

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban workers discuss
agricultural cooperatives

— PAGES 8-9

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China warns U.S. Navy to stay away from Taiwan Strait

BY BOB MILLER

China's prime minister, Li Peng, warned Washington to keep its naval forces away from the Taiwan Strait. Speaking at the conclusion of the National People's Congress, China's legislature, on March 17, Li stated, "If someone makes a show of force in the Taiwan Strait, that will not only be a futile act, but it will also make the situation all the more complicated."

"If someone threatens the use of force against China, this — as has been shown by past experience — will not spell any good results," Li said.

A U.S. naval battle group centered around the aircraft carrier *Independence* is stationed east of Taiwan. Another battle group, led by the carrier *Nimitz*, was dispatched to the area from the Persian Gulf. This is one of the largest U.S. armadas sent to the region since the end of the Vietnam war.

The Clinton administration is not precluding that U.S. ships may enter the Taiwan Strait. Speaking on the CBS News program "Face the Nation," White House chief of staff Leon Panetta said on March 17, "I am not going to tell you one way or the other where the carriers are going." Another U.S. official told Reuters that Washington retains its right to move through international waters near the strait.

In December, the *Nimitz*, accompanied by other warships, sailed through the 100-mile-wide strait between mainland China

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GM workers resist job cuts by auto giant

Bosses respond to strike with vicious economic assault

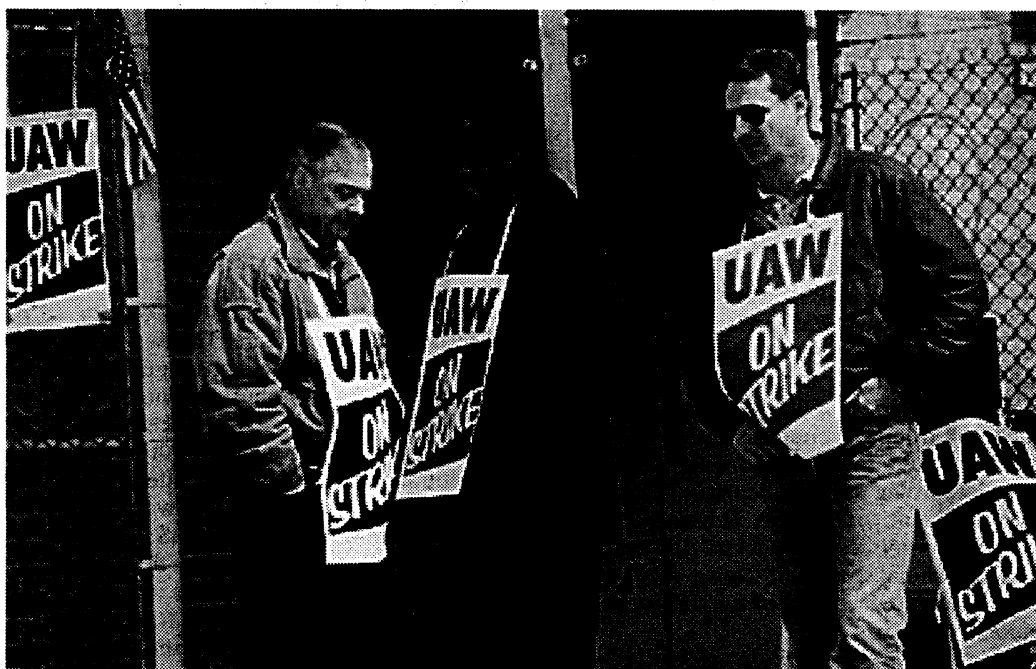
BY JOHN SARGE

DAYTON, Ohio — "We're trying to create more jobs so the younger generation has a future in this plant," said Mathew Mayer. He has worked for General Motors for 31 years. He gave an interview as he picketed the Needmore Road plant here March 16. "The company thought we would go back after a week. Now that we know we can shut down GM, we won't be back until we win our demands."

The strike here by 2,700 workers began March 5 at two GM brake parts plants and has ground the auto giant's production to a halt. As the walkout began to cause shortages of brake components in assembly plants, more than 166,000 have been idled and GM has shut down 26 of its 29 production factories in North America. Plants have shut down from Canada to Mexico, with half the nearly 60,000 parts-plant workers affected by the strike being in Mexico. The company is trying to deny unemployment benefits to laid-off workers in the U.S. — a de facto lock-out.

GM and other U.S. auto manufacturers use the "just in time" inventory system, which means assembly plants get parts as needed. This strike shows the power of parts workers under this system to affect production.

This is the longest strike against a major U.S. auto maker in 26 years, since a two-



UAW members on strike picket GM plant in Dayton, Ohio, March 19. The company has laid off tens of thousands in 26 of 29 plants in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

month strike against GM in 1970.

Thousands of other workers at non-GM owned parts plants have also been affected. At American Axle in Detroit some workers estimated at least 15 percent of the workers at the operation have already been laid off due to the strike. American Axle, which was sold off by GM three years ago, produces axles and other parts for many auto companies.

Some 3,000 members of Local 696 of the United Auto Workers Union (UAW) walked out March 5 over plans by GM to shift work out of the Dayton plants to lower cost suppliers, a practice called outsourcing, thereby threatening jobs.

Health and safety issues and staffing levels that lead to overtime also play a role. A plant manager has admitted in

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Socialists campaign to sell book by Che Guevara

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"Selling the *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* — a book about workers taking power — and other Pathfinder books helps you be known for what you stand for in the world," said Joel Britton, the Socialist Workers Party national trade union director, in an interview. He was explaining why socialists who are members of eight industrial unions are organizing to go all out between now and April 1 to meet their goal of selling 500 copies of the book to co-workers on the job.

The results so far in the campaign "are uneven," Britton said. "But where local fractions of socialist workers have gotten onto a campaign footing — presenting the book to a broad range of co-workers — the interest they find shows the potential to make the goals."

The goal for sales on the job is part of an overall campaign by Pathfinder supporters in the United States to sell 1,550 copies of the book by April 1. The book contains Ernesto Che Guevara's description of the struggle that led the workers and farmers of Cuba to overthrow the

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Young Socialists protest Buchanan

Come to the

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BY JON HILLSON
AND TONY LANE

MINNEAPOLIS — "Union yes! Buchanan no!" and "Racist, sexist, anti-gay! Pat Buchanan go away!" were some of the chants people shouted as ultrarightist Republican presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan marched in the St. Patrick's Day parade on Chicago's south side March 17.

"The Young Socialists organized a group of us to go down and stand up against Buchanan," reports Megan Arney from the Twin Cities YS. They met up with YS members from Chicago, Peoria, San Francisco, and Bloomington and Muncie, Indiana, for a weekend of selling socialist literature, publicizing the upcoming Young Socialists convention, and protesting Buchanan.

YS members and friends jumped into the St. Patrick's Day parade upon seeing members of the Irish American Student Organization marching to demand that British troops leave Ireland. They joined the contingent with signs saying "England out of Ireland, Buchanan out of Chicago" and "Yes to Irish freedom, No to Buchanan."

Buchanan was met with pickets at three points along the parade route. He received scattered boos and cheers throughout. A young woman ran up to one of the protesters and pointed at the *Militant*, saying, "I want one of those! I don't like

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Cuban gov't presents facts, rebuts lies in U.S. press — pages 4,10



40,000 protest in Austria

About 40,000 people rallied in the streets of downtown Vienna, Austria, March 14 protesting proposed cuts in education spending. The protesters included university students, faculty, and employees in the third rally of the week — the largest demonstration in the country in years.

The Austrian government plans to eliminate free travel for students on public transportation, reduce scholarships, and cut back government subsidies paid to parents with children in school. Some 90,000 students would be affected by the public transportation measure, according to Agnes Berlakovich, chairperson of the Austrian Students Union.

Lebanon: gov't, labor face off

The Lebanese General Confederation of Workers (CGTL), which numbers 400,000 members, called for a general strike February 29. The aim of the strike was to demand a 76 percent wage raise to make up for inflation and an end to the government ban on demonstrations. The labor federation was also protesting the regime's most recent attempt to limit the number of television and radio stations permitted to broadcast. The CGTL planned marches in Beirut and other cities.

Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri declared the actions illegal and called on the 50,000-strong army to take control of the cities on the day of the walkout. Thousands of troops occupied strategic positions and set up roadblocks with machine guns, enforcing a general curfew declared from 3:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. February 29 to prevent assemblies of workers. According to the official National News Agency, 2,500 people were arrested for curfew violations.

In effect, most working people were forced to stay home that day. Lebanese journalist Imad Jamal Eddine said in a phone interview that the CGTL leadership called off the street mobilizations to avoid a direct confrontation with the army.

Ex-presidents on trial in Korea

Roh Tae Woo and Chun Doo Hwan, former presidents of South Korea, went on trial March 11 for their role in leading the



Some 50,000 workers rallied in Tokyo March 2 demanding a wage increase. The jobless rate in Japan stood at a record high of 3.4 percent in January as the number of unemployed workers rose to 2.3 million. The unemployment rate for young people jumped to a historic high of 6.1 percent in 1995.

military to slaughter at least 240 people in the 1980 Kwangju massacre. The two men are also charged with accepting millions of dollars in bribes from businessmen.

South Korean riot cops attacked 300 students who marched on March 8 to the U.S. cultural center in Kwangju, site of the bloody crackdown. The protest was also aimed at Washington after the U.S.-based *Journal of Commerce* revealed that the Carter administration knew the regime planned to use specially trained forces to crush protests in Kwangju and elsewhere.

Okinawa governor fights bases

Okinawa governor Masahide Ota, reflecting mass sentiment, appeared before a court March 11 to oppose renewing the leases of U.S. military bases on the island. Ota has asserted on previous occasions that the military bases hamper development and are a central reason Okinawa remains Japan's poorest region.

About 75 percent of all land in Japan

reserved exclusively for U.S. military operations is concentrated on Okinawa. Some of the leases for the military bases, which take up almost 20 percent of the island, expire at the end of March.

3,000 people rebel in Indonesia

Some 3,000 workers and peasants in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya shut down the Grasberg mine March 10-12, demanding improvement of economic and social conditions for the indigenous people, as well as repair of environmental damage. The government sent 2,800 soldiers to quell the unrest.

"The riot was caused mainly by the suppressed anger and frustration among the Irianese people... which have accumulated for many years," declared a statement issued by WALHI, an environmental organization in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. The U.S.-based Freeport mining company owns Grasberg, one of the world's largest copper and gold producers. Freeport dominates the economy in the province and has production goals of mining 1.1 billion pounds of copper and 1.7 million ounces of gold for 1996.

Aborigines in Australia protest

Some 300 Aborigines and supporters marched in Sydney, March 9, to demand that the building where the first national Aboriginal protest meeting to demand basic civil rights was held on Jan. 26, 1938 — on the 150th anniversary of the arrival of colonial settlers from the United Kingdom — be protected as a historic site. The building is in danger of being sold to developers who will likely demolish it.

Meanwhile, in Ipswich, near Brisbane,

several hundred Aborigines and supporters rallied March 7 to condemn racist statements by new federal independent member of parliament Pauline Hanson. During the recent election campaign Hanson claimed the government gave Aborigines special privileges. Upon being elected, Hanson pledged she would represent only the "white community," not Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders.

Racist S. African officials fired

South African government officials announced March 13 they would dissolve a school board trying to maintain apartheid at Potgietersrus, a former whites-only school. "We will be dissolving them, there is no question," declared Jake Mokobi, a spokesperson for the Northern Province, which funds the school.

The South African Supreme Court ruled in February that the school could not deny admittance to any child based on race or ethnicity. Parents began teaching 150 white students in a hostel in an attempt to bypass the court ruling.

Controllers strike in Honduras

Air traffic controllers in Honduras — numbering 45 in the whole country — went on strike March 11 demanding a wage increase, paralyzing most of the domestic and international flights in the country. The controllers accused the government of deceiving them after promising to respond to their demands for a pay increase by March 8.

Vice minister of transportation Maritza Salinas said she had scheduled negotiations for March 12, but the controllers started their strike anyway. The controllers, who currently earn \$230 a month, are demanding a wage raise up to \$925.

Nuke waste factory opened

U.S. energy secretary Hazel O'Leary opened the \$2.4 billion Defense Waste Processing Facility in Aiken, South Carolina, March 12, where liquid waste from nuclear weapons production will be stored in radiation-absorbing glass logs. While touted as a safe storage facility, some of the chemicals that engineers want to use in processing the deadly poison have produced unexpectedly large amounts of hydrogen, benzene, and ammonium nitrate, which can explode or burn. Similar waste exploded in the Ural Mountains in the late 1950s, making thousands of acres of land uninhabitable for years.

The U.S. energy department says the glass melting machine used in the process is designed to last only three years and all operations will supposedly halt when it is worn out. Most working parts in the automated factory will be contaminated beyond what humans can tolerate within three weeks of the factory start-up.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Doug Cooper in Sydney, Australia; and Georges Mehrabian in Athens, Greece, contributed to this column.

THE MILITANT

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Palestinian students in Gaza

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Unionists discuss Cuba in Montreal

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — "This conference is a strong call for us to pursue our struggle." This is how Pedro Ross Leal, general secretary of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), summarized the accomplishments of an International Solidarity Conference with Cuba held here March 15-16. Ross headed a delegation of seven CTC officials and leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC).

Some 400 people attended a Friday evening opening session and nearly 300 participated in workshops and plenary sessions the next day. The majority of French-speaking participants came from Quebec. A few dozen people came from the United States, mainly from the New York area, and several dozen from Toronto and other parts of English-speaking Canada. The participants were mainly trade unionists and Cuba solidarity activists, including a layer of youth.

The conference was organized by the Montreal-based International Center of Working-Class Solidarity (CISO) and Alternatives, a nongovernmental organization. It was sponsored by Quebec's three main trade union federations — the Central Organization of Quebec Teachers (CEQ), the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) and the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ) — as well as by the Canadian Labour Congress, Canada's main labor federation, and other groups.

The gathering became a protest against the Helms-Burton act, signed into U.S. law on March 12 by U.S. president Bill Clinton. The legislation tightens the 36-year embargo imposed by Washington against the Cuban revolution and enacts penalties against companies or individuals in other countries who invest in Cuba. It

was adopted as part of Washington's campaign of hostile actions against Cuba, using as a pretext the February 24 downing of two planes by Cuba's air force. The group sponsoring the flights, originating from Florida, had repeatedly violated Cuba's airspace.

Economic progress irks Washington

Speaking at the opening session, Ross detailed the impact of the deep economic crisis in Cuba triggered at the beginning of the 1990s by the collapse of Cuba's trade on favorable terms with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. "Our people resisted — not passively, but actively — in order to regain their economy without giving up their social project," he said.

Throughout this period Washington tightened its embargo and increased provocations because "they hoped that our social system would disappear," said the Cuban union leader. But they didn't succeed. In 1994, after four years of economic free fall, there was a small upturn in the Cuban economy that has been consolidated and reinforced since then, said Ross. "That's the source of the current evil actions of the U.S. government against Cuba," he stated.

Ross was joined by three international speakers at the opening session, introduced by Daniel Lachance, vice president of the CEQ. Gérard Larose, president of the CSN, and Clément Godbout, president of the FTQ, also participated. A message was read from Louise Harel, Quebec's minister of employment and solidarity.

Jean-Pierre Jallais, from the French General Confederation of Labor, pointed positively to the recent rejection of the Helms-Burton law by the European Parlia-



Militant/Monica Jones

Cuban union leader Pedro Ross Leal (left) at solidarity conference in Montreal.

ment and the government of France because the law constitutes interfering in other countries' business dealings.

During the discussion period someone asked about the relevance of the Cuban revolution for the Quebecois struggle for independence. Interceding, CSN president Larose stated he didn't think that was an appropriate topic for this forum. He added, "The only thing I can say is that the model can't be imported." The Quebecois constitute an oppressed nation in Canada and their fight for self-determination has been a dominant feature of politics in Canada. But after this exchange the issue was rarely mentioned again in plenary sessions of the conference.

Ross invited everyone to attend the April 25-30 convention of the CTC. He explained that there is currently a debate in every workplace in Cuba on theses that will be submitted to the congress by the CTC leadership (see articles on page 8).

According to Cubans participating in the conference, nearly 2,000 delegates,

representing 2.5 million Cuban workers, will attend the CTC congress. Some 300-500 international delegates are also expected. The convention will be followed by a May Day march in Havana. Delegations to the CTC congress are being organized from Canada and the United States (see ad on page 8).

On March 16, a panel discussion with trade unions officials from Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and Peru, as well as FMC leader Arelys Santana, was followed by a dozen workshops.

Geneviève Boulanger, a student at Sherbrooke University in Sherbrooke, Quebec, attended the gathering with nine other youth planning a two-month visit to Cuba later this year. "I want to see a socialist system applied and how people react to it," she said. The youth staffed the conference cloakroom and sold coffee and muffins to raise money for their trip. Boulanger campaigned for the Yes in the recent referendum on sovereignty and is an advocate of Quebec independence. She also participated in actions against unemployment and a picket line in defense of Cuba.

Is Ottawa a friend of Cuban people?

A one-hour debate erupted in the final plenary session of the conference on Canada's policy toward Cuba.

A draft "Declaration of solidarity" submitted for discussion and adoption by conference participants stated, "We support the Canadian government in its refusal to follow Washington in its Cuban policy and we exhort the Canadian government to continue to develop its own policy."

"This doesn't help us to build solidarity with Cuba," stated John Steele, a member of the International Association of Machinists at Ford Electronics and of the Worker to Worker Cuba solidarity committee in Toronto. "We support Cuba's right to trade with the maximum number of countries. And the more it trades with Canada, the better," he said.

"At the same time," he continued, "we have to recognize that the Canadian government is complicit in Washington's campaign against the Cuban revolution." Ottawa condemned the February 24 shooting of the two U.S. airplanes that violated Cuba's airspace. And it has joined Washington in denouncing so-called human rights abuses by the Cuban government.

"Ottawa rejects the Helms-Burton law," said Steele, "because of interimperialist competition — concern for Canadian investments in Cuba, not because of concerns for Cuba's sovereignty. Working people should demand that the Canadian government denounce the U.S. embargo against Cuba and send massive aid without strings."

"As workers," replied Sara Shartel, also from Worker to Worker, "we have an interest in defending our sovereignty against the transnationals and U.S. imperialism."

"We are not blind to Ottawa's real motives," added Claude Morin, a professor at the University of Montreal and an editor of the draft declaration. "We wanted to underline the positive aspects of what Ottawa is doing because we absolutely need to isolate the U.S."

Michael Walsh of the Quebec City group Carrefour d'amitié Québec-Cuba responded that the Canadian government should be condemned for its attacks on Havana over the shooting down of

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Fight launched to get visas for Cuban youth

BY MACEO DIXON

BOSTON — The Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, based at Roxbury Community College here, launched a protest campaign March 16 to pressure the State Department to grant visas to Cuban youth leaders Maika Guerrero and Iroel Sánchez to visit the United States.

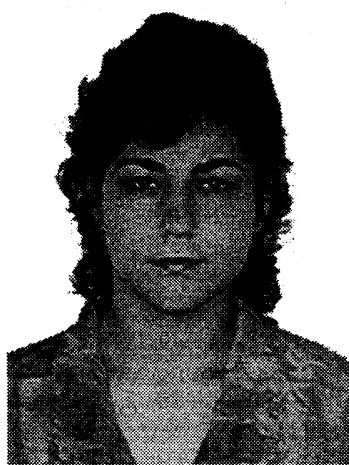
Guerrero and Sánchez are associate researchers at the Center of Studies for Youth in Havana, which provides information on the situation facing youth, particularly with respect to employment, education, and culture. They were invited by 119 professors and student groups across the country to speak on U.S. campuses in April. The Roxbury-based committee is hosting the visit of the two Cuban youth, who are also members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC).

On March 4 Guerrero and Sánchez submitted their visa applications to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. On March 13, the U.S. Interests Section returned the forms and the letters of invitation to the Cuban youth without registering their submission. U.S. officials said there were some "unclear details" about the Center of Studies for Youth. Guerrero and Sánchez resubmitted their applications March 14.

"Not only is this move... highly unwarranted, but it also seriously delays the entire visa process which officially starts the day the applications are actually registered," said a letter to the State Department by the Boston-based Lectures Committee. "We feel this procedure may even prevent the free and open exchange of ideas offered by this lecture series from taking place within the spring academic schedule."

The letter is signed by Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir of the Romance Language Department at Tufts University; Tom Reeves, professor of Social Sciences at Roxbury Community College; and Thomas Bidell of the School of Education in Boston College.

Lenoir, one of the spokespeople for the



Federation of University Students leader Maika Guerrero (left). Iroel Sánchez (right), is second editor-in-chief of the editorial house Abril, based in Havana.



Lectures Committee, said the claim of "unclear details" about the Center of Studies for Youth is a pretext to deny the youth the visa.

She pointed out that in the last four years five other colleagues of Guerrero and Sánchez from the same center were granted visas in response to similar invitations and spoke on many of the same campuses. The five were Ibis Alvisa González and José Antonio Concepción in August-October 1992, Pável Díaz Hernández in March-April 1994, and Kenia Serrano Puig and Rogelio Polanco Fuentes in March-April 1995.

"We are therefore very much concerned that the action by the U.S. Interests Section in Havana may represent a change in policy of granting such visas in the interests of academic freedom and free speech," said the letter by the Lectures Committee to the State Department.

"We urge you to take prompt action on the matter by giving favorable consideration to the applications and grant Guerrero and Sánchez visas to travel to the United States immediately, in time for their lectures scheduled for April."

Last April Kenia Serrano, a leader of the Federation of University Students, participated in the Caribbean Focus Program of Roxbury Community College (RCC), coordinated by Tom Reeves. Serrano gave a lecture and held meetings on campus on

the Cuban revolution. Through this process, a student exchange program was created between the RCC and the Center of Studies for Youth.

Bruce Rose, vice president for academic affairs at RCC, sent a letter to colleagues at the University of Havana March 15.

"We are also pleased to host this year's Cuban Youth Tour Committee, extending invitations and organizing a visit to our college, as well as scores of other universities," Rose said.

"We sincerely hope that these exchanges will be the first of many between our two institutions of higher education, as the laws of both of our nations allow. Such exchanges are especially called for between two institutions dedicated to adult community education."

The RCC students left for Cuba March 16. About a dozen of them were granted travel licenses by the U.S. Treasury Department earlier in the week.

"Clearly, one part of the student exchange has been approved by the U.S. government," noted Kaiser-Lenoir. "Justice should prevail. The State Department should grant visas to Guerrero and Sánchez immediately."

The Lectures Committee is asking professors, student groups, elected officials, civil rights and women's rights organizations, trade unionists, and all democratic-minded people to call and send letters to the State Department immediately demanding that visas be granted.

Letters should be addressed to Michael Ranneberger, Coordinator for Cuban Affairs, U.S. Department of State; and Richard Nuccio, Special Advisor for Cuban Affairs to the Secretary of State; both at 2201 C St. NW, Washington, D.C., 20520. Tel: (202) 647-7024; Fax: (202) 736-4475.

Copies should be sent to the Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee, c/o Tom Reeves, Caribbean Focus Program, Room 3-353, Roxbury Community College, 1234 Columbus Ave., Boston, MA, 02120. Tel: (617) 427-0060 ext. 5151; Fax: (617) 541-0339.

Cuban gov't presents facts at the UN

Foreign minister details provocations that led to shootdown of intruder planes

The following are major excerpts from the speech by Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina to a March 6 special session of the United Nations General Assembly. On February 27, the U.S. government pushed through the UN Security Council a presidential statement that "deplored" the shooting down of two planes by Cuba's air force on February 24. The statement was issued without a formal vote, though it was accepted unanimously by the 15 council members. Cuba requested a meeting of the General Assembly to present its case. The translation is based on the English-language text provided by Cuba's permanent mission to the United Nations. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY ROBERTO ROBAINA

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, The revolutionary government of Cuba has requested the resumption of the United Nations General Assembly to give an accounting of the events concerning the repeated violation of our sovereignty by airplanes coming from United States territory and to give notice to the international community and to world public opinion of the inadmissibility of these actions and their dangerous implications. Coming to this Assembly, Cuba wants to express her deep gratitude to all who one way or another, have helped our country to have today the opportunity to express its opinions....

In the case of the incident that took place off our shores on February 24, we all are well aware of the tremendous pressures the members of the [UN Security] Council were subjected to by the U.S. delegation, interested in getting a fast and undeserved condemnation of Cuba and, in addition to that, abusively taking advantage of the fact that it was then holding the rotating presidency of that body.

Cuba wants to express here her appreciation for the position maintained throughout this process by some of the members of the Security Council who disagreed with the evident manipulation they wanted them to participate in, and who made it impossible for the U.S. delegation to achieve in the end the absurd and unjust condemnation it had intended.

To understand this episode it is necessary to know the background. The history of aggression against Cuba and actions in violation of her sovereignty and territorial integrity did not start this February 24, but 37 years ago. One of the first acts of violence against the Cuban revolution also originated in South Florida — exactly as now — on Oct. 21, 1959, when small pirate airplanes dropped subversive propaganda and bombed the capital of the country, an aggression that cost our people valuable lives.

On the same Opa Locka base, even under the cover of a civil agency, part of the air force that went into action during the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, was trained and prepared, almost 35 years ago. This was a military air force, but in this case they had painted on the planes the emblem of the Cuban air force, something as fraudulent as the repeated use of civilian airplanes for military aggression.

Throughout all these years, the expressions of a hostile policy toward Cuba by consecutive U.S. administrations have been innumerable — ranging from attempts of diplomatic isolation to a systematic policy of blockade and economic aggression, the promotion of domestic subversion, illegal radio and television broadcasts, infiltration of spies and saboteurs, plans to murder the leaders of our revolution, the encouragement of terrorist activities, biological warfare, the support of armed counterrevolutionary gangs, giving shelter to incursions of planes and boats coming to Cuba from U.S. territory to carry out aggressions, among many other actions....

The highest points of this aggressive policy were the already mentioned armed invasion of our territory, organized by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United

States in April 1961, which later ended in a naval blockade and a threat of nuclear war....

With the disappearance of the USSR and the socialist bloc, whose help enabled Cuba to better resist the aggression and the blockade of the United States, the violent attempts against Cuba by groups of Cuban origin established in the city of Miami grew stronger.

Since 1990, 14 infiltrations and pirate attacks have taken place against our country, carried out with boats coming from the South of the United States, and dozens of terrorist plans were aborted by us. Some of the participants in the last serious actions were captured and anytime now they will be able to explain in court how and with whose support they got weapons, explosives, boats, and advanced location and communications equipment.

In addition, the anti-Cuban radio broadcasted a total of 4,480 hours monthly in 1995 from the United States, inciting peo-

at some 22 kilometers northeast of Havana and had also entered our jurisdictional waters.

On Saturday, September 2 of the same year, five Cessna airplanes and five helicopters flew again in support of a similar flotilla, which was supposed to come from Miami to the north of the beach resort of Varadero in Matanzas province. That time the aircraft left the operations zone when the aggression was aborted due to the negligence of the participants, which caused the sinking of a boat and the death of one of them.

On Jan. 9 and 13, 1996, two actions of particular relevance and importance occurred, which are the immediate precedent to the February 24 incident: airplanes belonging to "Brothers to the Rescue" dropped over the city of Havana tens of thousands of flyers with subversive propaganda exhorting the population to carry out actions against the Cuban constitutional order. The Cuban government offi-

It was not us who could prevent those violations from happening. The only one who had the power to do so was the government of the United States, from whose territory the aggression originated.

But we do not say this simply to be believed with no facts to support it. There is irrefutable evidence that the U.S. government was also concerned about the actions of the above mentioned organization, concern that was expressed in the different notes that the American authorities sent to us during this time in response to our warnings.

In note no. 577 from the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, dated Oct. 18, 1995, the Government of the United States informed the Cuban government that members of the above mentioned organization intended to approach the limit of Cuban airspace the 21st of that month, with the purpose of "broadcasting television and short-wave radio signals to Cuba from boats located outside Cuban territorial waters, for a period of time of about a half-hour."

In the same note it was pointed out that "Officials of the United States have warned the flotilla organizers of the provisions of international law and of U.S. law regarding non-authorized broadcasts from ships or airplanes registered in the United States, and have urged them not to perform illegal broadcasts"....

On Feb. 16, 1996, a week before the incident at hand, the U.S. government, besides thanking the Cuban government for the information it had supplied by means of a State Department note, informed Cuba that the Federal Aviation Administration was continuing its investigations concerning the head of the aforementioned organization, who "is facing the charges of violating federal aviation regulation (FAR 91.703)."

As can be clearly seen, the U.S. authorities were fully aware of the existence of a group organized in U.S. territory, in possession of airplanes, engaged in carrying out activities different from the legal rendering of international air service, who were using these airplanes with clearly provocative purposes, failing to recognize Cuban sovereignty and ignoring the very regulations of the state where those airplanes are registered and where the licenses to fly them were issued to their pilots.

If we are to be blamed for any mistake concerning our behavior in the events of February 24, that mistake would be to have trusted that a country as powerful as the United States had the ability to stop groups of irresponsible people from performing perfectly avoidable actions, which could even drag it into a genocidal war against our people.

What happened on February 24

On the morning of that day, airplanes belonging to the "Brothers to the Rescue" organization flew north of Havana and entered our airspace. These flights did not conform to international and national civil aviation standards, since their take-offs and flight patterns had at no time been reported, and besides, before entering our flight information region no communication had been established with our aeronautical authorities.

For that reason, at 10:40 a.m., the Cuban authorities requested information from the Miami Air Traffic Control Center, which replied that it had no information whatsoever. In view of this, aircraft of the Cuban air force took off and the pirate airplanes withdrew.

On the afternoon of that same day, again three aircraft, violating their flight plan, began to penetrate a dangerous activated zone, despite warnings given by the Havana Traffic Control Center. The chief of the band, which was taking part in the action, answered that he knew it was prohibited to fly in that zone, but that they would do it nevertheless. From another plane it was pointed out that they were heading for Havana.

Under these circumstances two intercepting fighters of the Cuban air force took off and performed the preventive



Members of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces demonstrate in Havana February 28 in defense of sovereignty. The sign reads "Cuba does not fear, nor accept threats."

ple to violence and to the subversion of the order established in the country. Cuba has the distinction of being the only country in the world with a television station aimed against it, financed with federal funds of the United States.

'Brothers to the Rescue' provocations

The latest pattern in this long history of aggression has been the provocations by aircraft belonging to the so-called "Brothers to the Rescue" organization, which during the last 20 months has violated Cuban airspace 25 times, always coming from the territory of the United States.

In September 1994, a bilateral meeting between the representatives of the civil aviation administrations of Cuba and the United States took place. At that meeting the American party expressed its concern in view of the information received from the Cuban authorities about the violations of Cuban airspace, and admitted that those flights were also a threat to the security of the genuine efforts to rescue Cuban illegal emigrants, carried out by the U.S. Coast Guard.

We will mention briefly just a few of the violations committed after that meeting.

On Nov. 10, 1994, two Cessna 337 airplanes, which took off from the naval base occupied by the United States in the Cuban territory of Guantánamo, flew over the eastern end of the country and dropped subversive flyers.

On April 4, 1995, another Cessna 337 aircraft entered the Cuban jurisdictional waters north of the city of Havana and flew over more than 40 kilometers [25 miles] along the coast, at a distance of from 5 to 10 nautical miles off shore.

On July 13, 1995, two airplanes again entered the Cuban jurisdictional waters north of our capital, went into a zone forbidden to air traffic. They flew over the city at a very low altitude, dropping propaganda in support of a flotilla of boats carrying anti-Cuban elements which, having departed from Miami, had gotten together

cially notified the U.S. government of this serious violation, like the other ones. But the incident it was also highly publicized by its own perpetrators through the U.S. media.

And here I stop to make a very important point. Many people, even our own friends in the United States, ask us: why did you shoot those planes down precisely now? That is, why did this happen at this delicate and dangerous moment when the mean and unscrupulous electoral race is in full swing in the United States, on the eve of the November elections?

The question is justified. But I should say, and beg to be understood, that this incident was not the result of a deliberate action by Cuba.

This is what happened. After the provocations carried out on January 9 and 13, the situation reached an intolerable point for us. The Cuban population reacted with indignation and concern about those flagrant violations of our airspace. And right after those events, the Cuban Government gave instructions to the air force that what happened on January 9 and 13 could by no means be tolerated.

Warned U.S. authorities

However, [the Cuban government] did not limit itself to that, although it had repeatedly warned the American authorities, publicly and by official notes.... that the risk existed of a serious incident, given the increasingly aggressive and irresponsible actions of the aircraft violating our airspace.

We actually begged the U.S. government to do all in its power to prevent those flights, which violated not only our laws, but also the laws of the United States. It was an additional and special request. Nothing was left for us to do to prevent the incident, except giving up our dignity and the sovereignty of our country. We can certify that our persistent request reached even the highest offices of the U.S. government responsible for making decisions. We were assured that everything possible would be done to prevent it.

warning pass. As there was no response, and, according to the Cuban pilots and air command, two of the pirate planes were at a distance of from 5 to 8 miles from our coasts, with the possibility of repeating the actions of January 9 and 13, the Command Post of anti-aircraft defense, in view of the instructions that had been received since mid January and the powers vested in it — since these actions occur in a matter of minutes — ordered the fighters to shoot down the two planes. The third plane, which by then was out of our airspace and flying away, was not pursued any further.

The Cuban government fully assumes the responsibility of the patriotic action carried out in legitimate defense of the sovereignty and security of our country.

Our helicopters and surface units of our Border Guard Troops immediately began activities for the search and rescue of possible survivors which were continued through February 25. And at 10:00 a.m. that day, at a distance of 9.3 miles north of the Havana coastline, some technical equipment was found, among them navigation charts, a traveling bag, and a portable battery charger.

The Cuban government was the first to publicly regret the loss of human lives, which occurred on February 24 as a result of irresponsible and criminal actions against our people, before the government of the United States did and long before the Security Council.

The same day these events took place, the first statement issued by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the matter informed that Cuba had immediately accepted the request for units of the U.S. Coast Guard to enter our territorial waters to participate, together with Cuban units, in search and rescue activities at the place where the two planes had been shot down. This also allows us to infer that the U.S. authorities themselves realized from the very first moment that the incident had taken place within Cuban territorial waters.

We do not really think that the U.S. government wished to provoke the February 24 incident and the conflict that might have resulted from these developments. What we do affirm is that the United States did not take timely and effective measures to prevent those events from occurring....

A 'humanitarian' group?

It has even been stated that "Brothers to the Rescue" had a humanitarian purpose. This Assembly should know that this band, founded in 1991 and officially registered as a "nonprofit organization without any political interests," is actually financed by the shady money of the extremist Miami mobsters.

It would be interesting to investigate the links between the Cuban-American National Foundation and that group, or to go deeper into the intense negotiations carried out by Congressperson Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, so that the U.S. Defense Department would donate or cheaply sell the group three planes of the type used against Cuba.

Cuba knows the main leader of that organization, José Basulto, quite well. He was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency, trained in Panama and Guatemala and later infiltrated into Cuba before and after the Bay of Pigs invasion. In 1963 he was again infiltrated as the radio operator of a terrorist commando, and in 1966 he worked for the CIA in Brazil. The Cessna 337 airplane which he personally uses in his misdeeds against Cuba has the number 2506 painted on it in big characters. This was the number of the mercenary brigade that under U.S. orders invaded our country at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, which gives us an idea of his political and moral caliber. This is the record of an individual who wants to present himself as a champion of humanitarian causes.

After Cuba and the United States signed the migratory agreements which put an end to illegal emigration, the apparent purpose of the aforesaid organization—promoting illegal emigration to the United States—ceased to exist. That was how the provocation, planning, and execution of terrorist actions became its sole, evident purpose.



More than 1,000 people, mostly youth, protested in Havana March 13, against the Helms-Burton bill signed into law by U.S. president Bill Clinton the day before.

They began to use their planes to act in a more overt, hostile, and dangerous way in Cuban territory. To carry out their actions, they have used twin-tailed Cessna airplanes of military design from the U.S. armed forces, which were used for exploration and combat actions in the Vietnam War.

If any doubts remain concerning this matter, one can always consult the July 19, 1992, issue of Miami's *El Nuevo Herald* and observe the photo of a "Brothers to the Rescue" airplane which still has the acronym of the U.S. Air Force.

Cuba has more than enough proof that this organization made plans to dynamite high tension towers in Havana, to sabotage the Cienfuegos oil refinery, and to carry out attempts on the lives of the main Cuban leaders, among other actions. All these precedents must be kept in mind in order to understand the reasons for the Cuban decision of not allowing the planes of that organization to fly over Cuba with impunity. This band's aggressive plans leave no room for doubt that it is a paramilitary, terrorist organization in open war against our country.

Its activities do not only constitute hostile and provocative actions against the Republic of Cuba, with the seriousness and danger they imply and their flagrant violation of the sovereignty and integrity of a State. It must also be stressed that all the activities carried out by this group constitute violations of the norms that regulate international civil aviation and, consequently, may endanger the lives and safety of many people and airplanes.

Let their intention of making radio and television broadcasts from international airspace, denounced as I have said by the U.S. authorities themselves, be proof of this. Also the altering of the flight plans they must present to the aeronautical authorities of the country where they come from, the flights at low altitudes or over unauthorized zones of the very territory of the United States, the use of radio communication for purposes other than those they are intended for. Let also be proof of this the dangerous, irresponsible, uncontrolled, not regulated intrusion of this organization's planes, for purposes other than rendering air service, in a zone of important international civil aviation activity, where one of the most active international air corridors of the western hemisphere is located.

Around 400 regular commercial flights go through the Cuban air corridors every day, to which our aeronautical services offer the necessary support and cooperation. Thousands of American citizens and citizens of other nations cross the Cuban skies daily without any risks or difficulties. There has never been a single incident that has affected civil transportation through Cuban airspace.

We are, in short, one of the world's countries that renders more aeronautical services to the companies and travelers of the country that, nonetheless, not only blockades us but also hinders the normal development of Cuban activities in this sphere, and from whose territory hostile actions violating international air navigation standards have been carried out throughout the years and continue to be carried out at present. What is more, we are the country they are trying to condemn without having any grounds for crimes it

has not committed but of which it has been the victim.

Cuba quickly expressed its willingness to collaborate with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), because no one is more interested than Cuba to totally clarify these developments and above all to ensure that they are not repeated. We also request that the United States facilitate the entire investigation and the work to clarify the facts.

By coincidence the ICAO Council is in session today in Montreal, Canada, and although our representatives there will present Cuba's position, I would like to share with the General Assembly some relevant points. Cuba is a founder of ICAO and its airline *Cubana de Aviación* is one of the oldest in the world.

Cuba has never been taken to task by that organization for any reason whatsoever. On the contrary, our country gives adequate and satisfactory aeronautical services to airlines and their passengers from around the world. In the entire history of aviation, Cuba has never violated the airspace of any country, much less the airspace of the United States.

We are in New York City, one of the cities of greatest air access in the world. It would be difficult for you, however, to imagine the distance covered by a Cuban plane to get from our island to this city. Cuba is prohibited from using the international air corridors that cross over the United States....

'Civilian' aircraft?

With regard to the incident of February 24, a concerted effort was made, through official statements by American spokespeople and diverse media reports, to arbitrarily identify the actions against Cuban territory as activities appropriate to civil aviation and to stress the civil status of the downed planes. But a simple look at the facts and the events leading up to them and their context shows clearly that this pretense is completely without foundation.

Havana and other places in Cuba have been bombarded and machine-gunned on many occasions with alleged civilian aircraft.

Spies and saboteurs were introduced in our territory, incendiary devices and explosives were dropped on our cane fields and other economic targets with alleged civilian aircraft.

Biological warfare has been waged against Cuba with alleged civilian aircraft.

In this long list of aggression, including the most recent events, these airplanes have changed their identity from that of civilian aircraft to that of craft involved in military actions.

Would the United States have tolerated provocations of the sort that Cuba has had to tolerate? Would the US authorities have accepted aircraft coming from Cuba, or any other country for that matter, entering illegally in their airspace to drop subversive flyers? What would have happened if civilian aircraft coming from Cuba had disobeyed the instructions of US air traffic controllers? Could Cuban civilian aircraft penetrate with impunity the security zones of Andrews or Fort Meade air bases close to Washington, D.C.? Would the United States have permitted the implicit threat to its air defenses and to the protection of its borders? What would have been the reaction of the US public opinion in face of such boasting of impunity by such incursions?

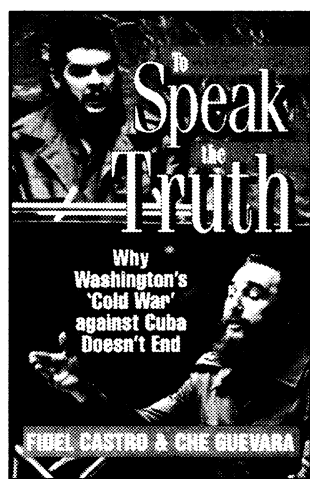
The answer does not require great imagination. But it is not even necessary to make this effort. The answer was given a few days ago by a spokesperson of the U.S. Defense Department who, when asked by journalists what the U.S. reaction would have been, declared that they would not have permitted it....

My country has every right not to tolerate the impermissible. We exercise the same sovereign right of all states to defend the territorial integrity of our country, its sovereignty, and the peace of our citizens. No one has the right to play with the freedom and independence of Cuba much less belittle and make fun of them with impunity.

There is no moral leg to stand on to require from us explanations especially in light of the fact that the country which does so, the United States, protects within its borders the material and intellectual authors that masterminded and executed the bombing in 1976 in Barbados of a Cuban civilian aircraft that eliminated the lives of 73 people. The same country went out of its way to prevent the Security Council from examining the case...

Today we are asking this Assembly if the sovereign right to defend the borders and national security of countries is only a prerogative of the powerful and not of poor and small countries. If the world tolerates what has happened to Cuba it would be tantamount to giving a license to freely

Continued on Page 10



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'Granma' voyage began revolutionary war

In February Pathfinder Press released a new edition of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* — 1956-58.

To promote this book the *Militant* is running "Pages from Cuba's Revolutionary History." This series features articles by and about combatants of the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army, which led the revolutionary war that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the socialist revolution in the Americas.

This week's installment — the tenth — is an account of the voyage of the *Granma*. On Nov. 25, 1956, 82 revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara, set sail on this small yacht from Mexico to begin the revolutionary war in Cuba. Landing in southeastern Cuba on December 2, the column was attacked by Batista's forces three days later at Alegria de Pio and dispersed. One-quarter of the expeditionaries were subsequently able to regroup and make their way to the Sierra Maestra mountains.

Faustino Pérez, a participant in the expedition, was later sent to Havana, where he spent much of the war helping to coordinate the July 26 Movement's urban underground. He was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba from 1965 until his death in 1992.

The account below was originally read over Radio Rebelde on Dec. 2, 1958, and was first published in the Cuban daily *Revolución* (Revolution) on Dec. 2, 1963. Translation and subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY FAUSTINO PÉREZ

Days before, the leader of the movement and the head of the expedition [Fidel Castro] had decided on the day of departure. From different and distant parts of Mexico, where the camps and training centers were located, groups of recruits had to leave, allowing sufficient time. Mexico City, Veracruz, and Tamaulipas were centers of silent mobilization.

Except for a few of the leaders in charge of bringing the weapons and the men, no one else knew the trip's destination. It was necessary to travel with extreme discretion. The police vigilance and the watchful eyes of the tyranny's foreign agents were a permanent danger. An important shipment and key men had recently fallen into the hands of the police. Speed and caution were essential to avoid losing what had cost so much effort and sacrifice to put together. A promise had been made, and Cuba cried out for someone to keep their word: We would be free or we would be martyrs!

We converged one night at a point on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. It was the city of Tuxpan, divided in two by the river it is named after. The night was dark and rainy. Many of us had to cross the wide river utilizing rented boats whose owners rowed with annoying slowness. They must have been surprised to be seated there amid such a large and strange clientele that on repeated trips had invaded their creaking docks. But



Fidel Castro with Faustino Pérez in Sierra Maestra, February 1957.

we were generous travelers who came up with abundant excuses to dispel the slightest possibility of ill will.

One after another the groups arrived by different and obscure streets at the prearranged point. All were convinced by then of the significance of that assembling. No one asked questions or spoke. A series of silent embraces in the woods next to the river was the emotional greeting given to those not seen for a long time. The silence of the night was violated only by the persistent barking of the dogs in the vicinity, who were alarmed. We observed some shadows very close by, moving to and from the river. They were all comrades, working feverishly to haul cargo toward a small boat whose reflection could be seen in the water. It was the *Granma*! No one expressed their thoughts. We all felt intense emotion and happiness, but I'm sure everyone was assaulted by the same fear.

After we finished carrying the weapons, ammunition, other items, and the meager food supply, a subtle competition began as to who would board first, since it was feared that the last ones would have to remain behind. Some had still not arrived. We waited.

At one o'clock in the morning of Nov. 25, 1956, it was time to set out. With the minimum amount of noise and power, the *Granma* began to move. All the lights were out, a single motor was going at low power, everyone was huddled over, some on top of others. The helmsman looked for the center of the wide canal formed by the Tuxpan river toward its mouth. Onward it went. On both sides the city slept.

It took us about half an hour to leave the river behind, perhaps another half hour to cross the port. No one had seen us and we were already entering what we had anxiously been awaiting: the Gulf. We all understood that silence was no longer necessary. Suddenly we broke out singing, in unison, as if prearranged. Never has the National Anthem sounded more beautiful! We were all seized by happiness. Again and

again our anthem filled our throats. Our small boat fixed its speed with irrevocable determination. We were en route to Cuba. But the journey ahead was still not an easy one.

Rough seas

After a few hours the effects of the constant swaying began to be felt. Nausea, seasickness, and fatigue were leaving their mark with growing intensity on the majority of

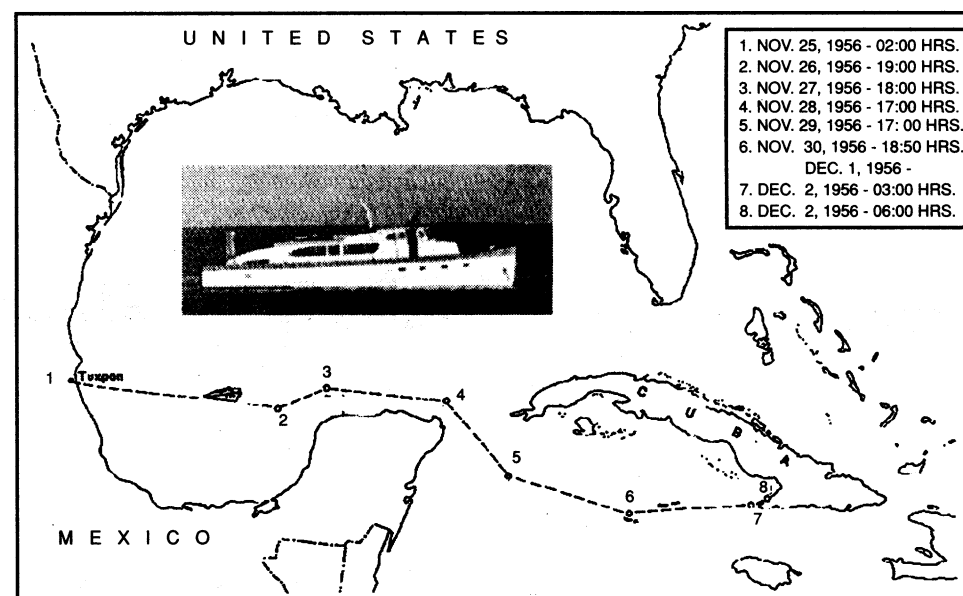
thought, one common ideal, one single desire, was projected in a single direction: the soil of the enslaved homeland.

By now we were out of the zone of danger of the northerlies and another type of danger began. A boat over the horizon or a plane flying overhead was more than enough to put us on alert. Having overcome the intense sea of the interminable Gulf, one morning we passed by the Yucatan peninsula. The proximity to the Pinar del Río coast was strongly appealing; but Oriente awaited us. And that's where the *Granma* headed, slow and resolute, toward its goal.

News of Santiago rebellion

One morning our radio caught news of great significance to us: Santiago de Cuba! The naval station and police station attacked! Gunfights in the streets! Mortars and machine guns seized at the Institute! Guantánamo paralyzed! A wave of sabotage in Matanzas, Las Villas, etc.! We immediately understood the magnitude and the cause of it all. They had received news of our departure. We should have already been on Cuban soil. That was how they responded to our arrival!

In Santiago the brave and disciplined combatants, led by the unforgettable Frank País and Pepito Tey, dominated the city. Guantánamo was totally paralyzed. Pepito, Otto Parellada, and Tony Alomá were the first heroes who fell confronting the tyranny in the new stage of the struggle that had just opened. It was November 30, a day indelibly etched in our history.



Route of the yacht *Granma* (shown in inset) from Mexico to Cuba

the comrades. Almost everyone was seized by such bothersome and common symptoms.

Furthermore, the forecasters had announced bad weather and the Mexican navy had suspended navigation permits for that part of the Gulf. It was a so-called northerly, very frequent that time of year. As we advanced the weather became more intense and the enormous waves — like bobbing mountains — toyed with the small but tenacious boat. The force of the elements slowed the boat's progress to a crawl. The danger of capsizing seemed imminent at all times.

One afternoon we saw that water was rising below the deck more than usual. An order was issued to use the bilge pumps, but instead of stopping it, the water level continued to rise, slowly but visibly. Rapidly and nervously we grabbed two buckets as a last resort. The results proved counterproductive. The water continue rising above our feet, and uneasiness grew among everyone. Trying not to look worried, I spoke with the navigators. I asked how far it was to the Yucatan coast. One of them responded: "Very far. We're goners." Not giving up hope, I found Fidel, who was intently monitoring the incessant and almost useless back-and-forth of the buckets. I was going to raise with him changing course toward the coast. But I saw that the water was already going down; the planks of the deck became visible once more; the bilge pumps were now working.

Everyone began to breathe again. The *Granma* was invincible, like the spirit that moved within its deck! There were forces at work in addition to purely physical ones, and they too withstood the storms and drove the boat onward to its destination. One

Impatience mounted — no longer from the waves but from the speed we were traveling at. But the *Granma* was not characterized by its velocity or size. We passed very close to the Cayman Islands. A helicopter approached in our direction. It circled suspiciously, but left without incident. We were on the last leg of our long journey. Now everyone had their weapon ready, a sufficient number to confront any contingency.

We were prepared for everything, except being captured or dying without a fight. Proud and beaming, with our olive drab uniforms, combat boots, backpacks, messkits, and canteens, we were conquering sickness and hunger. "Soon the lighthouse should appear," said one of our sailors. Everyone anxiously looked for it over the dark horizon. The sea was choppy.

Man overboard

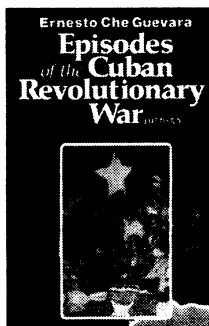
Comrade Roque, formerly a lieutenant in the navy, tried to see better by climbing to the roof of the *Granma*. Still nothing was visible. Climbing down, he braced himself by holding on to the antenna and fell into the sea. Someone saw it and shouted the alarm: "Man overboard!" The helmsman made the greatest effort. We all wanted to do something. Several times desperate shouts were heard: "Here! Here! Here!" moving away from us. We turned to find him, but no one could hear or see anything. With growing anxiety we looked, called out, searched. For the first time the *Granma*'s headlight was turned on, when the danger was greatest.

Everything seemed useless. The comrade who had gone to search for the light had disappeared into the dark depths of the ocean. We resigned ourselves to the bitter

Continued on Page 13

Special offer from Pathfinder

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War 1956-58



Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War is a firsthand account of the military battles and political campaigns that culminated in the January 1959 mass armed insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.

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SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Continued from front page

Batista dictatorship and opened the door to the socialist revolution in the Americas. The *Militant* has received reports of 1,018 copies sold so far, including 149 to trade unionists.

In addition to the immediate campaign around *Episodes*, socialist workers have adopted goals for monthly sales of Pathfinder books and pamphlets, including on the job. "Selling and explaining the books helps you to stand up to all sorts of pressures and defend the Irish, the Palestinians, and others fighting against national oppression. It puts you in the best position to answer the ongoing slander campaign against the Cuban revolution. And it's part of recruiting workers to the perspective of proletarian revolution — by reading with them and encouraging them to come to activities like meetings in solidarity with Cuba."

While they are selling *Episodes*, socialist workers are also encouraging their co-workers to attend the upcoming congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), April 25-30 in Havana.

Jerry Freiworth, a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Houston, said Cuba has been a big discussion on the job there. A March 10 tour by José Basulto helped fuel interest in *Episodes*. Basulto is the right-wing "Brothers to the Rescue" leader who avoided being shot down with his cohorts over Cuban waters on February 24. In the three days following his visit to Houston, four oil workers bought copies of the book by Guevara.

"A key ingredient to selling the Che books is breaking out of the circle of people we regularly work and talk with on the job," Freiworth wrote. "I stopped by a control room at the Shell refinery where I knew a few people from union activity but I had never had broader political discussion. I brought a small selection of Pathfinder books and showed them around. One worker ordered an *Episodes* book and a Pathfinder Readers Club membership. Another took a Pathfinder catalog to look over, and asked, 'Do you have any Marx in here?'"

Socialists from Canada and the United States report good sales at the International Solidarity Conference with Cuba,

held in Montreal March 15-16. Six conference participants bought *Episodes*, and five joined the Pathfinder Readers Club. In addition, socialist workers sold 48 copies of the *Militant*, two subscriptions, and a variety of other literature.

It will take a collective and well-planned effort to reach the *Episodes* goal by April 1. Local fractions of socialist workers in the unions will need to meet to discuss how they can maximize sales to co-workers. Pathfinder supporters in each city need to work out a battle plan to reach as many people as possible. Taking individual responsibility to follow through with people who express interest in the book will also be required.

Classes to discuss its contents and meetings celebrating the book, where various people

March 17: 33%
Should be: 55%

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

Cities	Through Pathfinder Bookstores			To Commercial distributors			Total		Readers Club Membership		
	Goal	Sold	% sold	Goal	Sold	% sold					
Houston	45	24	53%	32	26	81%	77	65%	30	27	
Miami	55	56	102%	42	0	0%	97	58%	37	29	
Detroit	77	74	96%	60	0	0%	137	54%	52	37	
Brooklyn	165	106	64%	130	46	35%	295	52%	110	56	
San Francisco	95	86	91%	74	0	0%	169	51%	64	48	
Boston	65	49	75%	50	7	14%	115	49%	43	35	
Twin Cities	86	56	65%	67	13	19%	153	45%	58	42	
Washington, D.C.	54	42	78%	42	0	0%	96	44%	37	25	
Philadelphia	63	27	43%	49	19	39%	112	41%	43	31	
Birmingham	63	39	62%	49	0	0%	112	35%	43	30	
Cleveland	50	29	58%	40	0	0%	90	32%	31	22	
Des Moines	45	25	56%	35	0	0%	80	31%	60	43	
Seattle	80	42	53%	60	0	0%	140	30%	21	11	
Morgantown	32	16	50%	25	0	0%	57	28%	52	30	
Chicago	77	38	49%	60	0	0%	137	28%	115	68	
New York	175	88	50%	175	0	0%	350	25%	43	24	
Pittsburgh	63	24	38%	49	0	0%	112	21%	115	84	
Newark	171	64	37%	133	0	0%	304	21%	80	53	
Los Angeles	120	38	32%	95	0	0%	215	18%	25	11	
Peoria	36	10	28%	28	0	0%	64	16%	54	30	
Salt Lake City	63	16	25%	49	0	0%	112	14%	31	14	
Atlanta*	48	0	0%	32	0	0%	80	0%	34	33	
Greensboro*	41	0	0%	36	0	0%	77	0%	28	17	
Total	1769	949	54%	1412	111	8%	3181	33%	1206	750	
Goal/Should be	1800	990	55%	1400	770	55%	3200	55%	1200	360	

*No new report



Sales at U.S. hands off Cuba picket in Philadelphia

who have been reading *Episodes* describe its importance, can help boost sales and get people digging into the politics. Six people picked up *Episodes* at a March 17 celebration in Los Angeles, for instance.

"We recently put out a pro-

motional mailing to a list of Pathfinder Readers Club members, *Militant* subscribers, and others about the *Episodes* and our newly expanded hours," Susan LaMont, director of the Pathfinder bookstore in Birmingham, Alabama, wrote at the bottom of the weekly reporting form. "Bookstore volunteers have been calling those who received the mailing. This has resulted in 14 copies of the *Episodes* being sold and a number of folks dropping by the bookstore."

Pathfinder books sold to Co-workers

Unions	Goal	Sold	% sold	Readers Club	
				Goal	Sold
OCAW	38	41	108%	34	7
UTU	85	34	40%	87	18
UAW*	100	16	16%	50	21
USWA	56	7	13%	56	7
IAM*	0	32	0%	42	12
UFCW*	12	0	0%	11	0
UMWA	5	0	0%	4	2
UNITE*	22	0	0%	14	2
Total	318	130	33%	298	69
Goal/Should be	400	220	55%	400	120

*No new report

Along with the monthly goals supporters have taken to increase sales from Pathfinder bookstores, getting campus and other commercial stores to carry Pathfinder books helps expand the reach of revolutionary literature. At a February meeting, the SWP National Committee voted that every party member should participate in this effort, and make at least one commercial sales visit by April 1.

Tony Dutrow from Pittsburgh wrote in on the local reporting form, "We had our first training session tonight." Nine Pathfinder supporters in the area planned to call and make sales visits to bookstores that week.

China warns Washington: 'stay away'

Continued from front page
and Taiwan. It was the first such excursion of a U.S. carrier group since 1979, when the U.S. government cut off diplomatic relations with Taipei and recognized Beijing as the only government of China.

A third round of Chinese military maneuvers began on March 18 in the Haitan island group off the mainland coast. China has declared a large part of the Taiwan Strait as a military exercise area and has warned international shipping and aviation to stay away. The New China news agency announced that the "Chinese People's Liberation Army will conduct joint ground, naval, and air exercises in and over a sea area" covering much of the northwest part of the Taiwan Strait. These military exercises are scheduled to last through March 25, two days after the presidential elections in Taiwan, and will surround Taipei-controlled is-

lands near the mainland.

Taiwan's president Lee Teng-hui, who is expected to win the March 23 election, has made greater international recognition for Taiwan — and possibly outright independence — the focal point of his campaign.

The Chinese workers state regards Taiwan as a break-away province. Taipei was set up as a separate entity by the fleeing forces of the defeated Nationalist Party of Chiang Kai-shek, following the successful revolution in 1949 by China's peasants and workers.

"What is most important is that the leader of Taiwan, no matter how he is selected, refrain from carrying out actions aimed at creating two Chinas or leading to independence for Taiwan in the future," China's premier said.

China's Foreign Ministry also denied that it had given Washington assurances it would not attack Taiwan. "China has never promised to abstain from resorting to arms," said ministry spokesman Shen Guofang.

"U.S. involvement has inspired a wave of criticism, particularly from ethnic Chinese in Asia," reported the *Wall Street Journal* March 15. The *Oriental News*, Hong Kong's largest paper, complained

that Washington's apparent support for Taipei might make Beijing more determined to force reunification of Taiwan.

The *Journal* noted "strains of anti-U.S. sentiment are evident in Taiwan as well." A full-page newspaper ad entitled "Where is dignity?" recalls the days when U.S. soldiers were stationed in Taiwan: "Think about the past, when the bars... were filled with American soldiers. Our sisters, our daughters, where was the dignity?"

On March 15, 200 military veterans staged an angry protest in Kaohsiung outside Lee's headquarters. They accused Taiwan's president of provoking China and demanded he resign. Reflecting divisions among Taipei's ruling circles, another candidate for president, Lin Yang-kang, accused Lee of dragging Taiwan to the brink of war. About 5,000 of his supporters marched through Taipei on March 17 denouncing Lee.

The next day, 50 people took part in a protest in Taipei outside the American Institute, protesting U.S. intervention. They burned U.S. flags and a model of an aircraft carrier. Similar protests took place outside the U.S. Consulate General in the British colony of Hong Kong, which reverts back to Chinese sovereignty June 30, 1997.

GOALS AND SALES FOR 'EPISODES'

FEBRUARY 9 - APRIL 1

Totals as of March 17

City	Goal	Sold	%
Los Angeles	100	86	86%
Twin Cities	80	67	84%
San Francisco	95	79	83%
Greensboro	45	36	80%
Atlanta, GA	45	35	78%
Houston	39	30	77%
Des Moines	45	33	73%
Seattle	80	56	70%
Miami	50	35	70%
Philadelphia	60	39	65%
Newark	133	83	62%
Cleveland	45	28	62%
Salt Lake City	60	37	62%
Boston	60	41	68%
New York	140	82	59%
Birmingham, AL	60	34	57%
Detroit	60	34	57%
Brooklyn	130	66	51%
Peoria, IL	30	15	50%
Morgantown	27	13	48%
Pittsburgh	55	25	45%
Chicago	60	32	53%
Washington, D.C.	75	32	43%
TOTAL	1574	1018	64%
SHOULD BE	1830	1,163	78%
IN THE UNIONS			
UTU	80	46	58%
OCAW	60	32	53%
UMWA	7	3	43%
UAW - no new report	110	35	32%
UNITE - no new report	42	8	19%
USWA	60	12	20%
IAM - no new report	90	12	13%
UFCW - no new report	12	1	8%
TOTAL	461	149	32%
SHOULD BE	500	373	75%

IAM—International Association of Machinists; OCAW—Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; UAW—United Auto Workers; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA—United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union.

'We have more control over production'

Farm cooperative workers in Cuba make progress in boosting food supplies

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

ARTEMISA, Cuba — "Now we have more control over production, we're more active participants in the decision-making," said Raúl Rodríguez, as we walked through a lush banana grove. "And we can see the results of our labor."

Rodríguez is among the 167 members of the Emilio Hernández farm cooperative, located near the town of Artemisa, 35 miles southeast of Havana. It is one of hundreds of Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPC) around Cuba.

"This UBPC was created in October 1993 out of a larger state farm. The goal was to increase production by establishing a more direct link between the labor performed by each worker and the results," explained Angel Cabaña Vargas, production manager of the cooperative, which grows mainly bananas and potatoes. "After being in the red year after year, first as a state farm, then as a cooperative, in 1995 we made a profit for the first time."

Across the country there are more than 3,000 UBPCs producing sugarcane, vegetables, fruit, tobacco, and other crops, or raising cattle; half of these are sugarcane cooperatives. Today UBPC members till 42 percent of Cuba's arable land. The majority of state farms, which previously accounted for 75 percent of the arable land, have been reorganized into the new cooperatives since September 1993.

Unlike the state farms, the UBPCs own their harvest. For food-producing cooperatives, part of the harvest is sold to the state warehouse and distribution agency (called *acopio*) at government-set prices. The surplus exceeding the contract with the state is generally sold by the UBPC at agricultural markets in the cities. The cooperative owns the machinery and purchases seed, fuel, fertilizer, and other supplies out of its revenues.

The government instituted this far-reaching change in an effort to increase



Angel Cabaña Vargas, production manager at Emilio Hernández cooperative, points to potato harvest. Conversion from state farm to cooperative has increased workers' decision-making over use of land and work methods, leading to higher productivity.

agricultural production, which had dropped precipitously — more than 50 percent by some estimates — over the previous four years. Sugar production alone — Cuba's main source of export earnings — plunged from 8.1 million tons in 1989 to a low of 3.3 million tons in 1995.

The economic crisis Cuba has experienced in the last years — known here as the "special period" — was triggered by the post-1989 disruption of aid and trade at favorable terms with former Soviet bloc countries, which accounted for 85 percent of Cuba's trade. The result was acute shortages of food, fuel, fertilizer, spare parts, and other necessities — everything from soap to cooking oil to boots. This situation, which reached its lowest point in

1993 and the first half of 1994, was made substantially worse by the U.S. government's 36-year-long trade embargo.

In 1993 and 1994, the Cuban government took a number of major steps to halt the economic decline and stimulate production in agriculture and industry. It decriminalized the use of U.S. dollars, legalized self-employment for dozens of occupations, opened agricultural markets, took steps to cut the budget deficit, and aggressively pursued foreign investment in numerous areas.

At the same time, beginning with political discussion and debate in every workplace, the workers and peasants organized to resist the economic difficulties, intensifying their efforts to increase production. The current meetings taking place in thou-

sands of workplaces throughout the island in preparation for the April 25-30 convention of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), the country's trade union federation, are another step in this working-class response (see section of CTC theses devoted to the UBPCs reprinted on this page).

The economic crisis bottomed out in 1994 and a slight recovery has been registered. After half a decade of decline, Cuba's economy achieved a growth rate of 2.5 percent in 1995. One of the most significant gains was an 11 percent growth in food production in the first nine months of that year.

State subsidies to the non-sugarcane agricultural sector declined in the first half of 1995 to 57 million pesos — compared to more than 700 million pesos during the same period in 1993.

Production of root and garden vegetables, citrus fruit, grains, tobacco, timber, and honey all increased. This improvement has above all helped meet the food needs for the 600,000 members of the UBPCs and their families — a substantial section of the rural population. It has also increased food supplies available on the agricultural markets in the cities.

Other visible indications of the economic stabilization in Cuba are the reduced blackouts, increased vehicle traffic and commercial life on city streets, and the revalued peso, whose exchange rate on the street market is now around 25 to the dollar, up from a low of 120-140 in mid-1994.

Despite the progress, however, only 50 percent of the non-sugarcane UBPCs were profitable in 1995, up from 40 percent the previous year. Some 77 percent of sugarcane UBPCs were unprofitable during the 1994-95 harvest. It is still too early to estimate the results of the current sugar harvest.

The Emilio Hernández UBPC has been one of the more successful. In Artemisa

Cuban workers discuss agricultural cooperatives

Printed below is the third portion of the Theses for the 17th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). This document was discussed at thousands of factory assemblies and other workplace meetings throughout Cuba between January 15 and March 15, in preparation for the congress of the country's nationwide trade union federation.

The CTC leadership has issued a call to trade unionists and other workers from around the world to attend the congress, scheduled for April 25-30 in Havana (for travel from the United States see ad below).

The theses, prepared by the federation's National Committee after a round of CTC

conferences organized in every municipality, consist of 11 sections. The last two issues of the *Militant* published the first seven sections (see box with contents).

The third installment, printed below, consists of section eight.

The theses were published as a special supplement to the Nov. 20, 1995, issue of *Trabajadores*, the CTC's weekly newspaper. Translation from Spanish is by the *Militant*.

VIII. Working for the consolidation and triumph of the UBPCs

107. At a critical moment when the shortage of resources made it impossible to sustain the big state-owned agricultural enterprises, the leadership in Cuba created the Basic Units of Cooperative Production [UBPCs] as a revolutionary, working-class, and socialist alternative.¹ In practice, this has meant that hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers and their families — the most humble sector of the population — have been granted an enormous patrimony: free and permanent use of land.

108. While brief, the period since the creation of the UBPCs shows that the union plays an irreplaceable role, in particular by encouraging members to take part in and advance the five-point program.² Success in this is decisive for the rapid consolidation of these units.

109. Our 17th congress should reaffirm that this program is an absolute priority for the entire union movement, and in particular for the Sugar, Agricultural, and Tobacco workers unions.

110. At a time when employment is shrinking in other sectors of production and in the area of services, the UBPCs have become our most important source of jobs. We should discuss and firmly implement steps to bring the workforce to full strength at these units. It is essential to create the kind of economic and social conditions that will make them increas-

ingly attractive to hundreds of thousands of new workers. Such steps will help assure a stable, productive workforce that is closely tied to the land and capable of meeting the needs of the sugar industry, food production, and the cultivation of other crops needed by industry.

111. It is necessary to continue confronting the problems — both material and subjective — that have slowed down the construction of low-cost housing for the sugar and agricultural UBPCs.

112. We should discuss and implement steps to make the UBPCs self-sufficient in producing food for the workers and their families, focusing on intensive use of the land set aside for this purpose.

113. The current reduction in use of mechanization makes it essential to promote maximum use of draft animals, and to ensure the production of the tools and implements such a step requires. This is a fundamental road toward increasing labor output.

114. Finally, deepening the connection between the individual and the land has proved to be an effective way to increase production, provide motivation, encourage the participation of the entire family in farm work, and increase workers' income in correspondence with their output.

115. If we carry out the five points, we will accomplish our intention of consolidating these units of production. This will make possible increasing workers' income. It will substantially improve conditions of life and labor in the countryside, which is the only road to stable, lasting solutions to the economic questions posed in agricultural production.

116. The rules that have been established for these collectives and their elected leadership boards must be respected. They must be held responsible for meeting the levels of work and production they agreed to. At the same time, however, their areas of authority must be respected. We must fight the tendency of certain enterprises to charge them unjust prices for

the goods and services they offer. And we should increase the attention paid to the workers. The autonomy workers derive from their new condition as members of cooperatives must be acknowledged in reality. It should become a source of creative initiative, of encouragement to more and better work.

¹ The UBPCs were initiated in September 1993. Since then, they have replaced most state farms. Members of the UBPCs — mostly workers who were formerly employed at state farms — own and sell what they produce, but the land itself remains nationalized.
² The five-point program is described in theses 110-114.

Be a Part of a Labor
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XVII Congress
of the CTC

April 25-30
Havana, Cuba

The U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange is organizing participation in a seminar to learn more about life in Cuba today, including observing the CTC Congress. The dates are:
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P.O. Box 39188

Redford, MI 48239

Phone and Fax: 313-836-3752

Printed below are the contents
of the CTC theses by section.

I. The world, the workers, and
the situation in Cuba

II. Our strategy does not lead to
capitalism

III. Fighting for an efficient and
competitive economy

IV. The decisive effort to increase
sugar production

V. The problem of employment
and reorganization of the
labor force

VI. Workers' wages

VII. Union action regarding
collective contract agreements
and labor legislation

VIII. Working for the conso-
lidation and triumph of the
UBPCs

IX. Unions are by and for the
workers

X. Defending the revolution means
guaranteeing our power

XI. Maintaining unity in the ranks
of the workers

the state farm was divided into three cooperatives in 1993, including this one. Most co-op members we spoke to viewed the transformation from state farm to UBPC as a way to exercise greater, more democratic control over the organization of labor and use of land and other resources. This has allowed the workers who know the land best to decide how to use it, cutting down on waste and producing more.

"Previously, the administration of the state enterprise here would decide everything — including what to grow — according to a plan for the entire enterprise. Sometimes this plan clashed with reality," Cabaña noted. An agricultural worker on the farm for 17 years, Cabaña was elected production manager by his co-workers when the UBPC was established.

"The main change with the establishment of the UBPC is its autonomy. Now cooperative members hold monthly meetings and vote on the plan proposed by the executive board. We decide things like what crops to plant and where to plant," Rodríguez explained.

"Some of our land was unsuited for growing bananas. So workers decided to plant sweet potatoes and yucca in those areas, and now these are yielding good results. Those who work the land usually know best which land is good for which crops.

"This year we decided to plant potatoes as the winter crop. According to initial samples, it looks like we'll have a good harvest," he added with a look of satisfaction.

"In other words, we have a contract with the state, but we decide how to fulfill it."

Responsible for all production phases

With the establishment of the UBPCs, one of the biggest changes has been what is called "linking workers to the work-site," in this case, the land they cultivate.

Cabaña explained that workers were previously organized as specialized brigades that did a given task, such as plowing, weeding, or planting, and moved from area to area. Now the same group of workers takes responsibility for every phase of production on a given plot of land, from clearing and planting right through to the harvest. This allows workers to take responsibility for what they produce. They learn what needs to be done at each step and know their actions will have an impact on raising productivity and quality and reducing waste.

"Before, few people here were very concerned about the productivity of a banana grove," Cabaña said. "Decisions were up to the management of the state enterprise. Now workers make an effort to reduce the cost of each bunch of bananas and have found ways to do so."

What a worker earns depends on the job performed and on productivity. "The basic monthly wage here is 225 pesos for agricultural workers, but some make as much as 600 pesos," he said, including the bonuses and the differential for those who do the hardest physical labor.

Manual labor gets higher pay

At this UBPC, Cabaña noted, "the closer workers are to production and the harder they work, the more they earn. For example, the ox drivers earn more than tractor operators. And both have a higher monthly income than the administrators." Although the president of the UBPC gets a wage of 325 pesos a month, he explained, he's not entitled to any bonuses because he isn't directly involved in the physical labor.

At the end of the year they all share in any profits, however. Each worker's share is determined by the number of days he or she has worked.

Cabaña and the other workers laughed when a visitor from the United States remarked that this wage structure — possible only in a country where workers hold political power — is the opposite of wage structures in capitalist countries. There, generally speaking, the further removed the job is from production, the more you earn, and those who do the hardest physical labor make the least.



Militant/Martin Koppel

Co-op members pooled their labor to build these housing units. Former volunteer workers brought their experiences and proletarian work norms to the cooperative.

Workers at the Emilio Hernández UBPC reported that the first year they didn't meet their production goal and had losses of 140,000 pesos, a gap that was subsidized by the ministry of agriculture.

Cabaña added, "We were able to reverse that situation. In 1995 we had a profit of 99,000 pesos. Half of that, some 49,000 pesos, was shared among the workers. The rest went to buy agricultural implements, pay our social security contributions, and other expenses."

He noted that this UBPC is the only one of the three in the Artemisa municipality that was profitable last year. Workers from Emilio Hernández are working with the other two to help them turn things around.

Agricultural markets

The cooperative sells bananas to the state distribution agency for 6 cents a pound. The surplus — currently about 20 percent of their production — is sold at the agricultural markets for about 30 cents a pound, a price based on supply and demand.

These markets, established in 1994, are supplied by state farms, cooperatives, and individual private farmers. Besides the UBPCs, there are two other kinds of co-ops in Cuba, those where peasants voluntarily pool and work their land together, called Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CPA), and those called Credit and Service Cooperatives (CCS), where the peasants work their land individually but share some services.

The agricultural markets have made food more readily available in cities and towns, easing the most acute conditions Cubans faced at the bottom of the special period in 1993-94. At the same time, food production has not increased as rapidly as most people hoped and the prices remain so high that most Cubans can afford to buy very little at these markets. One of the biggest benefits has been to undercut the burgeoning black market.

Yet another source of fresh produce in the cities, many people told us, is the Youth Army of Labor (EJT), special units of the Revolutionary Armed Forces that work on state farms alongside agricultural workers. The army-run farms, which in 1994 were supplying almost 50 percent of vegetables and other food crops for the two provinces surrounding Havana, bring their produce into the cities and often sell directly off the trucks at cheaper prices than those offered at the agricultural markets, thus helping keep down the market prices. In Artemisa municipality, for example, EJT units are working on two state farms that have not yet been converted to UBPCs.

Increased productivity

At the Emilio Hernández UBPC, workers have been able to increase productivity considerably. "We used to have 600 workers on the state farm," Rodríguez added, including a special volunteer contingent of almost 400. Despite the initially positive impact of the contingent, however, production on the state farm was declining before the UBPC was created.

"Now we have 167 workers — which is the workforce size we need — and we produce more," Rodríguez explained.

Like most of the former state farms, the one at Artemisa had a high proportion of administrators and other unproductive

personnel. "When this was a state farm, we had 20 technicians, brigade leaders, and others here who didn't work in production. Now we've eliminated most of those nonproductive jobs. The technicians became workers or working foremen. So the administrative personnel went down from 20 to 5. Workers feel encouraged when they see the supervisors working."

The full-time administrative personnel of the cooperative now consists of the president, an economist, a production manager, the head mechanic, and the head of welfare. The executive board, elected by all cooperative members, is made up of these five plus six workers.

The head of welfare is responsible for assuring attention to food, housing, health services, transportation, child care, education, and other needs of workers at the UBPC. Such an assignment was another feature that struck visitors from the United States as very different from capitalist enterprises.

Land is set aside to grow food crops, which are sold to cooperative members and their families at prices below those on agricultural markets, allowing them to achieve a substantial degree of food self-sufficiency. The garden also supplies the co-op's cafeteria, which serves workers a substantial breakfast and lunch, as well as dinner when necessary. In addition, UBPC families receive food and other supplies through the ration card, like all Cuban citizens.

Emilio Hernández members have also pooled their labor to build 16 housing units that are nearing completion, with another 16 under construction. They are using low-cost materials known as the "Sandino system," named after the Sandino construction materials factory in Pinar del Río. The apartments have two bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen, living room, and terrace.

While housing construction such as this has been projected for all UBPC units, reports indicate that very few have carried through and built even a small portion of what is necessary. In this regard too, the Emilio Hernández cooperative was in the vanguard, and the co-op members were eagerly awaiting the day when they could soon occupy the homes they had built. Most UBPC members live in the town of

Artemisa or in the dormitories built for the former volunteer labor contingent.

Impact of volunteer contingent

Many of the members of this cooperative had been members of the volunteer contingent on the state farm who decided to join the UBPC when it was founded. Agricultural contingents were organized throughout Cuba at the beginning of the special period as one of the first measures to deal with the country's food crisis. They were formed out of the vanguard construction contingents launched in the latter part of the 1980s, where tens of thousands of workers volunteered to be released from their regular jobs for two-year stints to build roads, dams, and other vitally necessary projects.

Those contingents initially played a political vanguard role both in industry and agriculture. They set an example of proletarian norms and methods of work, maximizing productivity, taking over jobs previously done by administrative personnel not directly involved in production, cutting waste, and transforming political self-confidence and collective self-discipline.

The legacy of the positive impact of the contingent was apparent in the composition and functioning of the co-op and the self-confidence of its members.

Sixty percent of the UBPC members are under 30 years old — a noticeably younger workforce than many cooperatives. Of the 32 party members and 20 members of the Union of Young Communists, many are former contingent volunteers.

One-quarter are women, most of whom are working in agricultural production. Lourdes Manis and Mayeline Torres both came to farm as part of the contingent. "I used to work in an office in Havana," Torres said. "I pushed a lot of paper. But here I'm satisfied, I feel useful."

Raúl Rodríguez, 32, previously an employee of the Ministry of Interior in Havana, explained that he had joined the contingent to work on the state farm, and later signed up for the UBPC when it was founded.

"I like it here," said Ramón Gómez, as he crouched in a potato field to pull up a sample. "I wanted to come back." Gómez, a native of Artemisa and now the secretary of the Communist Party unit at the UBPC, had been living in Havana, where he was a rail worker.

Like others interviewed, he had welcomed the opportunity to join the contingent and then stayed on.

High norms of discipline

A number of UBPC members pointed out that many of their norms had been developed through their experiences on the contingent. For example, the workers maintain their own rules of discipline. Anyone who violates them is called to order by the collective and voted out of the cooperative if they don't change.

Reynaldo Rodríguez Cruz, head of welfare, explained that the cooperative does not have any specialized security person-

Continued on Page 10

Cuba's Agrarian Reform

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Speech by Castro to the 1962 National Congress of Cane Cooperatives. Also includes "American Agriculture and the Working Farmer" by Doug Jenness and articles by Frederick Engels and V.I. Lenin. \$7

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Ahora/Juan González

Harvesting carrots, Holguín province, Cuba.

Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba

in *New International* no. 4

The alliance between workers and peasants against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation remains the backbone of the Cuban revolution. Three Cuban documents with an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters.

\$9

Cuba rebuts lies in US press

Printed below is a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba released to the press in Havana March 18. The document answers false allegations raised in an article by Thomas Lippman and Guy Gugliotta in the March 16 *Washington Post*.

The *Post* article claimed that high-level CIA officials presented Cuban representatives evidence that the Cuban air force shot down two planes flying toward Havana on February 24 over international waters, not inside Cuban air space. As a result, they claimed, Cuban officials retreated from their position that the intruder planes were downed inside Cuban territory.¹ The aircraft were flown by members of the Florida-based counterrevolutionary group "Brothers to the Rescue."

The translation of the statement from Spanish is based on the English-language text provided by the Cuban foreign ministry.



In its March 16 edition, the *Washington Post* published an article that, despite its stated objective of revealing new information on the February 24 incident involving the violation of Cuba's airspace, is aimed at creating greater confusion and disorientation about the event and about Cuba's action.

Quoting anonymous administration sources, the daily refers to a meeting between Cuban and U.S. experts that allegedly forced Cuba to retreat from its denunciation of the violation of its national jurisdiction. Regardless of the fact that every sentence in that article deserves to be answered and adjusted to the truth, it is necessary, nevertheless, to clarify three particular assertions made in it:

1) There was, in fact, a meeting between Cuban and U.S. experts in New York, in the early morning hours between Friday March 1, and Saturday, March 2, which began exactly at 12:15 a.m. This meeting was the result of an initiative and invitation by the U.S. government for Cuban experts to travel to that country,

with the purpose of presenting additional evidence on the events, to which Cuba agreed. The Cuban government is aware that the invitation was made through instructions at the highest levels of the U.S. government.

This was in no way a Cuban initiative, nor was any such request made by the Cuban side. What Cuba did was to adhere to the discretion to which both sides had agreed.

2) The exchange showed the Cuban experts that the U.S. authorities had no solid evidence whatsoever that the events had taken place in international airspace. It confirmed an already indisputable fact: that the downing of the aircraft took place within the 12 miles of Cuba's territorial waters and airspace. The U.S. experts provided no significant evidence of any kind.

3) It is totally false that the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the revolutionary government has backed down from insisting, since the March 1 meeting, that the downing occurred in Cuban waters.

Anyone who had the opportunity to hear or read the statement by the Cuban foreign minister at the [UN] General Assembly² on March 6 — five days after the above-mentioned meeting between experts — or the presentation of the head of the Cuban delegation to the council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) the same day, would know that on both occasions Cuba reiterated its unquestionable conviction that the events occurred over Cuban waters and that Cuba acted in legitimate defense of its territory and national security.

Since then, several press statements were picked up by various international media in Havana, New York, and Montreal, in which both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other Cuban officials insisted on this issue.

It was the U.S. administration that, since Monday, February 26, began to retreat and doubt its own assertion that the incident had taken place in international waters. This is reflected in statements by [U.S.] ambassador [to the United Nations]

Madeleine Albright and Federico Peña, head of the U.S. delegation to the ICAO council, who said more than once that it did not matter whether the incident had taken place in Cuban or international waters.

In addition, on March 12, the U.S. president himself, referring to the incident of February 24 during the signing of the Helms-Burton bill, refused to specify whether the event had taken place in international airspace or in Cuban skies. It is the U.S. government that has been unable to maintain a consistent position since the beginning of this episode, because it lacks evidence.

At the same time, because of pressure on the White House by some congressmen, it is already known that the U.S. administration is using abundant and powerful resources, with very precise instructions, to convince a large number of governments that the event occurred at a different location than the actual site.

It would be useful to know what material evidence the U.S. administration presents for its proselytizing work. It would also be interesting to know how it explains to those it approaches that the first diplomatic contacts of that government with the Cuban government, after the incident took place, were a request for permission from Cuban authorities to enter Cuban territorial waters to participate in search and rescue operations.

Cuba has maintained a coherent and consistent position in its statements based on the facts and the only material evidence that has been presented so far. From the beginning we stated, then reiterated, and continue to assert today, that this was a legitimate act of self-defense that occurred in the territorial airspace over which Cuba exercises sovereignty. And this right, as well as the territorial integrity and national



Militant/Janet Post

Some 85 people in Miami protested the Helms-Burton law March 16. The action was announced in advance on television and in *El Nuevo Herald*.

security of the country, are sacred. We will never renounce their defense.

¹ Here's what the *Washington Post* article said in the first three paragraphs:

"Senior CIA officials held an unannounced and highly unusual meeting with Cuban intelligence officers in New York last month to show them U.S. intelligence data demonstrating that two small civilian planes were not in Cuban airspace when a Cuban jet fighter shot them down, Clinton administration officials said yesterday."

"Washington arranged the encounter and provided entry visas for six Cuban military intelligence officers to call the bluff of Cubans who were telling the United Nations they had solid evidence that the unarmed Cessnas were downed inside Cuba's 12-mile territorial limit, the senior U.S. officials said."

"The ploy worked, they added. Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, who had been telling the United Nations he had 'all the conversations, all the maps' to prove Cuban airspace had been violated, backed down after the CIA briefing. Reports at the time noted that Robaina retreated from his position but did not say why."

² See excerpts of speech on pages 4,5,10.

Cuban gov't presents facts at the United Nations

Continued from Page 5

violate national sovereignty and to convert all nations of the international community into potential victims.

These events suspiciously converge on one point: the passing in U.S. Congress of the infamous piece of legislation directed toward blockading Cuba from the rest of the world when over 35 years of cruel and ever stronger economic, commercial and financial blockade have failed, having been condemned on consecutive years by this very sovereign Assembly....

We want to make it perfectly clear that one of these measures that has just been passed in the heat of recent events, like the one that supports the Helms-Burton bill, is an open challenge to the condemnation by

the majority in this very Assembly in recent years against the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed upon my country.

We want to make it perfectly clear that the Helms-Burton bill is not only directed against Cuba but also against humanity. It is a law that is directed against you all, against all those who desire to exercise their right to have relations with, trade with, and invest freely in Cuba....

We are steadfast and confident in our position. We learned a long time ago that faced with an arrogant and bullying neighbor there is no place for weakness. Living without fear is what has allowed us to survive up to now. We know very well that that challenge is a price we have to pay in

order to live free and without a master. We do not raise our voice, we do not make use of unjustified insults, name-calling and vulgarity, we have no need of hysteria or mendacious ranting.

We know very well, after 37 years of resistance, that the force of truth lies not in the tone in which it is proclaimed but rather in the convictions and the principles on which it is based. We are a small country but our sky, our sea, our soil and our flag will never be violated, humiliated or mocked by anyone ever.

Much blood has been shed during the nearly 100-year-long struggle Cubans have waged in order to free themselves from all types of colonialism and build the independent, sovereign, democratic and free country we have today. Our history, our dead, and our heroic people deserve great respect and especially in the light of the peace and tranquillity that we desire so fervently to give to our children. We will never renounce our vigilance in safeguarding our sovereignty.

Our readiness to enter into dialogue has been demonstrated time and again in the course of the development of our relations with the United States. Cuba has given ample proof of good faith and her desire to make headway in the search of ways to resolve the conflicts that have been present in these relationships, as well as willingness to comply with all her commitments.

We have demonstrated this by scrupulously complying with the accords reached at the termination of the war in Angola, after fulfilling our duty to support with our generous blood the sovereignty of that country, the implementation of Resolution 435, the independence of Namibia, and the end of apartheid. We have demonstrated this by complying with the travel arrangements between Cuba and the United States and other forms of communication, by furthering the establishment and development of relationships with the Cuban community abroad, and by following the accords reached on migratory issues, only to mention a few exam-

ples....

If the government of the United States is really interested in eliminating or reducing the points of friction or conflict between our two countries through discussions and negotiations, we emphatically reiterate here that Cuba is and always will be ready to advance in this direction.

But if, on the contrary, the pretense here is to try to pressure or threaten Cuba with sanctions or condemnations, let it be understood that we have never retreated in the face of pressures or threats. We did not do so when our people were faced by the imminent threat of nuclear annihilation in the October Missile Crisis of 1962. We will not do so now....

Our country has embarked upon a titanic struggle for its own development in the midst of very difficult circumstances that result from the iron-clad blockade imposed upon us for the last 37 years by the government of the United States.

Why does the Security Council act so diligently in the case of the two planes that violated our airspace, shot down on February 24, but has never acted to consider the blockade against Cuba, which has been condemned no less than four times by overwhelming vote in the General assembly? Why does the Security Council not deem it worthy to discuss the present plans within the U.S. government to harden and extend the blockade against Cuba and to criminally aggravate its brutal effects on Cuba's people? Why does it not analyze the behavior of a member state that disregards, disdains, and rebuffs the decisions of the General Assembly of the United Nations?...

Threats have meant nothing to us nor the abuse of power that corrupts and humiliates those who join and submit to it. Ever since the generation of our parents began the final battle to win our freedom, we have learnt the lesson that there is no brute force that can reduce to abject obedience a people who were born and learned to walk in this world with their heads held high.

Farm cooperatives in Cuba

Continued from Page 9

nel. "We organize our own security patrols," he noted, adding that those on patrol just carry machetes, not firearms. Theft has gone way down since the worst days of the special period, he reported.

He remarked with pride on the high standards they kept in the fight against absenteeism. Co-op members with one unexcused absence lose 20 percent of their annual share of profits. On the other hand, workers with a full attendance record are entitled to much-needed items like shampoo that are generally available only for dollars.

Cabañas pointed out that the work day, which had been at a low of 4-5 hours on the state farm, is now 8 hours — a result of the increased political morale and collective discipline.

Some of the workers recognized that many other cooperatives in the country are not as productive as theirs. But, they said, they were convinced that all UBPCs had the capacity to achieve what they were doing. Teams from Emilio Hernández were working with members of the two other

co-ops in Artemisa to contribute their experiences and raise production there.

"We're fighting to get out of the special period," Cabañas commented. "We know we won't get out quickly, but we are having some success."

The challenges facing the UBPCs are now being discussed throughout Cuba as part of the preparatory debate for the upcoming national convention of the CTC. UBPC members, unlike members of other kinds of agricultural cooperatives, are members of the agricultural workers union of the CTC.

Asked if he thought it was contradictory to be a member of an agricultural cooperative and a member of a trade union, Rodríguez paused for a moment with a look of amusement. "Of course not," he replied. "We're workers, not landowners." He noted that the land remains nationalized. It cannot be sold, rented, inherited, or mortgaged.

"We have the right to use the land. But the only thing we own is the product of our labor. This is just a different way of organizing production. We're workers."

Continued from front page

Buchanan!" She bought a copy of the paper and signed up for more information on the YS convention.

One of the socialist literature tables was attacked by some right-wing youth sporting Confederate flags and SS pins, and describing themselves as "true Irish." They threw beer and bottles on and towards members of the team. The socialists were not provoked. Police finally asked the rightists to stop their activities after on-lookers pressed the cops to take some action. The team took their sign in support of a united Ireland reading "Unite the 32 [counties of Ireland], no to Buchanan" and continued campaigning down the street.

Later that evening, Buchanan was met by 25 demonstrators holding signs reading "Fight sexism, Fight Buchanan," and "No Borders, No Buchanan" in front of the Marriott hotel by the O'Hare airport.

The ultrarightist politician lost the four primaries for the Republican nomination for president March 19 — in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin — to Senator Robert Dole, who now needs just a few more delegates to clinch the nomination at the Republican Party convention.

One of the highlights of the Chicago trip, Arney said, was a gathering with some student activists and a group of workers, some of whom had been at the Militant Labor Forum the night before. "These two college students said that Buchanan didn't scare them, they were more worried about the mainstream and how the media controls people's lives," Arney said. At the end of the discussion, the two students said they wanted to go on the Youth Exchange to Cuba this summer, sponsored by the National Network on Cuba, and were interested in coming to the YS convention.

Daily organizing for convention

Young Socialists in the Twin Cities, who will be hosting their group's first national convention April 6-7, are stepping up their efforts to organize the fast-approaching event.

"We begin every day with an 8 a.m. meeting," explained Jennifer Banathy, who came from Boston to pitch in on preparing the convention. "These meetings project daily activities, here and around the country."

The local Pathfinder bookstore has made space available for an office. "A computer has been donated, we've organized files and workspace where local young socialists are involved in convention building. The chapter is responsible for responding to inquiries we've received," convention co-coordinator Diana Newberry noted. Messages have come

Montreal conference

Continued from Page 3

"Brothers to the Rescue" planes, a legitimate act of self-defense.

Speakers from both points of view received wide applause.

The final declaration stated "support for the Canadian government in its choice to maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba and oppose the Helms-Burton bill."

A point was added to ask the U.S. government to stop attacks against members of Pastors for Peace, the group whose recent shipments of computers for humanitarian aid for Cuba have been confiscated. The U.S. government has subpoenaed the records of the group, asking for the names of participants in previous aid caravans.

"When I came here yesterday evening," said Michel Martin to the conference participants, "the only thing I knew about Cuba was Washington's version." Martin is a Montreal city worker and a member of Local 301 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. These workers have been engaged in a year-long dispute with Montreal City Hall.

"I realized that Cuba also is confronted with a campaign of slanders," he added. "I had a change of heart. I want to say to the Cuban people, 'Stand firm!'"

Michel Prairie is a member of Carrefour culturel de l'amitié Québec-Cuba. Patricia O'Beirne and Carlos Cornejo from Montreal, John Steele from Toronto, and Mary Martin from Washington, D.C., contributed to this article.

from as far as Papua, New Guinea, by mail, phone, fax, and e-mail.

The committee has begun preparing three reports to the gathering, Newberry said, "on our political perspectives in the world today, the tasks before us coming directly out of the convention, and a report on leadership of a revolutionary youth organization."

"The high point of the convention," she said, "will be our Saturday night, April 6, rally to support and launch the 1996 Socialist Workers Party presidential election campaign."

Newberry reported that the convention coordinators and the local Pathfinder bookstore are preparing special literature offers for the convention. "They'll focus on the questions that young people need to read and study on," she explained, "like the rise of fascism, the importance of the national question, and how workers and youth can build a communist movement internationally."

Regional teams

Verónica Poses, a YS member from Miami, has been touring cities to help build the convention. From Greensboro, North Carolina, she reported she spoke at the Militant Labor Forum there on "Socialism: a future worth fighting for." More than 20 people came.

"There were a lot of questions," she said, "on Cuba and on Buchanan and what he represents. One person asked whether ending the embargo would help Cuba or not. I pointed out that ending the embargo will help, but it won't solve all the problems Cuba faces. What Cuba needs is more revolutions like Cuba's around the world — including here in the United States."

At the forum, local YS member Montserrat Caballero reported on activities leading up to the convention, including literature tables, a fund-raising yard sale, and discussions the local YS chapter is planning around the principles drawn up by the YS National Committee for discussion and adoption at the convention.

They also reach out to meet other fighters. "Before the forum, four members of the YS and some other supporters of the Militant went to a rally in support of Kmart workers who are fighting for a contract. To get to the forum, one YSer drove three hours from the university she attends in Asheville, North Carolina. She is now trying to set up a meeting at her campus where I can speak," said Poses.

Tami Peterson, a YS leader from San Francisco who joined the activities in Chicago, is spending the next two and a half weeks in Illinois helping to build the convention.

Rebecca Gettleman, from Des Moines, Iowa, reported that the YS there has just signed up another member, a 24-year-old meatpacker who had first come to the Pathfinder bookstore and started attending Militant Labor Forums. "It's great," said Gettleman. "It means we have a chapter here now." The chapter will elect a delegate with voice and vote at the convention. Gettleman is putting plans together for teams to campuses from Omaha to Iowa City in the next week. "Already we have

Pastors for Peace call for protests

BY VALERIE JOHNSON

BOSTON — The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) and Pastors for Peace have called for protests at federal buildings and courthouses across the United States March 22.

The actions were called to support a liquid-diet hunger strike by seven members and supporters of the group and to condemn recent measures by Washington — including the Helms-Burton legislation — tightening the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba and Washington's ban on travel to the island.

The demonstrations will also condemn a grand jury subpoena served on IFCO demanding documents and testimony by its leaders related to two previous humanitarian aid caravans to Cuba the group organized in 1994 and 1995 in violation of the U.S. embargo against that country. A flyer by the July 26 Coalition here says the "subpoena is an attack on the Cuba solidarity movement and an effort to cripple



Above: Middle and high school students march in support of Chicano studies classes at "Restoring Unity in Aztlan" rally March 8 in Tucson, Arizona. They held march of 600 last October. Activists are planning a National Raza March against the Republican Party Convention August 12 in San Diego. Below: March 6 protest in Bloomington, Indiana, against U.S. attacks on Cuba. At right is YS member Tom Alter. Young Socialists are building convention among young fighters all over.

Doug Nelson, a YS member from Minneapolis, coming down, and we are looking for others to come and give us a hand."

To reach the YS convention center call (612) 645-1674 or e-mail the YS at

73323,1177@compuserve.com

YS members Tami Peterson and Aislinn Pulley reporting from Chicago contributed to this article.

Curtis supporters fight Illinois decision to reject his parole

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

CHICAGO — Mark Curtis's application for parole in Illinois has been rejected, lawyers for the imprisoned political activist were told March 19. Four months ago, on November 21, Iowa parole officials voted to grant Curtis freedom on parole. Curtis, a member of the Socialist Workers Party and union activist, was framed up on charges of attempted rape and burglary in 1988 and has served more than seven years in Iowa prison.

Curtis had asked to be paroled to Chicago, where his wife Kate Kaku lives.

From the outset, Illinois authorities refused to cooperate with Curtis in processing his application. One of the "problems" they cited was that his marriage to Kaku was "common law." Curtis and Kaku formalized their marriage March 11.

While a certified copy of his marriage license was in the mail to Illinois, Curtis was told by his prison counselor that prison authorities had received a letter from Illinois Department of Corrections official Vivian Sneed saying he was denied parole for three reasons: he was not a resident of Illinois, had no family there, and did not have a valid marriage license.

Sneed told Curtis's lawyer March 19 that Illinois officials have since received the marriage license. However, Sneed said, since they have closed his file, Curtis will have to reapply.

"We need to launch an immediate, international campaign to protest this decision, and to urge Illinois authorities to immediately grant Curtis parole to Chicago," John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, told a meeting of his supporters at the Independence Library here March 19. "To mount this kind of campaign will cost money," Studer added. "We need to launch a fund to raise \$10,000 over the next month to help cover printing, mailing, and legal costs."

Letters urging Curtis be allowed parole to Illinois can be sent to Vivian Sneed, Illinois Department of Corrections, Executive Office Building, 1301 Concordia Court, Springfield, IL 62794-9277. They can be faxed to (217) 522-9652.

Studer asked supporters to send copies of their letters to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 477419, Chicago, IL 60647.

GM strike

Continued from front page

press interviews that workers in the Dayton factories average a shift and a half of overtime a week. Strikers report that it is closer to two shifts of overtime a week.

Big business is watching this strike carefully. The *Investor's Business Daily* reported that U.S. steelmakers were "concerned a prolonged stoppage could hurt their shipments and profits." Wall Street analysts estimate that GM alone is losing \$250 to \$300 million a week because of the strike.

Company officials have made it clear they are prepared for a fight. GM made a \$6.9 billion profit last year and has a higher than usual inventory of most cars and trucks, giving the auto giant flexibility to weather the walkout for a while.

The company has made it plain it intends to make as many workers as possible suffer to win this strike. GM announced it will attempt to block union workers laid off because of the strike from drawing unemployment insurance. The state of Texas is the only one so far that has ruled against GM workers' claims.

GM vice chairman Harry Pearce laid out GM's approach telling the press the company must choose parts suppliers based on lower cost, not keep GM parts plants operating. "If we must think in terms of creating UAW jobs, independent of our ability to compete in cost and quality... well, it's hard to imagine how we could live with this," Pearce said.

Wall Street investors are confident so far in this stand by the company. GM stock prices have been slowly but steadily rising during the last two weeks.

Workers on the picket lines are also confident in the face of GM's refusal to budge. UAW members in these plants have experienced GM's drive for profits for years. The only new workers brought into the Dayton plants over the last 10 years are workers laid off from other GM operations and transferred there under terms of the UAW national contract. This is the third walkout by the local over similar issues since the mid-1980s.

The plants in Dayton are quiet, with small picket lines and mostly empty parking lots. At the Needmore Rd. plant eight strikers walk picket duty in four-hour shifts on two gates in front of a deserted parking lot.

At the Wisconsin Rd. plant, four strikers staff picket lines at each of a half dozen entrances. There is a little more activity here because the local union sent 300 workers back into the plant on the second day of the walkout to produce brakes for other auto makers. The pickets have to check the special union-issued passes of UAW members entering.

At times there are more non-strikers at some picket sites. On March 16, Dan Sponaugle and Eddie Neace had driven up from Cincinnati to offer their solidarity. Sponaugle said they were "showing our union support. Even though we're laid off we're supporting the strike." Sponaugle and Neace, both in their late 20s, said they were officers of the UAW local that had recently won its first contract at a GM parts supplier that announced lay offs due to the strike earlier in the week.

Among those who showed up and tried to win adherents among GM workers in Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois, was ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan who was campaigning in the Midwest in mid-March for the Republican nomination for U.S. president. Buchanan tried to use the strike to advance his reactionary "America First" themes by praising it as a fight against sending "American" jobs abroad. He did the same during the Machinists strike against Boeing in January, while he has attacked other strikes that can not serve his nationalist demagoguery, such as an earlier walkout at the New York *Daily News*.

Buchanan was frequently photographed in Michigan and elsewhere sporting UAW hats and T-shirts with a few UAW members surrounding him. But television reports also quoted UAW workers saying they opposed the ultrarightist's campaign.

John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900 and works for Ford in the Detroit area. Val Libby from Cincinnati and Dave Rowlands from Cleveland contributed to this article.

'We can stay out long with solidarity'

BY ABBY TILSNER
AND ELLIE GARCÍA

DAYTON, Ohio — Supporters of the *Militant* who are auto workers at the General Motors assembly plant in Tarrytown, New York, and are laid off traveled here March 19 to meet and solidarize with fellow United Auto Workers members on strike against GM.

Besides Tarrytown, auto workers locked out by GM from other plants have come to walk the picket lines and offer their support. Auto workers from GM and some Ford plants have come from Ypsilanti, Milan, and Flint, Michigan; Kokomo, Indiana; Shreveport, Louisiana; and a busload came from Parma, Ohio. The workers from Flint recently won a strike against outsourcing by GM.

The walkout has also attracted students from Antioch College, who spent a whole day on the picket line and filmed a documentary.

The strikers are staffing the picket lines 24 hours a day, doing four-hour shifts, at least once a week. All the UAW members we spoke to were confident in their fight against the auto giant.

from Pathfinder

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Joe Hartky, while walking the picket line, pointed out that in the last five years the UAW has struck three times. "It's always the same thing, they agree to keep jobs here, they go for one and a half years, and then they outsource."

Hartky said the union has been able to keep GM from sending parts to be made in other plants, often nonunion. "I think we're doing the right thing by going out again," he stated. "What these companies want to do is just the tip of the iceberg."

Jerry Anspach has worked as a machine operator at the North plant here for 24 years. "Now we're only at about 90 percent of the union members who are walking the picket line," he said while on picket duty. "We need to put them all on the line." He was referring to the UAW decision on the second day of the strike to ask 300 of its members to return on the job to resume production of brake components for Chrysler and Mitsubishi.

"Our forefathers fought for the unions and we can't let that go down the drain," Anspach said. "What we need are more unionized shops."

Some workers thought it was necessary to produce brakes for GM competitors so that those companies would not go elsewhere to fill their orders. "That's 300 jobs

we are saving," said one worker.

Others disagreed. "If you're gonna strike, strike! If you're gonna work, work," said Anspach.

Several UAW members said they had been called by GM to work but said they would never cross the picket line.

Chuck Mangrum was working at the union hall as sergeant at arms when we interviewed him. He has worked for 25 years here at GM and is now a union committeeman on second shift. On top of the outsourcing, he said, "There are 750 health and safety grievances built up over the past two years, 450 normal grievances, and 14 discharged members. But the main issue is jobs. I think everyone will hang tough. We'll win and we don't care how long it will take."

Many strikers were pleased with the support they have received. "People have backed us 100 percent and great people have come from other plants," said striker George Jones. "I will stay out a year to win if we continue to have that kind of support."

Margrethe Siem contributed to this article. Tilsner, García, and Siem are members of UAW Local 664 at GM's Tarrytown, New York, plant.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

What Next For Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination? Fri., March 29, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Women and the Cuban revolution: From 1959 to Today. Celebrate Women's History Month. Speakers: Jan Strout, member Coordinating Committee for Hermanas, WILPF National Board; and Elizabeth Stone, editor of

Women and the Cuban Revolution, member of Socialist Workers Party and International Association of Machinists. Fri., March 29, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

CANADA

Vancouver

China vs. Taiwan. Speaker: Beverly Bernardo, Communist League. Fri., March 29, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (Between 23rd and 24th Ave.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Confrontation Between China and Taiwan: The Stakes for Working People. Speaker Tony Gibson, Communist League. Fri., March 29, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

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Reykjavik: Klapparstíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. INTERNET: gphssg@treknet.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075. Compuserve: 100035,3205

Christchurch: 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

They don't do windows? — For a cleaner United Airlines, employees on business or pleasure trips have been invited to pitch in. Like, "When you use the lavato-



Harry Ring

ries, wipe wash basins and mirror if necessary. Please pick up any towels on the floor."

The sane society — Processing has begun of 35 million gallons of radioactive sludge — some 30 percent of the contaminated soil and ground water at former nu-

clear weapons sites. The deadly stuff will be converted into glass-like form and stored in steel canisters. If the South Carolina processing plant functions perfectly 24 hours a day, the arduous processing will take 32 years. During that time they hope to solve the problem of a permanent storage site.

Where did this guy come from? — It was a column by David Boldt in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and, at first, we thought it was satire. Not so. To reduce the tension in the immigration debate, Boldt suggests, "Immigrants... should have, at most, restricted access to welfare.... Advocates of bilingualism should be rounded up and, where possible, deported.... Latinos should rethink their status as a 'protected' minor-

ity. They were not brought here in chains; nor were their lands stolen by palefaces."

And now it will be leaner and meaner — Brazil's Malha Oeste rail line, better known as the "train of death," has been sold to Chemical Bank and the holding company, the Noel Group. On an average of every three days, the line has an accident serious enough to halt service. Of its 88 locomotives, 35 are out of service, awaiting repairs.

It's fate is sealed — The *Toronto Globe and Mail* reports that at the recent gathering in Switzerland of top corporate execs and government figures, speakers warned that, "Capitalism is doomed unless it develops a

heart."

A scandal — Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan is perplexed, vexed and distressed. Despite a record-size police force, arrests have dropped by 100,000 in the past five years. Cops offer an explanation. What with the fallout from the Rodney King beating of five years ago, they think twice about complaints, law suits, and criminal prosecutions.

Tough situation — In California's Yolo County, officials are fuming they may go bust after being forced to settle a sexual harassment suit against Judge James Stevens for \$666,000. Meanwhile the abusive judge continues to pocket \$107,390 a year, and the county pays his legal fees.

Meanwhile... — Neil Solomon, Maryland's former state health secretary, had his medical license revoked after admitting to having sex with at least eight patients. Three former patients sued, but a judge permitted Solomon to declare bankruptcy. After legal fees, the women will wind up with about \$16,000 each, paid out over a five year period. Solomon has assets of \$2 million.

Note to Young Socialists — You don't have to be a veteran reader to contribute to this column. Clippings, which are warmly welcomed, should be sent to: Great Society c/o Pathfinder Books, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. 90006. Fax: 213-380-1268.

Forum demands justice for Native American

BY ROXANNE GOULD

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — "I do not want this community to forget Kimberly, and I do not want it to forget that prejudice exists," Native American activist Ted Means stated.

Means, one of the original organizers of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and vice president of the Oglala Lakota nation, was the opening speaker for the March 1 "Native America — Inequality Before the Law" forum at Morningside College here.

"Sometimes I feel that not a lot has changed," Means said. "Had there been the kind of change necessary, Kimberly Frazier would still be alive today."

Kimberly Ann Frazier, a Santee Dakota Indian woman, was shot and killed by the Sioux City police on March 1 a year ago. Although Frazier had not committed a crime, she was gunned down on the porch

of her house. The police were cleared of any wrongdoing by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation and the FBI.

The forum was held in memory of Frazier but other cases showing widespread discrimination against Native Americans were discussed. These cases included the murder of Terri McCauley, an 18-year-old Omaha, Nebraska, woman; and Michelle Saul, another Santee woman who was beaten to death by her boyfriend. He dismembered her body and hid it in the woods near Des Moines.

Means shared his own loss with participants. In 1983, his 11-year-old daughter, Kimberly Means, was killed by a drunk driver as she participated in a "Run for freedom." The driver, a non-Indian, was charged only with drunk driving and served 15 days in jail.

A panel including activist Nico Mercier and Robert Baldwin, director of the Triple

One Parents Union, also discussed the killing in Omaha of Joseph Knudson, a 15-year-old disabled Indian boy who was chased and gunned down by a store clerk for stealing a six-pack of beer. Knudson had not threatened or assaulted the store clerk. Baldwin explained that when the mayor of Omaha was asked to respond to the killing he stated "the boy shouldn't have been stealing."

Other panelists spoke to the length of jail sentences in the Sioux City case of 17-year-old Carlos Medina who has now been imprisoned for nine months for refusing to testify against his brother. Medina stated that he and his brother were falsely accused of murder when in fact overwhelming evidence points to a non-Indian as the murderer.

Janet Paulsen, a Winnebago woman with three small children was sentenced to 10 years in prison for stealing a \$6 item from a Sioux City grocery store. According to panelists, Janet has no prior arrest record.

"There appears to be a different standard of justice for Indian people and this must change," said Frank LaMere activist and director of Nebraska Intertribal Development Corporation. Issues of inequal-

ity in city employment and the use of the nickname "Chiefs" by Morningside College athletic teams was also discussed.

The following day a march and memorial of 150 people was held in memory of Kimberly Frazier. Marchers trekked about a mile and a half across the city holding a demonstration in front of the Sioux City police station and returning to the Indian Mission. During the demonstration Indian songs were sung.

As marchers stood in the below zero weather, a passer-by shouted, "Why don't you go home?" Mary-Ann Jamerson, who stood wrapped in her Indian shawl responded, "We are home."

Louisa Frazier, mother of Kimberly, spoke. "Today we remember my daughter but we don't do this just for her, we do this for all our children, so no one else will ever have to know the loss I feel," she said.

The Frazier family is pursuing legal action against the Sioux City authorities and demonstrations will continue to fight for justice in regard to Kimberly's murder. Anyone interested in aiding this effort can make a donation to the Smiling Winds Woman Fund and send it to Kelly Black at 1306 Main Street, Sioux City, IA 51103.

Historic voyage of 'Granma'

Continued from Page 6

reality. The deepest pain arose in everyone. Fidel however had still not given up hope, and ordered one last effort. Again we heard the fading and almost imperceptible shout: "Here!" Inexplicably it was now coming closer. And Pichirilo, the efficient old helmsman who always saw things ahead of everyone else, aided by his lantern, turned the miracle.

The rest was easy. The comrade was rescued. His extraordinary strength, dexterity, and serenity, together with the commander's faith and the effort of the comrades had saved him, although Roque would no longer be the first to spot Cabo Cruz, whose beaming signal of salvation still delayed its appearance.

Niquero was supposed to be our Playitas.¹ But already on the horizon the first light of the new day appeared. There were doubts about the route. The sea was shallow, and there was a danger of running aground. Finally we headed toward the coast, which could already be seen over the horizon. Our ship advanced until it could go no further, less than 100 meters from shore. There was no time to lose. The lifeboat was dropped into the water. The exploratory unit got on board, led by Captain Smith. But because of excessive weight, water came in, and it was necessary to wade in on foot.

The sea bottom was swampy and difficult, but we kept moving, anxious to find solid ground. The sea extended into mangrove swamps that formed a thick and multicolored tangle difficult to penetrate. Before our anxious eyes all we saw was more mud, more water, more dense thicket. We continued on. One comrade climbed to the highest branch, and saw that the water extended farther than the undergrowth. For a moment we thought we had landed in the open sea, on some small and swampy key. But we could not allow ourselves any doubts. We had to continue on. Cuba had to be ahead.

After innumerable hours fighting our way through the immense swamp of mud, underbrush, and water, we began to feel solid ground. Some comrades had to be pulled out in the arms of stronger ones. As we reached dry land, we threw ourselves

down in the abundant grass, fatigued, hungry, covered in mud virtually from head to foot. Little by little we were becoming conscious that we were on the soil of the homeland.

There were already indications of human presence. Crespo, climbing on another branch, discovered a small house in the distance. We approached and met its frightened owner, bringing him toward us. He was one of Cuba's poor, with whom we had come to throw in our lot. His name was Angel Pérez. Fidel spoke to him, telling him who we were, why we had come, what our ideas were. Frightened, the man invited us into his hut to offer us his meager food. The first ones arrived, and drank some water. Some of us began to shake off the sacrilegious mud off our olive drab; others cleaned their guns. The family hunted a hen and ran after a pig. The immediate perspectives seemed good, although many comrades were still missing.

Suddenly we heard multiple shots, bursts of fire, and explosions in the direction of the abandoned *Granma*. We did not know if it was the infantry or the navy, and we retreated into the nearby woods, giving a counterorder about the pig. Later, taking stock of our ranks, we noted that eight comrades were still missing. Two days later they appeared in very distant locations.

The first day ended without a morsel of food. We were entering a dense woods. There we would rest. It was December 2. We had landed on the Las Coloradas beach, although to use Juan Manuel Márquez's words, it was not a landing but a shipwreck.

The column, now complete, was continuing to recover. And it advanced, vibrant and determined. But we did not have a chance to continue narrating and reliving those events. Very soon we reached a spot charged with tragic irony. There is no other name with such sad significance: Alegria de Pío.

¹ Playitas, in southeastern Cuba, was the site where José Martí and other expeditionaries landed on April 11, 1895, to begin Cuba's war of independence from Spain.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

April 2, 1971

Price 10¢

NEW YORK, March 21 — Over 5,000 Puertorriqueños turned out in force to commemorate the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Ponce Massacre and to show solidarity with the independence movement in Puerto Rico, presently under attack by the right-wing assimilationist government of Luis Ferré.

The demonstration took place in the predominantly Puerto Rican ghetto of the South Bronx, commencing with a march from St. Mary's Park and winding up with a rally at La Plaza Borinqueña on E. 138 St. and Willis Ave.

This is in the wake of the March 11 police attack on the students at the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras. As a pretext for their invasion that day, the police used a confrontation provoked by ROTC cadets with pro-independence students. The incident began when a gang of ROTC cadets stormed into the student center, tossing a chair at the leader of the Juventud Independentista Universitaria (JIU, youth group of the PIP). In the ensuing struggle, the cadets retreated and joined others on top of the military building armed with shields, sticks, shotguns, and other weapons. There, the university guards lined up in front of the building and began firing tear gas at the massing students. The cadets fired shotguns and other weapons at the students, wounding several.

The police riot squad was called onto the campus that afternoon. They came armed with imperialism's latest, the M-

16, and proceeded to savagely and indiscriminately beat students and professors. The police and guards roamed all over the university town, breaking into homes and attacking the students. After it was all over, two cops and a student lay dead, with hundreds wounded.

This attack is not the first of its kind. The government has been trying to crush the independence and antiwar movements, which are strongest among the students.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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

March 30, 1946

After World War I, the food relief policy of the United States government was based, not on any desire to help the starving European masses, but on the determination of American imperialism to crush the rising tide of working-class revolt.

In requesting a \$100,000,000 appropriation from Congress on February 24, 1919, President Wilson declared: "Food relief is now the key to the whole European situation and to the solution of peace. Bolshevism is steadily advancing westward.... It cannot be stopped by force, but it can be stopped by food...."

Congress was convinced by the President's arguments. The American Relief Administration headed by Herbert Hoover, was established to carry out this policy.

The American Relief Administration withheld food from all areas in which the workers had taken power. A stringent blockade of the Soviet Union was enforced from 1917 to 1921. The Allies imposed a blockade on starving Hungary when the Hungarian workers established their own government in 1919.

Support UAW strikers

The entire labor movement throughout North America and beyond should throw its active solidarity and energetic support behind the United Auto Workers on strike against General Motors in Dayton, Ohio. Their struggle for jobs and against the grinding erosion of health and safety and other working conditions is reinforced right now by the strikes of public employees in Canada and the resistance by workers and peasants in Mexico.

GM executives have declared they are willing and prepared to fight the union's attempt to prevent the cutting of 125 jobs in the two brake parts plants in Dayton, in violation of a 1994 agreement with the UAW. The number one auto giant enjoys the confidence and backing of other employers, the government, and Wall Street — as the continuing rise of GM stocks is showing.

As interimperialist competition sharpens in a period of depression, GM is leading the Big Three to continue downsizing and cost-cutting in order to shore up the U.S. auto giants' profit rates and gain a greater edge over rivals in Japan, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe. This profit drive means a terrible wear and tear on the bodies of those who produce the wealth GM owners expropriate. Job combinations, speed-up, reduction in equipment maintenance, and rising mandatory overtime are the order of the day. General Motors says it will not back off this course.

As the shortage of brake parts began to affect production due to the walkout, GM responded with a well-prepared, de-facto lockout and a vicious economic assault on workers. So far, the company has idled over 160,000 assembly and parts workers — in Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

On top of that, the GM bosses are trying their best to cut state unemployment benefits to laid-off employees. So far, only Texas has gone along, a move the labor movement must protest vigorously and fight to reverse. The difficulty GM is having convincing other state governments to immediately go along with its plan is testimony to the value of fighting tooth and nail to protect and expand entitlements such as unemployment benefits — conquered through bloody battles by the labor movement.

The UAW members on the picket lines in Dayton are also determined to fight and hold their ground. They protest not only the job cuts, but demand the settlement of hundreds of grievances over deteriorating health and safety on the job and the hiring of more workers to alleviate the burden of forced overtime. Their fight is in the interests of the entire working class.

Solidarity is the key to facing the bosses. GM workers who are laid off are already setting an example by showing up in growing numbers at the picket lines in Dayton. UAW members in Local 696 there also need the solidarity of other workers, students, civil rights and women's rights groups, and all democratic-minded people. In this class warfare the lines are drawn clearly.

The GM strike also shows the potential power of the labor movement to break down divisions among workers across borders, throughout North America. Tens of thousands facing a similar assault by the same employer in Canada, Mexico, and the United States can put meat on the bones of the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all."

This is the answer to the reactionary, nationalist appeals by ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan, who is trying to dupe the strikers behind his "America First" demagoguery by portraying their battle as a struggle to preserve "U.S. jobs" — that is, a struggle *against* workers in Mexico and other countries.

UAW strikers in Dayton have as much of an interest in identifying with their fellow workers at GM in Mexico and other working people in that country — who are fighting imperialist super-exploitation on top of GM's assaults — and with Canadian workers as they do with UAW members across the United States. This is a moment for the labor movement to begin raising demands such as canceling Mexico's foreign debt, which is used by the same Wall Street sharks who stand behind GM today to siphon off the wealth workers and peasants produce in that country. Such a stance can cement much needed bonds of working-class solidarity across borders.

The working class truly has no country, only our united strength against the bosses. All out to support the UAW strikers in Dayton!

The terrorists' summit

Washington assembled a true terrorist summit in Sharm el Sheik, Egypt, March 13 — a conference aimed at backing up the main perpetrator of terror in the Middle East.

As U.S. president Bill Clinton, Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres, and a variety of other heads of state mouthed phrases about peace, Tel Aviv was sealing off villages, destroying Palestinian houses, and denying access to work, food, and medical care to 1.2 million people. At the "peace" meeting, Clinton took the unprecedented step of openly backing this "collective punishment" by the Israeli regime against Palestinians.

High-level officials from most of the Arab governments in the region participated in the gathering. This reflects the increasing end of any pretense that these bourgeois regimes stand up for the national rights of the Palestinians — the central question of the class struggle in the Middle East. Washington has sought to rely more on these regimes, in addition to Tel Aviv, to uphold its imperialist interests in the region, especially since the 1991 Gulf War. Yasir Arafat, president of the Palestinian Authority and chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, also gave credence to the summit by his attendance. While the PLO remains a national liberation organization, its central leadership has its eyes increasingly on imperialism, not on organizing an uncompromising fight against the Zionist colonial-settler regime in Israel.

In the face of systematic terror by the Zionist regime, backed up by Washington's support and the complicity of those claiming to speak for the Arab population, Palestinian workers and youth continue to resist, demanding self-determination against Israeli oppression. In the absence of a mass movement with revolutionary leadership, Palestinian fighters strike out with whatever means they can find — including the suicide bombings and attacks on Israeli soldiers occupying southern Lebanon.

The rulers are quick to hypocritically label this resistance as terror, and point to it to justify further assaults against the Palestinians. Many of those claiming to speak in the interests of the working class internationally tail after them. The March 9 issue of the *People's Weekly World*, the paper of the Communist Party, U.S.A., for example, declared in an editorial, "The terrorist bombings that have killed 61 Israelis in the past several days arouse the indignation of all humanity." The *World* condemned Hamas as a group of "right-wing extremists."

Working people should reject this position 100 percent. Writing in 1916, Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained, "To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc. — to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*." This remains as true 80 years later.

Working people the world over can breathe a sigh of relief and rejoice that the "antiterrorist" propaganda offensive by imperialism and its labor lackeys is met by determined resistance from Palestinian, Irish, Quebecois, and Mexican-American militants.

The Palestinian fight for national liberation deserves the solidarity of all workers and supporters of democratic rights. The task before workers around the world is to answer the propaganda of the real terrorists — those in Washington and Tel Aviv.

Stand with the fighting Irish

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Shouldn't the *Militant* take a stand criticizing the Irish Republican Army (IRA) for the February 9 bombing at Canary Wharf in London? Wasn't that act a setback for the fight for Irish self-determination? That's what a couple of readers suggested in last week's "Letters" column. Our answer is unequivocally no.

Roy Inglee, from Wilmington, Delaware, wrote a letter that gave many useful facts explaining why British prime

continued resistance to the Zionist state in Israel, the struggle for a free and united Ireland is in the interests of the working class. It strikes a blow against the imperialist rulers and opens the door to working-class unity, in face of national and religious divisions generated and perpetuated by the British rulers. It's when the Irish stop fighting that the working class — both in Ireland and in Britain — will be in trouble.

The capitalist press and politicians are trying to whip up an "antiterrorist" cam-

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

minister John Major's government is entirely to blame for the breakdown of peace talks. At the same time, he commented, "I personally think that the resumption of armed actions is going to set back the mass struggle in Northern Ireland."

In his letter, Gary Cohen of Arlington, Massachusetts, said that while a February 26 *Militant* editorial "correctly targets British imperialism as the prime obstacle to the aspirations of the Irish people," the *Militant* should have offered a "critique of the tactic of individual terrorism as a means to enhance the struggle against national oppression.... Perhaps a review of Trotsky's 'Against Individual Terrorism' would be helpful."

The Irish freedom struggle is the biggest powder keg confronting the rulers of the United Kingdom, whose decline as an imperialist power is continuing under the depression conditions facing world capitalism today. Faced with unbreakable resistance by the Irish toilers to national oppression and discrimination, London — which has dominated Ireland for centuries and directly occupied the northern part of the country for the last 25 years — has been forced since the summer of 1994 to seek a new arrangement in its oldest colony.

Following an Aug. 31, 1994, cease-fire by the IRA and moves toward talks between London and Dublin, workers, farmers, and youth from the Catholic population in the north of Ireland stepped into the political space opened up. They pressed demands for a complete withdrawal of the British occupation forces, the lifting of all repressive legislation and release of political prisoners, and affirmative-action measures to redress the caste-like discrimination they face in all aspects of social and political life.

A 'shot across the bow'

The policy of the Tory government in Britain, with the loyal support of the Labour Party, has been to stall as much as possible. While refusing to free hundreds of republican political prisoners, London released and then promoted Lee Clegg, the only British soldier ever jailed for killing an Irish civilian. While martial law conditions eased in the north, more than 16,000 British troops remained there — that is more than one for every 100 residents. With the passage of time, this dragging of the British crown's feet, if unanswered, would indeed have marked a setback.

On February 9, the IRA responded with what the *Militant* described as a "shot across the bow" and "a rude reminder" to Major that there had been a cease-fire, not a surrender. Irish republicans accurately assessed that the British government was stalling out of weakness, not strength. In the following weeks, not only was London unable to whip up anti-Irish hysteria, but Westminster dropped its demand that the IRA "decommission" its weapons before all-party talks, and set a June 10 date for negotiations that could include Sinn Fein.

Like the independence struggle of the Quebecois in Canada and the Palestinians

paign against Palestinian fighters in the Middle East, the IRA, and other national liberation struggles. We refuse to join the chorus. We do suggest readers pick up *Marxism and Terrorism*, as the new edition of the pamphlet by Leon Trotsky that Cohen refers to is titled. Among other things, the selections in the pamphlet, published by Pathfinder Press, give a wonderful example of the tone communists need to take when the big-business media and most forces on the "left" are screaming about "terrorism."

The article "For Grynspan: Against the Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels" takes up the case of Herschel Grynspan, a young rebel who assassinated a Nazi official in the German Embassy in Paris in November 1938.

"A single isolated hero cannot replace the masses," Trotsky wrote. "But we understand only too clearly the inevitability of such convulsive acts of despair and vengeance.... We are bound, naturally, by ties of open moral solidarity to Grynspan and not to his 'democratic jailers.'"

Trotsky continued, "People come cheap who are capable only of fulminating against injustice and bestiality. But those who, like Grynspan, are able to act as well as conceive, sacrificing their own lives if need be, are the precious leaven of mankind." He urged other young fighters to join the revolutionary communist movement as a "different and more effective outlet" for their energies.

Malcolm X responded similarly in May 1964 to lurid stories in New York's big-business press about a band of Black youth called the "Blood Brothers," allegedly organized to maim and kill whites. Malcolm said he first heard about the group while he was traveling in Nigeria. "It didn't make me sad at all," he said. "And I don't see why anybody should be sad or regretful in any way, shape or form." He explained how "the police in Harlem, their presence is like occupation forces.... [The police commissioner] is creating a situation that can lead to nothing but bloodshed." Under these conditions, Malcolm said, "you will find that there is a growing tendency among us, among our people, to do whatever is necessary to bring this to a halt.... I'm not here to apologize for the existence of any blood brothers."

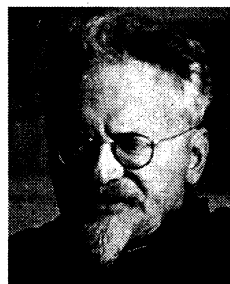
Socialist workers need to explain to working people in the United Kingdom, the United States, and elsewhere how it is in their interests to support the fight for a free, united Ireland — not react by "offering a critique" to the tactics of Irish nationalists around Canary Wharf. We need to join the protests demanding freedom for Irish prisoners, calling for all-party talks, and demanding the removal of all British troops from Ireland. Taking an unconditional stand on the side of those fighting against national oppression, for national liberation, is a prerequisite to advancing the Irish freedom struggle and the interrelated task of winning workers and young rebels to building a communist movement.

FOR FURTHER READING

Marxism and Terrorism

Leon Trotsky

The propertied classes have always laid the charge of "terrorism" on those leading the struggle against exploitation and oppression. But it has been the terror of the capitalist rulers against which an outraged majority eventually rises. Trotsky explains why the working class is the only social force capable of leading the toiling majority in overthrowing the capitalist exploiters and beginning the construction of a new society and why individual terrorism—whatever its intention—relegates the workers to the role of spectators and opens the workers movement to provocation and victimization. Trotsky also answers those who slander the revolutionary movement as "terrorists" and "adventurists." Booklet \$3.50



Leon Trotsky in Mexico

Available from bookstores listed page 12, or from Pathfinder, 410 West St. New York, NY 10014.

Mushroom workers win one

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important

rejected this challenge in a contradictory ruling. It ordered Pia to rehire 11 members of the Kaolin Mushroom Workers Union who had been fired from their jobs for union activity.

But the court also upheld Pia's demand for a new election on the grounds that inadequate translation had been provided to some of

union election was valid.

Pia announced he will continue his stalling tactics by appealing the union's victory yet again, this time in Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court.

ON THE PICKET LINE

struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

KENNETT SQUARE, Pennsylvania — After proceedings of nearly a year, the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board announced March 13 that it was rejecting a second appeal by owner Michael Pia of a successful union representation election at his Kaolin Mushroom Farms, the country's fifth-largest mushroom producer.

Pia's first appeal asked the Labor Relations Board to overturn a 124-102 victory in a May 27, 1993, union representation election that came after a hard-fought one-month strike by farm workers here, most of them Mexican.

On April 11, 1995, the board

the workers during the balloting.

The union appealed this part of the decision, arguing that Pia's sudden concern for the language rights of the Mexican workers on strike was merely a legal pretext aimed at circumventing the results of the election. In compliance with state requirements, the ballots had been printed in Spanish even though for a few voters, there was no bilingual help on hand. They also pointed out that because the previously disputed votes of the 11 fired workers would now have to be counted, the union's margin of victory was now well beyond the number of votes in dispute over the issue of translation anyway.

Pia appealed the decision ordering the fired workers reinstated.

The Labor Board's March 13 ruling upheld the union on both points, holding that the 1993

New Zealand teachers strike

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — High school classrooms across the country were empty March 6, as 13,000 teachers walked out in a one-day, nationwide strike called by their union, the Post-Primary Teachers Association (PPTA). The overwhelming majority of teachers supported the strike call. The teachers are demanding a 21 percent pay raise. The State Services Commission has offered a piddling 2 percent, with the prospect of an additional 1 percent "performance bonus."

In Auckland 1,500 teachers marched up the main street March 6. Along with banners identifying contingents from various schools, some carried placards saying "Lowest-paid teachers in the western world," and "education in crisis." In Wellington, 700

marched on parliament. Marches and rallies were also held in Christchurch, Hamilton, Whangarei, and other cities.

On the eve of the strike, the government removed the widely-hated Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith, and organized last-minute talks between the PPTA and the new minister, Wyatt Creech. But these moves failed to avert the strike.

The PPTA is also demanding the hiring of 1,000 new teachers, including 200 Maori teachers. The school year began in February with many schools understaffed, despite a last-minute government

recruitment drive in Australia and Britain. Another contentious issue is the government's attempts to impose "bulk funding," under which teachers are not paid by the government. Instead the government gives funds to school boards that then negotiate salaries on the local level — a way to break up the national pay scale.

Pete Seidman, a member of Union of Needletrades Industrial and Textile Employees in Philadelphia; and James Robb, a member of the Meat Workers Union in Aotearoa, New Zealand, contributed to this week's column.



Teacher in Oakland, California, pickets outside La Escuelita Elementary School. The Oakland Education Association, with 3,500 members on strike since February 15, seeks not only pay raises but also reductions in class size.

LETTERS

Oppose the death penalty

The New Jersey Coalition Against the Death Penalty will hold a march and rally April 20, 1996, in front of New Jersey State Prison in Trenton.

To be clear, I oppose the death penalty even for bloodsuckers like Dupont. It is no coincidence that politicians are not seeking the death penalty for him. Clearly, the death penalty in this country is not designed for billionaires accused of murder.

It is reserved for those who cannot afford bail much less an adequate defense. Those who have capital don't face capital punishment. THAT'S CAPITALISM!!!

So attend this rally which begins at 11:00 AM. Help stop the executions in New Jersey before they start!

For more information call: In New York & North Jersey: (201)642-2086; Central Jersey: (908)874-5891; South Jersey & Philly: (609)342-6681 or E-mail: bwitanek@igc.apc.org

*Daniel Cortés
Camden, New Jersey*

Define 'national socialism'

As someone who turns to the *Militant* for political direction, I have been following the articles on Buchananism with particular anticipation. I have been rather disappointed with the analysis in the most recent issues, and particularly with the front-page article in the March 4th paper. I, like many other, feel the need to understand this political phenomenon in all its implications in order to more effectively explain it to others. I find in "Buchanan win is Based on Counterfeit Socialism" the problems that, to various degrees apply as well to the preceding articles. It is mostly schematic, lacking in proof for its central points, predominantly written for the initiated in the socialist circle, and rather inadequate and uninformative for the average person.

This article states that Buchanan offers a national socialist agenda, that national socialism is counterfeit socialism, and that he is building an incipient fascist

movement. Yet while it contains a fair amount of quotes from the candidate as well as about him from other political figures, it fails to actually explain in what way they substantiate the conclusions put forth about Buchanan. They thus remain closer to mere labels than to sound political points.

What proof does the article offer about the building of a fascist movement? Are we to assume that Buchanan is arming street gangs, organizing against unions, homosexuals, against young people as was the case with German fascism? Or is it, at present, in an early stage of that process? When the article cites the *New York Times* editorial that mentions the presence of thuggish elements at Buchanan's rallies, it is more to take issue with the *NYT's* classist reduction of working people to "pot bellied boys who (would) be happy to throw a punch or two just for the recreation of it" than with addressing the political significance of that component of Buchanan's constituency.

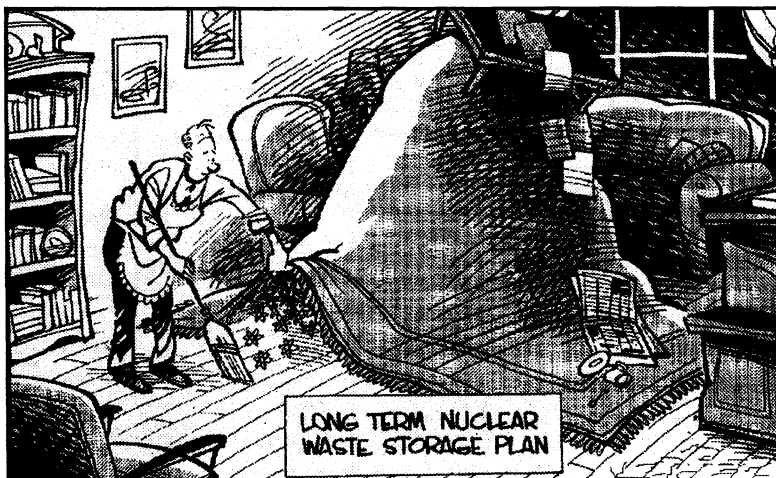
I see still further problems with the article's potential to clarify Buchananism for people unfamiliar with the subtleties of political categories. From the point of view of the average person, why are Buchanan's attacks on big bosses and landlords, and his defense of the "little guy" themes to be suspicious of? What is national socialism?

*Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir
Boston, Massachusetts*

Che on Yugoslavia

Cuban communist leader Che Guevara anticipated some of the consequences of the pro-capitalist economic policies undertaken by rulers of the Yugoslav workers state, and sought to make them general lessons for fighters for socialism to avoid as he grappled with the major questions facing revolutionists of his day.

I raise this point to support the thorough and convincing "Discussion with Our Readers" article by Argiris Malapanis in the February 16 issue of the *Militant*, on the character, evolution, deformation, and continued existence of the Yugoslav workers state.



"Capitalist methods of competition among enterprises and profitability were institutionalized in industry," Malapanis states, "packaged as 'workers' self-management. Market mechanisms were extolled, encourage eventual competition between different republics," thus open the way to the current situation.

This is what Che was coming to grips with.

In an interview by the Arab journal *Al-Tali'ah*, published in April of 1965, after making extended remarks on the views of Cuban communists on "the role of the party" and the character of "the revolutionary state," Guevara is asked by the reporter point blank, "What is your opinion of the Yugoslavian experiment in this respect?"

(The following quotes are excerpts. The entire interview is available in "Che: Selected Works of Ernesto Guevara," by Rolando E. Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdes. The MIT Press, 1969.)

"We definitely oppose the Yugoslavs," Che states, "and we do not wish to use big flashy words on this subject; we are not talking about backsliding — but we also do not wish to talk about being stationary. We do not accuse the Yugoslavs of being agents of imperialism, and so forth — but we oppose them in a basic manner."

"We believe that there are two ways in which we differ from the Yugoslav experiment; that is, in our reaction to Stalinism and in opposition to the Soviet Union to dictate to us its economic leadership ideals."

Guevara notes that "in their experiments the Yugoslavs mix individual economic matters with group problems, and we believe in the separation of the one from the other. The problem of workers' participation in the administration of organization seems to us to be a separate questions from the problem of workers' participation in profit."

"There are problems concerning the basic concept of socialist evolution in the field of economy which are still unknown to this day. So far, crooked roads have been followed; and when it was decided to refrain from these roads, other roads were followed which did not prove to be less crooked...Everything so far has been focused on the law of production [value] — and this means the danger of returning to capitalism," Guevara explains.

"[I]n Yugoslavia the road faces toward the danger of outbursts of these negative elements. In our trade with Yugoslavian organizations which work in the same field and at the same time compete with each other — each one is ready to cut down prices to a critical low point so as to eliminate each other from the market...Isn't this a distinctive feature of capitalistic economy?"

Guevara saw in the "Yugoslav experiment" the danger of capitalist methods, employed by the ruling stratum, and warns of the formation of a "privileged group" with its "capitalist nature."

The disintegration into warring gangs fighting for lucre, egged on by imperialist backers, fulfills the

logic of the Yugoslav approach with which Che disagreed so strongly. To this, he contrasted the worker's "extreme efforts and steadfastness for readiness in the struggle...and this is what socialism is particularly concerned with."

It is that working steadfastness, in defense of the gains of the Yugoslav revolution, that has proven stronger than the brutal campaigns of the splintered "privileged groups" of Stalinist bureaucrats who seek, and have failed, to restore the market economy to the country. As that battle continues under the conditions of imperialist occupation, Cuba's vanguard example of resistance to this course, over nearly four decades, will attract Yugoslavian fighters, as will Che's especially keen insights as they search for the clarity required to guide their historic tasks.

*Jon Hillson
Twin Cities, Minnesota*

Mexico City book fair

The Pathfinder Press participation in the recent Book Fair held in Mexico City from February 22 to March 3, 1996, was a great success. The brisk sales and interest generated by the Pathfinder stand is testimony to the thirst for revolutionary ideas on the part of "los mexicanos."

Mexico has been going through the throes of a profound economic, social, and political crisis for many years. The sudden devaluation of the peso at the end of December 1994, demonstrated the third world reality of Mexico as it plunged ever deeper into poverty. Revolutionary-minded people here are searching for answers and analysis that Pathfinder Press can offer. Your continuing effort to circulate more widely your literature is greatly appreciated.

*N. Fuentes
Mexico City, Mexico*

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.

'Antiterror' summit props up Zionism

BY CANDACE WAGNER
AND MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. president Bill Clinton hastily cobbled together a "summit of peacemakers" at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el Sheik March 13 in an effort to buttress the Israeli regime. Heads of state and other high-level government officials from 30 countries, including Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, Russian president Boris Yeltsin, and Palestine Liberation Organization head Yasir Arafat, posed together after the meeting to release a brief statement. The gathering was called following four suicide bombings in Israel by Palestinian activists that resulted in 62 people getting killed.

Clinton later promised Tel Aviv \$100 million in aid on a one-day stop in Jerusalem March 14, in addition to stepped up collaboration in spying on Palestinian fighters. According to the *Washington Post*, the "declared purpose" of Clinton's visit was to "bolster" the Zionist regime in the face of "their Arab enemies."

Israeli government officials say negotiations to begin beefing up military and security agreements between the two countries may be announced by Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres before the May 29 elections. U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher, CIA director John Deutch, and Lt. Gen. Daniel Christman remained in Jerusalem for further military talks on March 15.

On March 5, Israeli troops barricaded 465 West Bank communities and confined some 1.2 million residents to their villages in a campaign of "collective punishment" against the Palestinians following the suicide bombings. Clinton backed the sweeping assault meted out to Palestinians as justified "at a time when it's hard to tell who may be wrapped in plastique" explosives.

After Clinton's departure from Jerusalem, the Israeli government announced that much of the U.S. funds would be spent on building a high-tech border fence between Israel and the West Bank.

'International propaganda rally'

Representatives of the Syrian and Lebanese governments skipped the summit. Syrian state radio called the gathering an "international propaganda rally" where the Zionist regime hoped to exploit the bombings and withdraw from the so-called peace process as a way "to put the blame for that on Arabs in general and Syria in particular." Damascus released a statement calling for the return by Israel of all occupied territories in order to remove the impetus for armed attacks. Negotiations between the Israeli and Syrian governments on the return of the Golan Heights were suspended after the bombings.

Many of the participating Arab governments paid lip service to the need to address the crackdown imposed on the Palestinians by the Zionist state, and the continuing occupation of West Bank territory. "Collective punishment, closure and every type of violence against innocent people will in turn generate more violence," declared Saudi foreign minister Saud al-Faisal in his remarks at the closing ceremony. President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasir Arafat, who played a central role through his presence in giving the imperialist-inspired gathering a facade of Arab representation, also condemned the blockade of West Bank towns and the Gaza Strip.

Shimon Peres, speaking to Israeli correspondents, explained the significance of the summit in helping to break down the isolation of the Zionist state in the region. "For 13 Arab countries to get up and express in a loud voice that their hearts are aching for the victims in Israel — only Israel was mentioned — is something," he crowed.

Meanwhile, the Zionist state has begun

to allow a trickle of food shipments into the Gaza Strip and West Bank towns under siege since February 25. After border closures caused several deaths of children needing medical treatment, the Israeli government announced March 13 that emergency cases will now be allowed through the check points.

Palestinian officials report that the closure has caused unemployment to rise to around 70 percent. Schools are having difficulty functioning as some 20 percent of the 700,000 students in the West Bank and up to 50 percent of 40,000 teachers cannot get to the schools.

Following the conference, Arafat told reporters that "the Israelis informed us that there has been a partial lift of the security cordon and we hope that during the next few days there will be a total lift of the blockade."

On March 17, however, Shimon Peres announced that the closure would continue indefinitely. He proposed the creation of an international fund of \$100 million to help provide jobs for the Palestinians. Previously the Israeli government had

announced a decision to import 16,500 more workers to replace Palestinians who are blocked from traveling to Israel because of the closure.

Peres also postponed the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank town of Hebron scheduled for the end of March. He stated that the withdrawal will depend on Arafat's cracking down on Hamas and on fulfilling his pledge to strike from the PLO charter the call for a democratic secular Palestine to replace the Zionist state of Israel.

Israeli troops blew up a number of homes of Palestinians Tel Aviv alleges were suicide bombers. In the West Bank town of Burka, youth defied a curfew and threw stones at soldiers performing the demolition. "This will not stop the people from struggling against the occupation," remarked 72-year-old Aysla Awdeh as he watched the explosion.

The Israeli-Palestinian accords have given limited self-rule to six cities and hundreds of small towns in the West Bank. Less than 30 percent of the West Bank has been conceded by Tel Aviv to be

under Palestinian control. The surrounding areas, as well as vital resources, remain under Israeli occupation.

The March 9 issue of the *Jerusalem Post* international edition reported that Israeli army colonel Shaul Arieli suggested several ways for pressuring Arafat to accept Israel's demands on suppressing the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, including cutting off water, electricity, telephone and Israeli medical services to the Palestinian Authority. This plan was supposedly dropped, but the suggestion illustrates the limits of Palestinian autonomy gained in the accords.

"In this peace, they are putting us in reservations like the Indians here," Hamas leader Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook told the *New York Times* March 8, from a jail in Manhattan where he is being held for possible extradition to Israel.

The Israeli crackdown is provoking more resistance throughout the region. On March 20, another suicide bomber attacked Zionist army units occupying a part of southern Lebanon, near the border with Israel, killing one Israeli soldier.

5,000 rally to defend Ontario strikers

BY AL CAPPE

TORONTO — "This is really great. This will show that we're serious," said Andrew Male, one of the thousands of striking Ontario Public Service Employee Union (OPSEU) members and their supporters who mobilized March 18 for the opening of the new session of the Ontario legislature.

Male was picketing at the Ministry of Education. Beginning before 7 a.m. pickets of up to 100 workers went up at entrances to numerous government buildings. At the same time hundreds of workers massed in front of the legislature.

At noon, workers converged at the legislature for a rally and the crowd swelled to 5,000. Steelworkers, teachers, postal workers, garment and auto workers, as well as students, and unemployed participated in the actions.

Faced with the growing confidence and resolve of the workers, now in the fourth week of their strike, the government of premier Mike Harris resorted to violence. A police riot squad attacked one of the picket lines near the Frost building, swinging their truncheons without warning at peaceful pickets. Two workers, including a teacher supporting the strikers, were taken to the hospital.

OPSEU members went on strike February 26 to defend their rights against government plans to lay off up to 27,000 public employees. They are demanding that workers whose jobs are privatized have the right to keep those jobs with union protection and wages, seniority be respected in layoffs, and laid-off employees maintain their pension rights. The government has dropped its demand to lay off anyone, at anytime, for up to two months.

The strikers mobilize to maintain picket lines at hundreds of locations across the province, calling on support from other unions. Rallies and marches are an almost daily occurrence in downtown Toronto. Three hundred strikers and their supporters rallied March 12 outside the Ontario Ministry of Housing, chanting "No Justice, No Peace."

"I am impressed with the strength of the lines. We have been able to unify all levels of OPSEU members," said Peter MacMillan, walking the picket line March 14 at the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The Harris government has repeatedly stated that a large percentage of the workers are crossing the picket lines, although even its own statistics add up to only about 10 percent.

"Harris didn't think we'd take it this far, so now he's taking cheap shots," said Sterling, an OPSEU member picketing at a



Militant/John Steele

Government workers and teachers picket Ontario Health Insurance Program offices March 11. "The strike is more than just a trade union struggle," said one striker.

subway entrance to government buildings. "The longer we go on the more profound our point is made. We have more public support now."

The strike takes place amidst increasing protests against the government and the employers' attacks on working people. The Ontario Federation of Labor has recently announced the third in a series of protest days against the Harris government. The next action is planned for April 19 in the Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge area. Over 100,000 working people rallied in Hamilton February 24, while tens of thousands participated in similar actions December 11 in London, Ontario.

By a vote of 98.4 percent, the 7,600 bus and subway drivers, ticket collectors, and maintenance personnel at Toronto Transit Commission rejected company demands for pay and benefit cuts and for a two-tier wage system. Negotiations resumed March 18 with the Amalgamated Transit Union.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Canadian Labor Congress have called for a National Women's March against Poverty May 14.

One hundred hospital workers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, chanted "Patients first!" and "Enough is Enough!" as they picketed March 12 in front of Toronto General Hospital. The hospital administration has handed lay off notices to 840 employees.

Several times the workers stretched their picket line across the busy boulevard, stopping traffic. Some of these workers had participated in the OPSEU rally the same day. The OPSEU strike is becoming a rallying point for many who are fighting the government.

Some 80 teachers joined an OPSEU picket line March 11 at one of the offices of the Ministry of Health preventing the entry of scabs that police and private security had herded across the line a few days earlier. Teachers are facing massive layoffs and many are lending their support to the OPSEU walkout.

Some 15 members of United Steelworkers Local 5338 who work at Ontario Store Fixtures, joined an OPSEU picket line near their workplace March 14.

"The OPSEU strike is more than just a trade union struggle," said striker Peter MacMillan. "It's about fundamental social and political rights of Ontario citizens."

The government continues to meet with union negotiators as the solidarity, unity, and pride of the strikers grows.

"Before, I never thought anything about the union," said Diane, a secretary at Queen Street Mental Hospital. Now she's a picket captain and doing extra duties on the line. "I'm a different person," she said. "No one will ever step on me again."

Al Cappe is a member of USWA Local 5338. Mick McDonald, a Young Socialists member, contributed to this article.