

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**New law escalates
U.S. assault on Cuban people**
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Young Socialists: join fight to defend immigrants

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — "The Young Socialists demand the immediate arrest, prosecution, conviction, and jailing of the two Riverside, California, cops who brutally beat immigrant workers from Mexico on April 1," said a statement released April 3 by the revolutionary youth group. The statement pointed to demonstrations against the beating as "an example for all those who fight for justice. We call on all youth and workers around the world to join these actions! Open the borders! Close the INS! Protest police brutality! Defend immigrant rights!"

"We've been calling young people who are active around Cuba, immigrant rights, and Black rights to build a meeting tonight to organize a protest," Megan Arney explained. She was in the Young Socialists organizing center at the Pathfinder bookstore here April 3, where YS members are making the final preparations for the group's national convention.

Arney, a convention coordinator and member of the United Steelworkers of America, said that in addition to the planning meeting, called by La Raza, the Young Socialists, and local Cuba activists, the YS is calling a news conference the first day of their convention, April 6, to speak out against the beatings. Leaders of the socialist youth group and the Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, James Harris and Laura Garza, will be among the speakers.

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Socialist workers step up sales of book on revolution

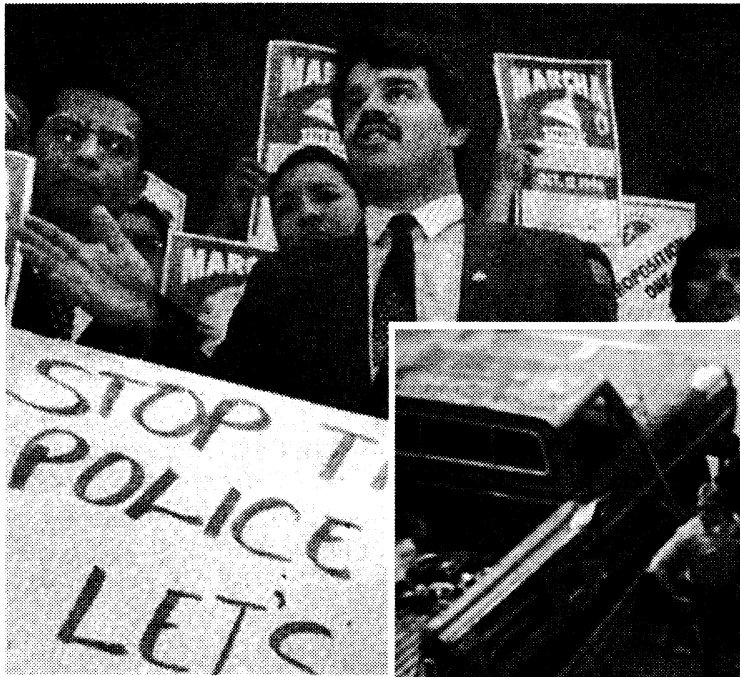
BY NAOMI CRAINE

"Four copies of *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* were sold to workers at Northwest Airlines here in the last two weeks," wrote Jeff Jones in a note to the *Militant*. "They were sold by two socialist workers making an effort to reach out broadly to more of the 10,000 workers organized in the International Association of Machinists at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport than we usually work with." One worker who bought the book "is interested in going to Cuba, so now we have to work on that," he said.

Making the goal of selling 500 copies of *Episodes* to industrial workers in the unions is the biggest challenge socialist workers face over the next four weeks in the campaign to increase sales of Pathfinder books and pamphlets. To make the target in the remaining four weeks, by May 1, supporters in the unions will have

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Protests denounce cop beating of immigrants



April 2 protest of 100 at Los Angeles Federal Building (above), condemning brutal assault by cops on Mexican workers the day before near the city (right), while being filmed by a local television crew.

BY JOHN EVENHUIS

LOS ANGELES — The videotaped clubbing of several Mexican workers by police here April 1, shown on television throughout the United States and Mexico, has caused widespread indignation.

The next day, 100 protesters outside the Federal Building angrily chanted, "We want justice" in English and Spanish.

"We will not rest until these people [the cops] are arrested," said Héctor Brolo, president of the Mexican American Political Association.

The videotape, shot from a helicopter by a KCAL Channel 9 television crew, "captured on tape the true illegals in our midst," remarked José de Paz, executive director of the California Immigrant Workers Association. Demonstrators carried signs building an October 12 national march in Washington, D.C., in support of the rights of immigrants.

Roberto Martínez of the American Friends Service Committee compared the assault to the 1991 police beating of Rodney King, saying both "show the level of police brutality in the department." The graphic video of the King beating sparked a wave of protests demanding prosecution of the cops involved.

Some 150 people rallied April 3 in front of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department demanding prosecution of the cops. The protesters included Chicano students from Riverside Community College and area high schools. "Protests like this are needed to fight cop brutality and racism," said Lisa Ramírez, a student at Riverside Community College. María, another student, added, "It didn't matter whether they were undocumented, the cops should not have beat them and should be thrown in jail themselves."

Two demonstrations were planned for April 6. One action was set in Los Angeles, and the other in Riverside in front of

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SWP candidates: 'Jail guilty cops, end deportations!'

BY GREG MCCARTAN

"Our campaign joins with protests condemning the brutal police beating of immigrant workers in Los Angeles," said Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president James Harris in an interview April 3.

"Far from rogue cops, this is the punishment meted out to working peo-

ple — especially those of us who are Black and Latino — day in and day out," Harris said. "The Democratic and Republican parties, and the government they run, bear direct responsibility for this attack because they have been spearheading the anti-immigrant, chauvinist, and 'America First' ideological offensive."

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Dozens protest U.S. denial of visas to Cuban youth

BY MACEO DIXON

BOSTON — Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir was notified March 29 by the U.S. State Department that Cuban youth leaders Maika Guerrero and Iroel Sánchez were denied visas to come to the United States. The two Cubans were invited by 119 professors and student groups from 73 universities in 22 states to visit the United States in April for a series of lectures primarily on campuses. Guerrero and Sánchez are associate researchers at the Center of Studies for Youth in Havana. They are also members of the Union of Young Communists.

Their speaking tour is hosted by the Faculty-Students Cuban Youth Lectures Committee based at the Roxbury Community College here. Kaiser-Lenoir, who teaches at the Romance Language Department at Tufts University in the area and is one of the national coordinators of the lectures committee, spoke by telephone with Sean Murphy of the State Department's Cuba desk.

"On the telephone, Mr. Murphy... said the denial was based on Section 2-12F of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, which gives the president the right to deny entry into the U.S. to employees and offi-

cials of the Cuban government," Kaiser-Lenoir stated.

"Given that Cuba is a totalitarian society," Mr. Murphy said, any Cuban is viewed as technically an official or employee of the state. Visas are denied, he said, "whenever the president finds that entry would be detrimental to the interests of the U.S."

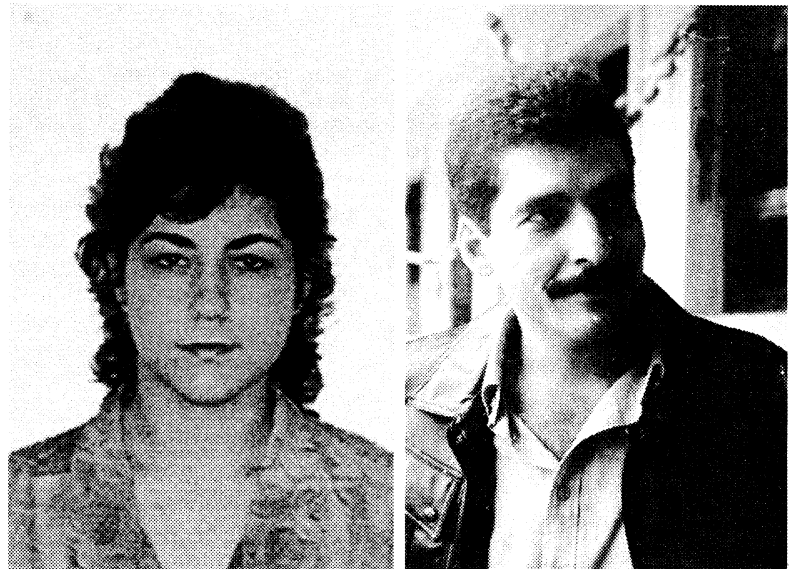
In this particular case, she continued, the State Department's opinion was that the visit was "for the purpose of advocacy."

Guerrero, 20, is president of the Federation of University Students (FEU) at the Advanced Institute of Nuclear Science and Technol-

ogy of Havana. Sánchez, 31, is second editor in chief of the Avril editorial house, which publishes books, pamphlets, and periodicals geared towards Cuba's youth (including many pamphlets with speeches of Ernesto Che Guevara).

On April 3, Guerrero and Sánchez were

Continued on Page 8



Maika Guerrero (left), and Iroel Sánchez (right).

What a young communist should be — page 9



30,000 people march in Bolivia

More than 30,000 workers hit the streets of La Paz March 27 demanding pay hikes and protesting government plans to sell off the state-owned oil company and other industries. Oil workers, miners, and health-care workers joined tens of thousands of striking government employees in the demonstration in the Bolivian capital. One worker was killed when riot cops attacked an earlier protest on March 25.

The Bolivian Workers Confederation led the march as part of a two-week-old strike it has organized, shutting down public schools and universities. "We are one of the poorest countries in the world, and now they want to sell one of the last remaining resources we have — oil," Lucia Morales, a public health worker, told the *New York Times*.

Brazilian bank bailed out

The Brazilian government announced March 23 it will pour \$8.2 billion into the Banco do Brasil, the largest bank in Latin America, to stanch its financial hemorrhaging. The bank had just announced on March 20 a \$4.3 billion loss — the largest in its history and an amount greater than its net worth.

The bailout was the third major rescue of a large Brazilian bank in less than a year. In August 1995, the Brazilian government seized the assets of Banco Economico and a few months later it pumped \$6 billion into Banco Nacional.

Cease-fire called in Guatemala

Guatemalan president Alvaro Arzu directed the military on March 21 to honor a truce called by guerrillas of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity a day earlier. It was the fourth cease-fire in Guatemala's 35-year-old civil war where more than 120,000 people have been slaughtered — largely during brutal government crackdowns during the 1980s.

The civil war started as peasants struggled against wealthy landowners in a country where more than 60 percent of the 10.7 million inhabitants live in poverty. The Commission for Human Rights in



Thousands of farmworkers in South Africa marched in late February to the Appleweite farm in Grabou, Western Cape, where 200 workers were fired for demanding higher wages. The South African Agricultural Plantation and Allied Workers Union, launched in February 1995, is waging campaigns to end child labor, improve working conditions, increase wages, and win reinstatement of those who were dismissed.

Guatemala recently reported the March 21 execution and torture of José Luis Ramos, coordinator of the Pro-Land Committee in the village of La Esperanza del Mar, Izabal.

Military raids in Puerto Rico

Some 800 National Guard soldiers and cops stormed the largest housing project in Puerto Rico, home to 40,000 residents, March 19 under the pretext of searching for illegal drugs. Helicopters hovered overhead while soldiers occupied the streets, arresting an undisclosed number of people.

Civil liberties groups charged the military with brutality and searching homes without warrants. *New York Times* columnist A.M. Rosenthal applauded Puerto Ri-

can governor Pedro Rosselló's armed assault in San Juan and the military occupations as a "top priority" in the so-called "war on drugs."

Italian airline facing bankruptcy

Alitalia, the state-owned airline in Italy with a debt of \$2.2 billion, lost \$175 million in the latest quarter, more than in all of 1995. Domenico Cempella, an Alitalia executive appointed in February to salvage the company, asked for cooperation from union officials in working out a rescue plan. In 1995 Alitalia, which employs 18,000 people, was beset by 184 hours of strikes.

U.S. renews leases in Okinawa

Japan's prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto signed documents on March 28 forcing the renewal of leases for U.S. military bases in Okinawa. This followed a court ruling in Okinawa's capital that the governor must renew the leases there. Some 32,000 people in Okinawa are compelled to lease land for the bases, where 30,000 U.S. soldiers are stationed. Nearly 3,000 Okinawans are resisting efforts to force them to surrender their plots of land for Washington's military operations.

Massive protests demanding U.S. troops leave the island were organized after a schoolgirl was raped by U.S. GIs. Reflecting this sentiment, Okinawa governor Masahide Ota refused to sign the lease agreement. "Considering the feelings of

the Okinawans, it is very difficult for me to sign," he said at a news conference March 27.

Clinton to cut Social Security

Clinton administration officials announced March 18 plans for reviewing the eligibility of 1.4 million of the 7.5 million people receiving disability payments from the Social Security or Supplemental Security Income programs over the next two years. The commissioner of Social Security, Shirley Chater, stated that everyone receiving Social Security disability benefits will be evaluated by 2002.

Jonathan Stein, general counsel of Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, said the "announcement takes a step in the direction of the purge of the disabled that occurred in the early 1980s." The Reagan administration provoked outrage among working people in the early 1980s when it stopped payments for more than 500,000 people receiving disability benefits. A measure that prohibits alcoholics and drug addicts from receiving disability benefits was included in a government spending bill approved March 28 in Congress with support from the Clinton administration.

House bans abortion method

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a final version of a bill on March 27 that bans women from using intact dilation and evacuation, a late-term abortion procedure. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists opposed the bill, asserting that it "employs terminology that is not even recognized in the medical community."

Opponents of the measure say it could be used later to attack abortion rights in general. Catherine Albisa, an attorney at the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy in New York, said, "The bill is so vague it may also apply to other abortion procedures."

Assault on welfare marches on

While the U.S. Congress and President William Clinton remain deadlocked on budget proposals, state governments around the country have plowed ahead cutting billions of dollars from welfare programs with waivers from Washington to enable them to cut billions more.

In early March, California's Los Angeles County reduced general assistance payments to 90,000 beneficiaries by 25 percent. In the past year, six states, including Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, followed Michigan's 1991 example and eliminated general assistance for able-bodied adults without children. All together, 37 states won waivers to adopt time limits, impose stringent work requirements, or place other restrictions on people receiving welfare benefits.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Read the facts about Cuba and U.S. policy against revolution

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Thousands rally for Puerto Rican rights

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A National Puerto Rican Affirmation Day drew 2,500 participants here March 29. Marchers came from across the United States and Puerto Rico.

The action involved people with a range of political viewpoints who expressed their determination to defend the rights of Puerto Ricans, both in the United States and on the island nation. Many enthusiastically chanted "Long Live Free Puerto Rico!" and "Puerto Rico Yes, Yankee No!" A good number of the marchers were young. For many it was their first political activity. Several individuals and groups of workers carried hand-lettered signs or wore jackets and caps identifying their

union, such as the Amalgamated Transit Workers, hospital workers union, Service Employees International Union, and International Association of Machinists. Many took the day off work to attend the march.

Juan Rodríguez came with a busload of 40 students from Central Connecticut State University. "I came today for the pride of Boricuas [Puerto Ricans]," he said. "We must stand up for our rights." Another student, Alicia, added, "We are fighting hard to get Puerto Rican studies on campus so our culture and history can be kept alive." The contingent was organized by the Latin American Students Organization.

Rafael López came with 34 others in a car caravan from the south Bronx in New

York City. "We are here to let the country know we exist. We refuse to be invisible," said López. "We are standing up today not just for Puerto Ricans but for all minorities."

One large banner proclaimed "Free the 15 Puerto Rican Political Prisoners!" Marchers all around the banner chanted "Libertad!" (freedom). "I came to show support for freedom for the political prisoners," said Carmen Torres. She was among the several busloads of marchers from Philadelphia.

The students were referring to 15 Puerto Rican political activists arrested by the FBI in the 1980s. They were convicted in U.S. courts on various charges including conspiracy, arms possession, and bank

robbery. In the case of several activists arrested in 1985, the convictions were based largely on FBI spy testimony and contested transcripts of conversations taped through massive wiretapping of private homes. The march organizers submitted petitions to U.S. president William Clinton asking for a presidential pardon for the 15 political activists.

Marchers expressed a variety of opinions on Puerto Rico's status, from supporters of independence to advocates of statehood or the status quo. A group of 30 carried a banner reading "New York Coalition for Statehood Now!"

"We all favor an independent Puerto Rico," explained Enrique Cruz, who was at his first march. "But first we must develop economically in association with the U.S. in order to work toward independence."

The event featured several prominent elected officials who are Puerto Rican, among them U.S. Congresspeople Nydia Velázquez and José Serrano from New York, and Rep. Luis Gutiérrez from Illinois. They and others called for Puerto Ricans to turn out in large numbers to the polls and vote for Democrats to "turn back the Republican Contract with America."

Gutiérrez said a document called the National Puerto Rican Leadership Agenda would be submitted to each member of Congress and to Clinton. March organizer Manuel Mirabal, president of the National Puerto Rican Coalition, said the document was intended to convince U.S. officials to support the interests of Puerto Ricans.

Organizers of the event began the activities with a rally at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to honor Puerto Rican veterans of U.S. wars. Many of the speeches were laced with appeals to defend "our country," referring to the United States.

Sam Manuel is a member of United Transportation Union Local 454.

OAS: 'Grenada must lift book ban'

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

"The Government of Grenada must lift the ban" on more than 80 books published by Pathfinder Press, the Organization of American States has declared.

In a 12-page ruling issued March 1, the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights condemned the Grenada government's censorship decree, in force since 1989, as a blatant violation of the "right to freedom of thought and expression."

Banned authors included revolutionary leaders such as Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and Malcolm X.

"The Grenada book ban is an intolerable denial of the right of workers, farmers, young people, and others to decide for themselves what they will read," said Steve Clark, editor of *Maurice Bishop Speaks*, a book by the central leader of the 1979-83 Grenada revolution and prime minister of the Caribbean country who was killed in 1983. Clark is also the author of "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop," the lead article in issue no. 6 of the Marxist magazine *New International*. The article explains the achievements of the workers and farmers government established there 17 years ago and what led to the assassination of Bishop by a Stalinist faction within his party. That event opened the door for Washington to invade the Caribbean island and put in place a government of its liking.

"The fact that even the OAS — which Cuban revolutionary leaders have accurately described as the 'Yankee Ministry of Colonies' — felt compelled to call for an end to the ban, is testimony to how difficult it has become to defend that flagrantly undemocratic action," Clark said.

The battle against censorship began in October 1988 when Grenada customs officials seized a shipment of Pathfinder books being sent to the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement. At that time Grenada's police commissioner said the titles were being checked against "a list of banned books."

In March 1989 another shipment of books was confiscated, and in April 1989 the government issued a decree banning 86 Pathfinder titles by name as "contrary to the public interest."

In response to the OAS ruling, Terry

Marryshow, leader of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement in Grenada, is demanding that the government of Prime Minister Keith Joseph "repeal the ban, remove the law from the books, and cease denying the citizens of Grenada the right to freedom of thought."

Marryshow told the *Militant* that while news of the OAS ruling had been broadcast in Grenada, the government has so far given no indication it intends to remove the decree.

Dennis Antoine, Grenada's ambassador to the United States and delegate to the OAS, told the *Militant* March 19 he had received the ruling. Although his government had not yet "officially" taken a position on the ruling, Antoine said, "I assure you it will respond."

"This is very important to the government's image," Antoine added.

Antoine's assurances notwithstanding, in subsequent calls to the offices of Grenada's prime minister and attorney general,

the *Militant* was told no official statement had been issued.

The Grenada censorship decree was condemned around the world. Statements of protest were issued by the Congressional Committee to Support Writers and Journalists, a bipartisan committee of more than 80 U.S. representatives and senators; U.S. Congressional representatives Ronald Dellums and Sidney Yates; Rev. Allan Kirton, general secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches; members of the British, Canadian, and Australian parliaments; the Oil Fields Workers Trade Union of Trinidad and Tobago; and the Grenada Trades Union Council.

Kendrick Radix, Grenada's attorney general under the Maurice Bishop government, noted that the legal origin of the book ban can be found in British colonial law. "We are supposed to be free from colonial rule. In fighting the book ban we are reaffirming our right to read anything we choose," he said.

'March to fight the right' on April 14

BY ELLEN BERMAN AND LYN DUFF

SAN FRANCISCO — "Young people have to stand up and show that we're not going to take this any more," a 15-year-old student from Redwood High School said at a recent demonstration against ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan in San Jose, California, referring to the demands of the upcoming "March to Fight the Right."

"We're tired of being harassed on the street by cops. San Jose has a youth curfew and uses it as an excuse to mess with anyone who's poor or a person of color. I have a friend who went to get an abortion and was terrorized by the Right-to-Lifers, who tried to physically prevent her from going in."

San Jose has been the target of numerous attempts to shut down abortion clinics. Abortion rights activists there have maintained a constant defense of the clinics. They are planning to send several buses to San Francisco for the April 14 demonstration, called by the National Organization for Women (NOW).

The Bay Area Young Feminist Coalition is calling on all young feminists from across the country — female and male — to march as a united "Young Feminist Delegation" in the April 14 action.

High school youth are also being urged to attend a "Young Feminist Sleepover" on Saturday, April 13. Billed as a night of "pizza, politics, and pajamas," this event is an effort to make it easier for young people to have an inexpensive place to stay the night before the march, as well as a chance to meet each other and talk politics in a series of workshops on a variety of topics.

Several high school students from the Gay-Straight Alliance in Salt Lake City, who recently made national news in their struggle to defend their democratic right to have a school club, are arranging to come and participate in the demonstration.

Organizers of the Bay Area Young Feminist Coalition sent the following message to a March 29 Militant Labor Forum here on the fight in Salt Lake City: "The Bay Area Young Feminist Coalition is very impressed by the student organizing

in Utah. We are thrilled that some students will be attending the Fight the Right March in San Francisco in April. We hope students from Utah and any other interested young people will join us for an overnight gathering of young activists the evening before the march. We think it will be a great event and we are excited about meeting the dynamic leaders."

Building the March to Fight the Right was a central focus of an all-day educational conference on March 10 titled "Affirming Equality: Women and Affirmative Action." About 200 people attended the event, where NOW president Patricia Ireland was the keynote speaker.

Because of the severe attacks against affirmative action in California, and a November ballot referendum that would end all public sector affirmative action programs in this state — the so-called California Civil Rights Initiative — activists for affirmative action are among the over 600 endorsers of this demonstration.

Joining the growing list of sponsors are labor organizations like the United Farm Workers, National Education Association, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Coalition of Labor Union Women, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, as well as several state AFL-CIO councils and locals of the Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees.

Members of United Auto Workers Local 2244, which organizes workers at the New United Motor Inc. (NUMMI) plant in Fremont, California, voted to distribute flyers about the demonstration at their plant.

On Friday and Saturday nights, young people meet at the NOW march office to pick up leaflets to distribute at the various bars around the city. On Saturdays, activists set up tables in different neighborhoods to leaflet and solicit volunteers for the day of the action. Leafleting is organized at mass transit stations every morning and evening during rush hour. March supporters are also targeting political events for distribution of flyers.

People from as far away as New Hampshire who are planning to attend are calling in for more information. The 600

free alternative housing spaces offered by volunteers have all been filled. NOW organizers who have been touring college campuses in California, Washington, and Oregon report they are getting a good response from students.

MARCH TO FIGHT THE RIGHT

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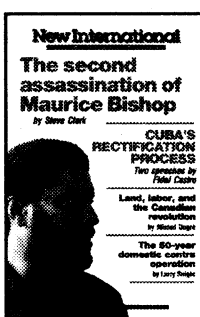
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The sugar workers' strike of 1955

Pathfinder Press has recently 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 12th — is on the strike by 200,000 sugar workers in December 1955, centered in Las Villas province. The walkout took on the character of a class battle that drew in students and all working people. The main issue in the strike was an attempt by the Batista government, on behalf of the sugar owners, to reduce the so-called sugar differential. Instituted in 1946, the differential was the result of an agreement between the Cuban and U.S. governments, whereby Washington was committed to increase the price it paid for Cuban sugar in proportion to increased costs of food and consumer goods sold to Cuba. The total amount of this differential price for sugar was to be distributed between workers, independent sugar farmers, and the landed estates. For workers the additional payment came to constitute an important component of their income.

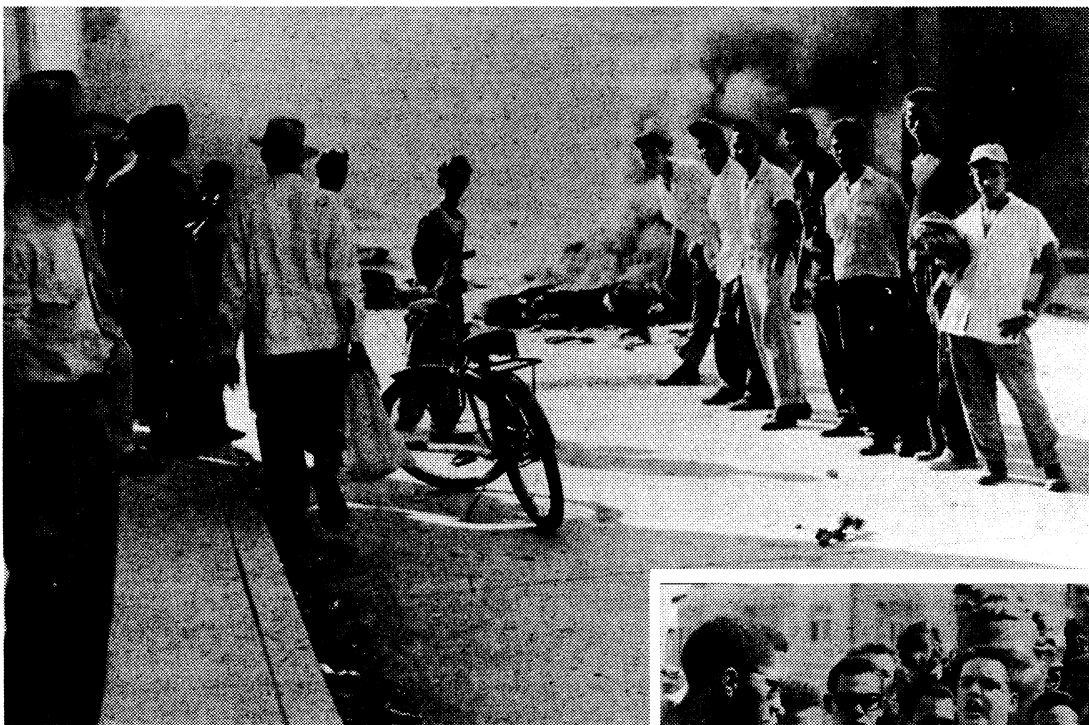
The following article was published in *Trabajadores*, the weekly newspaper of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Nov. 27, 1995. Translation is by the *Militant*.

BY ALINA MARTÍNEZ TRIAY

On Nov. 27, 1955,¹ a militant student protest in Santiago de Cuba was brutally repressed by the police, with a toll of 17 young people hurt and more than 30 arrested. This action was the start of a campaign of revolutionary agitation that would unite students, workers, and the people in general. By the time of the new year, a state of open rebellion against the regime existed.

The high point was reached during the December sugar workers' strike, which achieved a unity between students and workers not seen since the days of Mella.²

The origin of this unity was the series of actions that followed rapidly after the Santiago de Cuba events: A protest strike was called involving the country's high schools, during which José Antonio Echeverría, the leader of the FEU, was arrested.³ On December 2, after being released, Echeverría headed a demonstration in which, together with Fructuoso Rodríguez, he was seriously injured and again imprisoned. On December 4 the police brutally assaulted a group of students during a protest on the playing field of the Cerro Stadium, seen on television by baseball fans all across the country. On De-



Top: Bohemia, Inset: Cuban Council of State

Above: workers take to streets of Santa Clara during 1955 strike. Inset: Federation of University Students leader José Antonio Echeverría addresses student demonstration. Sugar workers' strike was high point of "a campaign of revolutionary agitation that would unite students, workers, and the people in general."



cember 7 an activity in homage to Maceo⁴ by the students and people ended with the demonstrators being sprayed with gunfire; among the wounded were FEU leader Juan Pedro Carbó Serviá and Camilo Cienfuegos.

In the midst of the indignation created by these actions, a five-minute national work stoppage was called by the FEU, supported with determination and enthusiasm by various sectors of workers; it was observed in thousands of workplaces throughout the country. This positive experience contributed to the subsequent united action by students and proletarians during the sugar workers' strike.

Combativity versus deals

In a statement to the daily newspaper *Mañana*, Conrado Bécquer — at the time vice-secretary general of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (FNTA) of Las Villas — denounced the maneuvers by the owners of the landed estates and the wealthy sugar farmers, whose objective was "to take back from the workers the differential they were entitled to, manipulating at whim the final average sugar price so as to avoid paying out what the workers had won through their sweat in the plantations and sugar mills."

Looking back on these events today, Bécquer recalls, "We raised the slogan that if the sugar workers did not have a merry Christmas, then nobody would have a happy new year. We addressed ourselves to the workers to organize a massive mobilization in support of the differential."

A group of workers leaders, among them Conrado, visited the university to coordinate actions with the FEU. Later, Conrado visited José Antonio when the latter was being held prisoner in the Príncipe Castle. At that time the student leader gave him a list of names of comrades who would be going to the provinces to reinforce the proletarian protests. It should be stated that immediately after arriving at their destinations, the young people sent by the FEU got in touch with the high school students to enlist them in the struggle.

Pressured by the workers, the leading councils of the CTC and FNTA, led by Mujal⁵ felt compelled to announce a 48-hour work stoppage beginning December 26 to demand the differential. They hoped that the strike would not have a larger impact because the sugar mills had not yet begun the stage of pressing, and only a few workers were on the job, doing repairs and bulk shipments. Acting underhandedly, Mujal and his gang made a deal with the tyrant and the sugar owners that amounted to a slap in the face to the workers, giving them a 2.77 percent differential instead of the 7.5 percent they were entitled to.

What the Mujalists did not anticipate was that the strike would get out of their control, not just because of its power and scope — involving other sectors of workers — but because a large number of the strikers rejected returning to work until they had been paid the full differential.

"In Las Villas," Conrado explains, "the strike was widespread. There the FEU sent

Fructuoso Rodríguez, who was in Santo Domingo when they took him prisoner. A number of areas were declared 'dead cities,' where the town halls and churches were taken over. Transportation on the central highway was halted. We acted jointly with the PSP's⁶ Committees in Defense of Workers Demands, with the comrades of the July 26 Movement's action and sabotage units, and numerous students from the Institute. Similar things occurred in other provinces."

Two persons were killed during those combative days: Everardo Carrera, a worker from Los Palos in Nueva Paz; and Herib-

erto Espino, an agricultural worker from Quemado de Güines. In Ciego de Avila, Pedro Martínez Breito, the leader of the Commercial Science School, was injured.

When José Antonio left jail, he made a tour of the scenes of battle, together with René Anillo and Julio García Oliveras. The latter recalls: "What we saw resembled a war zone. The sugar workers had felled trees to impede the movement of vehicles, and had torn up the pavement. Visiting the towns José Antonio stopped and spoke with the people. In Santa Clara we met with Conrado Bécquer and made efforts to free Fructuoso. In Ciego de Avila we visited Martínez Brito, who was at his parents' house recovering from his wounds. The

movement had become so strong that the army had been withdrawn to its barracks and the workers dominated the streets."

Octavio Louit Venzant, leader of the July 26 Movement's workers section in Guantánamo, recounts how on the day before the strike began he toured the sugar mills accompanied by Osmeel Francis, sent by the FEU, to urge the workers to join the job action. The office of the Regional Work-

ers Federation of Guantánamo was taken over, as was the town hall. The members of the action and sabotage units undertook numerous support actions. The railroad workers, bus drivers, and merchants joined the protest. "More than an action of sugar workers, things took on the appearance of a general struggle of the people and of all workers."

Trade union locals that did not obey the order given by the FNTA to return to work on December 29 were taken over by the national leadership. Nevertheless, the agitation continued, and on December 31 the newspapers were still announcing disturbances in various localities of the country, demonstrations being broken up by force with injured, burning of bridges, interruption of telephone and telegraph communication between the capital and the provinces, and towns and villages being taken over by the army.

The strike was thus transformed into a formidable demonstration of protest against Batista. On Jan. 1, 1956, the dictator signed a decree ordering the payment of a differential slightly greater than what was initially proposed, but that signified a payment of only 6.5 million pesos, less than half of the 18 million demanded by the strikers.

Nevertheless, workers, students, and the people in general had, in a united manner, conducted an impressive display of power against the tyrant, sending him the "present" of a rebel new year.

NOTES

¹ November 27 is a traditional day of student protests in Cuba, marking the execution of eight medical students by the Spanish colonial regime in 1871.

² Julio Antonio Mella was a founder of the Federation of University Students (FEU) in 1923, and of the Communist Party of Cuba in 1925.

³ José Antonio Echeverría had been elected president of the Federation of University Students in 1954. Earlier in 1955 he helped found the Revolutionary Directorate, and was killed March 13, 1957, in events surrounding the Directorate's attack on the Presidential Palace.

⁴ Antonio Maceo was a prominent military leader and strategist in Cuba's wars of independence from Spain in the 19th century, and a symbol of revolutionary intransigence.

⁵ Eusebio Mujal, a prominent supporter of Batista, was general secretary of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), using his post to stifle opposition to the regime. He fled Cuba after Jan. 1, 1959.

⁶ The pro-Moscow Communist Party, which changed its name to Popular Socialist Party (PSP) in 1944.

Special offer from Pathfinder

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58 Ernesto Che Guevara

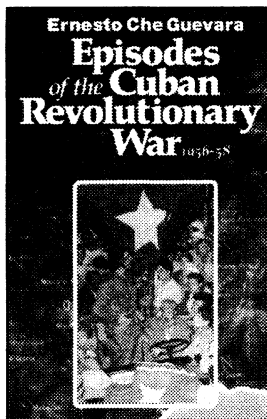
Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War is a firsthand account of the military battles and political campaigns that culminated in the January 1959 mass armed insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.

Guevara's *Episodes* shows how he and other Rebel Army combatants were transformed by their experiences into battle-tested leaders of working people in Cuba.

Writing with clarity and humor, he shows how the revolution's social program emerged out of deepening class-struggle experience by workers and peasants themselves. He explains how the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement grew into a movement capable of leading millions to carry through a socialist revolution in the years after the 1959 victory.

Edited with an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters.

Join the **Pathfinder Readers Club** for a \$10 annual fee, and receive special discounts like this, as well as a 15 percent discount on all Pathfinder titles from bookstores listed on page 12 and direct from the publisher. Contact the Pathfinder bookstore nearest you, or write **Pathfinder**, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 for postage and handling.



Special offer to members of the
Pathfinder Readers Club
Regular price \$23.95
Special offer \$18 (25% off)
Offer good until May 1

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Continued from front page

to go over the goals set so far, since they do not yet add up to 500. Just over 200 copies have been sold on the job in the first eight weeks of the campaign.

Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War by Che Guevara describes how workers and peasants in Cuba succeeded in taking power and beginning the socialist revolution in the Americas. Socialists who are members of unions are selling the book to their co-workers and discussing how the working class continues to hold power in Cuba today.

The best way to see this, they explain, is to attend the congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) at the end of April. Unionists who are interested in the idea of the working class in power can read and discuss the theses the Cuban workers will be taking up there, whether or not they can make the trip to Cuba.

Emily Fitzsimmons, a member of the United Transportation Union in Seattle, described how one rail worker there decided to buy the book. "He borrowed a copy from another co-worker, read sections of it over the course of a few weeks, and after several discussions about Cuba decided to get Episodes and a Pathfinder Readers Club membership. He was impressed with the land reform in Cuba and read one section of the CTC theses in the Militant."

The Militant will e-mail this week the entire text of the CTC theses to distributors so they can be copied and used together with Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War.

This week's Militant also reports the results of the first full month of the campaign to sell 1,800 Pathfinder books and pamphlets a month through local Pathfinder bookstores, and 1,400 a month to commercial bookstores and libraries. Many local bookstores are off to a good start, going well over their targets for the month. Pathfinder supporters may want to discuss increasing goals where they have proven easy to exceed.

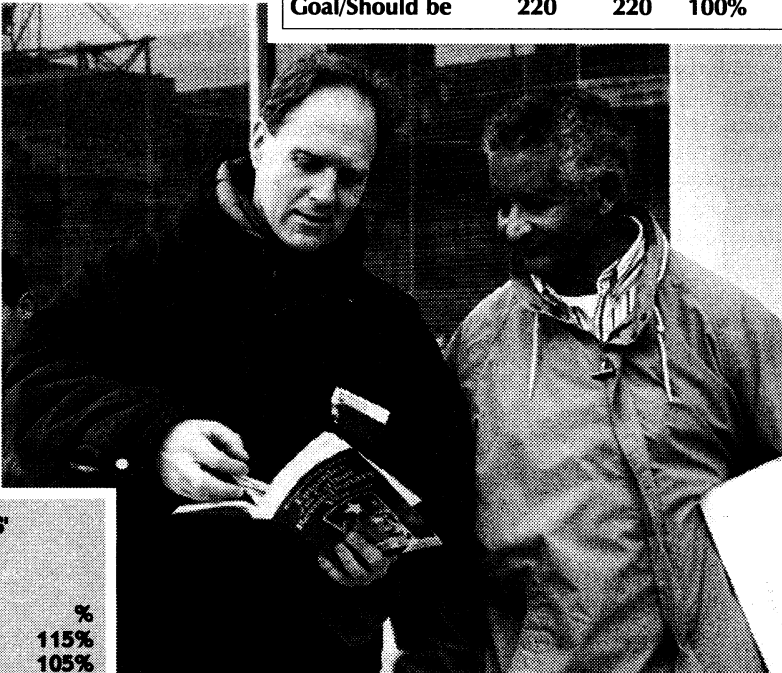
The figures on sales to commercial distributors are based on what local volunteer Pathfinder sales representatives know they have sold. According to the Pathfinder business office, other

orders have come in directly from book buyers. Beginning next week, the chart will be compiled based on orders received by Pathfinder, so it will be more accurate. Local distributors should still report what they know has been sold by the volunteer representatives.

As more Pathfinder supporters get trained in visiting bookstores, libraries, and universities, these sales can go up rapidly. Supporters in Salt Lake City e-mailed in a note that they sold 43 books to two university bookstores in the last week.

Along with the monthly goals, Pathfinder supporters are

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books											
Through PF Bookstores			To Commercial distributors			Total			Readers Club		
March 31: 74%			Should be: 100%								
UNITED STATES	Goal	Sold	% sold	Goal	Sold	% sold	Goal	Sold	% sold	Goal	Sold
Des Moines*	45	98	218%	35	26	74%	80	124	155%	31	25
Atlanta	48	55	115%	32	37	116%	80	92	115%	31	35
Salt Lake City	63	63	100%	49	54	110%	112	117	104%	54	35
Los Angeles	120	176	147%	95	44	46%	215	220	102%	80	59
Miami	55	92	167%	42	0	0%	97	92	95%	36	30
Philadelphia	63	87	138%	49	19	39%	112	106	95%	43	33
Twin Cities	86	113	131%	67	26	39%	153	139	91%	58	50
Seattle	80	86	108%	60	39	65%	140	125	89%	60	54
Houston	45	39	87%	32	26	81%	77	65	84%	34	29
Birmingham	63	66	105%	49	26	53%	112	92	82%	43	40
Brooklyn	165	188	114%	130	46	35%	295	234	79%	110	63
Washington, D.C.	54	75	139%	42	0	0%	96	75	78%	37	28
New York	175	137	78%	175	106	61%	350	243	69%	115	75
Detroit	77	95	123%	60	0	0%	137	95	69%	52	40
Morgantown	32	35	109%	25	1	4%	57	36	63%	21	16
Boston *	65	61	94%	50	7	14%	115	68	59%	43	35
Pittsburgh	63	64	102%	49	0	0%	112	64	57%	43	27
Newark	171	150	88%	133	6	5%	304	156	51%	115	90
San Francisco	95	85	89%	74	0	0%	169	85	50%	64	58
Chicago *	77	62	81%	60	0	0%	137	62	45%	52	44
Greensboro	41	31	76%	36	0	0%	77	31	40%	36	31
Peoria	36	19	53%	28	4	14%	64	23	36%	25	11
Cleveland	50	13	26%	40	0	0%	90	13	14%	34	18
Total	1769	1890	105%	1412	467	33%	3181	2357	74%	1217	897
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%	1400	1400	100%	3200	3200	100%	1200	600
* no new report											
CANADA											
Vancouver	36	53	147%	28	45	161%	64	98	153%	42	40
Toronto	112	51	46%	0	0	0%	112	51	46%	40	30
Montreal	72	44	61%	64	0	0%	136	44	32%	40	34
Total	220	148	67%	92	45	49%	312	193	62%	122	104
Goal/Should be	220	220	100%	92	92	100%	312	312	100%	122	61



Selling Episodes in New York City March 24

shooting to raise the U.S. membership in the Pathfinder Readers Club to 1,200 by May 1.

Readers club members receive a discount on all Pathfinder titles purchased at Pathfinder bookstores or direct from the publisher for a

In order to meet the goal, Pathfinder supporters need to sell about 300 new memberships in the next month, and make sure others don't lapse.

New members of the readers club are easy to win when you ask. Estelle DeBates sent in a note describing sales at a rally in

Pathfinder books sold to Co-workers					
Unions	Goal	Sold	% sold	Readers Club	
				Goal	Sold
UNITE	41	46	112%	26	6
UMWA	5	5	100%	4	4
UAW	100	92	92%	70	33
OCAW	50	44	88%	50	24
UTU	85	73	86%	87	27
USWA	56	34	61%	56	8
UFCW*	12	7	58%	11	0
IAM	70	28	40%	60	10
Total	419	329	82%	364	112
Goal/Should be	400	400	100%	400	200
*No new report					

GOALS AND SALES FOR 'EPISODES'			
FEBRUARY 9 - MAY 1			
Totals as of March 31			
City	Goal	Sold	%
Houston	39	45	115%
Twin Cities	80	84	105%
Los Angeles	100	105	105%
San Francisco	95	96	101%
Greensboro	45	44	98%
Des Moines*	45	41	91%
Miami	50	44	88%
Seattle	80	69	86%
Birmingham, AL	60	51	85%
Atlanta, GA	45	38	84%
Philadelphia	60	49	82%
Boston*	60	48	80%
Newark	133	105	79%
Salt Lake City	60	46	77%
Cleveland	45	34	76%
Detroit	60	44	73%
Morgantown	27	19	70%
Pittsburgh	55	38	69%
Washington, D.C.	75	49	65%
New York	140	91	65%
Brooklyn	130	84	65%
Peoria, IL	30	19	63%
Chicago*	60	36	60%
TOTAL	1535	1279	83%
SHOULD BE	1536	1039	67%
IN THE UNIONS			
UTU	80	60	75%
OCAW	62	44	71%
UMWA	7	5	71%
UFCW*	12	6	50%
UAW	110	44	40%
USWA	60	18	30%
UNITE	42	11	26%
IAM	90	19	21%
TOTAL	463	207	41%
SHOULD BE	506	235	47%
* no new report			
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.			

Young Socialists defend immigrant rights

Continued from front page

The press conference will precede a "meet the socialist candidates" event already scheduled as part of the weekend's activities.

YS members in Los Angeles were unavailable for comment because they were out demonstrating in Riverside against the cops' immigrant bashing.

Participating in protests like this is what building the YS is all about.

In the process, chapters have come into contact with more young militants, and "recruitment has begun to happen," said New York City YS leader Joshua Carroll, a graduate student at the City University of New York.

Carroll has come to the Twin Cities to be part of the convention organizing team.

Convention outreach activities have won three new members to the YS chapter here in the last four weeks, and two to Montreal's Young Socialists.

Half of the eight-person contingent organized by the YS in Pittsburgh to drive 20 hours to Minneapolis are not yet members of the revolutionary youth organization, Carroll noted.

Among high school students planning to attend are two from Denver, who read about the convention in the Militant, and two from Sioux City, Iowa, where there are no YS chapters. These four young fighters, like others from Galesburg, Illinois, and Houston, Texas, are coming to learn more about the YS.

Arney said the convention would be welcoming Young Socialists and their guests from Australia, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom.

Defense of the Cuban revolution will be squarely at the center of the convention, YS leaders here state. "Cuba is our revolution," Arney said, "and the YS was born in its defense."

"We want to organize ourselves to

Charleston, West Virginia, protesting the building of a pulp mill that will pollute the local area.

"We sold 11 Pathfinder titles, a Readers Club membership, and 29 Militants there," DeBates said.

Later, at a meeting with a group of young rebels in Huntington, West Virginia, they sold an Episodes book, a Readers Club membership, and a Pathfinder catalog.

Finally, we welcome Pathfinder supporters in Canada, who will be reporting their sales of revolutionary books and pamphlets for the chart every week.

reach out and get as many young people as we can to go to Cuba and see a living revolution for themselves," Carroll explained, referring to the July 22-August 5 U.S.-Cuba Youth Exchange, sponsored by the National Network on Cuba.

More immediately, YS members who are unionists are making a final push to bring co-workers to the upcoming congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers at the end of April, in Havana.

Young Socialists will also discuss how, with other activists, to protest the refusal of the U.S. State Department to grant visas to Cuban youth leaders Maika Guerrero and Iroel Sánchez.

The young revolutionaries were scheduled to be in Minneapolis during the convention as part of their U.S. campus tour, sponsored by the Boston-based Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee.

New law escalates U.S. economic assault

'Libertad' act also registers Washington's intensifying trade offensive against

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The misnamed Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, which U.S. president William Clinton signed into law March 12, is a substantial new escalation of Washington's 37-year-old economic war against the Cuban people.

At the same time, the new legislation registers the intensifying trade offensive by the U.S. rulers against their imperialist allies, who are also competitors, especially in Europe and Canada.

The bill was introduced by Sen. Jesse Helms and Rep. Daniel Burton in February 1995. In its final form it was approved by substantial bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress on March 5 and 6 of this year. Its enactment was part of a new round of hostile measures Washington unleashed against the Cuban people following the February 24 shooting down by the Cuban air force of two U.S.-based planes that violated the country's airspace, piloted by Cuban counterrevolutionaries operating out of Florida.

The new legislation tightens the embargo that was already intensified by the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (sometimes referred to as the Torricelli law, after Democratic congressman Robert Torricelli, who introduced it). That act — signed by President George Bush after candidate Clinton took the lead during his presidential bid in pushing the bill — made it illegal for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies to trade with Cuba.

It also closed U.S. ports to ships that have called in Cuba within six months. And it authorized the president to apply sanctions against any country that provides aid to Cuba, by declaring such countries ineligible for U.S. foreign aid funds, arms sales, or debt relief.

The Cuban Democracy Act contained several provisions designed to encourage the "free flow of ideas." These included measures to improve telephone communi-



Inset: Bohemia; Above: Council of State Office of Historical Affairs, Havana
Cuban militia members put up sign announcing nationalization of First National Bank of Boston, October 1960 (inset). Rally in Havana, August 1960, to support nationalization of imperialist-owned properties in Cuba. Coffins representing each of the main imperialist monopolies are carried by the crowd to be dumped into the sea.

cation, leeway for non-governmental organizations to finance U.S. activities in Cuba, and greater latitude for travel to Cuba by certain U.S. academics as well as allowing greater access to U.S. universities for Cuban professionals on a case-by-case basis. These provisions have been referred to as "track two" of the Torricelli law and denounced in Cuba as one more strategy to overthrow the revolution.

In addition to the blockade, Cuban president Fidel Castro told a rally last July 26, there are those who "want to exert their influence through wide-ranging interchanges with diverse sectors they believe they can influence, by granting generous scholarships, by dazzling us with their million-dollar institutions, their technol-

ogy, their social research centers. They do not allow U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba, to get to know the island and to have a holiday here, but they are prepared to send sociologists, philosophers, historians, Cuba specialists, English professors, and other academics to our universities to 'enlighten' us.... That is to say, the so-called 'track two' of the Torricelli Act."

The "Libertad" act codifies into law all executive orders pertinent to the embargo in effect on March 1 and requires that U.S. sanctions remain in place until a "transitional government" approved by Washington is established in Cuba (see summary of key provisions below).

Since July 1960, when Washington initiated the embargo against Cuba, many

U.S. economic and other sanctions have been imposed by presidential decree, not congressional legislation. This executive leeway has been curtailed.

Designed to stifle foreign investment in Cuba, the law permits for the first time Cuban-American and other U.S. businessmen whose property on the island was confiscated by Cuban workers and peasants after the 1959 revolution to sue companies abroad that invest in those properties. This comes on top of the long established procedures for filing claims against and demanding compensation from the Cuban government for the expropriations.

Keep your cake and eat it too

Under one provision of the law the richest Cubans who fled to Florida after the revolution — those who owned at least \$50,000 worth of property in 1960s prices — will be able to cash in on investments in Cuba despite the embargo by extorting payoffs from foreign companies. Under the measure, these former property owners can sue an investor in a Cuban joint venture and then reach an out-of-court settlement giving them a cut of the investment revenue.

In effect they can both support the embargo and profit from business in Cuba.

One of the key authors of this provision is Cuban-American attorney Nicolás Gutiérrez, who, according to an article in the March 3 *Washington Post*, "represents the National Association of Sugar Mill Owners of Cuba and the Cuban Association for the Tobacco Industry." Before the revolution, his family owned two sugar mills, a rice plantation, 15 cattle ranches, and a bank, among other properties, which Cuban working people expropriated in the 1960s. Ignacio Sánchez, another lawyer representing the Bacardi rum company, was also involved in writing this clause.

Gutiérrez is eyeing a Kentucky subsidiary of British-American Tobacco (B.A.T.), which produces Lucky Strike cigarettes. B.A.T. is part of a Cuban joint

Key provisions of Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act

- Codifies into law all presidential executive orders relevant to the U.S. embargo against Cuba in effect on March 1, 1996. The president cannot alter any provisions without an act of Congress. Eliminates the power of the president to impose "calibrated measures," as specified in the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act, such as easing travel or other restrictions.

- States that the U.S. embargo will remain in force until a "transition government" is set up in Cuba. Such a government must fulfill eight "requirements" and must have made demonstrable progress under four "additional factors" before the U.S. government considers restoring diplomatic and economic relations. The president is to certify the fulfillment of these conditions, subject to Congressional review.

The new act stipulates requirements for a transition government such as: legalization of all political activity; release of all political prisoners; dissolution of "the present Department of State Security in the Cuban Ministry of the Interior, including the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution and the Rapid Reaction Brigades"; public commitment to "free and fair elections" with the participation of "multiple political parties" to be held within 18 months under international supervision; ceasing "any interference with Radio Martí or Television Martí broadcasts"; demonstrable progress toward "the establishment of independent trade unions"; and the absence of Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro from the political process.

The additional factors include: permission for "privately owned media and telecommunications companies to operate in Cuba"; reinstatement of citizenship to "Cuban-born persons returning to Cuba"; assuring "the right to private property"; and taking appropriate steps to return to U.S. citizens and companies

property confiscated by the Cuban government on or after Jan. 1, 1959, or to provide "equitable compensation to such citizens and entities."

- Allows Cuban-American and other U.S. businessmen whose property was expropriated on or after Jan. 1, 1959, to sue anyone who "trafficks" in those properties. An individual who trafficks is defined as one who "sells, transfers, distributes, dispenses, brokers, manages, or otherwise disposes of confiscated property, or purchases, leases, receives, possesses, obtains control of, manages, uses, or otherwise acquires or holds an interest."

The president may suspend this provision for six-month periods if he certifies to Congress the suspension "is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy."

- Requires U.S. officials to deny entry into the country by any non-U.S. residents who "traffic" in confiscated properties. This includes denial of visas to executives, principals, and shareholders with controlling interest in companies that invest in such property, and to their spouses and children; the excludables include nationals of countries from which no U.S. visa is required, like Canada.

- Prohibits import into the United States of any Cuban products or anything that contains products made or grown in Cuba — including any quantity of Cuban sugar — or that may have been transported through Cuban territory.

- Requires cutting U.S. financial assistance to any country that trades with or gives credits to Cuba on favorable terms — that is, at prices or interest rates below those on world capitalist market — or that forgives any debts by Cuba.

- Requires decreasing aid to Moscow by an amount equal to what that govern-

ment gives to support intelligence or military facilities in Cuba, including the Russian government's intelligence-gathering station at Lourdes, Cuba. The president may waive this requirement if he certifies to Congress that Moscow does not share intelligence information with Havana.

- Directs a cut in U.S. financial aid to any government that contributes to the completion of the Juraguá nuclear power plant near Cienfuegos, Cuba, by "an amount equal to the sum of assistance and credits."

- Requires U.S. officials to oppose Cuba's admission to any international financial institutions and calls for opposition to any loans to Cuba by such institutions. Instructs the secretary of the Treasury to "withhold from payment to such institution an amount equal to the amount of the loan or other assistance" to Cuba.

- Outlines provisions for material aid to antigovernment "human rights" groups in Cuba and for establishing an Organization of American States fund for OAS "human rights" monitors to be sent to Cuba.

- States that another wave of immigration from Cuba to the United States, like those in 1980 and 1994, or the completion of the Juraguá nuclear plant, would constitute an "act of aggression" against the U.S. government.

- Closes loophole in the "Cuban Democracy Act" that might have allowed AT&T or other U.S. telecommunications companies to invest in upgrading Cuba's domestic telephone system.

- Directs Florida-based TV Martí to begin broadcasting in UHF in an attempt to circumvent Cuban jamming.

- Requires that any exchange of news bureaus between the United States and Cuba must be "fully reciprocal." This includes agreement by the Cuban government "not to interfere with the establish-

ment of news bureaus or with the movement in Cuba of journalists of any United States-based news organizations, including Radio Martí and Television Martí"; allowing the unhindered transmission to Cuba of U.S. TV and radio signals; and permitting the unrestricted distribution inside Cuba of U.S.-based publications that have news bureaus in Cuba. These conditions also include assurances by the U.S. Treasury Department that "only accredited journalists regularly employed with a news gathering organization" in the United States travel to Cuba.

- Subjects U.S. residents traveling unlicensed to Cuba or violating any provisions of this law, or any regulations that may be issued as a result of this act, to civil penalties of up to \$50,000 and forfeiture of "any property, funds, securities, papers, or other articles or documents, or any vessel, together with its tackle, apparel, furniture, and equipment that is the subject of a violation."

The Secretary of the Treasury may impose such penalties through administrative hearings, without a trial.

- Urges the U.S. president to maintain the prohibition of general licenses for Cuban-Americans to send remittances to relatives on the island until Cuba permits small businesses that hire wage labor to function freely throughout the country. Currently, such contributions are allowed by the Treasury Department only by special license on a case-by-case basis.

Similarly, without a special license, Cuban-Americans can only travel to Cuba to visit an immediate family member who is gravely ill, and even then only once a year. The bill states this travel restriction may be lifted only if Cuba abrogates "the sanction for departure from Cuba by refugees," recognizes "fundamental freedoms," and releases "political prisoners."

— A.M.

on Cuban people

competitors in Europe, Canada

venture to produce tobacco on land supposedly confiscated from Gutiérrez's clients. And the Bacardi family will now be able to sue Pernod Ricard, the French spirits distributor, currently marketing Havana Club rum worldwide. Bacardi claims that the rum Pernod Ricard trades is being produced in the former Bacardi distillery in Santiago de Cuba, which was nationalized after the revolution.

The same approach can be applied against Canadian or other companies with investments in nickel mining or oil exploration.

Out-of-court settlements for such lawsuits do not need U.S. government approval. "Given the choice of forfeiting millions of dollars invested in Cuba or their financial business interests in the United States," said the *Post* article, "the practical business solution might be to give the exiles a cut of the action."

Banning officers of rival firms

The new legislation also denies visas and excludes from the United States principle shareholders and corporate officers, and their family members, of companies that do business involving expropriated properties in Cuba. Even citizens of Canada, who are not required to obtain U.S. visas, would be barred.

Executives of firms such as the Canadian oil and mining company Sherritt International or the Italian apparel corporation Benetton Group, which have investments in Cuba, may be affected. According to the March 14 *New York Times*, U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor defended the new legislation saying that "the United States reserved the right to protect its security interests and to bar from entry people who have committed crimes of moral turpitude."

The new law also contains a sweeping prohibition of importing into the United States anything that may contain even a grain of Cuban sugar.

These provisions potentially affect companies and their subsidiaries in dozens of countries. Cuba has substantial trade relations with more than 100 countries today.

According to Cuban government statistics, there are more than 200 joint ventures in the Caribbean nation now, totaling investments of \$2.1 billion — the overwhelming majority in tourism and a few in industry. Other estimates are more modest. According to the March 25 *Financial Times* of London, "one independent estimate puts total funds actually committed or delivered since 1990 at only around \$730 million."

Topping the list of investors are companies from Mexico, Spain, and Canada.

Last year, Cuba's National Assembly adopted a new investment law to facilitate more joint ventures with foreign capital, in

an effort to boost access to technology and markets, and increase production levels that plummeted with the post-1989 cutoff of aid and favorable trade links with the former Soviet bloc countries.

Government officials in Cuba acknowledge that the new U.S. law will probably have an adverse impact on the nation's economy.

It "may influence... some enterprises," said Carlos Lage, vice president of Cuba's Council of Ministers, "and that will have a negative impact on our economy." Lage was speaking to a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba on March 23. His remarks were published in the Cuban daily *Granma* March 25.

"Fear of that law, of the implications of that law, puts a brake on investments," Lage stated. It "can paralyze financing, it can paralyze the supply of products, because of the concerns it raises for enterprises or suppliers."

Lage cited "isolated cases" of corporations and banks that have indicated they may back out of investment plans.

Interimperialist conflicts

Some of Washington's competitors have "released a steady stream of invective against the U.S.," according to an article in the March 14 *Wall Street Journal*.

"The real chill for Canada in the wake of the new U.S. law to tighten the blockade around Cuba is how the precedent could hurt Canadian companies doing business anywhere in the world," said an article in the March 26 *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

There was a similar response from officials of the European Union, which passed a resolution condemning the legislation. "It is particularly unacceptable that a third country could tell us how to conduct our trade," stated Jean-Pierre Leng of the European Union (EU).

"We remain strongly opposed to this legislation," stated Peter Guilford, EU trade spokesman. "One of the principles of the World Trade Organization is that you don't export your laws and your principles to other countries."

"The bill runs counter to international practice in bringing extraterritorial claims against foreign investors in Cuba," said Mark Entwistle, Canadian ambassador to Cuba.

Ottawa announced it was considering a formal complaint, along with the government of Mexico, that the legislation violates the terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement. On March 19, the Geneva-based World Trade Organization (WTO) criticized the embargo-tightening law in a non-binding resolution.

Washington on the offensive

"So why aren't America's allies rushing to file a challenge at the WTO?" asked the March 14 *Journal*. "Because they aren't likely to win." Kantor, the article says, indicated the White House will use an escape clause in WTO rules that allows governments to declare unilateral trade sanctions for reasons of "national security."

Since the WTO was established in January 1995, Washington has challenged the rules of the organization at least three times. It ignored, for example, WTO dispute settlement procedures in a conflict with Japanese companies over auto parts, choosing to threaten Tokyo with sanctions.

Another bill moving through U.S. Congress now, sponsored by Republican Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, would also impose sanctions on non-U.S. companies selling oil and gas equipment to Iran and Libya. On March 21, a House of Representatives committee passed this proposal. The Senate has already approved a version of the bill.

Cuba campaigns against law

The Cuban government has launched a political campaign to counter the effects of the law, by taking advantage of differences between Washington and its capitalist competitors over provisions of the act.

"The goal of breaking the Cuban people through hunger will fail, as all hostile efforts against the Cuban revolution over the



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

March 13 protest at U.S. passport office, Rockefeller Center, New York, to protest the enactment of the Helms-Burton bill into law by President William Clinton.

last 37 years have failed," said the statement from Cuba's foreign ministry condemning the new U.S. law. "Cuba reiterates its firm determination to defend its sovereignty, independence, and self-determination. We know justice and truth are on our side."

"The road charted by the revolution since Jan. 1, 1959, is irreversible."

The Latin American parliament, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), and the Rio Group, which includes the majority of Latin American states, have adopted resolutions against the "Libertad" act.

The law has been condemned by most governments in Latin America and the Caribbean on the grounds that it infringes on their sovereignty. Several conservative parties vehemently opposed to the Cuban revolution, such as the right-wing opposition Democratic Independent Union of Chile, have also issued statements objecting to its extraterritorial reach.

A tour to Latin America and the Caribbean by U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher in early March, the first such visit in eight years, met with an unusually cool reception in Chile and Brazil.

The Chilean foreign ministry refused to support the new U.S. moves against Cuba and there was dissatisfaction among Chilean capitalists with the recent U.S. ban on import of Chilean grapes citing contamination with "poisons." Christopher's reception in Brazil was similar because of Washington's recent decision to

bar gasoline imports from that country and Venezuela, allegedly for environmental concerns.

Small street demonstrations in Santiago, Chile, and São Paulo, Brazil, also protested Christopher's presence and showed solidarity with Cuba.

Christopher's Latin America tour coincided with Clinton's announcement that the government of Colombia failed to stanch narcotic trafficking. A U.S. law requires the president to report each year which countries supposedly linked to illegal drug trade are combating trafficking and which are not.

The U.S. "decertification" of Colombia — which according to the White House could affect \$750 million to \$1 billion in Export-Import Bank commitments and at least \$50 million in loans — caused widespread outrage in Latin America, including among many bourgeois politicians and commentators.

"Who certifies the United States?" asked a columnist in *El Diario*, a Spanish-language New York daily.

At the same time, most governments in Latin America joined Washington in castigating Havana for the February 24 incident. And their condemnations of the "Libertad" law are not likely to be translated into actions defying U.S. policy toward Cuba. Most of these capitalist regimes have few investments in Cuba and, when faced with the choice, are unlikely to sacrifice their relations with Washington over trade deals with Cuba.

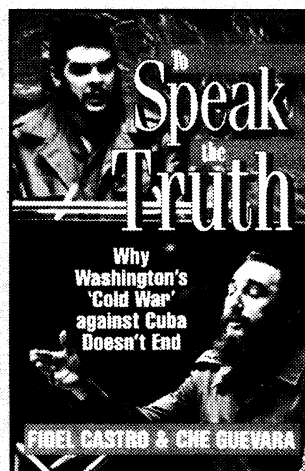
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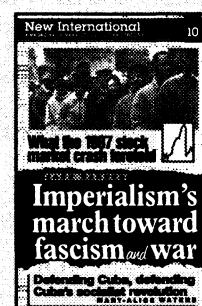


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Socialist candidates say, 'Jail the guilty cops!'

Continued from front page

SWP vice presidential candidate Laura Garza said that the immediate protests in Los Angeles, and numerous other actions over the past months by Chicano and Mexican workers and youth, show that "the wealthy rulers of this country have a problem: they are running into resistance. Their policies have brought about a new rise of the struggle of Chicano and Mexican population in the United States. In protests, conferences, and demonstrations thousands are saying, 'We will not be intimidated or pushed back.'"

Harris noted that the good response to a national march planned for October 12 to defend immigrant rights is another example of this working-class resistance. "SWP candidates and our supporters will be joining all such actions to call for an end to deportations, equal rights for immigrants, and for immediate prosecution of cops who beat workers," Harris said.

Harris is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union at the Hormel meatpacking company in Atlanta. Garza is currently a staff writer for the *Militant*. Both have several decades of activity in the fight for Chicano and Black rights, in addition to the labor movement.

In the interview Harris pointed out that the cop beating in Los Angeles County is an extension of the anti-working-class policies of the wealthy minority and the parties that serve them.

The fact that the U.S. Congress did not even bring the issue of the minimum wage to the floor last week, "is part of the capitalist economic crisis and the U.S. rulers' drive to take more surplus value from the labor of working people for themselves," Harris said. "Any fight for raising the minimum wage is more difficult today than in the past; working people and the labor movement will have to put up more of a struggle to accomplish this goal."

"Our campaign demands the minimum wage be raised to union scale. This fight is not only about raising living standards, but

about building unity within the working class to be able to more effectively fight for our rights," the socialist candidate said.

"It will take a fighting labor movement to win gains. Unions need to join with those protesting police brutality and anti-immigrant violence as well," Harris stated.

Pointing to the AFL-CIO endorsement of President William Clinton's reelection effort, Harris noted that "Clinton has been in league with the Republicans in making sure there has been no increase in the minimum wage for four years. Labor can't place itself at the beck and call of the parties that defend capitalism. We don't need more 'friends' in Congress or the White House like the ones we've had. We need a movement of working people independent of the ruling rich that fights unequivocally for the interests of the exploited and oppressed."

"The fact that two sheriff's deputies can savagely beat — apparently without fear of reprisal — two Mexican workers in full daylight on the side of an Interstate highway is just one more demonstration that there is not a 'level playing field' in the United States today," Garza said. "Those

who are attacking affirmative action programs claim that racism and discrimination are a thing of the past, that it is not part of 'America' anymore. They are dead wrong." She encouraged participation in the April 14 March to Fight the Right in San Francisco that includes defending women's rights and affirmative action.

At the end of March the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals opened a new assault on affirmative action programs. The court ruled in the case *Hopwood vs. State of Texas* that "the use of race in admissions for diversity in higher education contradicts, rather than furthers, the aims of equal protection." The ruling, in the case of several white students who sued the University of Texas Law School seeking an end to affirmative action preferences for Blacks and Mexican-Americans, is now appealed to the Supreme Court.

At the same time, California governor Peter Wilson and others turned in signatures in that state to place an initiative on the November ballot that would prohibit the government from using affirmative action programs in hiring and contracting and in admissions to public schools.

Several days later Republican presidential candidate Robert Dole told an audience in Orange County that "We ought to do away with preferences. It ought to be based on merit! This is America!"

"Our opponents in this election," Garza said, "while cutting social spending, are calling for building walls, erecting more jails, and putting more cops on the border. They are responsible for feeding the atmosphere of thuggery that is personified in the actions of the Riverside cops. This is part of a drive to reverse past gains of Blacks, Latinos, and women, as they seek to shore up their system at our expense."

"But if the employers and their mouthpieces think they can head down that road without encountering a fight they are wrong. We battled to tear down the racist system of Jim Crow, to end the inferior system of 'separate but equal' segregated education, and to open up equal pay and job access for women. The labor movement can strengthen itself by fighting to defend those gains and to prevent divisions based on nationality from permanently condemning a layer of the working class to second-class status."

Protests denounce cop beating

Continued from front page

city hall. The incident began in Temecula, southeast of Los Angeles, when Border Patrol cops began to pursue a pickup truck carrying 19 immigrant workers near a police checkpoint on an interstate highway. The border cops called the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, which dispatched patrol cars to chase the truck along a 70-mile stretch of highway.

The pickup stopped on the side of the freeway at South El Monte, where some of the workers tried to flee the gun-toting cops. The videotape shows three cops clubbing, kicking, and arresting three workers who offer no resistance.

One deputy, swinging a baton with his two hands like a baseball bat, was taped beating Enrique Funes, 30, on the back and shoulders, even after he fell to the ground. The worker's leg bled profusely.

Funes was clubbed as he tried to aid Leticia González, 32, who was struggling with the jammed passenger door. When González got out through a window, the

same cop beat her on the back with his baton, slammed her face into the pickup's hood, yanked her by the hair, and pulled her to the ground. At least one other cop clubbed her. Turned over to the immigration cops, she was treated at a hospital by a nurse, who reported she suffered severe bruises. González was released after being treated for her injuries.

Adrián Flores Martínez, 26, suffered bruises and a hairline fracture of an elbow. He was briefly treated at a hospital and then jailed.

The cops arrested 19 workers. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began proceedings to deport them.

Cops from several agencies were at the scene of the beating, including the Los Angeles County sheriff's department and California Highway Patrol, in addition to the Riverside County sheriffs and INS.

González, originally from Xocheca, Mexico, said she had come to the United States to seek a job. After being released by the INS, she told the press, "I thought

they were going to kill me." She added, "I'm hurt and almost can't walk. I was seen by a nurse, but I want to be examined by a doctor."

In response to the public outcry, officials put two of the cops, Kurt Franklin and Tracy Watson, on paid administrative leave. The FBI opened a civil rights investigation of the assault.

Much of the media commentary of the beatings has focused on whether the cops used "excessive" force and how normally reasonable police officers became emotional as a result of "high-speed pursuit syndrome." A *Los Angeles Times* news article remarked, "During the chase, ways to relieve stress and anger are few."

Mexican workers in the area, however, reported that Franklin, the 20-year police veteran who bashed González's head into the truck, has a reputation for racist brutality in the neighborhood he patrols. "He's known for roughing up Mexican Americans and harassing the hell out of them," said Gilbert Chávez, director of the Centro de Aztlán.

Visa denials

Continued from front page

called into the U.S. Interests Section in Havana and were told in person that their visa applications had been denied. U.S. officials returned the passports to the two Cuban youth. Earlier, on March 13, the U.S. Interests Section had returned the applications to the two Cubans without even registering their receipt. Two days later U.S. officials accepted the resubmitted applications, only to turn down the visa requests within two weeks.

The Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee sent a letter to professors, student groups, and others asking for urgent messages of protest to be faxed to the State Department demanding a reversal of the visa denial. Kaiser-Lenoir stated in the letter that this "is a very serious attack on academic freedom that has implications for broader civil liberties as well."

Already, many letters have arrived at the State Department, protesting the earlier stonewalling by the U.S. Interests Section. "This move on the part of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana is detrimental to the best interests of the international image of the U.S., as well as to the preservation of free speech and academic liberties in U.S. Institutions of Higher Education," said a protest message by Valentín Soto of the Department of Spanish and Italian at Montclair State University in New Jersey.

The Lectures Committee is asking that letters be addressed to Michael Ranneberger, Coordinator for Cuban Affairs; Richard Nuccio, Special Advisor for Cuban Affairs to the Secretary of State; and Sean Murphy of the Cuba Desk of the State Department. All three are located at the U.S. Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20520. Tel: (202) 647-9273; Fax: (202) 736-4476.

The Lectures Committee requests that it be informed of all activities in relation to this protest campaign and that it receive copies of all communications sent to the State Department.

The group can be reached at Caribbean Focus Program, Tom Reeves, Room 3-353, Roxbury Community College, 1234 Columbus Ave., Boston, MA 02120. Tel: (617) 427-0060 ext. 5151. The new fax number is (617) 776-5832.

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No cemetery stock? — It was disclosed that executives at Brown & Williamson, the tobacco folks, urged that the firm buy itself a company that manufactured



Harry Ring

nicotine patches, which assertedly help people kick the addiction.

Adding insult to mortal injury — Arrested in 1987 on suspicion of theft, Michael Taylor, 16, died in an Indianapolis police car.

The cops claimed that with his hands cuffed behind his back, the youth took a gun from his high-top shoe and shot himself in the head. The coroner ruled it a suicide and the cops are still on the force. But, in a damage suit, a jury has ordered the city to pay the victim's mother \$4.3 million.

Don't they need her permission? — "Santa Barbara, a fourth century martyr traditionally prayed to in the West by those in danger of sudden death, has been made the patron saint of Russia's intercontinental nuclear missile force." — The *Guardian* of London.

Ivory-tower type — Peter Dia-

mandopoulos, president of New York's Adelphi University, gets a half million a year. Also, he's under investigation because the school spent \$1.5 million on an apartment and sold it to him for \$900,000. Plus the university's financing of his art collection and his \$85,000 Mercedes. Students tried to query him about reports on this, but he brushed such questions aside, explaining he found the reports "boring."

Why we used to love school — When Adelphi students asked if he wanted to hear about their needs, the prez retorted "No, I have very strong views about what you need. I don't need to know what you think you need."

Facts-of-life dep't — "They are executives. Executives get perks." — A corporate exec explaining why the top dogs get fat medical coverage while forcing employees into "managed care" plans that cut the quality and quantity of care.

What a nice guy — "Restructuring to get to a strong future does unfortunately require staff reductions....I'm deeply saddened by the pain and loss this is causing some of our people and their families. But in the end concern isn't enough." — Robert Allen, AT&T chief who ordered 40,000 employees axed and who "earned" \$16 million last year.

With knights at the toll booths? — "All but extinct in this country for nearly a century, privately built toll roads suddenly have begun to reappear." — *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Victoria's (dirty little) Secret — Ruth Cobb and Nathaniel Masterson are suing Victoria's Secret and a Baltimore-area mall for \$100 million each. They left the store after buying some hosiery, but were taken back by two uniformed, off-duty cops moonlighting as security guards. They were strip searched and Cobb was also subjected to a cavity search. Victoria's Secret said its policy is "to treat all of its customers with dignity and respect."

What a young communist should be

Speech by Che Guevara to Union of Young Communists of Cuba

On Oct. 21, 1960, young revolutionaries in Cuba formed the Association of Young Rebels. The group was made up of youth from the July 26 Movement, which together with the Rebel Army led the revolutionary war that overthrew the Batista dictatorship; the Revolutionary Directorate, a student-based group that participated in the armed struggle against Batista; and the youth organization of the Popular Socialist Party (PSP), the former Communist Party that looked to Moscow. The merged youth organization adopted the name Union of Young Communists (UJC) on April 4, 1962.

Below are excerpts of a speech given by Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution, at a ceremony marking the second anniversary of the formation of the youth organization. It was first published in *Obra Revolucionaria*, Oct. 23, 1962. The English-language translation of the entire speech, titled "What a Young Communist Should Be," can be found in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, a collection of Guevara's speeches and writings published by Pathfinder Press.

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BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

The Union of Young Communists, with different names and organizational forms, is almost as old as the revolution. At the beginning it emerged out of the Rebel Army — perhaps that's where it also got its initial name [Association of Young Rebels]. But it was an organization linked to the army in order to introduce Cuba's youth to the massive tasks of national defense, the most urgent problem at the time and the one requiring the most rapid solution....

Later, as the revolution was consolidated and we could finally talk about the new tasks ahead, Compañero Fidel proposed changing the name of the organiza-

tion, a change of name that fully expresses a principle. The Union of Young Communists [Applause] has its face to the future. It is organized with the bright future of socialist society in mind....

The Union of Young Communists should be defined by a single word: *vanguard*. You, compañeros, must be the vanguard of all movements, the first to be ready to make the sacrifices demanded by the revolution, whatever they might be.... And in order to do that, you have to set yourself real, concrete tasks, tasks in your daily work that won't allow you the slightest letup.

The job of organizing must constantly be linked to all the work carried out by the Union of Young Communists. Organization is the key to grasping the initiatives presented by the revolution's leaders, the many initiatives proposed by our prime minister, and the initiatives from the working class, which should also lead to precise directives and ideas for subsequent action.

Without organization, ideas, after an initial momentum, start losing their effect. They become routine, degenerate into conformity, and end up simply a memory. I make this warning because too often, in this short but rich period of our revolution, many great initiatives have failed. They have been forgotten because of the lack of the organizational apparatus needed to keep them going and accomplish something....

Now, two years later, we can look back and observe the results of our work. The Union of Young Communists has tremendous achievements, one of the most important and spectacular being in defense.

'Study, work, and the rifle'

Those young people, or some of them, who first climbed the five peaks of Turquino,¹ others who were enrolled in a whole series of military organizations, all those who picked up their rifles at moments of danger — they were ready to defend the revolution each and every place where an invasion or enemy action was expected. The highest honor, that of being able to defend our revolution, fell to the young people at Playa Girón....²

At the moment when the country's defense was our most important task, the youth were there. Today, defense is still at the top of our concerns. But we should not forget that the watchword that guides the Young Communists — study, work, and the rifle — is a unified whole. The country cannot be defended with arms alone. We must also defend the country by building it with our work and preparing the new technical cadres to speed up its development in the coming years.

This is enormously important now, just as important as armed defense. When these problems were raised, the youth once again were there. Youth brigades, responding to the call of the revolution, invaded every corner of the country, and so after a few months of hard battle in which there were also martyrs of our revolution — martyrs in education — we were able to announce something new in Latin America: Cuba was a territory free of illiteracy in the Americas....³



Revista Verde Olivo/J. González

Cuban volunteer in Angola, fighting against invading armies of apartheid South Africa. "Young communists must practice proletarian internationalism," said Che.

[Applause]

This is the kind of education that best suits youth who are being educated for communism. It is a kind of education in which work stops being an obsession, as it is in the capitalist world, and becomes a pleasant social duty....

What a young communist should be

Now, compañeros, I wanted to share my opinion as a national leader of the ORI⁴ on what a Young Communist should be, to see if we all agree. I believe that the first thing that must characterize a Young Communist is the honor he feels in being a Young Communist, an honor that moves him to let the world know he is a Young Communist....

In addition to that, he should have a great sense of duty, a sense of duty toward the society we are building, toward our fellow men as human beings and toward all men around the world. That is something that must characterize the Young Communist. And along with that: deep sensitivity to all problems, sensitivity to injustice; a spirit that rebels against every wrong, whoever commits it; [Applause] questioning anything not understood, discussing and asking for clarification on whatever is not clear; declaring war on formalism of all types; always being open to new experiences in order to apply the many years of experience of humanity's advance along the road to socialism to our country's concrete conditions, to the realities that exist in Cuba. Each and every one of you must think about how to change reality, how to make it better....

Developing to the utmost the sensitivity to feel anguished when a man is murdered in any corner of the world and to feel enthusiasm when a new banner of freedom is raised in any corner of the world. [Applause]

The Young Communist cannot be limited by national borders. The Young Communist must practice proletarian interna-

tionalism and feel it as his own, reminding himself and all of us — Young Communists and those aspiring to be communists here in Cuba — that we are a real and palpable example for all our America, and for more than our America, for the other countries of the world also fighting on other continents for freedom, against colonialism, against neocolonialism, against imperialism, against all forms of oppression by unjust systems.

He must always remember that we are a flaming torch, that just as we are all individually a model for the people of Cuba, we are also a model for the peoples of Latin America and the oppressed peoples of the world who are fighting for their freedom....

And if someone says we are just romantics, inveterate idealists, thinking the impossible, that the masses of people cannot be turned into almost perfect human beings, we will have to answer a thousand and one times: Yes, it can be done; we are right. The people as a whole can advance.

NOTES

1. Located in the Sierra Maestra, Turquino is the highest mountain in Cuba.

2. On April 17, 1961, 1,500 Cuban-born mercenaries invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs on the southern coast in Las Villas Province. The action, organized directly by Washington, aimed to establish a "provisional government" to appeal for direct U.S. intervention. However, the invaders were first held at bay by the Cuban militias and defeated within 72 hours by the Revolutionary Armed Forces. On April 19, the last invaders surrendered at Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs), which has come to be the name Cubans use to designate the battle.

3. From late 1960 through 1961, the revolutionary government undertook a literacy campaign to teach 1 million Cubans to read and write. Central to this effort was the mobilization of 100,000 young people to go to the countryside, where they lived with peasants whom they were teaching. As a result of this drive, Cuba virtually eliminated illiteracy.

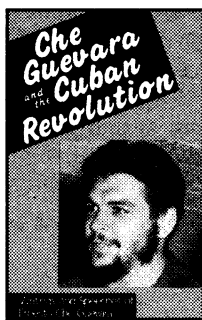
4. The Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI) was formed in 1961 from a fusion of forces from the July 26 Movement, Popular Socialist Party, and Revolutionary Directorate. It became the United Party of the Socialist Revolution in 1963 and the Communist Party of Cuba in 1965.

for further reading

Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution

Writings and Speeches of Ernesto Che Guevara

Guevara writes about the revolutionary war that brought the workers and farmers to victory; Cuba's efforts to overcome economic backwardness while transforming the economic foundations and social relations inherited from capitalism; and Cuba's commitment to freedom struggles around the world. Cloth only \$25



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Cuba: rebel, don't cower!

Is it a foolhardy mistake for revolutionary Cuba to stand up to the U.S. Goliath in today's world? This is the message Washington and Wall Street would have working people believe. Powerful evidence in recent months, however, has confirmed the opposite. By acting decisively in defense of the revolution, Cuban working people and their government have pushed back the wealthy U.S. rulers and their international cohorts.

The latest U.S. attacks, including the new law that tightens the economic squeeze on Cuba, are a product of increasing imperialist weakness, not strength. Instead of faltering, the Cuban revolution has grown stronger.

Above all, the U.S. rulers' policy toward Cuba is determined by the fact that they lost the cold war. For several decades, Washington tried to pressure the bureaucratic castes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to police the working class in those countries, hoping this would eventually weaken these states enough to launch a direct assault on them. But imperialism lost its enforcers when those regimes shattered in face of working-class resistance in 1989-91.

As Washington's recent hostile measures against Cuba and war moves against China and Yugoslavia indicate, imperialism will be unable to overthrow any workers state and reestablish capitalism short of direct military intervention. Working people in those countries are now resisting demands by the capitalist powers to squeeze them further.

This blow to imperialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was one of the first major consequences of the world capitalist economic crisis, announced by the 1987 stock market crash. Instead of a new world capitalist order, the 1990s opened a period of economic depression, instability, and sharpening rivalries between imperialist powers — as well as recurring working-class resistance. And the Havana-Washington axis of conflict remains the most direct manifestation of the international battle between imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The most dramatic proof that U.S. imperialism lost the cold war is the fact that the Cuban revolution has emerged politically stronger. Since the crumbling of the Stalinist regimes, the Cuban working class has been weighed down less than ever by the burden of Stalinist political miseducation; it has become less isolated from class struggle around the world.

For 37 years, Washington's goal has been to undermine and overthrow the Cuban revolution. Politically incapable of using direct military power against the Cuban people, U.S. imperialism has employed "low-intensity warfare." It has tried a mercenary invasion, the encouragement of counterrevolutionary terror, threat of nuclear annihilation, an economic and trade embargo, assassination attempts, occupation of the Guantánamo Naval Base, and a campaign to isolate Cuba internationally. All this has failed to break Cuba's working class and its communist vanguard.

Unlike the petty-bourgeois regimes in the former Soviet bloc countries, Cuba's revolutionary leadership has not made any fundamental concessions to imperialism. It has refused to subordinate the interests of workers and farmers to accommodation or collaboration with the masters of the empire to the north. The communist leadership in Cuba has not only remained determined to defend the revolution, but has not budged from its internationalist course in support of the world struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Thus, the 37-year-long trade embargo and other hostile U.S. moves are not an irrational policy for the super-rich class. They are pragmatic moves that spring from imperialism's cold-blooded class interests. And they are a result of weakness.

UK capitalists have a cow

Despite evidence that infected meat products were unnecessarily exposing countless working people to a disease causing insanity and death, capitalists and their government spokespeople have insisted for a decade that beef was safe. Little was done to prevent infected material from entering the food chain. Animal feed manufacturers and the meat magnates have reaped massive profits while claiming there was no proof that bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow disease," could be transmitted to humans.

Since the British government recently admitted scientific reports that a new deadly strain of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease — the human equivalent to BSE — suggested such a link, the chief concern of the representatives of the ruling rich has been restoring "public confidence" in the beef industry.

In the last six years, despite a formidable economic crisis that followed the abrupt disruption of aid and trade on favorable terms with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Cuban working people have tenaciously resisted the effects of the world capitalist crisis. They have come out stronger and more confident of their own capacities. While everywhere else in Latin America working people face a worsening economic and social calamity, in Cuba they have succeeded through their collective efforts in putting their country on the road to economic recovery.

The resilience of the Cuban people has frustrated the U.S. rulers. As a result, the Clinton administration — which answers to the billionaire ruling families and to them alone — has lashed out with measures to tighten the embargo and travel ban. As the column by Naomi Craine on this page explains, the "Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act" was not a hasty reaction to Cuba's shooting down of U.S.-based planes invading its airspace, but a calculated move in Washington's bipartisan war on the socialist revolution in that country.

The new legislation also registers the intensifying trade offensive by Washington against its capitalist competitors, especially in Canada and Europe. Despite their howls of outrage over Washington asserting its domination of the imperialist Atlantic alliance, Ottawa, Paris, London, and Bonn are not about to put their meager economic ties with socialist Cuba ahead of those with the U.S. colossus.

As Carlos Lage, vice president of Cuba's Council of Ministers, explained recently, the Cuban people will certainly feel the harsh impact of the tightened trade embargo. But they will do so as a sovereign and socialist people, not as a people on its knees. A common remark voiced by Cuban workers today is, "The Helms-Burton law is criminal, but we're not going to lose any sleep over it."

The strength of Cuba's working people has been demonstrated in their preparations for the upcoming congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). In tens of thousands of factories, farm cooperatives, and offices, workers are discussing how to assure their revolutionary power, collectively increase production of food and other basic products, combat profiteering by middle-class layers, and defend their socialist revolution against Washington's military threats, economic assaults, and ideological war. They know, as President Fidel Castro recently put it, "there is no alternative to socialism...because without it, we would lose our independence."

For working people in the United States and around the world — from Chicanos protesting racist attacks to strikers defending their picket lines and young feminists marching for women's rights — the example of Cuba answers the well-worn arguments of the oppressor, who always tells the oppressed: "The odds are against you." From the streets of Havana to the fields of Guantánamo province, the reply to Washington has been, and is, "Yes, but we beat you anyway."

That is the truth about Cuba that workers and young fighters everywhere must tell. One of the best ways to find out for yourself is to go to Cuba and attend the CTC convention. In the United States and elsewhere, working people can take part in educational events and protests against the Clinton administration's anti-Cuba policies and undemocratic measures, such as the subpoena of members of Pastors for Peace to appear before a grand jury and the denial of visas to Cuban youth leaders invited to tour U.S. campuses. Through such activities, it will be possible to win more people to demand:

U.S. Hands Off Cuba!

Likewise, the rulers of Germany, France, and other European countries are trying to take advantage of the beef scare to deal blows to their British competitors and boost their own market share.

Working people should demand a policy that puts safety first, not profits. All necessary measures must be taken to eradicate BSE from the human food chain, including the destruction of cattle herds and quarantining land used for beef and milk production.

The government must offer compensation to ensure no working farmers lose their livelihoods from this capitalist-induced crisis. Funding must be devoted to study BSE and its transmission to humans, and develop a treatment. This should be paid not by working people but by the capitalists who have risked our health in order to swell their profits.

Don't regret, rejoice

Did the Cuban government make a mistake by shooting down two U.S.-based planes that violated that country's air space February 24? California activist Al Traugott, whose letter was sent to us by reader Kevin Kelley, is by no means the only opponent of U.S. government policy toward Cuba to raise criticisms of the action by the Cuban air force. A statement issued by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom three days after the event stated, "We join other peace-loving individuals in mourning the deaths of the four men whose plane was shot down." The statement urged the Clinton administration to "refrain from a rush to bellicose action" and instead allow a "thorough investigation."

Likewise, the Cuban American Alliance issued a statement opposing Clinton's announcement of tighter travel restrictions after the in-

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

cident and stating, "The Alliance is deeply saddened by the loss of three young lives."

"We want to suggest this tragedy is not the time for an escalation of rhetoric, but an opportunity for a fundamental reexamination of U.S. policy toward Cuba," said David McReynolds of the War Resisters League.

I don't think there's reason to mourn for one moment over the right-wing provocateurs who were shot down over Cuban waters. The flight by the "Brothers to the Rescue" was the latest in a 37-year record of military provocations and other acts of aggression by U.S.-based "civilian" counterrevolutionary forces against the Cuban people, all carried out with the complicity and support of Washington. In fact, the tragedy was not what happened but what was averted. Acts of terrorism and aggression by armed, U.S.-based "civilians" have been slowed. Who can doubt that it has now become more difficult to recruit pilots and others to carry out provocations and terrorist acts against the Cuban revolution?

Did shutdown lead to tightening of embargo?

Some U.S. activists have attributed Clinton's decision to sign the misnamed Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (also known as the Helms-Burton act) to the shutdown. An analysis issued March 16 by the group IFCO-Pastors for Peace states, "Clinton passed the Helms-Burton bill in a hasty reaction to unfolding events well before all of the facts were known. This is not the best way to devise foreign policy." The group states that the law puts "an important element of U.S. foreign policy...in the hands of the right-wing Cuban exile community" in Miami. The embargo is not the best way to "bring about constructive changes" in Cuba, the statement adds.

But this is a false and dangerously misleading view of how the most powerful imperialist government in history decides a course of action to defend its class interests. Washington and Wall Street didn't "react." They acted. The tightening of the embargo and travel restrictions is not a "hasty" policy, but part of the U.S. rulers' ongoing cold war against Cuba, on which there is overwhelming bipartisan agreement.

The driving force behind this intensified economic warfare against the Cuban people is not counterrevolutionary Cubans in Miami either. It is the capitalist class of the United States, whose holdings were expropriated by the working people in Cuba and who will never forgive or peacefully accept the challenge to capitalist property and prerogatives that the socialist revolution in Cuba represents and the example it provides to millions of toilers around the world. Attempting to economically squeeze, weaken, and ultimately overthrow the revolutionary government of the workers and farmers in Cuba is and has been Washington's unwavering foreign policy goal for 37 years.

Last September, after the House of Representative passed an earlier version of the legislation, a White House spokesperson explained to reporters that the Clinton administration expected "to work hard with the Senate to modify the troublesome aspects of the bill." And that's what they did. The Clinton administration was simply awaiting the appropriate moment to announce its decision to sign the bill and try to justify it in face of U.S. public opinion and opposition of numerous governments internationally.

In a March 19 letter to Cuba activists, Andrés Gómez, a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, made the case well. "It is my understanding and the Brigade's that all public decisions regarding Cuba that have been taken by the Clinton Administration since last Saturday, 24 February, result from a change of policy that has been decided by the Administration previous to the downing of the 2 airplanes." Gómez pointed out that in spite of the tightening of the embargo in 1992, "it was evident that during the past 12 months the Cuban economy was recovering significantly.... At the same time, the Administration had failed to pressure the Cuban government into making concessions that the U.S. has been demanding, especially regarding the country's political system."

Gómez also noted that the Florida-based rightist group had "publicly announced that it intended to once again fly over Havana on February 24 in solidarity with Concilio Cubano's Congress.... Both operations — Concilio Cubano and Brothers to the Rescue — had and have as objectives to gain space for the counter-revolution in Cuba and therefore to debilitate revolutionary power." Concilio Cubano is a coalition of anti-government groups in Cuba that openly acknowledges receiving funding from Brothers to the Rescue and other right-wing groups in Miami. The Cuban government did not permit their planned convention.

Where you stand on these questions is essential for the working class. Do you call for a "better foreign policy" by U.S. imperialism to bring about "constructive change" in Cuba? Or do you stand shoulder to shoulder with working people in Cuba as they defend their sovereignty, independence, and freely chosen socialist course, arms in hand, and in doing so advance the possibilities for workers in other countries to emulate their example?

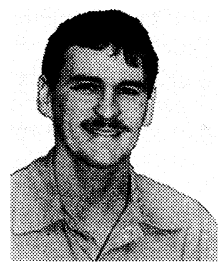
The *Militant* stands unequivocally with the Cuban revolution and the action taken by the Cuban government February 24 to defend the first free territory of the Americas.

— NAOMI CRAINE

I defend the rights of basketball's Abdul-Rauf

BY MARK CURTIS

FORT MADISON, Iowa — The most recent scrimmage in the "culture war" was played on a basketball court. Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf, a guard for the Na-



Mark Curtis

tional Basketball Association's Denver Nuggets, was suspended indefinitely without pay by the league for not standing at attention during the playing of the national anthem.

In an interview I saw on television he said he refused to stand because (1) as a Muslim his religion prohibits "nationalistic demonstrations," and (2) for him the "Star Spangled Banner" symbolizes "the oppression of Caucasians and African Americans." Both good reasons, I thought. After all, what does the national anthem have to do with the game? I wouldn't want such a requirement on my job. Here in prison we have to stand at our bars during three daily counts, but we can still read, talk, or whatever, while we do.

Most of the guys I talked with about this agreed that Abdul-Rauf was within his rights and that the NBA would probably back down. To them, it was a free-speech issue.

More than a few, however, had a different opinion. "How would he like it if I came into his church and lit a cigarette? Sooner or later people like him will find out that whites are going to stop watching basketball. He's ruining the game," was one long-time sports fan's comment. Another argument I heard quite a bit was, "He knew what he was getting into when

he signed his multi-million dollar contract. He knew the rules then and he should follow them now."

I answered that freedom of speech and the First Amendment to the Constitution are a little more important than NBA rules and overrule them.

Of the NBA players I saw interviewed, all but one backed up Abdul-Rauf. Their union, the player's association, announced they would try to get the stand-at-attention rule changed. All this changed though, when Abdul-Rauf decided he would stand and pray rather than stay in the locker room as he has done since November. Perhaps he was influenced by Houston center Hakeem O'Jaiuwon, who said Abdul-Rauf got it wrong, that Islam encourages respect for national symbols. Religion is frequently used to prop up the state's authority and sanction its official symbols of power.

In any case, Abdul-Rauf will be allowed to play again.

What 'Star Spangled Banner' means

What does the "Star Spangled Banner," a song that praises the flag that flies over the "land of the free and the home of the brave" really mean? Two centuries ago that flag was the symbol of revolution against foreign tyranny, of national independence and sovereignty. But that was a long time ago, before two world wars, Vietnam, Iraq, before imperialism. Today the star spangled banner flies over the illegal U.S. naval base at Guantánamo, Cuba; over an invading army's base camps in Yugoslavia; and snaps in the wind on naval destroyers Washington is now sending into the China Sea.

When I started high school in 1974 in Thoreau, New Mexico, it was the custom to start every assembly and pep rally with the pledge of allegiance. At one rally a small group of Navajo students (the school was mostly Native American) refused to stand. They were protesting the racism they saw at the school and the way

Navajos were treated like dogs in nearby Gallup every weekend when they came into town to do their shopping. A few students shouted at them, "Stand up!" but they held their positions. That was the last time we ever said the pledge of allegiance.

I wasn't among the protesters, but it made a big impression on me and maybe was one of the experiences that led me to become a socialist.

Earlier I said that this issue is part of the so-called culture war. What I mean is that

even sports, pledges, songs, pep rallies, flags, and books become part of the tug-of-war between the ruling rich and working people. Who are the rules for? Who has and who hasn't the freedoms to choose what flag they'll salute, what words come out of their mouth, what language they speak, what heroes they'll admire, and what class they'll pledge allegiance to?

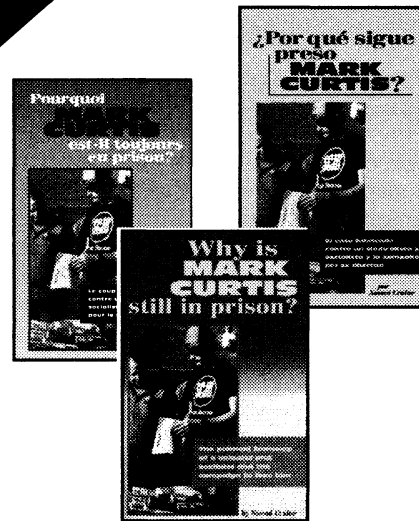
That's why democratic rights are vital for our side and that's why I defended Abdul-Rauf.

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Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

The Political Frame-Up of a Unionist and Socialist and the Campaign to Free Him

by Naomi Craine



Mark Curtis is a union activist and socialist who was framed up by police on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. At the time he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers arrested in an immigration raid at the packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines, Iowa.

This new pamphlet explains what happened to Curtis, and the stakes for workers, farmers, youth, and other democratic-minded people in demanding his release.

All three pamphlets, \$6

Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 8, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. Or contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

LETTERS

Did Cuba make mistake?

Enclosed is a letter to the editor written by a prominent South Bay solidarity activist. After denouncing government actions, he goes on to say that "Cuba made a mistake... by shooting down the planes."

You present the shootdown as a positive act (March 11, 1996, *Militant*, page 14).

Obviously there is a difference here. Do you consider this an issue on which fair minded people can disagree or do you consider this statement an unacceptable capitulation to bourgeois public opinion?

I would appreciate a brief reply.
Kevin Kelley
San Jose, California

[Printed below is the letter Kelley refers to, which he sent us along with his note. This letter by Al Traugott was published in the March 4, 1996, issue of the San Jose Mercury News.]

Provocateurs from Miami, Brothers to the Rescue, have been flying over Havana, the seat of the Cuban government, on a regular basis. Imagine what the U.S. response would be to hostile foreign flights over Washington, D.C. Or, imagine what our response would be to an attempted invasion of our country by forces trained and armed by Cuba.

How about contemplating over 10 assassination attempts on the president of the United States, approved at the highest levels of government, using the most heinous criminals to carry them out? Try even harder to imagine a 35-year blockade of the United States, supported by only two other countries in the world,

aimed at impoverishing all the people of our country, causing many to suffer reduced nutritional intake and some to die. Would we be a little bit angry? I can almost hear the cries of "Nuke 'em."

Cuba made a mistake in responding to provocations by shooting down the planes, but its response was modest in light of the diabolic war being waged against the people of Cuba by our government.

Al Traugott
San Jose, California

Taiwan Straits crisis

I found the *Militant's* coverage of the crisis in the Taiwan Straits very informative. However, I don't see any evidence for the *Militant's* statement that "The Chinese people are trying to take back what is rightfully theirs — Taiwan," (*Militant* no. 12, page 2, in the subscription advertisement).

It is true that the conflict is rooted in China's right to national reunification, and anecdotal evidence indicates that the sentiment for national unity is strong in China. But I see little to show that the fight for reunification of China is advancing today — in comparison with, for example, Korea, where in recent years there has clearly been a growing campaign for reunification, taking many forms, on both sides of the 38th parallel.

The main evidence the *Militant* cites to back this assertion is the coming return of the colonial enclaves of Macao and Hong Kong. But I think the situation with

Hong Kong is more contradictory than that.

While the return of the political administration of Hong Kong to China is indeed progress towards reunification, this coincides with the rapid expansion of capitalist investment from Hong Kong into southern China. If China is "taking over" Hong Kong politically, economically Hong Kong is "taking over" southern China. Won't this process inevitably lead to reactionary moves by the capitalists of the "special economic zone" to buck control by Beijing? There have been severe blows struck against the national unity of the Yugoslav workers state under similar pressures.

One article in the capitalist press that I read suggested that

one of the main reasons China is taking a hard line with Taipei is precisely to send a message to the increasingly strident and defiant capitalists in southern China.

James Robb
Auckland, New Zealand

Oakland teachers strike

The month-long Oakland teachers strike ended with a settlement calling for a 22 percent wage increase spread over the next four years with a proviso of lowering it if the cost of living doesn't rise the same. Efforts to achieve class size reduction and cutback of a bloated administrative payroll achieved only token attention.

The strike was a hard and militant struggle, resulting in the

sharpening of relations between the strikers and the estimated 30 percent who scabbed. In the school where I work (Oakland Technical High) most of the scabs were Black teachers while many Black teachers in turn formed a militant core of the strikers. The intense month-long struggle shaped and built new friendships while destroying old ones.

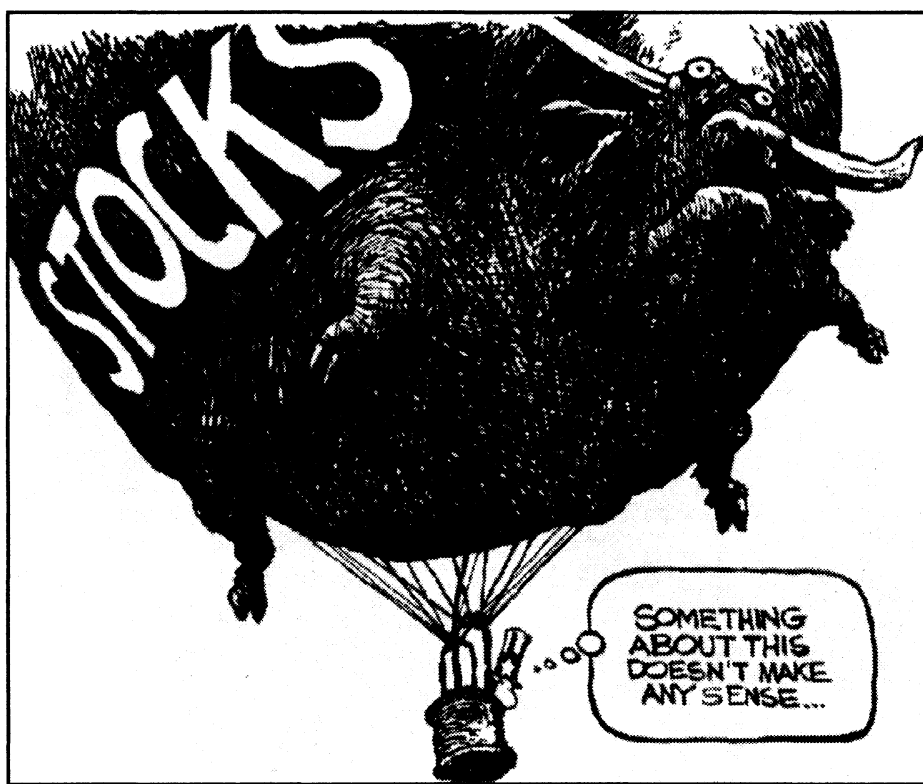
In Oakland Tech — in a manner typical of other schools throughout the district — the strikers returned as a victorious body. Forming 20 abreast, the day after the settlement was approved, the strikers marched into school shouting militant and at times anti-scab slogans. Buttons were worn by all proudly acclaiming that they were strikers.

During the following week "Strikers Pot Luck Lunches" were organized in the teachers' lunchroom. Students who had supported the strike and helped in picketing were invited as honored guests to these affairs.

In many ways the fight led by the teachers took on a form and shape that were reminiscent of the militant struggles of past decades.

Paul Montauk
Oakland, California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



Ontario strikers end walkout stronger

BY AL CAPPE

TORONTO — "We are strong and unified. Whatever the government tries to do, we'll be ready for them," said Ron Marino, one of 100 Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) members who gathered behind a union banner April 1 and marched together into work at the Queen Street Mental Health Centre. The previous day, OPSEU members across Ontario had voted more than 90 percent in favor of accepting a new contract and ending the five-week-long strike of 55,000 public employees.

The Queen Street hospital workers, some still wearing picket signs, sang "Solidarity Forever" as they marched through the corridors. Across town, 200 office workers rallied before entering a government office complex.

The big-business daily *Globe and Mail* stated April 1 that the strikers dealt a "major hit" to the conservative government of Michael Harris. The Harris administration plans to cut between 13,000 and 27,000 public employee jobs and privatize a number of government services. Prior to negotiations with the union, Harris passed laws abolishing government workers' rights concerning pension eligibility and the protection of jobs and union contracts in the case of privatization.

The government's "final" contract offer, rejected by OPSEU members before the strike, sought to impose short-term layoffs, and to gut seniority by limiting "bumping" — that is the right to transfer by seniority to another job instead of being



OPSEU members rally April 1 at Queen St. Mental Health Centre before returning to work. The strike action showed the fighting spirit of the workers.

laid off. Many workers said the offer was a slap in the face and that Harris was on a union-busting course.

"The master plan was to break us. To rush us into a strike, defeat us, and make us a lesson to other unions," said Isan, an OPSEU striker who participated in a demonstration March 28 against cuts in compensation for injured workers.

OPSEU members walked out February 26. The union officials did not challenge

the layoffs but advanced demands concerning severance pay, bumping procedures, pensions, and the impact of privatization. It was the first strike in the union's history and the first walkout for many of its members. "The government thought people would cross the picket line in droves and that it would be able to break the union," said Winston Walkes, a nurse at Queen Street Mental Health Centre, where only seven out of 1,000 workers

crossed the picket line.

On March 18, in the midst of mass picketing by thousands of OPSEU strikers and other unionists at the legislature and government offices, Harris sent the provincial police riot squad against the strikers. Several workers were injured and two were taken to the hospital.

The police attack made the strikers even more determined and sparked outrage among working people across the province. The following week the government agreed to a settlement. It then demanded reprisals against certain strikers, but backed off when the union resisted.

According to a union bulletin summarizing the new contract, it contains improvements over the government offer rejected by the strikers.

There is "enhanced severance pay," "improved bumping" procedures, "short-term layoffs are not permitted," and there are some new "provisions that allow laid-off workers near early retirement to reach their unreduced pension." In regards to privatization, "the government must make reasonable efforts to ensure that [OPSEU] members are offered jobs with the new employer with comparable terms and conditions of employment."

"This probably means I'm more likely to be bumped," said Andrew Male. "But I support it because it's more just."

"The first offer was an insult" said Danielle Larmand, a nurse at Queen Street hospital. "We've kept our dignity. Now at least there's a little more protection for our jobs than before."

"Reasonable efforts" doesn't mean a lot," said Andy Watson, interviewed after voting. He expressed the view of some workers who said there was little protection against privatization and layoffs.

"When we started, most didn't know what a strike was. Now we know that we're workers and they're management. The lines between us are very distinct," said Nicki, a nurse at Queen Street.

"With all the labor unrest you're going to see a lot more OPSEU members out on picket lines like this," said Barb, an OPSEU striker who picketed the Woodbine Racetrack March 30 with members of the Service Employees International Union locked out by management there.

"Even before the strike I decided to get out to Kitchener," said Male, referring to the April 19 day of protest in Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge planned by the Ontario Federation of Labor. Kitchener is the third in a series of anti-cutbacks demonstrations and work stoppages.

Al Cappe is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338. USWA members Steve Penner and Joanne Prichard contributed to this article.

N. Korea calls for aid, condemns war moves

BY HILDA CUZCO

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has appealed for more international assistance to relieve food shortages caused by disastrous floods during August and September of last year. Pak Dok Hun of the North Korean mission to the United Nations in Geneva made the request April 1, citing a UN estimate that the DPRK has "an urgent need of 1.2 million tons of grain" by October. He asked the United Nations to resume all efforts for assistance.

On February 7, Pyongyang had halted appeals for aid from foreign relief agencies because, according to Pak, "hostile elements," mainly in South Korea, were trying to use this appeal to demand political concessions from North Korea.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Glyn Davies said April 1 that no new U.S. aid would be considered, stating that Washington had already contributed \$2 million. In a February interview with the *Washington Post*, Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord described that amount as "peanuts."

Heavy rains last year washed away paddies and rice storages in the northwestern region of the DPRK, the main source of rice for a population of 21 million. The to-

tal damage is estimated at \$15 billion. According to a report on the devastated areas published in the February issue of *U.S. Asian News* magazine and reprinted in the *People's Korea* weekly, a total of 690,000 people have been affected. Fifty-nine hospitals and clinics, 466 nurseries, and over 1,000 schools have been destroyed.

Kim Kwang Jin, first vice minister of the DPRK's armed forces, issued a statement March 31 condemning recent military exercises by South Korean and U.S. forces in the area. "The south Korean authorities regarded the temporary difficulties facing fellow countrymen in the wake of flood damage as a good chance for northward invasion, and spread false rumors about 'collapse' of the north while obstructing international humanitarian assistance to the DPRK," Kim said. "This was part of a provocation for war." The Seoul government "is seeking a way out of the political and government crisis in war," he stated.

Some 200 protesters demonstrated

March 11 in front of the Seoul District Court, where two former South Korean presidents are on trial, demanding punishment for those involved in the 1979 coup and the bloody suppression of the Kwangju civil uprising in 1980. On February 27 the *Journal of Commerce* published a report revealing that former U.S. president James Carter and former South Korean president Chun Doo Hwan approved plans for a military attack against antigovernment demonstrations that rocked Korean cities in 1980. Since the publication of that report protests have taken place across South Korea.

Meanwhile, an emergency meeting of North Korean youth and student representatives took place in Pyongyang March 5. They urged the South Korean government to release two students, Jong Min Ju and Ri Hye Jong, who are imprisoned in Seoul for making an "unauthorized" visit to Pyongyang and participating in a national reunification conference that took place there August 14, 1995.

UK beef crisis humiliates London

BY IAN GRANT

LONDON — British Health Secretary Steven Dorrell reported March 20 that the government had received advice from scientists that 10 recent deaths from Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) may have been caused by consumption of beef infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow disease."

For years Downing Street has maintained that there was no evidence linking mad cow disease in cattle with CJD, the human version of the fatal brain disorder.

Despite a statement from Minister of Agriculture Douglas Hogg that beef could still be "eaten with confidence," the government admission triggered within days a virtual collapse of the beef market in the United Kingdom.

In Somerfield supermarkets, the sixth largest British chain, beef sales dropped by 43 percent in a week. Some 6,000 abattoir and meat processing workers were laid off by March 31. Cattle prices plummeted and prices of other meat jumped.

On March 27 the European Union (EU)

ordered a worldwide ban on British beef exports. But beef sales still fell in both Germany and France due to widespread fears that the risk of infection from non-UK beef was being played down.

On April 3, the European Union voted at an emergency session to pay 70 percent of the cost of destroying 4.7 million UK cattle 30 months and older — 15,000 cows per week. The animals will be slaughtered and incinerated after the end of their working lives, but will continue to be used for milk production or breeding stock. At the same time, on the strong urging of Bonn, the EU brushed aside protests from London and decided to maintain the global ban on British beef exports.

Since the first case of BSE was recorded in 1985, more than 161,000 confirmed cases have been registered in the UK by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food. The next highest incidence of the disease has been recorded in Switzerland, with 206 cases.

The disease in cattle most likely originated from the practice of feeding cattle

with animal feed made from carcasses infected by "scrapie," an equivalent form of the disease in sheep. In processing this meal, the rendering industry in the UK has been criticized for using temperatures sometimes lower than 100 degrees centigrade, necessary to kill harmful bacteria.

In 1988 the government banned the use of sheep and cow remains in animal feed, but the ban was not fully enforced. Even after the action, animal feed likely to contain infected parts was exported.

Rules introduced to avoid contamination within slaughterhouses have been inadequate and poorly enforced. Only in November 1995 was the practice of stripping meat from cows' backbones outlawed. These cuts can be contaminated by small fragments of spinal cord.

In 1995 the government privatized the local state-controlled health and safety bodies that regulated the industry. The replacement, Meat Hygiene Service, is now laying off workers. Employees say inspectors currently have as little as 17 seconds to examine each carcass.

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