next year, along with other previously unpublished letters and documents from that campaign. An English edition will be published by Pathfinder later in 1996.

Times readers interested in unwinding the distortions and falsifications of Lipscomb's account fortunately now have the possibility to do so by referring to the recently published expanded edition of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*. It contains not only the entire journal kept by Guevara during the campaign, but also an extensive account by the central Bolivian leader, Inti Peredo, available for the first time in English.

Finally, Lipscomb's gratuitous reference to Guevara's "disastrous posting as Minister of Industries" in the revolutionary Cuban government in the early 1960s is no more accurate than his fabrications about Che's accomplishments as a revolutionary military leader. In fact, both Guevara's day-by-day activity — not only as minister of industry, but earlier as head of the national bank — and his writings and speeches on the practical connection between economics and politics in the construction of socialism are among his most enduring contributions to the Cuban revolution and to the millions of workers and farmers in Cuba who stand ready to defend it to this day. The extensive documentary record of Guevara's efforts in this regard can be found in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution* and *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, both published by Pathfinder.

Mary-Alice Waters
editor, *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*
(Pathfinder, 1994)

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Just say no — Most members of a federal advisory panel said they favored approving Procter & Gamble's Olestra, a fake fat to be used in potato chips and other snacks.

The Center for Science in the



Harry Ring

Public Interest says Olestra depletes the body of key vitamins and can cause dehydration, nau-

sea, bloating, and "anal leakage." Panel members shrug that if people experience such problems, they'll simply stop buying it.

Capitalist values — An international group of airlines have worked out a new and assertedly more liberal policy to compensate air crash victims. A news dispatch said, "The sums would vary according to the standard of living and salaries in individual countries so that insured victims and relatives in the developed world would receive more than those from emerging nations."

He thought it was a strike? — During the recent shutdown of

federal agencies, the governor of Arizona led 50 National Guard members to Grand Canyon National Park in a bid to keep it open and not lose tourist revenue. But the feds said it would be illegal to have "volunteers" staff the park.

Not at all surprising — According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, Marilyn vos Savant, author of the "Ask Marilyn" column, has an IQ that ranks her as the world's smartest living person.

Truly a great society — AIDS patients with a particular form of pneumonia who are covered by Medicaid are nearly twice as

likely to die than those able to afford private insurance. To diagnose the pneumonia and treat it correctly requires a bronchoscopy, an expensive testing technique. Medicaid reimburses hospitals for the procedure at a small fraction of the rate paid by private insurers.

'Labour leader'? — "Britain needs successful people in business who can become rich by their success, through the money they earn. Penal rates of taxation do not make economic or political sense." — British Labour Party leader Tony Blair.

Now will you shut up? — Question to the "Ask Marilyn"

column: "Is it really true that the rich pay very little tax?" A: "No, and this is the myth... that has created the unwarranted and destructive dissension among the so-called economic classes in this country."

Just be sure to keep commerce in — A Sudbury, Canada, councilor is organizing a movement against shrinking Christmas to Xmas. "Let's leave Christ in Christmas," he urges.

Thought for the week — "You start royal service as a monarchist, but you very quickly become a republican." A former butler to the United Kingdom's royal family.

Summit shows discontent in Black communities

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A three-day meeting of the National African American Leadership Summit (NAALS) was a window on the widespread discontent in Black communities across the country, and the growing frustration with the ineffectiveness of traditional civil rights leaders and organizations.

Several of the 500 participants pointed to these themes to explain the enormous turnout for the Million Man March on Washington held here October 16.

The principle organizers of the meeting were Ben Chavis, former executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, now chairman of the NAALS; Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan; and Conrad Worrill, chairman of the Chicago-based National Black United Front.

Others participating were Hugh Price, president of the National Urban League; Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Jesse Jackson; and Gail Holness, an executive board member of the NAACP. They were joined by several Black elected officials from across the country, Black college sorority and fraternity officials, and members of professional organizations.

Many of the national Black rights organizations belatedly supported the march. Others like the Urban League and the NAACP refused to support it. But local affiliates of these groups, along with political and civic organizations, were strongly involved in building the rally.

Organizers of the Million Man March put participation at 1.5 million. National Parks Service officials have retreated from their lower estimate of 400,000.

Most of the participants in the summit had helped to organize the march. Local march organizing committees have remained intact. In some cities, like Pittsburgh, they are helping to organize fights against police brutality and other racist attacks. In other cities these committees have organized follow-up meetings that have become forums for ongoing discussion. Some 4,000 people showed up for such a follow-up event in Philadelphia.

The summit agreed that the local committees would become affiliated with NAALS and would help carry out the summit decisions.

In short reports throughout the summit participants painted a more detailed picture of the broad support behind the Mil-

lion Man March. A city councilman from East St. Louis reported that city authorities officially closed the city for the march. Buses for Washington were organized through city hall.

Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit chapter of NAACP, reported that 100,000 participants in the march came from across Michigan. He also brought \$22,500 collected from supporters of the march in the Detroit area to be donated to future NAALS activities.

A representative of the mayor's office in Denver, Colorado, reported 10,000 people came from that city and that they are planning a "Mile High Million Man March" in Denver next year.

Black political convention called

The main proposal from the summit was to organize a national Black political convention in late August next year. The convention, scheduled to be held in St. Louis, will be preceded by a national conference in Memphis in early April. NAALS chairman Ben Chavis explained that the purpose of the convention and conference would be to develop a "Black Political Agenda" for the 1996 election.

Chavis added that the two meetings will be preceded by discussions in local cities across the country to "develop input for the agenda." Chavis and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan announced they will be touring the country to publicize the conference and convention.

Many participants were frustrated by the lack of discussion and decisions on vital issues facing Blacks. Except for meetings of ten standing committees most of the summit consisted of panel presentations by heads of national organizations with little opportunities for discussion.

Though a wide range of views were expressed on what constitutes independent Black political action, all stopped short of proposing a break with the two-party system. During a public event attended by 1,000 people Farrakhan said, "Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans have been fair, but we must extract what we need from the parties that exist."

Price, of the Urban League, argued the interests of Black people can never be advanced by a strategy of only voting in one party and "never the other."

Lowery stated his conclusion that the Republican domination of Congress and the Supreme Court meant the federal government could no longer be used to

"redress our grievances." He proposed concentrating on electing Blacks and "defending gains" at state and local levels.

Members of the audience began to take the microphones and demanded to speak after sitting through long presentations and discussions between the panelists. Jesse Jackson, this city's shadow senator, was singled out by several in the audience.

Robert Hamilton, a single parent, related the deplorable conditions his two children face in the Washington, D.C., public school system. "The students don't have up-to-date books, classrooms are overcrowded, and the buildings are unsafe," Hamilton said. "I want to know what you are going to do about that, fat brother," he shouted at Jackson.

A young person asked Jackson, "What have you accomplished for us?" When Harvard University Black studies professor Cornel West attempted to defend Jackson he was booed by the audience.

Order was restored only after Farrakhan pleaded with the audience. He conceded, "Many of you do not feel that we have adequately served your needs. And in many respects you are right."

The order of the closing plenary was changed when several participants explained that the summit had failed to adequately deal with the concerns of Black women and youth.

A student leader from University of California at Los Angeles said they had received no response from the Million Man March organizers to a written list of stu-

dent and youth demands and proposals. A committee report on youth was amended to propose "two permanent representatives, one male and one female, for youth at all levels of the summit organization."

Throughout the conference participants complained about the lack of women panelists and committee reporters. One woman who is a co-chair of a local organizing committee for the Million Man March and a member of the steering committee of NAALS pointed out that there was no standing committee on the concerns of women at this summit. Chavis promised that the "concerns of our sisters will be addressed and dealt with."

"Our struggle has been filled with a history of denigrating the contributions of our women," Farrakhan demagogically added. "I will not be a part of that and will fight to destroy it," he said to cheers of many participants.

The meeting had to be extended late into the night when angry participants continued to demand a chance to speak.

A reporter for the committee on economic development cited the disproportionately high levels of unemployment among Blacks and the assaults on job gains made through affirmative action.

The meeting adopted the committee's proposal to establish an economic development trust which would provide loans for the development of Black-owned businesses. No proposals were made on how to fight to maintain and extend jobs and to defend affirmative action.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
December 18, 1970 Price 10¢

DEC. 9 — The outrageous jailing of César Chávez, head of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC), has focused greater national attention on the struggle of California's lettuce workers for union contracts with the lettuce growers.

Chávez was jailed indefinitely on Dec. 4 by a California judge in Monterey County because he refused to call off a nationwide lettuce boycott as arbitrarily ordered by the court. The UFWOC was fined \$1,000 for refusing to obey the court injunction against the boycott.

On Oct. 8, Bud Antle, Inc., which grows about 8 percent of the Salinas Valley lettuce, got Superior Court judge Gordon Campbell to issue an injunction against the UFWOC lettuce boycott. Campbell refused to stay the injunction pending appeal unless UFWOC posted \$2.75-million bond to protect Antle against damages. Earlier, on Sept. 14, the Superior Court had ordered the union to halt a strike of lettuce workers, which the union did.

While the lettuce workers, nearly all Chicanos, struggle for a union contract, higher wages, better working conditions, and exercise their elementary democratic right to urge wholesalers and retailers not to buy non-union lettuce, the courts of California stand shoulder to shoulder with

the wealthy corporate farmers.

Bud Antle, Inc., for example, is a subsidiary of Dow and is charged by the farm workers with using a "most deadly bug killer," Dow 24D, also used by U.S. forces in Vietnam.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

December 15, 1945

"The Philippines today are a powder keg," reports an October 29 dispatch to the N.Y. Times. "The Hukbalahaps (People's Anti-Japanese Army) and other 'unrecognized guerrillas' roam the land with rifles on their shoulders and ideas for government in their heads and with hatred of the landed aristocracy in their hearts."

A secret U.S. Army intelligence report, made public during the trial of General Yamashita, declares that the Hukbalahaps' "policy is definitely Communist and...its plans include the establishment of a Communist government in the Philippines after the war, on the early Russian model."

American officials hate and fear the Hukbalahaps because their program calls for the breaking up of the widespread feudal farming system inherited from the Spanish dons.

Although the Hukbalahap is the largest and most powerful organization of Filipinos who are fighting against imperialist rule, other similar groups likewise retain their arms. PM correspondent, David Boguslav, states that all guerrillas including the Huks may number as many as 600,000 and cannot be less than 200,000.

OSPAAAL
International Meeting

**SOLIDARITY WITH THE THIRD WORLD
A CHALLENGE ON THE EVE OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM**

January 12-15, 1996
Havana, Cuba



The Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) will be soon celebrating its 30th anniversary and invites you to participate in an international tribune to honor 30 years of solidarity with struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

For further information, please contact OSPAAAL Secretary-General, Calle C No. 670 esq. a 29, Vedado, La Habana, Cuba. Tel: (537) 3-5136, 30-0583, 31-3101, Fax: (537) 33-3905

Solidarity with France strikers

"If this thing goes through, we are dead," a rail worker at the Austerlitz train station in Paris told *Militant* reporters, referring to the drive by the French capitalist class to slash social welfare. "But we are not dead yet!"

This comment is an accurate reflection of the stakes in the class conflict rocking this country, for all working people and their unions on one side, and for the bourgeoisie and its government on the other.

The French rulers are facing growing competition by their imperialist rivals, especially in Washington, London, and Bonn. They have already failed twice in previous attempts over the last two years to slash social benefits and maintain a strong franc. Now Paris is trying in one sweeping blow to make up for past failures — targeting public workers' retirement rights, medical benefits, and jobs.

The French employing class aims to deal a serious enough blow to the working class as a whole — beginning with workers in the public sector — to open the road to a significant lowering of labor costs, and boost their competitive standing and profits.

France's capitalists are driven by the growing crisis of their system of exploitation and oppression, which is part and parcel of the worldwide depression — with its accelerating march toward massive unemployment, misery, racism, fascism, and war. On that level, Paris is just following the lead of their main rivals, particularly Washington and London.

But President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Alain Juppé, and company may have set off uncontrollable forces. Their government had not planned for the scope of the resistance by working people. The capitalist and landlord classes rarely have such foresight.

The current wave of strikes, rallies, demonstrations, and other labor and student actions is the most important since the one-month massive labor upsurge of May 1968. It is certainly the most sustained working-class resistance to the capitalists' attacks on wages, jobs, social services, and democratic and union rights in the recent

period anywhere in the world.

That's why capitalists everywhere have rallied behind their blood brothers in France. They know that a victory by the Juppé regime will open the door to further and deeper attacks against working people not only there, but in all other capitalist countries. On the other hand, if Paris fails once again, working people around the world will have a powerful example that can be emulated throughout Europe and beyond.

This wave of strikes, combined with the upsurge of student struggles, also provides the best opportunity for working people to combat Paris's terror campaign against Algerian and other immigrants unleashed under the "Vigipirate" plan. The soldiers and cops sent into the streets — allegedly to check "terrorism" — are the troops of the enemy class, who will one day be turned against workers' struggles.

Working people the world over have a direct stake in the outcome of the struggle waged by our brothers and sisters in France. They are showing the way forward for all toilers, for the "wretched of the earth." To defend jobs, unions, and the social wage, workers have to fight the ruling class in the streets and in the process transform themselves into a self-confident class that can take political power.

The order of the day is international working-class solidarity with the workers and youth of France. Now is the time to convince our unions, student groups, and other organizations to send messages of support and delegations to France.

An essential element of solidarity is to make the truth known about the struggle. The big-business media is either silent or falsifying the facts about the battles unfolding. Help get out the truth by reading and circulating the *Militant* at work, to strikers, among youth and other working people.

No to the Juppé plan!

International solidarity with workers and students in France!

U.S. troops out of Haiti now!

The upcoming elections in Haiti have helped put a spotlight on the real purpose of the U.S. intervention in that Caribbean nation — to make Port-au-Prince safe and stable for capitalist rulers in the United States and the Caribbean.

In the past few months alone, Washington has plainly shown its imperial arrogance:

- It has cut off aid and blocked loans to make the point that Haiti's government should speed up selling off industries to private capitalists.
- It refused for months — until December 6, when the White House decided the case was turning into too much of a scandal — to turn over documents taken from the headquarters of the Haitian military and paramilitary groups. (The Pentagon even claimed these files had become U.S. property!)
- It insisted the current president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, must not remain in office.
- It pressed Aristide's regime not to take any further measures to bring to justice those responsible for the murders and torture common under the previous military regime.
- And it announced plans for keeping U.S. troops in Haiti for an indefinite period.

Far from helping the Haitian masses resolve the fundamental problems confronting them, the U.S. and United Nations troops are there to protect the interests of the wealthy capitalists in Haiti and the sharks on Wall Street who are responsible for the harsh conditions facing most Haitians. Washington and the big-business press are cynically portraying the upcoming vote as the key for democracy in Haiti, especially emphasizing the importance of Aristide stepping down.

Aristide was elected in 1990 on the wave of an upsurge. The masses in Haiti had succeeded in overthrowing the hated Duvalier dictatorship and proceeded to fight for greater democratic space.

Any repeat of such mass mobilizations is exactly what the U.S. government and Haiti's ruling class want to avoid. Washington hopes the December 17 elections will be a step toward making capitalist rule more stable, and especially toward guaranteeing that those in charge sing the U.S. government's tune without hesitation. Even though Aristide bowed to the Clinton administration and agreed to be returned through U.S. bayonets, he is not as reliable as the succession of dictators Washington propped up in the past.

Thousands of Haitians have learned through bitter experience that the U.S. imperialist boot will never be used to disarm the thugs who imposed terror on them for decades. When a raid was recently organized on the home of Prosper Avril, the former military dictator was gone. Hours earlier he had been visited by a U.S. em-

bassy official, and, in what the embassy said was a "coincidence," he soon fled to seek asylum at the Colombian embassy. In another such example, Emmanuel Constant, a leader of the main paramilitary group FRAPH, recently confirmed in an interview that he was a paid agent of the CIA from 1991 to 1994. Constant directed the brutal treatment meted out to opponents of the military dictatorship and stated the U.S. government "knew exactly what I was doing."

These events in Haiti help lay bare the lie perpetrated by Clinton that Washington is using its military muscle around the globe — whether in Bosnia, the Middle East, or Haiti — to promote democracy and peace.

It is testimony to the tenacious resistance of Haiti's workers and peasants that the Tonton Macoutes did not succeed in forcing Haiti's masses to accept being ruled by the military thugs who overthrew Aristide's elected government.

The invasion by U.S. troops last year was initially welcomed by many Haitians. But it was never designed to end the rule of the class that the military regime served — the factory owners and landlords. It was designed to appease immediate demands for an end to the military regime and then exercise control over what kind of government would end up replacing the ousted dictators. Washington is now making it clear that it will use everything at its disposal to make its control firm.

For many, the return of Aristide raised hopes of winning greater democratic rights, jailing some of those responsible for the wave of killings under the military regime, having a chance to organize unions and fight for a more equitable distribution of land, and organizing literacy and health-care programs. It is now becoming clearer to millions that none of the aspirations of Haitian working people will be achieved under the U.S. boot. It is becoming easier to see why sovereign control of a nation, democracy, and independence are incompatible with the presence of the U.S. military on the scene.

That is why a growing number of voices are calling for an end to the U.S. occupation and demanding justice for the horrible crimes committed under the military regime led by Raoul Cedras.

These demands should receive the support of working people around the world. The battle to limit the ability of the thugs to operate freely is part of the fight to defend democratic rights and carve out space for Haiti's working people to organize themselves and eventually build a communist leadership that can lead the fight against imperialist domination.

As the struggle unfolds over what will happen next in Haiti, working people should raise their voices loudly, demanding:

U.S. and UN troops out of Haiti now!

Troops in Bosnia

Continued from front page

massive force in a workers state for the first time in decades. The State Department's official goal is to enforce the partition of Bosnia, agreed to by the warring regimes in the former Yugoslav republics in a deal brokered by Washington on a military base in Dayton, Ohio, November 21. The masters of the U.S. empire are trying to boost their military and economic domination of the region, get one up on their European competitors, particularly Paris and Bonn, and take a stab at re-establishing capitalism in the former Yugoslavia.

The first NATO unit composed of 28 soldiers landed in Sarajevo December 4 and included two GIs. Some 3,000 U.S. soldiers are imminently expected to arrive in Kaposvar, Hungary, for a brief stopover on the way to Bosnia by train. Overall, 32,000 U.S. military personnel will be involved in the action, including the 20,000 GIs in Bosnia, 5,000 in Croatia, and 7,000 support troops in Hungary and Italy.

The parliament in Germany voted December 6 to approve sending 4,000 German soldiers to the Balkans — Bonn's largest military mission abroad since World War II. Bonn has already participated in United Nations "peacekeeping missions," including providing logistical support to U.S. jets during the NATO bombings in Bosnia in September.

While some big-business politicians continue to quibble over the deployment of U.S. troops in the region, Sen. Bob Dole, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, made public his support for the military intervention. Aiming fire at Sen. Phil Gramm, a campaign rival, Dole declared, "If Phil Gramm wants to say he doesn't support the American forces there, I'll be glad to have that debate with him."

White House officials estimate that the military operation, proposed by Clinton to last one year, could cost \$1.5 billion. In addition, Washington will contribute about \$600 million, over three years, supposedly to rebuild Bosnia's infrastructure. Some 250,000 people have died there in the military conflict that began in 1991. Hundreds of thousands more have been driven from their homes or forced into exile.

A meeting co-sponsored by the World Bank and the European Commission is planned in Brussels December 18-19 to discuss the total cost of the rebuilding effort — estimated at \$6 billion. The *Financial Times* reported that the U.S. government rebuffed a proposal that the aid package be divided along the lines of one-third by Washington, one-third by the European Union, and one-third by Tokyo and other governments in the Pacific.

Reflecting tension between the imperialist powers, a French diplomat said that the Brussels meeting was a sop to the European Commission to offset the December 8-9 London conference, which will discuss implementing the Dayton deal, and the December 13-14 meeting in Paris where the accord is to be formally signed.

In another sign of Paris's chagrin, the *New York Times* reported that Washington pressured the French government to recall French Gen. Jean-René Bachelet, commander of UN troops in Sarajevo, after he stated that Paris should have rejected the Dayton pact.

"The Dayton accord is taking us straight into an impasse," said Bachelet. "If the Serbs resist by force, I refuse to have the Americans and Bosnians object if we cannot enforce the peace plan." Bachelet said the Clinton administration "had only one goal: to obtain an agreement at whatever cost to serve the electoral interests of an American candidate."

Bachelet's recall was Washington's latest slap in the face to Paris.

The role of the U.S. government as the dominant political and military force in western Europe was again reflected in the French government's December 5 decision to resume participation in the NATO military command. Former French president Charles de Gaulle had ordered U.S. troops out of France in 1966, and pulled the country out of the military wing of the alliance.

Sinn Fein presses talks

Continued from back page

wings November 13. The two had sustained a "dirty" protest since mid-July, refusing to cooperate with prison authorities and wearing only blankets, according to Sinn Fein's newspaper *An Phoblacht*. The abuse of these and other Irish prisoners by British authorities was raised in a recent motion by 20 MPs in the British parliament and at a November 17 hearing in the UN Committee against Torture in Geneva.

Meanwhile, Sinn Fein leaders have continued to seek support in the fight for Irish self-determination around the world. Since September they have completed successful tours in Australia, France, the United States, and elsewhere.

On November 8, Sinn Fein leaders Adams and McGuinness addressed a 1,500-strong rally at the Ulster Hall in Belfast, known for a historic unionist rally against Home Rule in 1886. It was the first time a republican rally was allowed there.

McGuinness captured the determination of many Irish to press their struggle for independence when he said, "John Major does not have a strategy for peace. On the contrary, the British are adhering to the old strategy of war, demanding a surrender.... They will never achieve our surrender. They failed to achieve our defeat in 25 years of war, in 75 years of oppression."

Toronto store increases sales of socialist books

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

The Pathfinder bookstore in Toronto sold more than Can\$2,500 (US\$1,840) worth of books in November, the best month in recent history. "The debate on the referen-

copies of *New International* no. 6, with the article "Land, Labor, and the Canadian Revolution." Two copies of *The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists* were sold, including one to a member of the International Association of Machinists at Air Canada. "She made a point of telling us that her first job was with Eastern—33 years ago," Marus said.

A telephone operator and member of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union bought a copy of *Mother Jones Speaks*. Another convention participant, who is active in the fight for Black rights, bought a copy of *February 1965: The Final Speeches* by Malcolm X. Another unionist said a co-worker had urged her to buy *Woman's Evolution*. She also

ded \$200 worth of books sold following a Militant Labor Forum on the Beijing women's conference, an \$85 order placed by an out-of-town reader who had picked up a Pathfinder catalog a year ago, and a \$350 purchase made by a new member of the Young Socialists, who had just received her student loan payment.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Sara Lobman

dum on Quebec sovereignty, the increased resistance to government cuts in health, education, and welfare, and the discussions on the Cuban revolution prompted by the recent tour of María del Carmen Barroso and Joel Queipo, two young communists from Cuba, all contributed to the higher sales," Mary Ellen Marus noted.

"The highlight of the month was the \$625 worth of books and seven *Militant* subscriptions sold to participants in the five-day Ontario Federation of Labor convention," Marus said. Among other decisions, delegates to the meeting called a one-day citywide strike in London, Ontario, for December 11 to protest government cuts in social services.

A member of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), who was familiar with Pathfinder, came by the table and exclaimed, "You're missing the one book I want, *Lenin's Final Fight*." A volunteer went back to the bookstore to get him a copy. "He renewed his Pathfinder Readers Club membership and recommended that we urge delegates to buy *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay* by Leon Trotsky," Marus said. "We took his advice and sold two copies of that title. By way of explaining who Trotsky was I showed one young woman *The Struggle against Fascism in Germany*. She bought both titles, saying that she would spend her per diem on books and get a friend to buy her lunch!"

As a result of discussions on the Quebecois fight for self-determination, convention participants bought two

picked up a copy of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. Thirteen people bought copies of the Pathfinder catalog.

The president of a CAW office local, who had already purchased *New International* no. 10, came by the table and asked which book would be the best to read on Cuba. He bought a copy of *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End*, as well as *Surrogate Motherhood, Women's Rights, and the Working Class* and *Too Many Babies: The Myth of the Population Explosion*. Later that day he attended a demonstration in defense of women's right to choose abortion.

In addition to the sales at the labor federation convention, some \$250 worth of Pathfinder books were sold from tables on campuses where Barroso and Queipo spoke. "We paid special attention to making attractive book displays," Marus said. "A big poster titled 'The Cuban Revolution in World Politics' featured the covers of several of Pathfinder's titles on the Cuban revolution, and we distributed a flier offering special discounts."

Titles sold included four copies of *To Speak the Truth*, and two copies each of *How Far We Slaves Have Come*, *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, and *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today: Cuba Confronts the World Crisis of the '90s*.

Other high points of Pathfinder sales in Toronto inclu-

Participants at the November 17-19 Miami Bookfair International bought nearly \$1,000 worth of Pathfinder books and pamphlets, as well as 13 copies of *New International*, 11 subscriptions to the *Militant*, and 9 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. They also purchased 12 copies of *Granma Internacional*, and 2 copies of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, both publications from Cuba. Members of the Young Socialists helped staff the booth, along with other socialists from the area. A big YS display highlighted *The Communist Manifesto* and other basic works of Marxism.

Two students from the University of Miami who are activists in defending abortion clinics from rightist attack and against the Ku Klux Klan bought *On the Emancipation of Women* by V.I. Lenin, *The Long View of History* by George Novack, and a copy of *New International* no. 9 on the rise and fall of the Nicaraguan revolution.

A high school student from Davie, Florida, bought a copy of *The Eastern Airlines Strike*. Her grandmother had been a flight attendant at Eastern Airlines and she wanted to learn more about that struggle.

A display advertising the Pathfinder Readers Club featured the newly reprinted *Polemics in Marxist Philosophy* and other titles by George Novack. An English professor from Florida International University bought a copy each of *Polemics* and *America's Revolutionary Heritage*. In all, eight copies of books by Novack were sold.

On the third day of the fair, several groups of rightist Cubans who oppose the revolution attempted to disrupt discussions at the booth. They failed after several people checking out the books answered their provocations. A man who had recently visited Cuba told them to respect freedom of speech. In response to the accusation that Pathfinder represented "the past," a woman from Puerto Rico told the rightists, "No, you represent the past."

Mary Ellen Marus from Toronto and Rachel Fruit from Miami contributed to this week's column.

LETTERS

Free Leonard Peltier

The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (LPDC) is asking for all people of conscience to stand together and help promote the upcoming events that have been planned to help free wrongly imprisoned Native American activist Leonard Peltier.

To help quicken the Justice Department's decision for executive clemency for Leonard Peltier, and in the historic significance and spirit of the siege at Wounded Knee in 1973, there has been a civil disobedience campaign organized by the National Committee for Nonviolent Civil Disobedience to Free Leonard Peltier. This action will begin on March 20, 1996, in Washington, D.C., as well as other locations around the country.

The LPDC is also organizing actions to take place on February 6, 1996, which marks the twentieth anniversary of Leonard Peltier's capture in Canada. Thus beginning his long and unjust incarceration.

Please make the time to network and advertise this information for the sake of justice and one man's freedom, because Leonard's time is running out. We are hoping that everyone will be able to attend these events either in D.C. or act locally in solidarity.

Leonard Peltier
Defense Committee
Box 583
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
(913) 842-5774

Prisoner request

I am an inmate over here in California, in Pelican State prison. A friend of mine went home. But he used to receive your weekly newspaper and the magazine (*Perspectiva Mundial*) and he gave me your address before he left because he knew I enjoyed your weekly newspaper and magazine. Right now, unfortunately,

I am out of funds and I was wondering if you could give me a complimentary subscription.
A prisoner
Crescent City, California

S. Korea repression

The Central Committee of the National Democratic Front of South Korea (NDFS) has the honor to pay our high respect and heartfelt greetings to you who are struggling for world peace, human rights, and social justice.

We, Koreans, have suffered 50 years of national division by the foreign forces, however, U.S. colonialist policy and the pro-American fascist regime remain as the main obstacles to the cause of our national reunification.

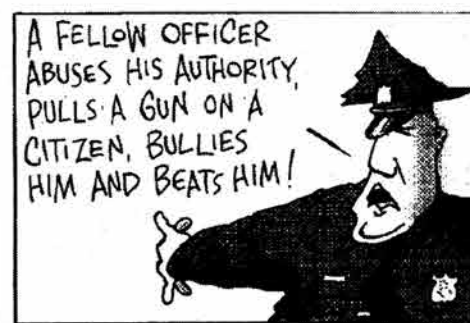
With the appearance of the Kim Young Sam civilian dictatorial regime, south Korean people's social sufferings and disasters have reached the extreme.

The fascist clique uses the notorious National Security Law (NSL) to oppress not only the demand of workers and peasants for democracy and the right of existence, but also the people's movement for independent and peaceful reunification.

In four months or less after its appearance, the Kim Young Sam clique arrested more than 1,000 innocent members of the democratic movement's organizations, fabricated by cruel tortures and punished over 680 of them on charges of violating the NSL.

In only 10 months of the first year after Kim Young Sam came into power advocating "civilian" politics, more than 14,500 patriotic people were punished unjustly.

The percentage of those who were imprisoned on charges of violation of the NSL rapidly incre-



on both sides of the issue. What capitalists are afraid of is the Socialism of James P. Cannon, of Che Guevara, of Fidel Castro, of Karl Marx, and of many others who have gone before us.

I quote from the article: "We visualize a social order that would be based on the common ownership of the means of production, the elimination of private profit in the means of production, the abolition of the wage system, the abolition of the division of society into classes... We have set as our aim the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government, in place of the existing government which we term a capitalist government..."

Thank you for your refreshing article.

Jack Chase
Fairlawn, Ohio

Mark Curtis victory

Congratulations on the parole of Mark Curtis. This victory advances the position of all victims of political frame-ups. By shattering the illusion that the government is immovable and its institutions insurmountable, Mark's parole opens room in the class to push for the release of other victims of political incarceration including Peltier and Abu-Jamal. Good Luck Mark, welcome back!
K.C. Ellis

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.

ased from 32 percent at the end of the previous military regime to 50 percent last year. This proves that the violations of human rights are being aggravated to the extreme under the Kim Young Sam regime. Kim Young Sam has declared shamelessly at every opportunity that there are not any political prisoners in S. Korea, but in reality there are nearly 500 prisoners of conscience in south Korean prisons, being tortured brutally.

The Kim Young Sam clique has inflicted judicial punishment upon a religious leader Mr. An Ho-Sang, aged 90, and his company, who had worshipped at the tomb of the founding father of the nation in Pyongyang out of a pure religious belief.

The so-called civilian regime has imprisoned recently Mrs. Park Yong-Gil, aged 76, the wife of the late Rev. Moon Ik-Whan, guilty of visiting Pyongyang purely out of her desire for reunification.

We south Korean people are struggling with difficulty for independence, democracy, and reunification. We call upon the world

conscience to send disinterested support and firm solidarity to the south Korean people who are struggling for the abolition of the NSL and release of all prisoners of conscience, the innocent victims of the law.

Central Committee,
National Democratic Front
of South Korea
Seoul, South Korea

'Socialism on Trial'

In your December 4, 1995, issue, you have finally published an article which is simple, easy to understand, back to the basics, and the bottom line of Socialism. The article I refer to is "Socialism on Trial" on the eve of World War II" by James P. Cannon. This is what defines a Socialist. What does not define a Socialist are the "one issue" followers who only see and promote their "one issue" and call themselves Socialists.

Capitalists are not afraid of these single issues, which are debated by both the Democratic and Republican parties who advocate

Haiti: tension, opposition to U.S. grow

BY SETH GALINSKY

MIAMI — Tensions have been mounting as the December 17 date for presidential elections approaches in Haiti. Washington hoped to use the elections to prove its intervention had contributed to democracy and stability. But instead, Haitians will go to the ballot box amid growing discontent with the role of the U.S.-led occupation force and the deteriorating economic situation in the country.

Haiti's current president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, indicated he might accede to growing demands that he remain in office past February, when his current term ends. Aristide was overthrown by a military coup in September 1991. He remained in exile for three years until U.S. and United Nations troops invaded the country and returned him to office in October 1994.

Many Aristide supporters argue that the time the Haitian president spent in exile in the United States should not be counted against his original term of office.

Washington's response was quick in coming. "We expect him to leave," Anthony Lake, the White House national security adviser, said November 26. Days later Aristide stated he would step down as scheduled.

The episode reflected the pressure on Aristide to take some distance from Washington. It took place in the midst of a deepening economic and political crisis on the island. Inflation, which dropped to 27 percent for the 1994-95 period, is now at an annual level of 35 percent.

Washington has stepped up a campaign to impose its policies on the Haitian government. Together with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, Washington has been pressing the Haitian government to undertake drastic austerity measures and privatize key industries currently in government hands.

In early August, then Prime Minister Smarck Michel called for bids for two of the state-owned companies, a flour mill and a cement plant. But facing growing opposition to the privatization, including a mass demonstration of thousands in Port-au-Prince, Aristide scuttled the plan. Michel, a businessman, resigned.

Meanwhile, Washington announced



U.S. troops try to control students demonstrating outside old military headquarters in Port-au-Prince, January 1995. Opposition to U.S. domination is growing.

that a \$4.6 million U.S. aid payment was being withheld. The money was needed to buy petroleum. A \$100 million agreement with the IMF and the World Bank is also on hold because of the delay in the privatizations.

Dependent on foreign aid

Haiti is dependent on foreign aid, which it counts on to cover an estimated 40 percent of the government budget, \$133 million out of a total \$326 million.

In spite of promises by the new prime minister, Claudette Werleigh, to come through on an austerity program and privatizing, little aid has been forthcoming.

In the last weeks of November more than 1,000 Haitian refugees were picked up at sea and forcibly repatriated by the U.S. government. Aristide had earlier terminated a treaty which gave Washington legal cover for the interceptions on the high seas. After the recent repatriations he complained that Haiti was not consulted.

Recent shootings and the assassination of an Aristide supporter have also heightened tensions.

Jean Hubert Feuille, a congressman and Aristide ally, was assassinated November 7. At Feuille's November 11 funeral, Aristide called on people to disarm supporters of the military regime that staged the coup.

He criticized the "international community" for failing to complete disarmament in the country. In a clear reference to U.S. officials and to the troops that still occupy Haiti, he addressed himself to "the police who are listening throughout the country," saying that "from now on, there are not two or three chiefs of state, just one. And that is who is talking."

In response, hundreds of youth set up barricades of burning tires. In Cap-Haïtien and Gonaïves, thousands of Aristide supporters searched vehicles and houses for arms. In a section of Cité Soleil in the capital, one former soldier was beaten to

death when he refused to give up his weapon.

Prime Minister Werleigh later urged Haitians to cooperate with the police and not organize on their own to disarm former coup supporters.

At a "National Dialogue" conference a week after the funeral, Aristide supporters approved resolutions supporting the formation of a new political party with Aristide as its head, demanded the arrest of those who financed the 1991 coup, and insisted that foreign troops, including the more than 2,000 U.S. troops still there, leave the country. The soldiers were scheduled to leave in February, but the United Nations extended the mandate for the international force to allow it to remain past the original deadline of March 1996.

On November 17, gunmen strafed city hall. "They did it to intimidate us, but I can't be cowed," said Mayor Emmanuel Charlemagne, a popular folk singer known for his outspoken opposition to the Duvalier dictatorship and its former supporters. Despite criticism of Aristide, Charlemagne endorsed Lavalas presidential candidate Rene Preval. After declaring he would not attempt to remain in office, Aristide said that as a member of Lavalas he supported its candidate.

While several opposition parties have announced a boycott of the upcoming presidential election, there are currently 14 announced candidates in the race.

In another incident, Washington has refused to turn over to the Haitian government thousands of documents U.S. troops seized from the offices of the Haitian military and right-wing paramilitary groups. This includes files of the hated Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH). Emmanuel Constant, a FRAPH leader, was reported to have ties to the CIA and U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The Pentagon claims the documents belonged to the former military dictatorship, not the Aristide government, and became U.S. government property when Washington's troops seized them last year. Stanley Schrager, a spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Haiti, acknowledged the documents are now in the hands of the DIA and "are being reviewed."

As Clinton visits Ireland, Sinn Fein presses for talks

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON, England — Events surrounding U.S. president Bill Clinton's recent visit to Ireland and the United Kingdom showed that those fighting for Irish national unification and independence continue to hold the initiative.

In the days leading up to Clinton's visit, spirited protests and meetings were held in Ireland and Britain by supporters of Irish self-determination. In Derry 2,000 joined a march organized by Sinn Fein on November 26 under the slogan "Save the peace process" — referring to the 15-month-old cease-fire in Northern Ireland and scheduled talks on the British partition and occupation of the north.

In Dublin a rally titled "All-party talks now" was held November 28. It was addressed by former Irish premier Albert Reynolds, Social Democratic and Labour Party leader Denis Haughey, and Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness. At the same time, women's "peace camps" were set up by Guth na mBan (Women's Voice) in Belfast, Derry, Dublin, and London for the duration of Clinton's visit.

On November 28 a letter signed by 140 prominent figures was presented to British prime minister John Major. Endorsed by 20 members of the British parliament and 21 European Union MPs from England, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Scotland, and Spain, it called for unconditional talks on Northern Ireland with all parties involved, including Sinn Fein. That same evening, 100 people attended a meeting in London

called by the Irish Peace Initiative, which was addressed by British Labour MP George Galloway and Eamon O'Cuiv, Fianna Fail member of the Irish Dail for Galway.

O'Cuiv drew attention to the recent repeated appearances by himself and Albert Reynolds on the same platform with Sinn Fein leaders. "We have grasped the nettle," he said. "This is proof of progress." O'Cuiv criticized London for stalling on the peace process. Major's government has insisted since June that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) must disarm before peace talks can proceed. "First they [London] wanted proof that the IRA cease-fire was permanent. Then they raised the issue of decommissioning IRA arms. To ask the IRA to give up arms is not on," he declared. "That would be to forget what has happened over the last 25 years."

Hours before Clinton's arrival on November 29, the prime ministers of Britain and Ireland issued a joint communiqué setting mid-February as the target for all-party talks. The two premiers agreed to refer the issue of arms "decommissioning" to a three-person international advisory body headed by former U.S. senator George Mitchell. This committee will report its recommendations to the two governments by mid-January.

The *Financial Times* of London commented in an editorial that the communiqué "bore the hallmarks of a deal struck

at Washington's bidding."

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams described the announcement as a fudge. "They agreed about that which they disagreed about," he said. Nevertheless, Adams noted, "we want to interpret it positively and make it work. John Major may not. He may be buying time." Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble commented, "The essential issue is that there must be decommissioning and there will not be talks with Sinn Fein until that happens."

Clinton addressed the British parliament in London November 30. Referring to his talk, the *Financial Times* said Clinton was "effusive in his praise for the role played by Mr. John Major in devising a new strategy." The same paper said one of Clinton's major goals was "to calm British misgivings on the strength of the Anglo-American relationship."

The U.S. president refused to say publicly whether he favors London's demand that the IRA hand in some weapons in order for talks to proceed. Reports in the big-business press on his visit emphasized a new "surge of investment interest in N. Ireland," especially by U.S. corporations. In Northern Ireland, according to the *Financial Times*, "labour costs are 10 percent lower than the UK average, [and] 40 percent below the US average."

Large crowds greeted Clinton in Ireland, including a rally of some 100,000 in Dublin. At a reception for Clinton at Queens University in Belfast, Major ap-

peared for the first time along with Adams, Irish prime minister John Bruton, and Unionist leader Trimble. Ian Paisley of the rightist Democratic Unionist Party turned down an invitation to attend, but met with Clinton separately.

Most reports in the big-business press in the United States and Britain painted Clinton's visit as a "triumph" of international diplomacy for Washington. Supporters of Irish independence, however, used it to push their demands for ending the British occupation of Northern Ireland. "The mood of the people from Belfast to Dublin is for lasting peace," said an editorial in the December 4 *London Observer*.

The British government, which continues to pursue its colonialist policy in Northern Ireland, was in fact pushed back. A ruling by the European Court of Justice November 30 illustrated this point. It declared Britain's Prevention of Terrorism Act in breach of European law. John Gallagher, a supporter of Sinn Fein who lives in Ireland, had initiated this case. Gallagher was barred from entering the United Kingdom in 1991 under this act, allegedly for being suspect of terrorism. He was never given the chance for a hearing.

In another recent victory for the republican movement, Patrick Kelly and Michael O'Brien, two Irish political prisoners held under onerous conditions in Whitemoor Prison's Special Secure Unit in Northern Ireland, were moved to the "normal" jail

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