

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Introduction to 'Pombo:
A man of Che's guerrilla'

— International Socialist Review, PAGES 7-10

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Workers in Albania protest gov't terror gangs

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — With the presence of the 6,500 Italian-led imperialist occupation troops in Albania, President Sali Berisha's vigilante gangs have intensified their armed assaults on working people of the Balkan workers state. Through his murderous assaults Berisha aims to terrorize working people into submission and to re-inforce his hold on power.

Eleven people were killed by Berisha's gangs May 18 in the towns of Tepelene, Memalie, and Gjirokaster in southern Albania, according to news reports on Greek TV channel ERT3. In Tepelene, the armed thugs carried out an assault in the center of the town at the time when representatives of the Committees of Salvation were meeting. The thugs abducted Gjoлека Malai, the leader of the rebel committee in Tepelene, along with a police officer.

Armed guards organized by the committee together with police officers loyal to Tirana's national reconciliation government of Prime Minister Bashkim Fino successfully confronted the gang and forced them to release Gjoлека and the police officer. Firing indiscriminately, the thugs killed four people including a young woman and her five-year-old son; five people were wounded. In Gjirokaster a bridge was blown

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Mobutu dictatorship falls in Congo

BY MEGAN ARNEY

On May 16, Mobutu Sese Seko fled Kinshasa, Zaire, after 31 years of dictatorial rule. The next day troops of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (AFDL) took over the capital city. With very little actual combat, the AFDL had crossed the third-largest country in Africa in just seven months. According to the Red Cross, some 220 people were killed in the capital.

On May 17, AFDL leader Laurent Kabila assumed presidential power and his regime renamed Zaire with its post-1960 independence name of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Washington and its allies across the globe have moved to recognize and work with the AFDL in hopes of restoring stability and establishing a pliant capitalist government.

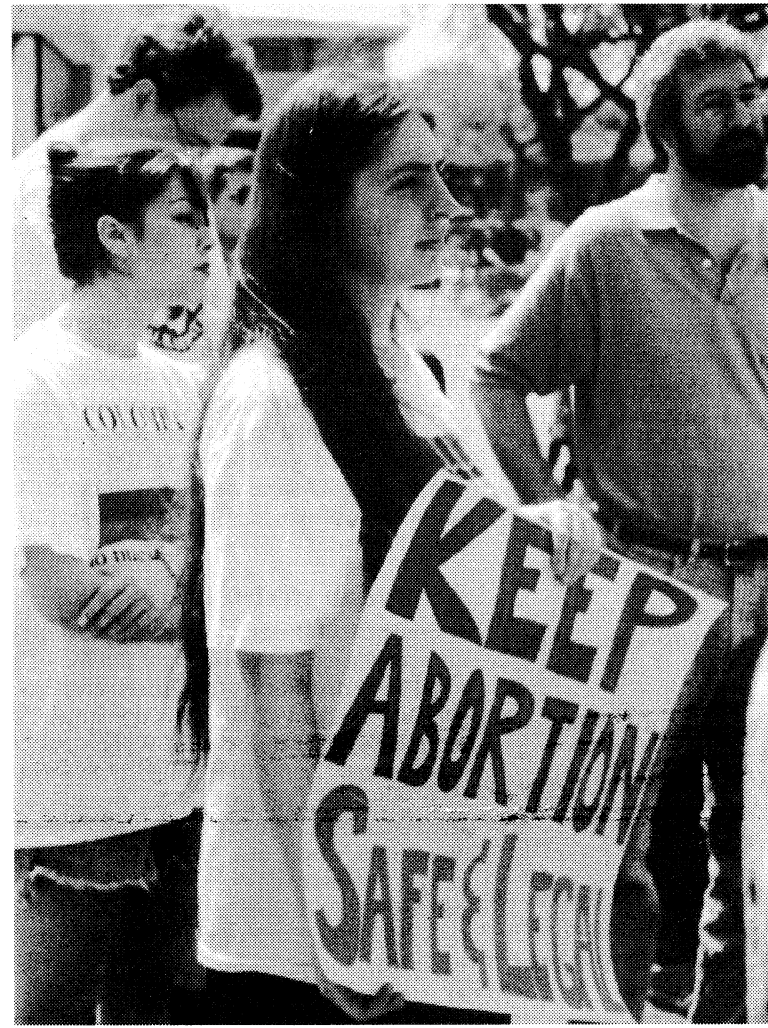
After the AFDL took the capital city, they quickly moved to broadcast via the state radio for the citizens to remain calm and soldiers from the old regime to turn in their weapons. There were small celebrations for the downfall of the hated dictator in the streets. AFDL officials say the new government will suspend the activities of political parties and organizations other than the alliance.

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright warned the incoming regime that there

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Abortion is a woman's right to choose!

Senate passes bill to ban abortion procedure



Militant/Barbara Graham

Students defend abortion rights, College Station, Texas, March 1997.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a bipartisan attack on a woman's right to choose, Democratic and Republican politicians in the Senate are vying with each other over who can offer up the most restrictive legislation aimed at banning an abortion procedure for the first time since the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973.

The Senate passed legislation May 20 that would ban the procedure medically known as "intact dilation and evacuation," or D&E. Opponents of abortion rights have demagogically dubbed it "partial-birth" abortion.

See editorial, page 14

The measure, sponsored by Republican Senator Rick Santorum, won approval by a 64-36 vote. On the eve of the Senate vote, the American Medical Association endorsed the ban — the first position the AMA has taken on abortion legislation.

The bill is identical to the measure passed by Congress and vetoed last year by President William Clinton and to a bill that passed the House on March 20 by a 295-136 vote. If this law is adopted, doctors performing this operation could be subject to up to \$250,000 in fines and two years in prison. The only exception would be to save the life of the woman.

Republican Senator Trent Lott said he expected the Senate to push for another vote to override a presidential veto before the Congress recessed in August. The Clinton administration said he intended to veto the ban again.

In counterposition to this bill, several Democrats in the Senate who describe themselves as supporters of abortion rights put forward bills that would impose even more sweeping bans on a broad category of abortions.

Democratic Senator Tom Daschle proposed legislation that would ban all abortions after the fetus reaches a point of devel-

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Clinton tour peddles NATO expansion

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The U.S. government drive to expand NATO into Eastern and Central Europe is pushing Moscow to recoil from agreed to reductions in its nuclear arsenal. At the same time, a European tour by U.S. president William Clinton is adding insult to injury in Washington's military provocations against Russia.

On May 27, Clinton is scheduled to join 15 officials of European governments at the Elysee Palace in Paris to sign an agreement with Russian president Boris Yeltsin. The deal, which the Russian government grudgingly accepted two weeks earlier in Moscow, outlines NATO expansion on Washington's terms. The accord leaves open the possibility that NATO may deploy nuclear weapons and build military bases on the soil of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic — the prospective member countries. In the case of Poland, this could bring NATO troops up to the border with Russia.

The Paris visit will be one of several public appearances in Europe and the United States where Clinton will speak on his plan for NATO enlargement, which Moscow vehemently objects to.

On May 15 — the day after the NATO-Russia deal was announced — Ivan Rybkin, head of Yeltsin's National Security Council, said that NATO's decision to expand eastward has made it difficult for Moscow to push for ratification of the latest treaty it had negotiated with Washington calling for

reduction of strategic nuclear weapons.

Rybkin said that ratification of the Start 2 treaty by the Russian parliament is now "almost impossible."

"In addition to all the current problems we have with the Duma," Rybkin stated,

referring to the lower house of parliament, which is dominated by deputies of the Communist Party, "there is the problem of NATO expansion."

Start 2 calls on each of the world's two

Continued on Page 12

Building a Party of Socialist Workers

and a

Communist Youth Organization

Come to the 39th Convention of the Socialist Workers Party

June 11-14, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio

Join communist workers in industrial unions and Young Socialists who are actively involved in building solidarity for the Wheeling-Pitt steelworkers' strike, battles of farmworkers, and other labor struggles; in the fight for Chicano liberation, Black freedom, and women's rights; in protests against the Klan and other rightist currents; and in actions defending national liberation struggles and the socialist revolution in Cuba.

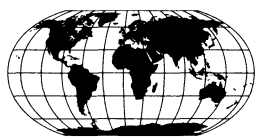
At the convention, delegates will discuss building a party of worker-Bolsheviks, who seek to transform the unions into revolutionary instruments of struggle to prevent imperialism from dragging humanity toward fascism and war and open the road toward a socialist future in the United States.

Also:

Classes * Workshops * Book sale * Social events

For more information, see listings on page 12.

Gov't abuses rights in McVeigh bomb trial — page 11



Turkish troops cross Iraq border

Turkey's defense minister, Turhan Tayan, justified the May 14 storming of Iraq's northern border with a disputed 50,000 troops, 350 tanks, armored personnel carriers, heavy machine-gun-stacked trucks and warplanes as a "humanitarian mission." Also described as "a small-scale, short-term operation" by military spokespeople, the stated goal was to protect Iraqi Kurds from attacks by Turkish Kurds in the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Turkish officials said the numbers of troops and weaponry given by Turkish Kurds were bloated, but refused to pinpoint a number. The *Wall Street Journal* called it "the biggest assault across the border [of Iraq] since 1995" when Ankara militarily occupied part of northern Iraq. The Iraqi government condemned the action, but took no further action. U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns, offering no criticism of the blatant disregard for Iraqi sovereignty, said, "We understand Turkey's need to fight terrorism."

Since the 1991 U.S.-led assault on the people of Iraq, the fight of Kurds for self-determination, and between rival groups in the region, has become a major issue used by imperialist forces to justify intervention into the middle eastern country.

Tel Aviv bombs Lebanese rebels

The Israeli government flew three bombing raids over southern Lebanon May 12. They were aiming for Hezbollah guerrilla fighters resisting Israeli military occupation there. Earlier, Hezbollah attacked and wounded one Israeli soldier and four other pro-Zionist militiamen. Hezbollah claims one fatality, while Israeli Army officials put the death toll at four. Tel Aviv launched a massive bombing campaign in April, 1996, killing more than 100 and causing 400,000 Lebanese residents to evacuate their homes.

Strike halts French train service

Railroad ticket inspectors initiated a two-day strike May 14, canceling half the trains between Paris and the southern cities of Marseille, Lyon, and Montpellier. The walk-out was aimed at pressuring the company to speed up contract negotiations, and discuss union proposals on promotion practices.



Some 2,500 people marched in Tokyo in early April protesting U.S. military bases in Japan. Over the years, a mounting resentment against imperialist forces in Okinawa boiled over when a 12-year-old woman was raped by three U.S. GIs two years ago.

Okinawans protest U.S. bases

Thousands of Okinawans, including unionists, youth, Okinawan landowners, and others protested on May 15 against 25 years under Japanese imperial rule and the military occupation of nearly 30,000 U.S. troops stationed there. The Japanese government deployed riot cops to defend the bases. Tokyo canceled the 25 year anniversary celebration this year, sensing a less-than-festive mood among Okinawans.

"We want the Americans and the Japanese government to respect the wishes of the Okinawan people," protester Sueko Akanime demanded outside Kadena Air Base. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto cancelled his visit to the island, after it was announced he approved a law that would force landowners to open up their property for U.S. bases.

Miners in Borneo: 'Pay us now!'

On May 11, when Canadian mining company Bre-X Minerals' gold mining opera-

tion in Borneo turned out to be a hoax and managers began fleeing by helicopter, 400 mine workers held the remaining two managers captive for three days, demanding their wages be paid. After Bre-X promised to pay the wages, the two bosses were released. The company had claimed that 200 million ounces of gold were deposited in the East Kalimantan province, some 930 miles north-east of Jakarta.

Australian steelworkers strike

Some 20,000 steelworkers in Australia organized a national 24-hour strike May 15 to protest a decision by the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd (BHP) to shut down its Newcastle steel mill by 1999. The move would cause 2,000 BHP workers to lose their jobs, and thousands more in steel related industries. The strike affected six steel operations throughout Australia and received support from the Maritime Union of Australia, whose dock worker members refused to service BHP ships during the strike. BHP is laying plans to shut down most of its Australia operations.

Honduran *chortís* promised land

More than 3,000 protesters, most of them *chortís* (native Hondurans), who waged a ten-day protest, ended the action after Honduran president Carlos Roberto Reina agreed to make some concessions. Trying to absolve himself from the 500 years of pillage of native peasants, he promised to give them 24,750 acres of land in the Copan and Ocotepeque provinces near the Guatemalan border. Reina also agreed to investigate the slayings of two *chortí* leaders that occurred last month. He offered military and police "protection" for their new land. There have been 31 killings of indigenous leaders in the

past decade. Other demands included government financial and technical assistance to help them work the land.

Aircraft bosses talk trade war

The U.S.-based Boeing aircraft company charged European Union (EU) competition commissioner Karel Van Miert of "provoking a transatlantic trade war," according to the May 14 *Financial Times*. Van Miert voiced opposition to a \$13 billion merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas, which would create the world's largest aerospace and defense corporation. Miert asserted the merger would be "extremely problematic" and insisted that the EU has the right to stop it. The EU commission is considering imposing a 10 percent fine on revenues, expected to reach \$48 billion.

Miert said decisions by American Airlines and Delta Air Lines of the United States to make Boeing its sole aircraft supplier for 20 years was "out of the question." U.S. vice president Albert Gore, vowed to "take whatever action is appropriate" to defend the merger. Boeing rejected the idea that the EU body could claim jurisdiction over deals between U.S. companies, warning that any attempt to do so would create "problems" between Washington and Brussels.

Clinton tosses workfare bone

The Clinton administration announced May 15 that most people participating in workfare programs should be covered by minimum wage laws, backing an argument by the union officialdom that workfare recipients were covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act. The decision "was widely interpreted as an effort to repay the union leaders who have supported the Democratic Party," the *New York Times* reported.

State Supreme Court Judge Jane Solomon of New York ruled May 12 that workfare participants should be paid comparable wages to what a city worker gets paid for similar labor. A spokesman for New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani asserted, "the decision will be appealed. Therefore it will have no immediate impact on our ongoing programs. Ultimately, the entire issue will be pre-empted by the Federal welfare law."

U.S. Army used Canadian town in secret germ-warfare tests

According to a report released May 14, the U.S. Army conducted secret germ-warfare tests in 1953, using Winnipeg as a guinea pig. Cancer-causing zinc cadmium sulphide was dropped in more than 32 towns and cities. The Pentagon claims the amounts were not large enough to harm humans. The Canadian Defense Department has mouthed the same deception. They also lied to the mayor of Winnipeg when the experiment was being done, telling them the toxin being sprayed on the town was a chemical fog being tested that might protect them from a Russian nuclear attack.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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Editor: NAOMI CRAINE

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

Editorial Staff: Megan Arney, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Taylor, and Maurice Williams.

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'Independence for Quebec'

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

MONTREAL — A crowd of 250, overwhelmingly composed of young people, gathered in Square Victoria in the business district here May 19 to rally for Quebec independence. Youth waved Quebec flags, Patriot flags from the rebellion of 1837 — Canada's failed democratic revolution, and one large red Che Guevara banner.

The action took place in the midst of a federal election campaign in Canada, with polling set for June 2. Quebec sovereignty remains the central question bedeviling capitalist politicians in this country. Both the English and French language recent TV debates between the five main parties' leaders revealed their major difference to be over how to handle Quebec sovereignty.

While Progressive Conservative leader Jean Charest and Liberal premier Jean Chrétien both pressed for national unity through increasing some provincial rights within Canada, Reform Party leader Preston Manning claimed nothing would be solved through wrangling between the old Quebec politicians. His supporters hand out placards which say "Equality not distinct society" in an explicit rejection of Quebec's rights. Alexa McDonough, leader of the New Democratic Party, called for job creation as a way to calm separatist sentiment. Gilles Duceppe of the Bloc Quebecois, which formed the Official Opposition in the outgoing parliament, reaffirmed Quebec's right to choose sovereignty.

The Bloc is an exclusively Quebec-based federal party. Its provincial counterpart, the

Parti Quebecois (PQ), forms the government in that province.

The federal government is presently asking the Supreme Court to rule against Quebec's right to secession.

"If equality was real," said Julie Lavoie at the rally, "that would be perfect. Then we wouldn't need a 'distinct society.' But we're Canada's cheap labor." She is a member of the Sovereignty Committee at the University of Quebec in Montreal, one of the rally organizers.

"At first I supported political parties," said another UQAM student Valéry Colas. "But I disaffiliated myself. Now I'm involved in the student movement. Pretty much all the members of the student's union support independence. To make independence, though, we don't have a choice but to vote for the Parti Quebecois or the Bloc."

A dozen speakers addressed the gathering including Paul Rose, now leader of the Party of Socialist Democracy and ex-leader of the FLQ (Quebec Liberation Front) in the 1960s; the editor of the union newspaper *Nouvelles CSN*; Bengaly Fode Diarra, president of the students association at the junior college of Old Montreal and others.

The union federations, the PQ or the Bloc were not represented at the gathering. The unions, while not calling for a Bloc vote, are associated with the PQ and the Bloc.

"Sovereignty is a question of believing in our own capacities," said Marie-Soleil Renaud, representative of a students' union at UQAM addressing the rally. "We don't want to sacrifice social programs on the al-

tar of the zero deficit, take away prisoners' right to vote, or see education as an accounting problem."

Thierry Maxime, 21 years old, who is assistant personnel director for a large multinational corporation, said, "I want Quebec independence in order to live better. I'm against opening the borders to immigrants because there aren't enough jobs. And I'm against unions because every individual is unique."

He was commenting on the Communist League campaign brochure which candidates Michel Dugré and Vicky Mercier were handing out as they participated in the rally. "The fight for Quebec independence will be part of uniting all workers across Canada for their rights against Ottawa," explained Dugré, who is running in the riding of Papineau - St. Denis.

Denis Valiquette, Jean-François Trahan and Elsa Martínez contributed to this article.



May 19 rally for Quebec independence. *Oui* (yes) sign refers to 1995 sovereignty referendum.

31-year Mobutu dictatorship topples in Congo

Continued from front page

would be conditions for international support and aid. "We are making it very clear that it is important for the new government to be inclusive," she said.

The AFDL announced May 19 that it would not quickly organize elections. The May 22 *Washington Post* quoted an unnamed aid to Kabila saying that elections will be held in 12 months.

Daniel Simpson, the U.S. ambassador in Zaire, met with two senior AFDL officials May 19 and reiterated Washington's interest in the "inclusive" elections. In particular, the Clinton administration is pressing for Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of the Union of Democracy and Social Progress party, to be included. Tshisekedi was part of Mobutu's single-party government until 1980 before splitting to form the official bourgeois opposition. He has served as Mobutu's prime minister three times. Tshisekedi personally signed the arrest warrant for Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in 1961. Lumumba, who led the independence movement against Belgium, was later murdered in government custody.

The local newspaper *Le Potentiel* predicted May 20 that Tshisekedi would be named Kabila's prime minister. That same day some 500 supporters rallied in front of Tshisekedi's office. But when the AFDL requested Tshisekedi come to the rebel headquarters, he refused. According to Reuters news agency, when the AFDL was asked if it would include Tshisekedi's opposition party, Finance Minister Mwana Nanga Mawampanga said, "We don't include political parties. We only include individuals."

Foreign companies began lining up to meet with the incoming regime even before it took power, making deals with the AFDL to insure they can continue operations. Many are mining companies vying for the country's mineral wealth. The Democratic Republic of Congo leads the world in industrial diamond production, produces about a quarter of the world's cobalt, and ranks sixth in copper production. Other natural resources include various other metals, hydroelectric potential, and oil reserves.

Mobutu, who came into power in the 1960s with Washington's backing, has usurped billions of the country's wealth. For decades Washington and Paris relied on his regime as a protectorate in the region. Mobutu has long served imperialist interests in the region — from Mozambique to Angola — and has been a CIA employee.

Meanwhile, some 3,000 imperialist troops from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, and elsewhere are still based in the capital city of

Brazzaville, Congo, just across the river from Kinshasa, where they were placed on the pretext of a possible evacuation of foreign citizens.

The rebellion started in the far eastern part of what was then called Zaire. The Zairian government had for decades launched armed assaults against the border countries in that region — Angola, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. In October, local politicians in the southern Kivu province announced a plan to push 300,000 Tutsi who had lived in Zaire for more than two centuries, known as the Banyamulenge, into Rwanda. This attack sparked an armed uprising by the residents, who joined with the rebels and helped them push the Zairian army out of the city of Bukavu and take over Goma.

Initially, the rebellion was reportedly led by André Ngandu Kassasse, a leader of a bourgeois opposition group who called the conflict "a popular uprising against President Mobutu." He said November 5 that his forces crossed ethnic lines, and he himself was not a Tutsi. Kassasse was later killed.

Kabila came onto the scene about two weeks after the fighting started in October. In the past he was a youth leader of the independence political party of Lumumba, participated in the 1963-64 uprising in what is now called Kisangani, and fought with Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara in 1965. From 1964 to early 1980,

Kabila headed the People's Revolutionary Party, and ruled an enclave in far eastern Zaire's Kivu province. From the 1980s until the rebellion, Kabila lived in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, running a thriving business selling gold mined from eastern Zaire. He owned another home in Uganda.

The Mobutu regime at one time had a strong army. Tel Aviv trained a special Presidential Division Mobutu used until he fled; Paris trained an airborne brigade; the Italian rulers assisted the Air Force; Belgian forces operated the military academy; and Washington doled out millions. Much of this support dried up in recent years, and as Zaire's economy crumbled so did the military. By last October, soldiers were being paid the equivalent of \$1 a month, or not at all. Many were poorly armed and trained. The regime's decision last year to hire well-paid mercenaries didn't boost morale either, and the rebel forces quickly gained ground.

The AFDL forces had no mechanized divisions to move troops, no heavy artillery, no air force, no radios, and until later in the rebellion, no engineering units to cross rivers. The AFDL were reportedly joined by logistical and some military help from Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda troops. Angolan troops may have also provided military support later in the rebellion as the AFDL moved toward Kinshasa. The capitalist media continues to claim that these

countries were the basis of the rebellion; the response from the governments of those countries is that they were not involved.

The AFDL forces picked up momentum as they crossed the country, recruiting many young people from the liberated areas. The rebels advanced with the help of the local population who gave them information, directions for the jungle terrain, and helped them cross rivers. This reflected the general hatred of Mobutu by the people of then Zaire. "Everywhere we go, the population is with the rebels," a Zairian colonel complained in Kisangani, three days before the third-largest city fell in March.

The new regime has laid out only a preliminary program, according to the *Financial Times* of London, saying it wants a multiparty democracy and a market economy. The AFDL has not been any more specific on their economic program.

With the capture of capital, the AFDL told economists to strengthen the zaire, the country's currency. Moneychangers on Kinshasa's "Wall Street" posted the zaire at about 70,000 to the dollar — doubling the value in just a week.

Just days after the fighting in the capital, the streets filled with people going back to work. Many big-business newspapers report high expectations of the new regime among the Congolese people, after three decades of the Mobutu dictatorship.

Sweden rulers debate immigration policy

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM — Rifts are showing in the opposition Conservative Party here over its immigration policy. The chairman in the party's youth organization, Thomas Idegaard, and Per Unckel, a prominent party spokesman, have drafted a new party program calling for greater restrictions on the right to asylum but more open borders for the immigrants to work in Sweden. They propose these workers be denied the right to social security that Swedish citizens have.

Sten Andersson, a Conservative member of parliament in the southern town Malmö, is advocating tighter immigration restrictions. In the 1970s, Andersson was a member of the Social Democratic party and a trade union official at the Kockums shipyard. He projects the image of speaking for the Swedish worker and still works one day a week at the shipyard. Recently, he addressed a meeting organized by a newly formed network called "The People's Will and Mass Immigration." Members of ultrarightist groups like Keep Sweden

Swedish and the Sweden Democrats also participated in that gathering.

Andersson was hailed by Karl-Johan Lidefeldt, one of the leaders of the new organization, for having the courage to have his own opinion on immigration. Lidefeldt told the Conservative party's main paper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, that the goal of the People's Will is to allow immigrants only temporary work permits and to return immigrants to their home countries.

Idegard immediately demanded that Andersson be expelled from the Conservative Party, but party secretary Gunnar Hökmark argued, "You can't expel a person for having participated in a meeting."

The ruling Social Democrats are also promoting a policy of deportations, offering 10,000 kronor (\$1,297) to immigrants from Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo, and Albania if they return to their native land. The Swedish government has also complained that Bonn is not taking back refugees who are crossing the borders to Sweden to escape repatriation to Yugoslavia by Bonn.

The dispute between the Conservative youth organization and the party leadership reflects something deeper. The policy that Idegaard and Unckel have proposed has little hearing in the party. The party's spokesman on questions of immigration, Gustav von Essen, is skeptical of the new proposal. Over the years he has advocated and practiced a policy in line with other governments in the European Union, often in basic agreement with the social democrats. On the other hand, Andersson's views on immigration are heard frequently within the conservative party.

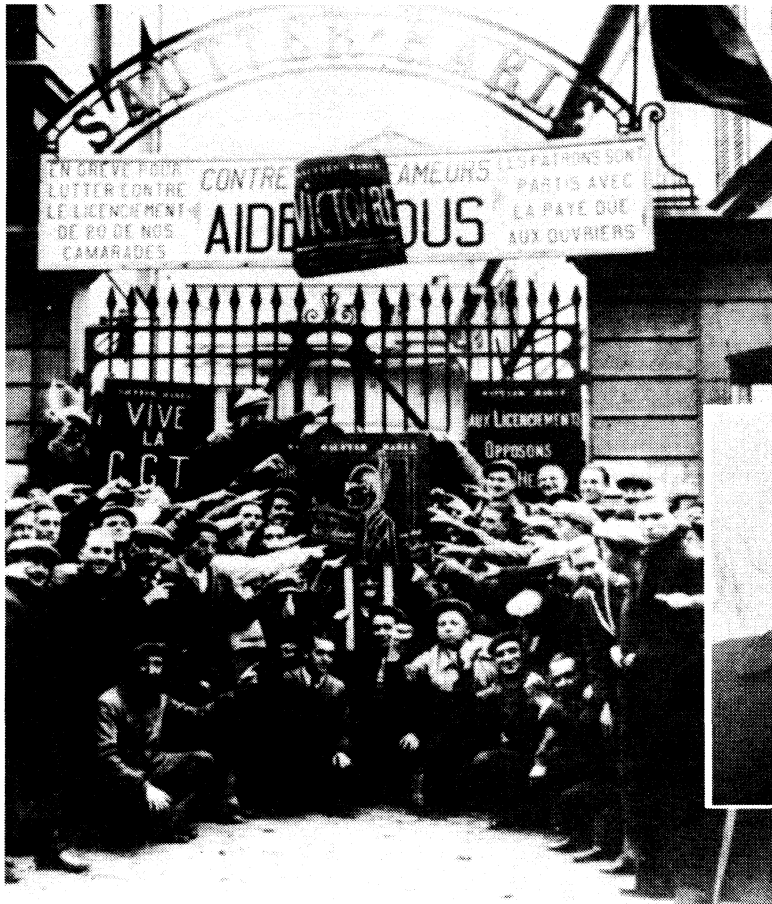
The Conservative party, although it is ahead in recent polls, is also in a crisis over the European Monetary Union. Party chief Carl Bildt is a strong advocate of Sweden joining the EMU from the start. But Mats Svegfors, the editor of *Svenska Dagbladet*, is expressing his doubts over the EMU project almost daily.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metal workers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

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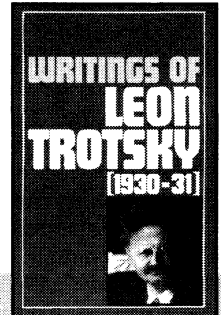
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Communist leader Leon Trotsky led the fight inside the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and in the Comintern to continue the course of the party under Lenin. Trotsky was exiled from the Soviet Union in early 1929 by the dominant and reactionary current in the party leadership whose central figure was Joseph Stalin. From then until his assassination at Stalin's orders in 1940, Trotsky worked to draw together forces who sought to build communist parties around the world, collaborating with revolutionary forces in numerous countries. His writings from these years address the key questions of Marxist politics and theory, as well as the problems and challenges of building proletarian parties in the years leading up to the second imperialist world slaughter.

Writings of Leon Trotsky is a fourteen-volume set covering the years 1929-40, consisting of material not included in Trotsky's other books from these years. All together, the volumes contain 1,700 separate items, amounting to more than 7,000 book pages.

THE Communist International IN Lenin's Time

6 VOLUMES

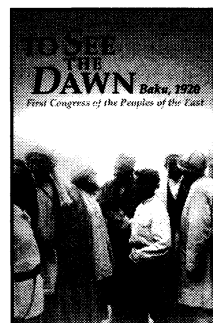
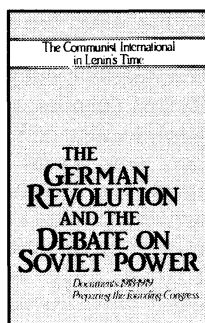
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SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Diary of a Pathfinder sales visit to Norway

BY DAG TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — I embarked on a three-day sales trip April 7-9 to Oslo and Bergen, Norway, where customers ordered more than 200 Pathfinder books and pamphlets. This is more literature than we ever sold on any of the trips organized from Stockholm, and shows some big opportunities.

The top sellers included 13 copies of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, 10 copies of *Woman's Evolution: From Patriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family* by Evelyn Reed, eight copies of Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War — 1956-58*, eight copies of *The Origins of Materialism* by George Novack, and six issues of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. The hot-selling pamphlets were 10 copies of *Marxism and Terrorism* by Leon Trotsky and 10 copies of *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Several customers ordered seven copies of the upcoming Pathfinder book *Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla*.

April 7, Oslo

I went to the bookstore near the Oslo University campus. It has been our largest commercial buyer in Scandinavia for several years. I had an "agent room" and representatives from the different departments visited me.

They place their orders on their computer system. A professor from the History and Politics department who was a big buyer from the last trip ordered 26 books and pamphlets, including five copies of *Marxism and Terrorism* and two copies of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. I sold a total of 53 Pathfinder titles on this first Oslo visit, which also included five copies of *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara.

April 8, Bergen

This was the first time we have visited Bergen and it was really worthwhile. At one campus bookstore, someone from the Anthropology and Women's Literature departments ordered 16 Pathfinder titles. Another customer at the bookstore wanted to order *Ny International* in Swedish. She had never

heard about Pathfinder and suggested we visit the Nordic countries more often. She also wanted to copy pages from the Pathfinder catalog for different teachers, mostly in the Spanish department, who specialized in Latin American studies.

April 9, Oslo

I dropped in to visit one bookstore where at first the owner was negative, but he became more interested and ordered 33 books — the first in several years from that bookstore. I also took orders from a group of Chileans who had formed a defense committee for political prisoners.

❖

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Socialists participated in four events over a two-week period here that ended on International Workers Day, May 1. Sales of the socialist literature totaled of 27 single copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, five singles of the *Militant*, one subscription to PM, three copies of *New Internationalist* and 21 Pathfinder titles.

On April 19 a committee of the U.S. Congress held hearings in San Juan on a proposed bill that would result in a plebiscite in 1998 over the future of this colony. The three political parties that appear on the ballot all organized rallies in the same general area as the hearing. The demonstration of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) had about 1,000 people. The marches of the pro-statehood and status quo parties had between 5,000 and 10,000 people. Sales at the PIP event included six copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, three of the *Militant*, and six Pathfinder titles.

On April 25 the Socialist Front organized a forum to discuss the proposed law of Gov. Pedro Rosselló that would legalize unions among public sector workers. Currently, government workers have no right to collective bargaining. Participants in the forum bought three copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* and one issue of the *Militant*.

On April 27 the National Hostos Congress (CNH) held its assembly in Ponce. The CNH is the second largest pro-independence organization and groups together virtually all

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books to Non Pathfinder Outlets						
APRIL			# of books sold			
CITY	GOALS	SOLD	%	MAR	FEB	JAN
WASHINGTON, D.C.	42	75	179%	41	122	429
CHICAGO	60	56	93%	4	118	71
SEATTLE	60	55	92%	47	38	7
HOUSTON	32	22	69%	0	0	10
NEW YORK	190	85	45%	143	172	417
SAN FRANCISCO	74	27	36%	54	15	53
LOS ANGELES	95	15	16%	237	257	78
BOSTON	50	4	8%	12	22	100
ATLANTA	32	1	3%	0	10	3
PHILADELPHIA	49	1	2%	30	71	81
BIRMINGHAM	50	0	0%	0	0	0
CLEVELAND	40	0	0%	72	8	63
DES MOINES	35	0	0%	10	0	274
DETROIT	60	0	0%	2	0	0
GREENSBORO	36	0	0%	0	0	65
MIAMI	42	0	0%	8	49	11
MORGANTOWN	25	0	0%	0	0	20
NEWARK	133	0	0%	0	1	66
PEORIA	21	0	0%	6	0	13
PITTSBURGH	49	0	0%	9	0	31
SALT LAKE CITY	40	0	0%	2	86	10
TWIN CITIES	67	0	0%	319	5	0
TOTAL	1282	341	27%	996	974	1802

the pro-independence forces with the exception of the PIP. About 600 people attended the assembly. There we sold three copies of *New Internationalist*, 15 Pathfinder titles, and one single copy each of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Some 10,000 people participated in the annual celebration of International Worker's Day on May 1. It was the largest march of workers in San Juan since the 1990 general strike that drew 100,000 people and prevented the government from selling the telephone company. The Rosselló administration recently announced plans to sell the telephone company and close government-owned hotels that it claims are losing money. May Day was the first public response of the workers. We sold 17 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* at the demonstration.

❖

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — Socialist workers in the

Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) sold 36 Pathfinder titles to co-workers last month. The hottest sellers at the Lord West garment shop in Queens were books and pamphlets by Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin. Five workers at Lord West bought 12 books. Some had read titles by the Lenin before and others were reading his material for the first time.

The literature sold there included *Wage Labor and Capital and Value, Price and Profit* by Marx; *On Colonialism*, by Marx and Engels; two copies of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back; Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and *Who Are The Friends of the People*, by Lenin; two copies of *Sendero Luminoso, Evolution of a Stalinist Sect* by Martín Koppel; *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis; Intensify the Struggle to Abolish Apartheid* by Nelson Mandela; and *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?* by Naomi Craine. All the titles sold were in Spanish.

Hot off the press!



Editor Martín Koppel (center) checks printing on the cover of *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos* — the new Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. With him are press operator Bill Estrada and designer Susan Zárate. The book will be available from Pathfinder in early June.

New titles in Spanish!

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of the twentieth century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows will revolutionize themselves, their unions and all of society. Also available in English. \$19.95

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V.I. Lenin

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Des Moines YS built by activity, study, propaganda

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, Box #478 Chicago, IL 60622 Tel: (773) 342-1780 CompuServe: 105162,605

BY TED WALTER
AND TRACY SABINI

DES MOINES, Iowa — Since the Young Socialists Convention last March, the Des Moines YS chapter has put itself on a footing to carry out the decisions of the convention: to build the YS through reading, studying, and selling communist literature, while engaging in political work with other forces.

The chapter has been participating in events like the Bacchanal Festival put on by students at Drake University, where we were invited to have a table. The festival was planned as an outdoor event with bands and different political organizations. With a change in the weather, it was moved to a local country bar and most of the organizations pulled out. The YS stayed and set up a table near the entrance. We spoke to many people about the Young Socialists, Cuba, Albania, sold a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *To Speak the Truth* by Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara.

Members of the YS and Socialist Workers Party also attended the Pedagogy of the Oppressed conference, held in Omaha, Nebraska, April 17-19. The conference was targeted at academics and teachers who were looking for ways to integrate discussion of oppression into their teaching. Some young people came who were looking for politics and answers, however, from Omaha to Pittsburgh. By talking politics and using our political weapons, we sold 19 *Militant* subscriptions, 6 copies of *New International* magazine, and over \$500 in Pathfinder books and pamphlets.

The YS was also invited to the May 10-11 Illinois/Iowa Music Fest, held in Davenport, Iowa, and East Moline, Illinois. More than 300 young people were there. The YS table stayed busy the whole time. Some of those who came by had seen the YS at other events. We sold 13 *Militants*

and 1 subscription there, along with copies of *The Communist Manifesto* and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. A large banner of Che Guevara drew many people to the table and gave us a chance to explain who Che really was — a communist who fought around the world against the horrors of capitalism, not just a commercial image as an article in the April 30 *New York Times* asserted. The paper cynically stated that Guevara's image "... has become more vivid, complex and commercial ... it also does not hurt that Guevara died young and looked glamorous in his beret."

The YS puts forth the perspective of emulating the Cuban revolution here in the United States and around the world, as opposed to Washington's continued war drive. This has won the YS many contacts in the region from Peoria, Illinois, to Sioux City, Iowa.

Jamie Munsen from Sioux City said, "You guys have a message everyone needs to hear."

Munsen is a member of the band "Songs of Zarathustra" made up of three young workers. The band has offered to set up a show in Sioux City where a YS member can speak before they play.

While engaged in this propaganda activity, the YS has been building the 14th World Youth Festival to take place in Cuba this summer. Also working to build the festival are members of the Black Student Alliance and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Transgender organization, both at Iowa State University.



Militant/Barbara Graham

Studying Pathfinder books and selling them to young rebels like the Chicano liberation activists above puts the YS in the best position to win new fighters.

The YS here in Des Moines also participates in weekly sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to Steelworkers at the Bridgestone/Firestone plant in Des Moines. Other sales are at the bus that takes workers from Des Moines to the Swift meatpacking plant in Marshalltown, Iowa, and at the IBP meatpacking plant in Perry, Iowa.

In order to be more effective in its politi-

cal work, the chapter is making education a part of its regular activities. We've found that having educationals is a good way to start off chapter meetings. The YS also participated in a class on the *Communist Manifesto* with farm activist Larry Ginter, on his farm in Rhodes, Iowa. YS members are eager to continue the class series once the busy planting season is over.

Montreal youth up efforts to build Festival

BY MARIA ISABEL LE BLANC
AND CARLOS CATALÁN

MONTREAL — Over the past few weeks there's been real progress here in building the contingent for the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students. Thousands of young people will meet this summer in Havana between July 28 and August 5 to discuss and debate issues such as the economy, environment, imperialism, women's rights, and culture.

Young people building the Quebec delegation set up tables on campuses to invite

as many people as possible to participate. Many members of the National Preparatory Committee (NPC) in Quebec first heard about the festival through information kiosks on campuses or saw leaflets advertising one of the four public meetings that the NPC has organized over the past months.

During one of the public meetings, a young Chilean woman explained that she and her band were going to Cuba this summer because they wanted to sing at the International Festival of Political Song, to be held at the same time as the youth festival. They want to take advantage of that event to protest the economic blockade Washington has imposed on the Cuban people for more than 35 years.

At a public meeting May 12, Miriam Monfide Jones, who was part of a voluntary work brigade to Nicaragua last winter, said she would attend the youth festival "because I want to break my political isolation and meet other fighters from around the world." She also explained that she wanted to learn more about the Cuban Revolution.

Young people who plan to attend the festival come from different backgrounds: some of them were part of struggles like student strikes against cutbacks, the fight for Quebec independence, and defense of gay and lesbian rights while others have done voluntary work in Cuba. The NPC in Quebec also includes organizations like the federations of university and junior college students in Quebec, who plan to send scores of students; the Quebec-Cuba Brigade, which will bring a group of 40 young people who will do voluntary work in the fields before the Festival; community centers; and political organizations such as the Communist Party of Quebec, the Young Socialists, and the Communist League in Canada. The NPC

is open to all groups or individuals who want to be part of the gathering, except fascist, sexist, and racist organizations. As of mid-May, 29 people had registered.

Every week, the committee holds a meeting to discuss the next steps to get others to the festival. On May 9, seven new people showed up to the NPC meeting and jumped into the different committees that have been set up. Fund-raising possibilities include a car-wash, organizing a party, and making T-shirts to sell.

A group of students at the University of Montreal also plan to make a documentary on the Festival. Several young people said they would be available to do translation during the conferences.

The delegation also decided to launch a humanitarian aid campaign in Quebec that will aim to bring as many bicycles as they can when they fly to Cuba.

From Montreal, the cost for the festival is CAN\$750. That price includes airfare, food, housing, and local transportation. Applications are due by May 30, with a Can\$15 registration fee.

For more information contact the NCP in Quebec:

World Festival of Youth and Students:
P.O. Box 8888, station: Centre-Ville
Montreal, Quebec
Room J-M850, C.P. H3C 3P8 at UQAM
Tel: (514)987-3000 extension 6727 or
(514)523-5496. fax: (514)987-0239
E-mail: sshal@nobel.si.uqam.ca

For information elsewhere in Canada, call the Preparatory Committee of Canada at Tel: (204) 783-0787 Fax: (204) 783-7080.

Maria Isabel Le Blanc and Carlos Catalán are both members of the Young Socialists in Montreal.

YS launches fund drive

BY MEG NOVAK

CHICAGO — On May 15, the Young Socialists launched a national fund drive, with a goal of raising \$4,200 in the next six weeks. Money raised through the fund drive will be used for basic expenses the Young Socialists incur through functioning as a centralized national organization, such as travel to political events and conferences, and phone and fax expenses for the national office.

Chapters around the country met and discussed the fund drive, and adopted goals based on pledges from members and reaching out to a broader number of supporters of the Young Socialists with fund-raising events. Goals in chapters were set based on raising roughly half of the money through pledges by members.

By May 15, Young Socialists from 11 cities sent in goals for the fund drive, totaling \$3,675 (see chart). YS members will use their weekly chapters to review the fund drive and map out plans on how to reach their goals. They will send in weekly reports on fund-raising efforts to the YS National Office — which has just moved to Chicago — along with the money raised.

Young Socialists in New York plan to ask for honoraria to speak on local college campuses. In Des Moines, the chapter is selling raffle tickets for a donated set of the *Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels* on YS tables and plan on selling them to their co-workers on the job.

Young Socialists in Morgantown, West Virginia, are kicking off the drive at a local Socialist Educational Weekend, hosted by the YS and Socialist Workers Party, on May 24-25. The Houston chapter adopted a goal of \$600, largely made possible by YS members making sizable pledges. They plan on having a raffle and a fund drive party to help reach their target.

The fund drive will enable the Young Socialists to continue to reach out to young fighters in the U.S. and around the world who are attracted to revolutionary politics. The money raised through the fund drive makes it possible for Young Socialists to participate in conferences and protest actions on women's liberation, immigration rights and other political events. It also helps make it possible for the YS to maintain three full-time organizers.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL FUND DRIVE	
Chapter goals	
Atlanta	\$200
Birmingham	\$75
Des Moines	\$400
Houston	\$600
Los Angeles	\$100
Miami	\$100
Morgantown	\$300
Newark	\$600
New York	\$400
San Francisco	\$100
Twin Cities	\$400
Washington D.C.	\$400
TOTAL	\$3,675

COME TO THE 14th World Festival of Youth and Students CUBA '97

Young students and workers will discuss issues including national liberation, anti-imperialist struggle, solidarity, sovereignty and self-determination, environment, employment, education, young women, health, culture, racism and fascism.

Applications to this international festival are due June 30. The total cost for the trip is \$600. This covers all expenses except airfare from the United States to Nassau, Bahamas, or Cancun, Mexico — the meeting points for U.S. participants.

**As of May 22 more than
300 people have filled
out applications.
Get yours in today!**



For more information
**U.S. Organizing Committee for
the World Youth Festival**
2565 Broadway #236, New York, NY 10025.
Tel: (212) 866-7270

The story of an epic chapter in history of the Americas

Preface and introduction to 'Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla'

The following is the publisher's preface to the English-language edition of *Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla*, which will be released in June by Pathfinder Press. It is copyright © Pathfinder Press and is reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla is "the story of an epic chapter in the history of the Americas," says Harry Villegas in these pages. The story tells us even more about the present and future than about the past. It needs to be told and retold today, because the importance of the struggle waged in the mid-1960s by the men and women of Che's guerrilla in Bolivia—the necessity of the socialist future for which they fought—has not receded with time. To the contrary, it has become more urgent than ever and to an even larger portion of humanity.

This is the story of several dozen men and women—Bolivian, Cuban, Peruvian, Argentine—whose struggle helped shape the closing decades of the twentieth century and create the foundations for the titanic battles that will mark the twenty-first. It is told through the eyes of a Cuban then still in his twenties, but already a veteran of a decade of struggle around the globe. The combatants, regardless of nationality, had all been deeply affected by the Cuban revolution and sought to emulate its example. They were fighters whose life experience, acquired habits of organization and discipline, and political understanding of history convinced them that working people little different than they can remake the world and, by the many millions, transform themselves in the process.

As Washington's bombs rained down on the people of Vietnam with ever greater destructiveness, the men and women of Che's guerrilla had the confidence to up the ante against the mightiest empire in the world and act on the intention of creating "two, three, many Vietnams." They knew the weaknesses as well as the brutal power of what Che Guevara calls "the great enemy of the human race," the imperialist government of the United States of America. Fully conscious of what they were doing, they sought to accelerate the struggle for national liberation in Latin America that culminated a few years later in massive revolutionary upsurges throughout the Southern Cone of that continent. They knew their acts would help determine the course of history.

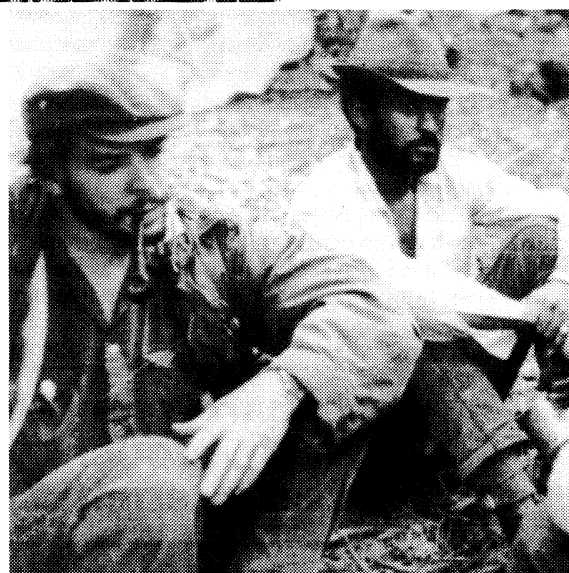
The title of the book accurately conveys the story to be told.

This is Pombo's story, his firsthand account of the 1966-68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara. Harry Villegas—Pombo—today a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, was a member of Guevara's general staff in Bolivia. He commanded the six combatants who fought their way out of the encirclement by the U.S.-aided Bolivian armed forces



AP/Wide World Photos (above)/Courtesy Richard Dindo (right) Thousands of working people rally in La Paz, Bolivia, April 1952 (above). A powerful revolutionary upsurge shook Bolivia that year forcing the nationalization of the largest tin mines, legalization of unions, initiation of a land reform, and enfranchisement of indigenous peoples. Legacy of revolutionary upsurge continued into 1960s. Inset, Ernesto Che Guevara and Harry Villegas (Pombo) in Bolivia, late 1966 or early 1967.

reorganize the ELN, the National Liberation Army of Bolivia, to continue the struggle. He was aided in this work by ELN combatant and Chilean journalist Elmo Catalán (Elías). *My Campaign with Che* was published in Bolivia and several other countries of Latin America soon after Peredo, betrayed by an informer, was wounded, captured, and murdered by the Bolivian police in September of that year. It is published for the first time in English as an appendix to Pathfinder's edition of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*. Peredo's account, however, was necessarily silent on numerous details of the combatants' escape. To have told the story then would have cost the lives of many who had aided them.



ably confirmed for Pombo and his co-combatants, they took an oath—each to himself, as well as to each other—to fight to stay alive in order to continue the struggle they had begun together with Che. "Your banners, which are ours, will never be lowered. Victory or death." That pledge has not only continued to guide the actions of Harry Villegas, but it embodies the internationalist commitment evident through the entire course of the leadership of the Cuban revolution: from the war against the Batista dictatorship itself, to Venezuela, to Algeria, to Vietnam, to the Congo, to Bolivia, to Angola and the battle against the apartheid invaders at Cuito Cuanavale, to Nicaragua, Grenada, and many others, to today. The most intransigent foes of the Cuban revolution in Washington and elsewhere have no doubt that if conditions allow, the revolutionary leadership of Cuba, from Fidel Castro on down, will not hesitate to act again with exactly the same internationalist selflessness.

Pombo's account is also a book about Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born revolutionary recruited by Fidel Castro in Mexico City in 1955 to the July 26 Movement and the nucleus of the new Rebel Army. Guevara had graduated from medical school in Buenos Aires

two years earlier and spent the intervening months traveling the Americas. In the course of these travels, Guevara became a more and more serious student of Marxism and was increasingly drawn toward action consistent with his revolutionary convictions.

In Guatemala Guevara met some Cuban veterans of the July 26, 1953, assault on the military garrisons of Moncada and

Bayamo. In 1954, when U.S.-organized mercenaries overthrew the regime of Guatemalan president Jacobo Arbenz after limited steps towards land reform threatened the vast interests of the U.S.-owned United Fruit Company, Guevara volunteered to join the armed resistance.

Forced to flee from Guatemala, Guevara was introduced to Castro in Mexico City and became the third confirmed member—Raúl Castro had been the second—of the expeditionary force that landed in eastern Cuba in December 1956 to relaunch the insurrectional struggle against the Batista dictatorship. Originally recruited as the troop doctor, Guevara rapidly proved himself an outstanding soldier and leader. Within months he became the first combatant selected by Castro to command a separate column.

The Cuban revolutionary war was the practical experience that transformed Guevara from a young revolutionary intellectual, in the best sense of that term, to a seasoned communist, a combat leader of men and women. As he fought side by side with the men and women of the Sierra, the Rebel Army became his school of Marxism. Through the war, working with and learning from Fidel Castro, who became increasingly recognized throughout the Americas as the central political and military leader of the struggle, Che developed the capacities that enabled him to become one of the most capable communist leaders of the twentieth century. The war, and his own discipline and study, prepared him to assume a broad range of responsibilities in the new revolutionary government that emerged following the January 1, 1959, victory over the Batista tyranny—from military commander, to president of the National Bank, to minister of industry, to interna-

Continued on Page 8

If conditions allow, the revolutionary leadership of Cuba, from Fidel Castro on down, will not hesitate to act again with the same internationalist selflessness

in which Guevara and many others were killed. Of the two Bolivians and three Cubans who lived to continue the revolutionary struggle, he was the only one who kept a campaign diary, on which this book is based.

Aside from the extensive notes kept by Guevara, published in 1968 as his *Bolivian Diary*,¹ the only other firsthand account, which was written soon after the events, is *My Campaign with Che* by Inti Peredo, the central leader of the combatants who was Bolivian. Like Pombo, he was a member of the general staff. Peredo wrote the account in 1969 while living clandestinely in La Paz, helping to

Now, with Pombo's account, we learn much more: the months of preparation, including the sharp conflicts with leaders of the Bolivian Communist Party; the aid and support from dozens of Bolivians who risked their lives to help the surviving revolutionaries as they eluded the more and more massive concentration of forces determined to bring them in dead or alive. We learn the bitter story of Nato's death, and how the three Cuban veterans finally fought their way across the border to Chile, and from there made their way literally around the world in order to regain their homeland and continue their internationalist fight.

In October 1967, near the village of La Higuera in Bolivia, when the fact of Guevara's death was inescap-

1. *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, Pathfinder Press, 1994.



Peasant unions in Peru demonstrate for land in La Convención valley, early 1960s (bottom); sign reads, "Land or death. We will win." Bolivia combatants, from left to right, Rolando, Antonio, and Pombo (left).

Editora Política (left)



Continued from Page 7

tional spokesperson, to organizer of volunteer work brigades, to educator, communist theorist, journalist, and party organizer.

The story of the revolutionary war and how it educated and transformed the men and women of the Rebel Army, including Che Guevara, is told with humor and eloquence in *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, originally written by Guevara as a series of articles published in Cuba and elsewhere in the early 1960s. A new, and for the first time complete, English-language edition of that work was published by Pathfinder Press in 1996. It is indispensable reading to understand the story told by Harry Villegas in these pages. Not only Guevara and Villegas, but every one of the Cuban combatants who participated in the Bolivian campaign, were veterans of Cuba's revolutionary war, graduates of the Rebel Army's school of life, leadership, and revolutionary training.

Harry Villegas volunteered for the Rebel Army and was recruited by Guevara when he was seventeen years old. He has spent the last forty years of his life as a revolutionary determined to live up to the high standards of conduct and discipline Guevara demanded of himself and those around him. Pombo's story can be found in the pages of *At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas*, published in English and Spanish by Pathfinder Press, 1997.

Villegas fought at Guevara's side in every campaign commanded by Che from 1957 on. He belonged to Rebel Army column no. 4 in the Sierra Maestra mountains of eastern Cuba; he took part in the 1958 march across several provinces of eastern and central Cuba by Rebel Army column no. 8 to establish a new front in the Escambray mountains; he fought in the battles that ended January 1, 1959, with the capture of Santa Clara, Cuba's third-largest city, and sealed the fate of the Batista dictatorship; he joined Guevara in the 1965 internationalist mission to aid the anti-imperialist forces in the Congo; and he was part of the general staff of the 1966-68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia.

For more than half a decade, Villegas commanded the troops that guard Cuba's border with the U.S.-held Guantánamo naval base in eastern Cuba.

Between 1975 and 1990, Villegas volunteered for three tours of duty in Angola, where Cuban military forces, at the request of the newly independent government, helped turn back repeated invasion attempts by the apartheid regime of South Africa and armed assaults by imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary groups.

Pombo's story—written through the eyes and experiences of an individual combatant—is the story of the Cuban revolution.

❖ "Let it be known that we have measured the scope of our acts and that we consider ourselves no more than a part of the great army of the proletariat." Those words of Guevara, part of his "Message to the Tricontinental," penned as he prepared to leave for Bolivia, are reprinted in this volume. It was his last major political writing, in which he examines the world political situation and explains the course of revolutionary action he and his com-

rades will follow in Bolivia.

Che's *guerrilla*—like the Rebel Army and militias before it, and the Red Army born of the October Revolution—was a nucleus of the international proletarian army referred to in the "Message to the Tricontinental."

In Guevara's as yet unpublished "Notes on the Revolutionary War in the Congo" he explains this even more precisely. The volunteers from Cuba who went to the Congo to fight alongside and help train the anti-imperialist fighters there, Che says, were drawn by nothing except ties of proletarian internationalism. He then adds: "They were initiating something new in modern wars of liberation: the creation of an international proletarian army, through having experienced people fighting alongside [less seasoned combatants] in battles for liberation and, later on, against reaction."

"We never envisioned a sectarian undertaking," Villegas states in his introduction. "Such a conception would have been impossible not only on a Bolivian scale, but above all on a continental scale. Our idea was to create a broad revolutionary movement that would draw in all honest individuals prepared to struggle for social justice, together

"Cuban volunteers were initiating something new in modern wars of liberation: the creation of an international proletarian army..."

with all revolutionary organizations, parties, and sectors of the people."

"Che's *guerrilla*" invites an easy but misleading translation into English as simply "Che's guerrillas." But for Che, *la guerrilla* was more than an armed unit or the summation of individual fighters. It was the organic political nucleus through whose actions and example—as well as actions related to it—the entire revolutionary movement and its cadres would be differentiated, reconstructed, and transformed, in the cities, towns, and countryside as well as within the guerrilla nucleus. That political content is subtly lost in the translation, "Che's guerrillas." For the title of this English edition of Pombo's account, therefore, we decided to use the familiar and understandable term Villegas chose for the original Spanish: *Pombo: un hombre de la guerrilla del Che*.

Most readers of this English-language edition who will find themselves devouring the pages of Pombo's account were not yet born when the events recorded here took place. Those readers especially will find themselves drawn to the record that Pombo's account supplements, *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, together with its "Necessary Introduction" by Fidel Castro.

❖ The first notebook of Pombo's Bolivian diary fell into the hands of Bolivian military forces on October 8, 1967, when Guevara was wounded and taken prisoner. He was murdered in cold blood by his captors the following day. In his introduction, Villegas describes how a typed transcript of his first notebook was sent to Cuba in March 1968. Along with a microfilm copy of Guevara's captured diary, it had been smuggled out of Bolivia with the

knowledge and aid of Bolivian interior minister Antonio Arguedas.

The transcript of Pombo's notes was translated and published in English in July 1968 as part of a book entitled *The Complete Bolivian Diary of Che Guevara and Other Captured Documents*. Stein and Day, the U.S. publishers of the book, claimed they had been granted "exclusive literary rights" by Bolivia's military dictatorship. In light of the document's origins, obvious distortions, and incongruous passages, the version made public by Bolivian and U.S. military intelligence, later published in Spanish in Bolivia and elsewhere, was of limited use to those who sought the truth about the events in Bolivia.

With the publication of *Pombo: un hombre de la guerrilla del Che*, those obstacles are cleared away. The first part of this volume is the text of the diary, revised and corrected by the author himself, who used, among other things, the typed version released in 1968, his own notes and recollections, and other documents and reports of the time—but still without ever having had access to his original handwritten notes. Fighters who seek to learn from the strengths and victories of the revolutionaries who fought in Bolivia, as well as from their errors, now have a document on which they can rely.

❖ The Pathfinder English-language edition could not have been prepared without the generous collaboration of Gen. Harry Villegas, who gave many hours of his time to review maps, identify photos, explain words and phrases that were difficult to translate, and answer numerous questions.

Rodolfo Saldaña, one of the Bolivian revolutionaries who carried central responsibilities in the clandestine urban support network, provided invaluable help.

Aleida March, Che's widow and comrade-in-arms, clarified a number of details. Information provided by Manuel Piñero, Armando Campos, and Rafael Salas (*Santiago*) of the Americas division of the Department of International Relations of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party enabled the editors to provide annotation that is more complete and thus more accurate than would have otherwise been possible.

The assistance of Editora Política, the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, was indispensable, especially the care and attention to detail of Iraida Aguirrechu, editor-in-chief of the current affairs department. Ana Rosa Gort reviewed portions of the translation.

Many of the historic photos came from the archives of Editora Política; others were located by Delfín Xiqués, director of the archives of the newspaper *Granma*.

Pathfinder is also appreciative of the photos provided by Richard Dindo, director of the film *Ernesto Che Guevara: The Bolivian Diary*. A number of these, including the photo of Guevara and Pombo used on the cover of this edition, were taken by the revolutionary combatants in Bolivia themselves and subsequently seized by the Bolivian military, some of whose officers have trafficked in these murderously acquired goods for three decades.

Translation of the English-language edition was supervised and edited by Michael Taber, who also drafted the extensive annotation, chronology, and glossary. Michael Baumann organized production of the book. The team of translators who volunteered their skills and efforts included Marty Anderson, Susan Apstein, Seth Galinsky, Mariposa Geller, Joya Lonsdale, Harvey McArthur, Aaron Ruby, and Matilde

Zimmermann.

Book, photo-signature, and cover design are by Eric Simpson, who, together with Harvey McArthur, also prepared the many maps.

❖ In the closing months of the Bolivian campaign, as the weeks passed and still the Bolivian and Cuban combatants managed to elude the manhunt organized by the regime's U.S.-trained forces, the stature of the revolutionaries grew. In the popular culture of Bolivia, as well as in the minds of their military foes, the guerrillas who had fought their way out of the encirclement assumed mythic proportions. Pombo himself, we learn in the pages that follow, was believed to be "a Black man of tremendous size who fought with two machine guns, one in each hand."

As with many popular myths, this one was not without foundation.

"You are alive because you were aggressive, because you fought," Fidel Castro told the three Cuban combatants when they arrived back in Havana in March 1968. "Had you been scared, had you shown fear, you would have perished. It is precisely your ability to resist, your capacity to fight, that shows your revolutionary strength and conviction."

That example, the example of the Cuban revolution, is what *Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla*, has to offer to new generations of fighters around the world. Now those millions of workers and youth whose reading language is English can make this chronicle their own.

May 1997

The following is the author's introduction to the English-language edition of *Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla*. It is copyright © Pathfinder Press and is reprinted by permission.

BY HARRY VILLEGAS TAMAYO

This introduction to the English-language edition of my diary and account of the Bolivian campaign is appearing more than thirty years after the first entry was written. I began keeping the diary in July 1966, and the last entry of the first notebook is dated May 28, 1967. I later continued my diary in other notebooks, until my return to Cuba in March 1968.

On April 19, 1967, Commander Ernesto Che Guevara ordered that all the diaries kept by members of the guerrilla unit, together with other documents, be collected and held for safekeeping in a knapsack I carried. (On that day a British journalist had given us a false report that very dangerous internal information had leaked out. The cause of this, the journalist said, was Braulio's diary, supposedly found in the main camp by the Bolivian army.) The diaries would then be taken out, updated, and in a disciplined manner returned to the place Che ordered them kept. In fairness, it should be said that Che was visibly irritated to have to take this step. But he did not want those personal notebooks to endanger the rigorous security measures the initial guerrilla force needed to maintain under extremely adverse circumstances.¹

In his "Necessary Introduction" to *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro referred to these measures in commenting on the rigor and discipline that were essential at those moments, as well as the criticisms, often severe and frank, that are a necessary part of the first stage of creating a small nucleus of combatants such as ours. It was necessary to prevent the slightest act of carelessness, Fidel said, however insignificant it might appear. At the same time, criticism would serve to educate the combatants, while appealing—as Che always did—to the honor and dignity of each one of us.²

On October 8, 1967, the first booklet containing my notes was captured together with Che's diary and other documents. It was transcribed in Bolivia. In 1968 Antonio Arguedas, Bolivia's minister of the interior at the time, sent a typed copy of the notes to Cuba. The original, which I did not receive a photographic copy of, remained in Bolivia, in the custody of the army high command.

Almost thirteen years later, on July 17, 1980, Division General Luis García Meza seized power in a military coup and assumed the presidency of a junta that lasted until the end of 1981, when it was succeeded by other military governments that ruled Bolivia until October 1982. During the time he held power, García Meza sold the original of Che's diary and the first notebook of mine to British dealer Erick Galantiere, who was given the diaries on December 15, 1980, along with "exclusive written authorization . . . to sell the diaries of Che and Pombo." The British businessman closed the deal on February 25, 1981, with "a certified check for the total agreed amount."³

In 1984 Galantiere sold the documents to the British firm Sotheby's, which informed the world that the documents were in its possession and would be put up for public auction, with a minimum asking price of approximately \$400,000.

Bolivian journalist Humberto Vacaflor denounced both the illegal sale and the subsequent announcement they would be auctioned off. Faced with charges of illegal possession of the documents and international indignation over these events, plans for the auction stalled. In 1986, following measures taken during a trip to Britain, Bolivia's

\$b. 10.000 — **RECOMPENSA** — \$b. 10.000 —
POR CADA UNO VIVO POR CADA UNO VIVO

ESTOS SON LOS BANDOLEROS MERCENARIOS AL SERVICIO DEL CASTROCOMUNISMO
ESTOS SON LOS CAUSANTES DE LUTO Y DOLOR EN LOS HOGARES BOLIVIANOS
INFORMACION QUE RESULTA CIERTA, DARA DERECHO A LA RECOMPENSA

Ciudadano Boliviano, Ayúdanos a Capturarlos Vivos en lo Posible







NOTA.— Pueden usar barba o llevar otros nombres falsos.

Afiche que se publicó en todo el país una vez concluidas las acciones.

In a gruelling five-month odyssey, five of the six surviving guerrillas succeeded in eluding the Bolivian army's encirclement. Poster issued by Bolivian government (above) offering a 10,000 peso reward (US\$842) for each guerrilla captured alive. Poster reads: "Bolivian citizen, help us capture them alive if possible. These are mercenary bandits at the service of Castro-Communism. These are the ones who cause mourning and pain in Bolivian homes. Information that turns out to be true will be subject to a reward. Note: they may have beards or use false names."

minister of foreign relations, Guillermo Bedregal Gutiérrez, succeeded in getting the diaries back through official diplomatic channels — an event that was noted by the international press at the time. The originals of the diaries were then placed in box A-73 of the vault of the Central Bank of Bolivia, under the custody of the Bolivian foreign ministry.

From May 28, 1967, through the end of the Bolivian campaign, I was able to continue my diary. I kept it up until the arrival of the group of survivors in Chile, on whose fraternal soil we were warmly received. Later, through the determined and valiant efforts of the late president Salvador Allende—then a senator of the Socialist Party of Chile—comrades in Chile sent me the three notebooks I had kept during the latter stage.

Many years lapsed between those events and the publication of the first Cuban edition of this book, brought out by Editora Política at the beginning of 1996. A number of clarifications are therefore necessary to help place the diary in context.

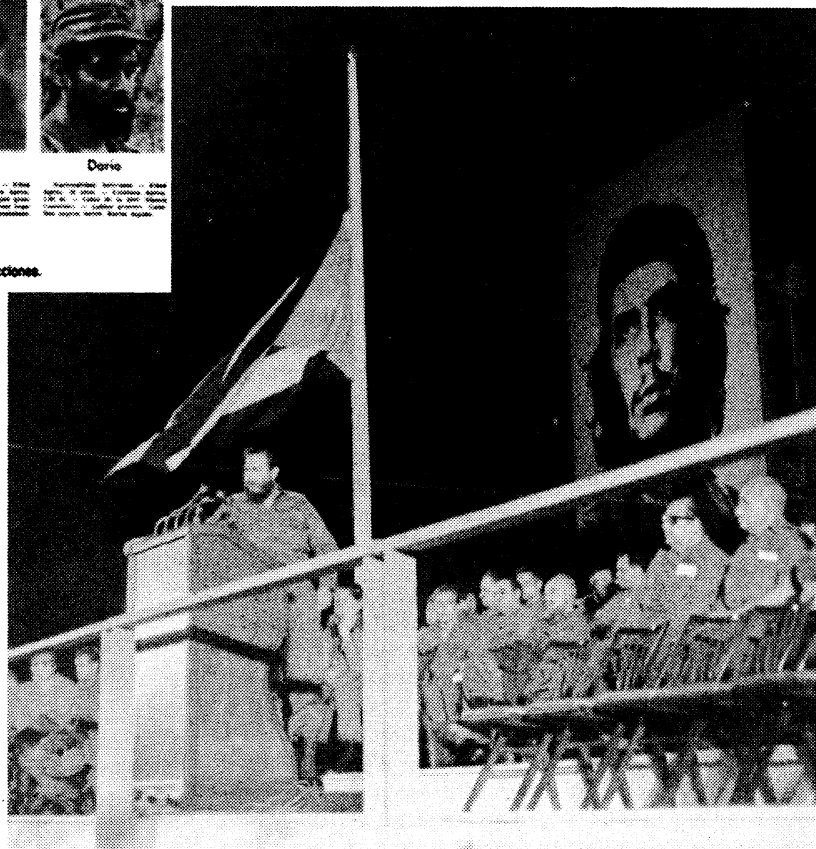
After returning to Cuba, I gave a series of talks in the La Cabaña military fortress to my comrades in arms, using as a guide and reference my diary of nearly twenty months of guerrilla and clandestine struggle. For part two of the present edition, I have based myself on those talks, with the aim of rounding out these historical recollections. I have summarized part of what I presented at the time. This is the first time the material is being published in its entirety.

Observations and comments written three decades ago in the heat of the struggle may appear harsh and full of passion. I am indeed struck by this today when I reread and relive some of the passages. At all times, however, the diary reflects the critical spirit, expressed in language that is frank and direct, straight to the point, in which we were educated by Commander Che Guevara. This was undoubtedly among the greatest lessons we received in his incomparable school.

In making revisions to the transcript of the first notebook of my diary previously published outside Cuba—based on my notes and on documents of the time—I am not attempting to alter or modify what was written in the heat of struggle. My aim, rather, is to clarify the words, commentaries, and ideas that were misunderstood, or were deliberately distorted, when the diary was transcribed. By doing so, I hope that the comments recorded in the diary can be seen in accurate

Fidel Castro delivers speech paying tribute to Guevara and other slain combatants in Havana's Plaza of the Revolution, before a crowd of hundreds of thousands, Oct. 18, 1967 (below).

Editora Política



historic dimension, reflecting the reality, grandeur, and truth of the events themselves. Distortions of historic reality in previous editions of the diary have been corrected.

It is necessary to make a few comments on the political and historical circumstances that existed at the time the diary was written. On the international level, the years 1966 and 1967 were marked by an escalation of one of the most horrendous crimes humanity has ever witnessed: the aggression against the people of Vietnam, a small but unflinchingly heroic country, by the strongest imperialist power on earth.

This genocide expressed, in all its cruelty, the U.S. government course of using force to impose its criminal interests of domination, plunder, and exploitation wherever in the world these interests were seriously threatened.

In Vietnam they applied a new strategy of military intervention known as "flexible response." The

old doctrine of "massive retaliation," which included the threat or use of atomic weapons, had ceased being effective in a world characterized by nuclear parity with the Soviet Union and by the advance of struggles for national liberation on an international scale. The triumph of the Cuban revolution on January 1, 1959, and its influence in the hemisphere, foretold new victories.

The empire then tried to develop and apply a new mode of aggression providing for appropriate differentiated responses to small conflicts, to local wars, to struggles for national liberation, and even to a possible nuclear confrontation and holocaust.

In the end, "flexible response" was simply another term for imperialism's efforts to continue unleashing all its power in acts of extermination against movements for national liberation and their leaders, which by then were active in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. There has been nothing new under the sun since the term "thieving eagle" was coined by our national hero José Martí at the end of the last century to refer to the U.S. policy of expansion, intervention, and conquest. Cubans are quite familiar with these acts by the empire. With regard to Cuba, the first U.S. moves toward annexation date back to 1803, when the United States had barely established itself as an independent state.

In his 1966 Message to the Tricontinental,⁴ Che made a thorough and deep-going analysis of this policy of imperialist domination. At the same time he expounded, in all their strategic and continental dimensions, his anti-imperialist ideas and course of action that by then were already being put into practice through his own personal example. In that message, Che proclaimed: "Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism and a call for the

Continued on Page 10

1. For Guevara's account of this incident see *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara* (New York: Pathfinder, 1994), pp. 175-78.
2. Castro's "A Necessary Introduction" is contained in the Pathfinder edition of *The Bolivian Diary*, pp. 51-70.
3. From letter of Div. Gen. Luis García Meza to Erick Galantiere, December 15, 1980, and letter of Galantiere to García Meza, February 25, 1981.
4. Reprinted elsewhere in this volume.

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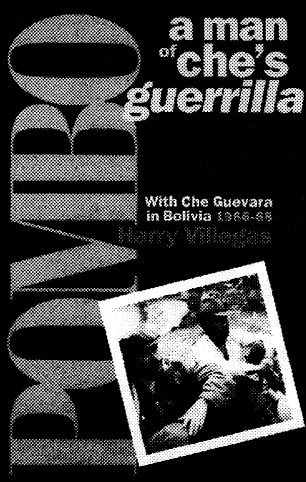
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Continued from Page 9

unity of the peoples against the great enemy of the human race: the United States of North America."

This deep conviction of the Heroic Guerrilla concerning the role played by the United States was rooted in the innumerable acts of imperial aggression that make up the history of contemporary colonialism and neocolonialism in this hemisphere. To mention only a few examples of bloody interventions in our century, there are the cases of Mexico, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Haiti, and Cuba.⁵

The continent as a whole has experienced the varied forms through which this imperialist policy has been systematically implemented. Neocolonialism has left its imprint of economic and political domination and deep social crisis, with its resulting hunger, poverty, unemployment, marginalization, and devastation. An entire region has been ravaged by foreign control over its natural resources and products, the exploitation of its workers, and the sharp impoverishment of its economies. Tribute is exacted in ways that violate the sovereignty of the nations of Latin America, pillage their material and spiritual patrimony, deepen their dependence and subjugation to imperialism, and close off possibilities of development and progress.

Together with a handful of heroic Bolivian, Peruvian, and Cuban combatants who accompanied him to Bolivia, Che fought to change this reality of the 1960s—a reality whose cruel mechanisms of plunder have since been deepened and refined. Che's death resounds vividly in his stirring message to revolutionaries around the world:

"Wherever death may surprise us, let it be welcome if our battle cry has reached even one receptive ear, if another hand reaches out to take up our arms, and other men come forward to join in our funeral dirge with the rattling of machine guns and with new cries of battle and victory."

With the new century virtually upon us, this image of Che remains present in the revolutionary dreams of Latin Americans. Among them are receptive ears.

The apostle of Cuba's independence, José Martí, also conceived of a continent-wide anti-imperialist struggle. On the eve of his death in combat, in his last letter to a Mexican friend, Martí was unambiguous:

"I am in danger each day now of giving my life for my country and for my duty—because I understand that duty and am eager to carry it out—of preventing the United States, as Cuba obtains her independence, from extending its control over the Antilles and consequently falling with that much more force upon our countries of America. Whatever I have done till now, and whatever I shall do, has been with that aim."

Simón Bolívar, Miranda, O'Higgins, San Martín, and other great figures of Latin America's independence struggle also raised the ideal of a free and united Latin America.

Che's dream was the dream of Martí and Bolívar. In elaborating his strategy, given the struggles already under way in different countries of the continent, Che envisioned the possibility of forming a guerrilla nucleus, a mother column that would pass through the necessary and difficult stage of survival and development. Later on it would give birth to new guerrilla columns extending outward toward the Southern Cone of Latin America,⁶ giving continuity to a battle that would become continent-

"Wherever death may surprise us, let it be welcome if our battle cry has reached even one receptive ear, if another hand reaches out to take up our arms..."

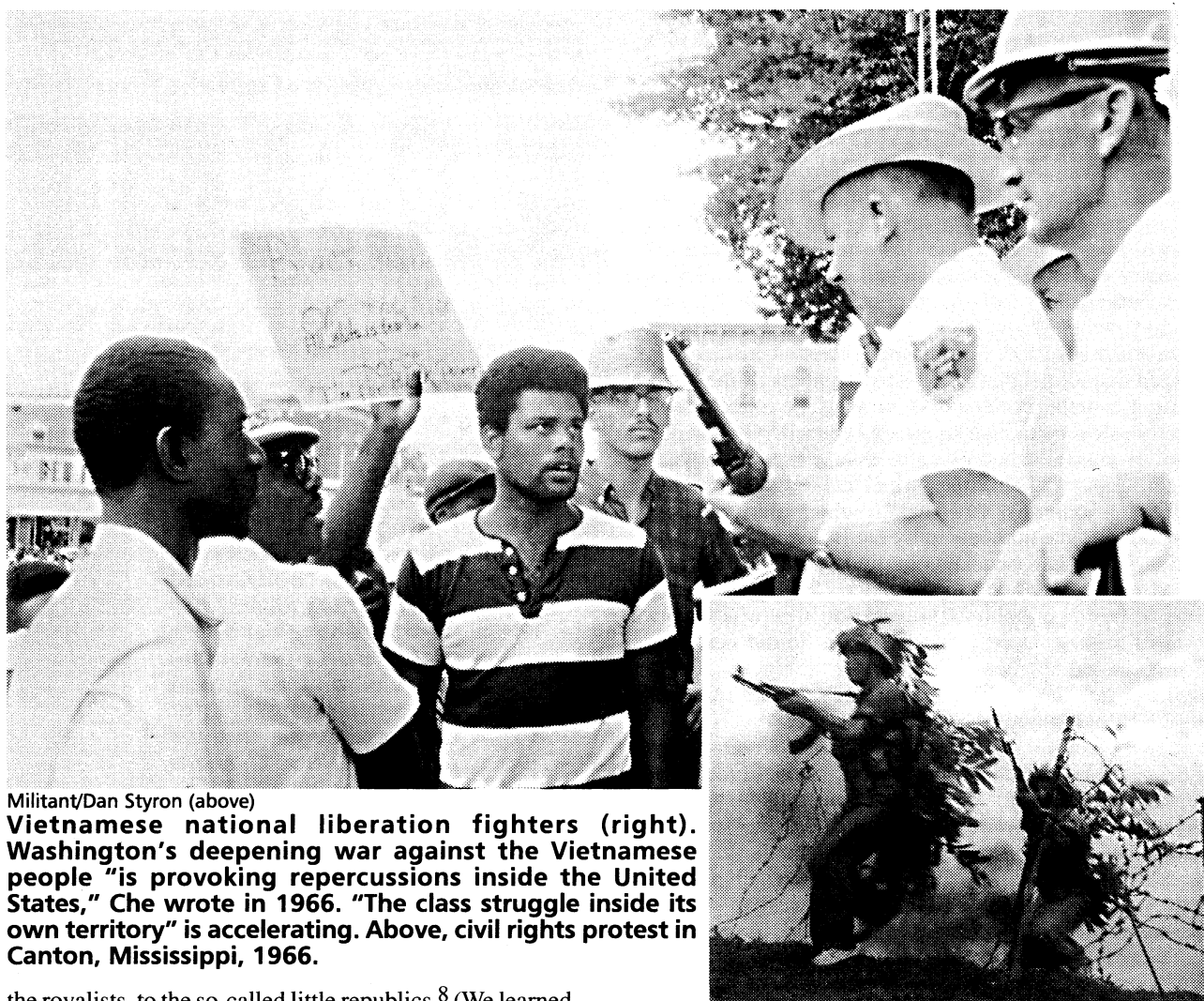
wide in scope. He took into account the experience of the mother column in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains, which gave rise to new guerrilla columns and fronts, culminating in the defeat of the Batista dictatorship and the victory of the Cuban revolution.

Totally convinced that the political conditions were ripening and that this perspective was realizable, Commander Che Guevara carried out his plans and initiated actions to open a path toward victory. In his view, victory was certain to the degree that the struggle extended as far as possible throughout Latin America.

Never has such a small group of individuals undertaken an enterprise of such gigantic proportions. That small detachment of heroic combatants was Che's "sling of David." As our commander in chief pointed out, Che did not outlive his ideas, he enriched them with his blood.⁷

Following the conclusion of his internationalist activity in the Congo, and given the confrontation unfolding in Latin America at the time, Che chose Bolivia as the place from which to initiate his strategic course in Latin America.

One factor behind Che's selection was his analysis of the Bolivian people's combative traditions going all the way back to the fight of the indigenous peoples against



Militant/Dan Styron (above)

Vietnamese national liberation fighters (right). Washington's deepening war against the Vietnamese people "is provoking repercussions inside the United States," Che wrote in 1966. "The class struggle inside its own territory" is accelerating. Above, civil rights protest in Canton, Mississippi, 1966.

the royalists, to the so-called little republics.⁸ (We learned about this epoch initially through the book *Santa Juana de América*, which vividly describes the battles by the Indians with primitive weapons against much more powerful forces.) With its mixture of victories and defeats, courage and fears, this chapter in history resembled Bolivia in the 1960s. Students, peasants, miners, and workers all fought heroically, under the noteworthy leadership of the Central Organization of Bolivian Workers (COB), against the new version of the conquistadors, and the growing poverty, misery, and marginalization of the majority of the people. Bolivia's geographic characteristics and continental location figured in the selection, as well.

Another factor that weighed heavily for Che was the nature of the Bolivian Communist Party, which had shown signs of determination during the popular battles taking place in those days. The party had also demonstrated its solidarity with revolutionary efforts for national liberation in neighboring countries. This included its backing for the Peruvian ELN (National Liberation Army), which began actions in Puerto Maldonado; its support to the combatants in Argentina led by Jorge Ricardo Masetti (*Comandante Segundo*); and its solidarity with the young Cuban revolution.⁹

The Bolivian Communist Party was assigned an important role in the complex preparatory stage of organizing our efforts in that country. Under those difficult circumstances, different points of view were being debated within the party over the conception held by the leadership regarding the struggle and the possible forms it would assume. These differences are reflected in the discussions we were compelled to have with them on this subject, given our responsibilities during that initial time and because that organization's participation and support were essential to us.

For these reasons, the observations I made in my diary on these discussions recorded the justifiable condemnation of conduct by party leaders that appeared to us improper given the historic moment in which we were living. Such was the case with Mario Monje, the party's general secretary, whose conduct contrasted with that of true communists like Coco and Inti Peredo, among others. The diary also reflects the firm conviction and internationalist fervor of our efforts for the national liberation of Latin America, as well as the real possibilities that existed for achieving that objective. The diary reflects our conviction that the struggle we were initiating would increasingly widen those possibilities. The precondition for this was to overcome the hard and difficult stage in which the guerrilla unit struggled to survive, in order to develop later on along the lines conceived by Che.

We never envisioned a sectarian undertaking. Such a conception would have been impossible not only on a Bolivian scale, but above all on a continental scale. Our idea was to create a broad revolutionary movement that would draw in all honest individuals prepared to struggle for social justice, together with all revolutionary organizations, parties, and sectors of the people. This was the basis on which the ELN (National Liberation Army) was formed, as is made clear by its five public communiqués, containing information and appeals addressed to the Bolivian people.¹⁰

Examining the events recorded in Che's Bolivian Di-

ary and in my own, one can see how relations were established not only with different political forces within Bolivia and their representatives, but also with leaders and representatives of other political organizations of the continent. These contacts and relations would inexorably lead to an expansion of ties with other progressive forces in the region provided that the struggle intensified and succeeded in surviving the initial phase, which imposed severe restrictions on contacts and communications.

My only hope is that the recollections contained in my diary give a true picture of the war in Bolivia. This was a confrontation carried out by a group of men true to their ideas. They fought a professional army equipped by the United States and aided by the CIA—starting with the country's president René Barrientos and extending to phony journalists, officers, soldiers, and peasant infiltrators. The participation of U.S. Rangers and agents from the CIA's station in La Paz and its general headquarters in the United States was, of course, direct and open.

I present these materials for the consideration of the reader. They tell the story of an epic chapter in the history of the Americas. I believe they will be of use to young people who wish to study the life and work of the Heroic Guerrilla. It is my hope that these youth get a better understanding and appreciation of the times we are living through and of the greatness of the human values embodied in Che's life, expressed through his early and lifelong decision to fight for humanity.

Che taught us many lessons, which were passed on to us through his practical activity. In Cuba he, also, had the possibility of learning, of self-improvement. One of the virtues he acquired from contact with our people was confidence in victory, faith in human beings, and the deepest sense of loyalty. I am certain that he was true to what he stated in his letter of farewell,¹¹ and that his last thoughts were of our commander in chief, Fidel Castro.

February 1997

5. U.S. military operations took place against Mexico in 1914, 1916, and 1918; Guatemala in 1904, 1920, and 1954; the Dominican Republic in 1904, 1912–14, 1916–24, and 1965; Panama in 1903, 1908, 1912, 1918, 1919–20, 1925, and 1989; Haiti in 1914, 1915–34, and 1994; and Cuba in 1898–1902, 1906–9, 1912, 1961, and 1962.

6. The countries of the Southern Cone are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

7. Fidel Castro, "A Necessary Introduction" to the Bolivian Diary, p. 58.

8. During Bolivia's independence war of the early nineteenth century, the largely indigenous guerrilla fighters set up six enclaves that became known as the "little republics."

9. In May 1963 a group of fighters led by Javier Heraud entered Peru from Bolivian territory, where they had received assistance from members of the Bolivian CP. After making their way to Puerto Maldonado in Peru, the guerrillas were crushed by the Peruvian police, and Heraud was killed. A guerrilla nucleus in the Salta mountains of northern Argentina functioned from late 1963 to early 1964, led by Jorge Ricardo Masetti (*Comandante Segundo*). Members of the Bolivian CP provided logistical support along the border. In early 1964 the Argentine guerrillas were wiped out by government troops. Masetti was killed.

10. These are printed elsewhere in this volume.

11. Guevara's 1965 letter to Fidel Castro, written right before he left Cuba, is published in Pathfinder's edition of Guevara's *Bolivian Diary* on pages 71–73.

Gov't abuses rights in McVeigh bomb trial

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Circumstantial and mishandled evidence, irrelevant details, emotional testimony from bomb survivors, and witnesses who have been granted immunity from prosecution are at the heart of the government's case against Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. They are charged with bombing the Oklahoma City Federal Building in 1995, killing 168 people. McVeigh, who faces the death penalty, is currently on trial in Denver, Colorado; Nichols will be tried later.

Nearly every day prosecutors have put survivors and relatives of those killed in the blast on the stand to tell the jury of their pain and suffering. Other "evidence" has included footage from a surveillance camera showing a rental truck like the one in which the bomb was allegedly placed passing near the federal building shortly before the blast. The video doesn't show who is driving the truck.

Steven Burmeister, the chief chemist of the FBI's chemistry-toxicology unit, was forced to admit to unprofessional work under cross-examination. For example the clothes allegedly worn by McVeigh on the day of the bombing were stored in a rolled up paper bag. When asked if a rolled up bag is considered sealed from a forensic point of view, Burmeister replied, "If it's not open, it's somewhat sealed." The cop chemist said he waited months before even asking if the police who handled McVeigh's clothes had earlier come into contact with any explosives. Burmeister also acknowledged that the FBI ran no tests for explosive residues on an Army truck before they used it to transport items from Nichols's house.

FBI mishandling of evidence

The defense attempted to cite recent findings of FBI crime laboratory negligence, released in mid-April, but Judge Richard

Matsch blocked this effort. The April investigation found that Burmeister's unit was so marked by misconduct that FBI officials had to review hundreds of cases where evidence might be contaminated. Inspector general Michael Bromwich stated the FBI on numerous occasions issued sloppy reports, exaggerated evidence against the defendants' interests, and inadequately documented their findings.

In the Oklahoma bombing case, Bromwich concludes that one of the FBI agents, David Williams, gave "conclusions not on a valid scientific analysis, but on speculation." He also says Williams "tilted" his findings to incriminate the defendants by asserting that the bomb was composed of ANFO (ammonium nitrate and fuel oil) not from a chemical analysis, but instead because of hindsight knowledge that the defendants allegedly purchased ANFO. One of the investigators on the scene admitted

to picking up two pieces of evidence before the cop photographer shot pictures, then putting the objects back so they could be photographed. He denied accusations of planting evidence.

In other testimony, Eldon Elliot, who owns the rental lot where the truck used in the bombing allegedly came from, identified McVeigh as the man renting the vehicle. His reason for being sure: he looks all his customers "square in the face." His height estimate for McVeigh was off by several inches, and he could not remember a thing McVeigh was wearing. Elliot has used the publicity from the bombing case to advertise his rental business.

An FBI report concluded that McVeigh's fingerprints weren't on the rental contract or anywhere in the offices of the truck rental agency. Nor were his fingerprints in the storage areas where he allegedly kept the explosive chemicals, or in the hotel room he allegedly rented. Prints from Nichols were found on a motel registration card signed in his alleged alias, but not in conjunction with these events.

Photos of a man said to be McVeigh, in a McDonald's restaurant more than a mile away from the truck rental, are supposed to support the assertion that McVeigh went to the rental site.

Testifying in hopes of lighter sentence

Michael Fortier, a supposed friend and Army colleague of McVeigh, testified that McVeigh and Nichols invited him to join in the bombing of the building. Fortier, who admitted in court to selling drugs and stealing, has pled guilty to charges that include not telling cops of the alleged bomb plot. He faces up to 23 years in prison, but will not be sentenced until after the McVeigh and Nichols trials. In taped conversations, Fortier was previously insistent of McVeigh's innocence. His wife, Lori Fortier, also testified against McVeigh.

Jennifer McVeigh, Timothy's sister, has also taken the stand against him. She changed her story after initially arguing his innocence. On the stand, she said agents threatened to charge her with treason and other crimes punishable by the death penalty. She said she was questioned eight or nine hours a day for "eight days straight." Speaking under a grant of immunity, she testified that McVeigh's ideas were radical and hostile to the government. She said he wrote her letters and sent clippings that implied plans to blow up a building, but says she burned the most explicit of these.

From the beginning, the prosecution and capitalist media have tried to point to McVeigh's rightist views as proof of guilt. Among the testimony used to support this speculation is that he called federal agents "fascist tyrants," nicknamed his car the "Warrior," and expressed outrage at the government for the massacre carried out by the Clinton administration on the Branch Davidians religious sect in Waco, Texas.

Washington has used the Oklahoma City bombing as a pretext to attack democratic rights. Immediately following the blast, U.S. president William Clinton shoved several pieces of legislation through Congress in the name of fighting terrorism. Included are measures to increase government spying, allow for warrantless searches, and make it more difficult for prisoners on death row to appeal their sentence.

500 protest cop brutality in Pittsburgh

BY EDWIN FRUIT

PITTSBURGH — More than 500 loud and determined protesters marched and rallied in downtown Pittsburgh at rush hour on May 16 to oppose the latest developments in the Jonny Gammage case. Gammage was a Black motorist who was killed at the hands of five suburban cops in October 1995 during a routine traffic stop. Despite the recommendation by a coroner's jury of criminal homicide charges against the five cops, only three were put on trial and they were charged with involuntary manslaughter rather than murder.

An all-white jury was brought to Pittsburgh from Chester County, Pennsylvania, several hours away, for the trial of two of the cops. The judge granted a mistrial in that case last October. The third cop, John Vojtas, was acquitted in November by another all-white jury, sparking protests of up to 2,000.

The May 16 action was precipitated by two recent events. On April 22, the presiding judge barred the Allegheny County district attorney's office from retrying the two cops who had been part of the mistrial. And on May 6, Vojtas was promoted to sergeant by the city council in Brentwood, the suburb where Gammage was killed.

The march was sponsored by over 15 organizations including local and regional groupings of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Pittsburgh Urban League, the YWCA, the Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice, and the Socialist Workers Party. At a news conference to announce the march and rally, NAACP Youth Chapter president Nicolle Leary urged teenagers to attend the rally after school. "At what time period do



Militant/Phil Norris

Hundreds protest cop killing of Black motorist Jonny Gammage in Pittsburgh May 16

I live, where KKK members run our streets and police get promoted for killing Blacks?" she asked.

Tim Stevens, president of the Pittsburgh NAACP, spoke at the City-County Building before the march took off to the Federal Building and led a chant of "Prosecute, Prosecute, Prosecute," referring to the demand to bring the U.S. Justice Department into the case.

Three students from Schenley High School in Pittsburgh explained why they came. They had all been part of the high school walkout which occurred after the Vojtas verdict last November, where over

1,000 students marched and rallied downtown. "How could Vojtas get promoted for committing a murder," Ogechi Chieke said. Marisela Silva remarked, "They killed someone wrongly and if we don't stand up to it, they'll keep doing it."

Cornell Womack of the Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice said the next step in the struggle was to demand federal prosecution of all five cops. Janet Reno, the Attorney General, is expected to be in Pittsburgh on May 24 to address the graduating class of the University of Pittsburgh Law School. Several speakers urged everyone to be present outside the graduation to press the demand for civil rights violation charges to be filed.

Others called for a march in the predominantly white neighborhood of Brentwood to protest the Vojtas promotion. Some speakers urged people to vote for the Police Civilian Review Board, which is on the May 20 primary ballot.

Edwin Fruit is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local Lodge 1976.

Senate passes antiabortion bill

Continued from front page

opment where it may be viable to live outside the womb. The only exception would be if a woman were threatened with death or "grievous" harm to her physical health.

A second measure, offered by Democratic Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer of California would also ban abortions after the fetus reached "viability," but would allow exceptions to protect the mental, as well as physical health of the woman. Forty-one states have already imposed restrictions on late-term abortions. These proposed federal laws would apply only to the nine states that have not yet put any constraints on these procedures. Twelve states have banned intact D&E abortions and several others are about to pass similar legislation.

In arguing for passage of his bill, Daschle stated that the "fundamental difference" between Santorum's bill and his own was that "we ban abortion; they ban a procedure." Clinton weighed in on this debate announcing that he was backing both the Daschle and Feinstein bills. On May 15, the Senate voted down the Daschle bill by a 64 to 36 vote. The Feinstein bill went down to defeat in a 72-28 vote. The following day Daschle, who is the Democratic Party leader in the Senate, announced that he was now considering changing his position from last year and voting for the Republican-spon-

sored bill that bans the D&E procedure.

Daschle, who has been described in the capitalist media as an ardent supporter of abortion rights, won praise for his new position from two leading Republican conservatives — William Bennett, the former Education Secretary; and William Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard*.

Bennett pointed out that for the first time the abortion rights supporters backing these restrictive bills were using the same language as abortion opponents. Instead of talking about a woman's "right to choose," he said, "Daschle was saying we should protect the life of a viable fetus."

"This is language the pro-life movement uses," continued Bennett. "If I didn't know who sponsored this, I would have thought it was a pro-life Republican."

Kristol pointed out, "As a strategic matter for the pro-life movement, Daschle offers an opportunity to get legislation passed by Congress and signed by the president that for the first time outlaws a certain class of abortions."

Daschle responded, "I'd be more than happy to talk with anybody who wants to work with us in taking this approach." He said that Bennett and Kristol "could be very catalytic, very helpful."

Brian Williams is a member of United Steelworkers Local 2609.

from Pathfinder

Abortion Is a Woman's Right

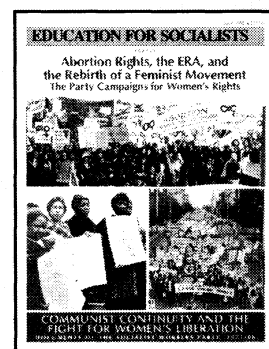
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ALABAMA

Birmingham

Why Defending Immigrant Rights Strengthens All Working People. Clay Dennison, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m.

Why Millions of Cuban Workers and Youth Defend Their Revolution. Speakers: April Holland, Young Socialists; Susan LaMont, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2122. Fri., June 6, 7:30 p.m.

Both events held at 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Revolutionary Cuba Today: A First Hand Account. Speaker: Argiris Malapanis, staff writer for the *Militant*. Sat., May 31, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

The Fight for Gay and Lesbian Rights. Panel discussion. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Can Capitalism Save Detroit? Detroit's Economic Depression and the 'Empowerment Zone' Plan. Speaker John Sarge, Socialist Worker candidate for Detroit City Council, mem-

ber of the United Auto Workers union. Sat., May 31, 7 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. (one block north of Grand Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Cuban Workers Resist Washington's Economic War: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Martín Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m.

The Labor Party Victory in the United Kingdom: What Does It Mean for Working People? Fri., June 6, 7:30.

Both events held at 87-A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad St., 2 blocks north of Raymond). Do-

nation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Stop Attacks on NY Rent Regulations! Decent and Affordable Housing for All! Speaker: Vivian Sagner, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Ave. (corner of 4th Ave. and Bergen Sts.) Translation into Spanish. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

TEXAS

Houston

Revolutionary Cuba Today: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Martín Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Sat., May 31, 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 5 p.m. 3260 South Loop West. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (713) 349-0090.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Celebration of the Life of Sam Stark in the Communist Movement More than 60 Years. Speakers: John Benson, Gale Shangold, and Eli Green, Socialist Workers Party; Diana Newberry, Young Socialists. Sun., June 1, 2 p.m. Brunch, 1 p.m. *Pathfinder Bookstore*, 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$5. For more information: (213) 380-9460.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Open House. Supersaver prices of titles: *Communist International in Lenin's Time*, the *Writings of Leon Trotsky*, and many others. Also announcement of new publications by Pathfinder Press. Sat., May 31, 4 to 7 p.m. *Pathfinder Bookstore*, 803 Peachtree St., NE. Donation: \$5. For more information, call: (404) 724-9759.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Rally to Defend Immigrants' Rights. Thurs., May 29, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Battery Park. Trains no. 4, 5 to Bowling Green; 1, 9 to South Ferry; N, R to Whitehall Street. Sponsored by the New York Immigration Coalition and the New York City Central Labor Council. For more information, call (212) 627-2227, Ext. 22.

CANADA

Vancouver

Communist League Election Campaign Rally. Hear Roger Annis, Communist League candidate in Vancouver Kingsway; and Vicky Mercier, Communist League candidate in Montreal Rosemont. Sat., May 31, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. 175 E. 24th Ave. (at Main). Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$6. For more information, call (604) 873-2492.

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Clinton tour will anger Moscow

Continued from front page

largest atomic powers to reduce their nuclear warheads to between 3,000 and 3,500. Washington currently has about 8,100 nuclear warheads and bombs, while Moscow has about 6,700.

An article in the May 16 *New York Times* said that many deputies in the Russian parliament insist that the accord "locks in American strategic superiority and compounds the insult of NATO expansion. More specifically, hard-liners assert that the agreement requires Russia to give up its most fearsome and cost-effective weapons system, the multi-warhead SS-18 missile, at a time when Russian conventional forces are getting progressively weaker."

Moscow's rejection of the treaty "would almost certainly prompt the United States to delay the arms cuts," the *Times* article continued, "putting both sides in the awkward position of retaining cold-war arsenals."

In a May 19 broadcast on Russian TV, Yeltsin said Moscow would "reconsider its relations" with NATO, laid out in the accord set to be signed in Paris, if NATO invites any republics of the former USSR to join. "Of course we cannot forbid them, we cannot go to war against them," the Russian president stated, "but we can try to assure a maximum of security for Russia in one way or another."

Washington's campaign of provocations against the Russian workers state is causing a reaction throughout the former Soviet republics and the entire Asian continent. In recent months, the Russian government has announced it is pursuing stronger economic and military relations with Belarus and possibly other former Soviet republics. In April Moscow signed a strategic partnership agreement with Beijing opposing U.S. domination and calling for stronger economic ties between Russia and China. Yeltsin met with the head of the Iranian parliament the same month, later announcing stronger ties between the two governments.

During elections in Mongolia on May 18, the opposition Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the former ruling Communist Party, won a decisive 61 percent of the vote.

Marshall Plan

After Paris Clinton plans to travel to the Hague, Netherlands. There he will participate in a celebration by government officials of the 50th anniversary of the launching of the so-called Marshall Plan.

On June 5, 1947, George Marshall, U.S. secretary of state at the time, gave a speech at Harvard University announcing the European Recovery Program, named after the speaker as the Marshall Plan. Between 1948 and 1952, the U.S. rulers provided through that program billions of dollars in long-term loans that were used to rebuild the foundation for renewed industrial production and stabilization of capitalist Europe, ravaged by World War II.

The Marshall Plan was a well thought-out scheme of U.S. imperialism to bend ruined Europe to Washington's needs, exert further economic and political pressure to hem in the Soviet Union, and realize U.S. hegemony of the continent.

"Granted, Marshall aid was not charity," commented an editorial in the May 19 *New York Times*, praising that U.S. initiative. "It generated a thriving market for American exports, and its deeper motive was political, to shore up the European center-left and to contain the Soviet Union."

The plan was announced as the U.S. rulers emerged supreme with Japan's surren-

der in 1945, but were forced to recognize that the eastern half of Europe had been definitely torn off the capitalist world market. There was no way for them, short of war, to breach the line between capitalist Europe and the countries where the wages system had been overthrown.

The Marshall Plan was unveiled barely two months after then U.S. president Harry Truman gave a speech launching a massive military aid program to the rightist regime in Greece, which was threatened by a worker and peasant uprising. The policy outlined in that talk, which became known as the Truman doctrine, enunciated the "Cold War." The Truman doctrine, along with the Marshall Plan, sought to prevent the spread of anticapitalist revolutions like those that took place in Albania and Yugoslavia in the mid-1940s and a few years later in China.

During that period Wall Street devoted huge resources, both economic and military, to exert pressure on the workers states of Eastern and Central Europe, the Soviet Union, and elsewhere. An indispensable part of this effort was Washington's second militarization drive, the first being the U.S. military buildup in World War II. With the second interimperialist slaughter hardly over, the U.S. rulers needed to put back together a military force that could be used against the struggles of workers and farmers around the globe and for containing and eventually overthrowing the workers states, if the opportunity arose.

NATO was founded in 1949 with this aim, codifying Washington's immense economic and military superiority in Europe in the aftermath of World War II.

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Lofty pursuit — “We’re driven by only one thing, selling more Coca Cola.” — Marketing chief Sergio Zyman announcing the kick-off of a campaign to have Coke



Harry Ring

commercials on the air every day for the rest of the year.

Get with the program — Coca Cola will finance a World Leadership Program for bureaucrats, business folks and economists from Russia and Eastern Europe. They’ll

spend 12 weeks at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and top it off with a week at Coke’s headquarters in Atlanta.

Psst! Hot bearings — The feds indicted four men in Chicago for selling spare parts from the debris of two British Airway planes hit by fire and shrapnel at Kuwait international airport during the Gulf War. Officials said the parts are being used in an unknown number of planes and could cause catastrophic failure. They refused to identify the airlines that bought them.

Mum’s the word — Clinton’s “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy on gays in the military began in 1994. Since then the number of GIs discharged as gay has increased 42

percent. The Pentagon is probing the possibility of increased harassment. Meanwhile, the Air Force says much of the increase is due to trainees declaring themselves gay in order to get out.

No job to too big or too low — Wackenhut has grown from a rent-a-cop agency into a global outfit that runs prisons and guards nuclear plants. And in Estero, a tiny Florida town, they’re operating a privatized fire department. The town’s 11 firefighters were sent to a training session one night and, on return, found the firehouse locked. Wackenhut replacements were waiting at a nearby motel.

And nobody got shot — The “Politeness Police,” An undercover

quad of New York cops, spent a year testing their colleagues for courtesy — asking directions, how to file a brutality complaint, etc. A surprising five percent flunked the test. However, officials assured, these were minor infractions. Declared a happy police commissioner: “We can be an aggressive police force and still treat people with dignity.”

That is gross — “There is nothing worse than unkempt feet hanging from a pair of sandals,” admonishes Duran Guion, men’s fashion director at Macy’s West, where you can pick up a pair of sandals by Donna Karan for \$250.

Thrifty Mickey — A Los Angeles jury heard the first of four sexual

harassment suits by Walt Disney employees. Citing specific incidents in 1992-94, the women also charge they were denied access to a company harassment policy manual. A Disney official testified that the manuals, were kept in supervisors’ offices and — because of budgetary constraints — made available on a “need-to-know” basis. In 1994 Disney grossed a record \$10 billion.

Can’t beat that with a stick — The Ritz Carlton in Southern California’s Laguna Niguel offers an Ultimate Dinner Party for groups of 12. Two nights at the hotel; a champagne and caviar reception; a five-course wine and food paired dinner; and six free sets of wine glasses. The tab is \$48,000, but that’s for the group, not per person.

‘Only the overthrow of slave-owners can end war’

The excerpt below is taken from the 1938-39 volume of the *Writings of Leon Trotsky*. At that time the central question of world politics was the imperialists’ preparation for World War II. After the Stalinists capitulated to fascism in Germany, Trotsky and his co-fighters set out to gather forces for a new communist International — the Fourth International. Trotsky had answered questions on fascism by a correspondent of the Labour Party’s newspaper, the *London Daily Herald*, which appeared in the May 27, 1939 issue. The exchange also appeared in the April 4, 1939 issue of *Socialist Appeal* — the named the *Militant*

BOOK OF THE WEEK

assumed from 1937-41. The volume is copyright © 1974 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

Q [Daily Herald]: Is a world war inevitable? If so, will it mean the end of the capitalist system?

A [Trotsky]: Yes a world war is inevitable, if a revolution does not forestall it. The inevitability of the war flows first from the incurable crisis of the capitalist system; second from the fact that the present partition of our planet, that is to say, above all, of the colonies, no longer corresponds to the economic specific weight of the imperialist states. Looking for an escape out of the mortal crisis, the parvenu states aspire, and cannot fail to aspire, to new partitioning of the world....

Of course, the more energetically and the more audaciously the advanced workers fight in all countries against militarism and imperialism now, in spite of the unfavorable conditions, the more quickly they will be able to stop the war when it has started, the greater will be the hopes for the salvation of our civilization from destruction.

Yes, I do not doubt that the new world war will provoke with absolute inevitability the world revolution and the collapse of the capitalist system. The imperialist governments of all countries are doing all that is possible to accelerate this collapse. It is only necessary that the world proletariat be not again taken unawares by the great events.

The task that the Fourth International puts before itself, I note in passing, is precisely the revolutionary preparation of the vanguard. This is exactly why it names itself the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

Q: Is not the world too afraid of Hitler?

A: The democratic governments look upon Hitler, who succeeded in ‘liquidating’ the social question, with admiration and fear. The working class, which during one and a half centuries periodically shook the civilized countries of Europe by its revolts, is suddenly reduced to complete silence in Italy and Germany. The official politicians attribute this “success” to the internal, quasimystical properties of fascism and National Socialism. In reality the strength of Hitler is not himself, or in his contempt-

ible philosophy, but in the terrible deception of the working masses, in their confusion and in their lassitude.

During many decades the proletariat of Germany built up a trade union organization and a Social Democratic party. Abreast of the strong Social Democracy appeared later a powerful Communist Party. And all these organizations, which rose upon the shoulders of the proletariat, were in the critical moment a zero, and crumbled away before the offensive of Hitler. They did not find in themselves the courage to call the masses to struggle, as they themselves were completely degenerated and bourgeoisified, and had lost the habit of thinking about struggle.

The masses pass through such catastrophes heavily and slowly. It is incorrect to say that the German proletariat has reconciled itself with Hitler! But it no longer believes in the old parties, in the old slogans, and at the same time it has not yet found a new way. This and only this explains the strong-arm omnipotence of fascism. It will continue until the masses have dressed their wounds, have regenerated themselves, and have once more lifted their heads. I think we can expect that in not a long time....

The struggle is for colonial possessions, for the domination of the world. The attempt to represent this brawl of interests and appetites as a struggle between “democracy” and “fascism” can only dupe the working class....

The strength of Hitler (at the same time also his weakness) consists in the fact that under the pressure of the helpless position of German capitalism, he is ready to resort to the most extreme means, using blackmail and bluff in passing, at the risk of leading to war. Hitler has fully realized the fear of the old colony-holders before any disturbance and has played on this fear, if not with a very great heart, at least with indubitable success.

Q: Should the “democracies” and the USSR unite to crush Hitler?

A: I do not feel that it is my mission to give counsel to imperialist governments, even if they call themselves democratic, or to the Bonapartist clique of the Kremlin, even if it calls itself socialist. I can only give counsel to the workers. My counsel to them is not to believe for a single instant that the war of the two imperialist camps can bring anything else but oppression and reaction in both camps. It will be the war of the slave-owners who cover themselves with various masks: “democracy,” “civilization,” on the one hand, “race,” “honor,” on the other. Only the overthrow of all slave-owners can once and for all put an end to war and open an epoch of true civilization.

Q: Does Hitler represent a great danger for the democracies?

A: The “democracies” themselves represent a much greater danger for themselves. The regime of bourgeois democracy appeared on the basis of liberal capitalism, that is to say, free competition. That epoch is now far in the past. The present monopoly capitalism, which has decomposed and degraded the petty and middle bourgeoisie, has thus undermined the ground under bourgeois democracy. Fascism is the product of this development. It does not come at all “from without.” In Italy and Germany fascism conquered without foreign intervention. Bourgeois democracy is dead not only in Europe but also



Social Democratic rally in Berlin Jan. 29, 1933, just before Hitler became Chancellor. Trotsky explained how these organizations did not have courage to wage mass struggle.

in America.

If it is not liquidated in time by socialist revolution, fascism will inevitably conquer in France, England, and the United States, with the aid of Mussolini and Hitler or without this aid. But fascism is only a respite.

Capitalism is condemned. Nothing will save it from collapse. The more resolute and audacious the policy of the proletariat, the less the socialist revolution will provoke sacrifice, the sooner mankind will enter upon a new road.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



June 2, 1972

Here is how Quebec-Press (May 14) reported the workers’ seizure of Thetford Mines, a mining town in the Eastern Townships, southeast of Montreal.

Thetford Mines, a city of 23,000, is in the hands of the asbestos workers and workers of the public and para-public (hospitals and schools) sector. The municipal police tried to intervene yesterday morning during the occupation of the radio station. They had the support of about 30 provincial police officers. A trade union spokesperson remarked to the police, who were largely outnumbered by the strikers, that “the dynamiters are on our side, not yours.” The police, we’re told, understood. The police were also told it was best they not call for reinforcements.

Everything is under control in the city where the unions involved, CSN [Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux — Confederation of National Trade Unions], FTQ [Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec — Québec Federation of Labor] and CEQ [Corporation des Enseignants du Québec — Québec Teachers Corporation], are ensuring that there is no violence. The city is controlled by radio (eight sending and receiving stations) and at the least skirmish or incident the unions can rapidly intervene to put things in their place.

All alcohol outlets are closed. Only small grocery stores are open, the big ones hav-

ing been warned not to open their doors. They were only allowed to do so yesterday afternoon when the small establishments began to run short of essential items.

In the downtown area, there was a street dance all afternoon and evening, yesterday, with various bands. The union announces moreover that the city council is collaborating completely with the workers: a telegram has been sent to Bourassa demanding the withdrawal of Bill 19 and amnesty for all those sentenced.



May 31, 1947

ST. PAUL, May 31 — Support for a national 24-hour protest strike and the building of a labor party to fight the antilabor offensive has been voted by the Executive Board of Local 209, a railroad local of the AFL Sheet Metal Workers International Association.

Denouncing the Taft-Hartley Bill as a measure to “put the whole labor movement in a worse straitjacket than the Railway Labor Act,” the **Local 209 Bulletin** declares that a general protest strike is the only effective answer to the Wall Street-sponsored measure. Big Business is playing its hand for all it is worth. We must do the same.

“Since all the methods we have used so far have failed, we must now use our power — the strike weapon.

“Therefore, Local 209 urges all railroad unions to participate in the call for a 24-hour work stoppage. Local 209 further calls for the building of a Labor Party to stop this political conspiracy against us.”

A troubled, dangerous president

"As of May 5, 1997.... I rejected for myself the story by William J. Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton that neither they nor anybody else at the White House knew that when their good friend Webster L. Hubbell resigned as Associate Attorney General in 1994 he was facing the likelihood of criminal accusations that could land him in jail. They did." That's how liberal columnist A.M. Rosenthal began his piece in the May 6 *New York Times*. His column signaled that the Clinton presidency is in deep trouble, barely six months after the president's reelection.

Hubbell, Hillary Clinton's former law partner, served an 18-month sentence after pleading guilty to fraud charges linked to the theft of nearly \$400,000 from the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, Arkansas. In the months between his resignation and the entering of his plea, Hubbell was paid hundreds of thousands of dollars by various businessmen, many of whom were close associates of the administration. Prosecutors suggest this was "hush money." Rosenthal has now joined the chorus, essentially calling for impeaching the president for "obstruction of justice." Thomas Friedman's references to the Whitewater scandal in his recent "NATOWater" column are another indication that sensibilities are high around this scandal among a widening number of top spokespeople for the capitalist class.

When prominent Democrats join the chorus of conservatives like William Safire, who have been pelting Clinton with accusations of wrongdoing for years, it means broader layers among the U.S. rulers are not confident their commander in chief is doing the job.

These attitudes are rooted in the crisis of self-confidence that's widespread within the U.S. bourgeoisie. The dilemma for the owners of capital stems from the survival of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of noncapitalist social relations, throughout Eastern Europe and the former USSR. Eight years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Washington and its imperialist allies remain unable to reestablish the total domination of their profit system, the complete hold of class exploitation and dog-eat-dog competition within society, in that part of the world. This blocks

off one of the main avenues for capitalism to exit the depression conditions it has plunged into. This road could be reached by prying open Russia and the other workers states to massive capitalist investment and exploitation. By pushing such policies as NATO expansion and military intervention in Yugoslavia, Clinton is acting for a majority among the U.S. rulers who recognize and act on the conviction that U.S. imperialism indeed lost the Cold War.

But this policy course implies a march toward military confrontation with Moscow — foretold by the current occupations of Yugoslavia and Albania — and acceleration of rifts with the U.S. competitors in France and Germany. The prospect makes many mouthpieces for Wall Street very nervous. This is what's behind Friedman's irrational arguments against NATO expansion — such as his ludicrous "explanation" that Clinton is motivated to enlarge NATO to honor promises he made to ethnic Polish voters in the 1996 elections!

Clinton's troubles make him a more dangerous president. The controversy and the ongoing Whitewater investigation may prompt the White House to launch new military forays in Europe, or elsewhere, in part to divert attention away from the administration's domestic woes. Launching a war has been a well-worn tactic of other U.S. presidents who found themselves in similarly hot waters.

The U.S. rulers' difficulty in accomplishing their objective of returning capitalism to Yugoslavia, even after a year and a half of occupation, shows they have to take on the working class in those countries and try to defeat it militarily in a much more direct manner. But before the competing imperialist powers can accomplish this goal they have to take on working people in their home countries as well — accelerating the emergence of fascist currents and forcing the slashing of wages and social services and a qualitative narrowing of democratic rights. This is a tall order for Wall Street and its representatives in Washington — one which working people in the United States and other countries can do something to derail through active resistance to austerity, racism, anti-immigrant campaigns, and related imperialist policies.

Abortion is a woman's right

Supporters for a woman's right to choose an abortion need to be organizing public protests against the legislation passed by the U.S. Congress banning the D&E abortion procedure. The measure would be the first time an abortion procedure has been banned since the right was codified in the 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court ruling. It would ban the procedure medically known as "intact dilation and evacuation," and demagogically called "partial-birth abortion" by opponents of women's right to choose. U.S. president William Clinton has said he would veto the bill if it did not have the exception for a woman's health; Congress rejected such an exception.

The ideological offensive against women's rights today is thoroughly bipartisan. The bill that passed was attributed to Republican Senator Rick Santorum. Two other bills attacking abortion rights failed in Congress this spring, both sponsored by liberal Democrats — Tom Daschle in one case and Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer in the other. Both of the Democratic-sponsored bills would ban abortions after the fetus reached "viability," with exceptions only to protect the mental and physi-

cal well-being of the woman.

Class-conscious workers and other supporters of women's rights should reject the argument that so-called viability has anything to do with the right to choose. The Daschle and Feinstein bills, like the ban on D&E abortions, are aimed at shifting the issue from that of a woman's right to control her body to one of "fetal rights."

The ability to decide when and if to have children is essential to the fight for women's equality. That's why the right to choose abortion became a central demand of the women's liberation movement in the early 1970s. The political campaign in Washington and state capitals across the country today is aimed at reversing the majority support for abortion rights that was conquered in that fight, laying the ground to roll back other gains women have fought for — including affirmative action, higher pay, and jobs in traditionally all-male industries.

These attacks can be pushed back, but only if they're taken on and answered publicly, through picket lines, forums, speak-outs, and other actions. Protest the assaults on women's rights! Defend the right to choose abortion!

Clinton sells NATO expansion

Continued from Page 12

visers and troops into Yugoslavia.

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright will visit Bosnia the same week of Clinton's European tour to push for implementation of the Washington-crafted Dayton accords, which laid the basis for partitioning Bosnia and for the deployment of the NATO troops there. The U.S. government is worried that after 18 months of occupation it is far from accomplishing its objectives in Yugoslavia. NATO forces in Bosnia, now numbering 30,000 led by 8,000 U.S. troops, will add nonmilitary tasks to their duties, Albright said May 22. "We hope to show over the next year and beyond that the people who go along with Dayton will live better, and those who do not will live worse," an Albright aide told the *Washington Post*.

As the July conference in Madrid, where NATO will issue formal invitations to new members, draws nearer, some prominent spokespeople for the U.S. ruling class are growing nervous about the implications of the administration's course.

The May 19 *New York Times* editorial on the Marshall Plan expressed reservations about Clinton's policy course. "The planned eastward expansion of NATO mimics the grand strategies of the earlier era but seems misplaced at a time when the consolidation of democracy in Russia is paramount," the *Times* editors said.

The same issue of the liberal daily carried an op-ed piece by columnist Thomas Friedman, who has been regularly

polemicizing against NATO expansion, arguing that Washington has won the Cold War, rendering Clinton's policy irrational. Friedman proposed instead to leave NATO as is and pick off the pieces as Russia continues to weaken. NATO should work with Moscow, he said, "to stabilize conflicts along Russia's frontiers and you focus on doing everything possible to help Russia ratify Start II. This way, NATO's core would remain solid, Europe would have a stable security structure without being redivided or alienating Russia, and our real priority, getting rid of Russia's heavy nukes, would be in reach."

"It's now clear that NATO expansion is the Whitewater of the Clinton foreign policy," Friedman wrote. He was referring to the years-long investigation of the U.S. president, his wife Hillary, and their associates on allegations of illicit enrichment in a real estate deal in Arkansas and subsequent payoffs to a former official of the Justice Department to keep his mouth shut in a related case. The Clintons recently appealed to the Supreme Court to stop investigator Kenneth Starr from getting notes related to their involvement in the so-called Whitewater scandal.

Friedman is the second prominent *New York Times* columnist to imply possible wrongdoing by the president since A.M. Rosenthal essentially called for Clinton's impeachment for alleged lies related to this scandal. Friedman's column, titled "NATOWater," is another sign that the administration is in trouble at home as Clinton wields the NATO expansion club across the Atlantic.

Workers resist government thugs in Albania

Continued from front page

apart, cutting the town off from the rest of the country.

The above attacks followed a series of bomb explosions the week before in the city of Vlore, the center of the revolt Albania. Thousands of working people there took to the streets in protest, chanting "Hang Berisha." The Italian and Greek imperialist occupation forces in Vlore have used these armed assaults as a pretext to justify their frequent patrol of the streets in armored vehicles to keep order.

The Committees of Salvation were born in the heat of the rebellion, which erupted in mid-January against the results of the "market reforms" of the pro-capitalist Berisha administration. The armed working people and these committees remain a major obstacle to the efforts of the imperialist forces and the government in Tirana to quell the revolt.

Meeting in Vlore May 16, the rebel councils discussed whether to boycott the elections scheduled for June 29 and to continue their fight until the ousting of Berisha. Although invited to participate, many opposition parties and no representatives from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) attended this meeting.

Democratic, Socialist parties agree to election date

After more than a week of wrangling, Fino's Socialist Party (SP) and Berisha's Democratic Party (DP) said they had reached an agreement May 21 to proceed with the elections. Both of these parties represent competing layers of the bureaucratic caste that has for decades controlled political power in Albania. The details of the agreement were not yet available.

On May 13 Albania's eight opposition parties — with the SP in the lead — had threatened to boycott the planned elections after Berisha's parliament passed an election law that is favorable to his party. The DP holds the majority in that body following rigged elections in March 1996.

A day earlier Fino met with U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright in Washington D.C. Albright voiced support for Fino's government and denounced Berisha's "parliamentary maneuvers which undermine the efforts toward bringing a solution to the crisis in Albania." On May 16 however Berisha dissolved parliament and officially proclaimed elections for June 29. Speaking at a poorly attended election rally at the town of Lats which is 60 kilometers from Tirana, he declared that he will "not make any concessions to the opposition parties on the election law and that is my final answer." Berisha's election law is a version of the previous law that is favorable to the DP.

On May 19 the eight parties that are part of the government reiterated their threat to boycott the elections and gave Berisha three days to accept an election law that will be more favorable to them. In a clear support to Berisha, German Minister of Foreign Affairs Klaus Kinkel warned Fino that the scheduled elections should take place and that "under no circumstances should the political parties boycott them." Franz Vranitzky, the European envoy in Albania also voiced opposition to the threatened boycott.

At a conference in Athens organized by the Union for Balkan Friendship, Greek members of the European Parliament from right-wing parties and the Communist Party of Greece in a common statement complained that the "EU doesn't have an independent policy toward Albania. As in the case of Bosnia, its policy is dictated by the US government." The imperialist occupation forces are backing Berisha, the statement said and warned that if the DP wins the elections "this will cause a civil war in Albania which will spread to Tetovo, Kosovo and the neighboring Balkan countries." The working-class rebellion in Albania has given a boost to the struggle of Albanians in Tetovo and Kosovo for their national rights.

Protests break out in Macedonia

Meanwhile, 30,000 people demonstrated in Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia on May 15 demanding that the government compensate them for the money that thousands lost in a "pyramid" scheme that collapsed in February. It was the sixth fraudulent investment scheme to do so. The protest was organized by the opposition Democratic Party for National Macedonian Unity.

A few days earlier, on May 10, some 5,000 rallied in Bitolj, Macedonia's second largest city, shouting "We want our money! We'll get it with weapons if we have to!" It was the collapse of similar fraudulent investment schemes that triggered the revolt in neighboring Albania. The government has proposed a partial compensation plan that would repay those who invested \$29,400 or more \$294 per month. The protesters insist this is not enough. They called for early elections and have threatened to stop paying taxes if the government, which permitted such schemes to operate, does not reimburse them.

On May 15, UN secretary general Kofi Annan recommended that the UN occupation force in Macedonia be extended another six months, until Nov. 30, 1997. "Recent developments in Albania have demonstrated that stability in the Balkan region remains extremely fragile," he said. The force of 1,050 troops from the United States, Scandinavia, and Indonesia has been deployed in Macedonia since 1992.

Hundreds rally for education in Canada

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — More than 200 parents, teachers, and students rallied here May 10 to protest cuts to education being carried out by the Vancouver School Board (VSB). The action was called by Parents for Public Education, a group formed in April after the VSB announced that due to a projected \$16.1 million budget deficit it was eliminating 326 jobs. In response to the public protest that swiftly followed, the VSB reduced the number of job cuts to 302.

In early April, some 500 teachers, students, parents, and support staff packed meetings of the VSB committee to discuss the planned job cuts. Even the revised cuts would virtually eliminate the position of staff assistants, organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). In all, 108 staff assistants are among the 182 support staff that would lose their jobs.

Approximately 100 CUPE members came out to the April 9 meeting to voice their opposition to the cuts. More than 60 groups and individuals submitted briefs to the VSB's first two committee hearings; more hearings are scheduled in the near future. In addition to eliminating the positions of staff assistants, the school board is also slashing 107 teaching jobs, 21 administrative staff, 9 principals or vice principals and 7 maintenance workers.

The school board's plan will reestablish segregated classrooms for disabled students. "Integration is not a frill, but a necessity," Brian Thomas from the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities told the April 10 VSB meeting. VSB officials say ending integration of special needs students in the classroom is a necessary consequence of eliminating staff assistants.

The cuts will also hit Vancouver's English as a Second Language (ESL) programs particularly hard. In B.C. the number of ESL students has doubled from 34,176 in 1991 to more than 71,300 today. Nine ESL teachers are slated to be cut, along with several administrators and consultants. Last year there was one ESL teacher for every 150 ESL students in regular classes; next year it could be one for every 160 students.

"We can't let the provincial government

off the hook either," Kim Zander representing parents from Lord Nelson Elementary School told the crowd at the April 9 meeting. The New Democratic Party government in British Columbia has been claiming that it is making education a priority. In response to the rising opposition to the announced cuts in Vancouver, Education Minister Paul Ramsey emphasized that the provincial government currently spends more per student than any other province and is increasing funding by 1 percent next year. However, actual operating budget dollars spent per student will drop by \$43 this year.

Roger Annis, the Communist League candidate in the upcoming parliamentary election, attended the May 10 protest action along with other campaign supporters. He explained that the Communist League campaign is opposing all cuts to social services. Annis drew attention to the fact that in socialist Cuba, despite severe economic problems, not a single school or hospital has been closed. "Your actions here today together with the actions of parents in New Brunswick who are fighting to stop closures of Francophone schools are an example for all working people who want to fight the cuts," Annis told rally participants.

200 commemorate Irish hunger strike



Militant/Megan Arney

On May 4 some 200 activists for the unification of northern Ireland rallied and held a commemoration in Hartford, Connecticut for Irish freedom fighter Bobby Sands and nine others who participated in a 1981 hunger strike for political prisoner status. The inmates were ten of many thousands of Irish republican fighters who were railroaded through British kangaroo courts, sent to British prisons, and tortured for their belief in the fight for a united Ireland. Sands' sister, Marcella (above), who spoke at the event, said, "If they can't destroy the desire, they can't destroy the struggle."

Teachers in New Zealand fight cuts

BY CHRISTINE BERESFORD

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Kindergarten teachers and their supporters rallied throughout the country on May 1. The May Day rallies, originally organized as a national protest over inadequate funding for early childhood education, took place under the cloud of a sudden government attack on the employment conditions of kindergarten teachers.

Acting under "urgency" in order to avoid public consultation and debate, the government pushed through legislation removing kindergarten teachers from coverage by the State Services Commission. The teachers will now have to negotiate employment contracts with more than 30 individual kindergarten associations across the country, rather than nationally with the State Services Com-

mission, as do all other teachers.

About 20 angry kindergarten teachers were ejected from Parliament's public gallery after they protested the passage of the new law. Lisa Terreni, a kindergarten teachers spokesperson, said of the new law, "It's a complete slap in the face for kindergarten teachers."

Currently, public kindergartens in New Zealand are free, and teachers in them are required to meet government training standards. Both wages and educational requirements are lower for early childhood workers in the private sector.

Cathie Wylie, a senior researcher at the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, predicts that kindergartens in some low-income and rural areas will be forced to close. She noted that the public kinder-

gartens are used by a high proportion of low income families, particularly Maori.

The May 1 protest on Parliament grounds in Wellington was attended by several hundred teachers, parents, children, and union leaders. It was followed by a candlelight vigil at a nearby park where there was a symbolic burning of a coffin representing the free kindergarten movement.

Teachers unions have vowed to continue protest leading up to the government's presentation of its budget in July.

Teachers plan to fight for a collective contract covering all the kindergarten associations.

Christine Beresford is a member of the United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union.

LETTERS

A lifelong activist

Longtime Philadelphia activist Joe Miller died here in early April at the age of 85. For all his adult life up until only weeks before his death, Joe joined in organizing innumerable causes from the anti-Vietnam War movement to low-income housing.

In a piece devoted to Joe's life titled "Passing of a 'pit bull' who clung to ideas of peace, hope and decency," *Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist Claude Lewis wrote, "Throughout the 25 years I knew him, among the diverse people I met in his home were Bill Kunstler, William Sloane Coffin, Daniel Ellsberg, Ann Braden, Huey Newton, Jane Fonda, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Benjamin Spock and David Dellinger."

Absent from Lewis's column, as well as the *Inquirer's* obituary, was Joe's actions in defense of the Cuban Revolution. He visited Cuba several times beginning in the early years of the revolution and became a founding member of the Cuba Support Coalition several years ago. Joe's home also served as a location for many meetings in support of Cuba.

When the Political Rights Defense Fund was formed in 1973 to organize support for the Socialist Workers Party's historic lawsuit against government spying, Joe was its first prominent sponsor in Philadelphia. An early backer of the effort to free SWP member Mark Curtis, who spent seven and a half years in prison on frame-up charges, Joe's home was once again the place

for the final planning meeting to organize a celebration when Mark was freed last year.

Joe's warmth, wit, and commitment will be missed by countless activists here. A memorial service is planned for June 18 at the Friends Meetinghouse at 15th and Cherry in Philadelphia.

*Nancy Cole
Joe Kleidon
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

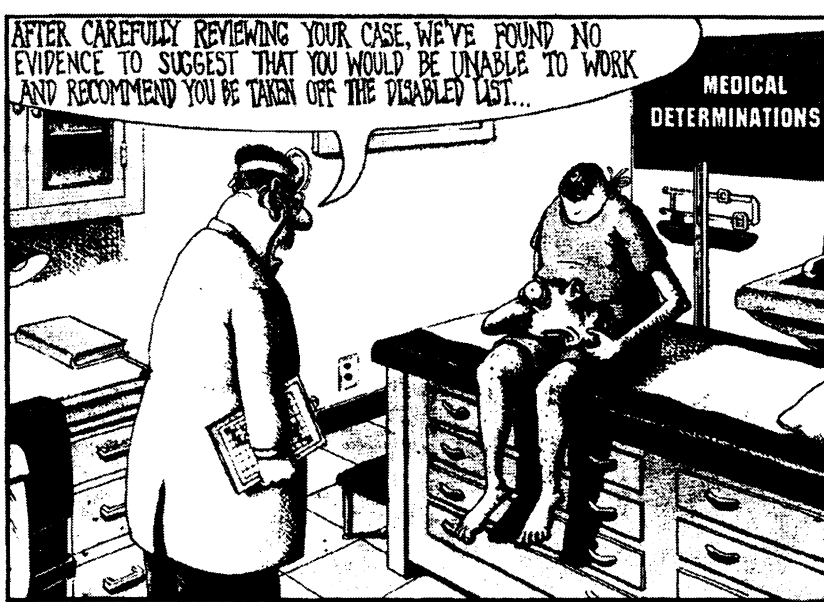
Cuban speaks in Utah

Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., just completed a three-day tour in Utah speaking on "The Cuban Revolution Today and the Helms-Burton Law."

In mid-April Dania Murgado from the Federation of University Students and Rolando González from the Center for the Studies of José Martí, both based in Havana, were scheduled to visit Utah as part of a national lecture tour organized Faculty-Student Cuban Youth Lectures Committee in Boston. On March 10 the U.S. State Department denied visas for Murgado and González.

In response, the Cuba Solidarity Coalition here decided to contact the Cuban Interests Section to see if they could provide a speaker.

Sponsors of the Rodríguez tour included Associated Students of the University of Utah Multicultural/Diversity Board; Center for Ethnic Student Affairs, University of Utah;



Hinckley Institute of Politics; Economics Department, University of Utah; Cuba Solidarity Coalition; Young Socialists; and the American Civil Liberties Union.

On May 8, Rodríguez spoke to a classroom at the University of Utah and then at a public meeting on campus, where 60 students heard Rodríguez denounce the U.S. economic war on Cuba. He said, "Cuba will never give up its sovereignty, independence and self-determination."

In response to a question on President Clinton's offer of billions of dollars in aid if the Cuban people removed Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro from the revolutionary government, Rodríguez said that millions of Cubans "have signed a declaration rejecting this offer to buy our

island."

In the evening, Rodríguez spoke to at El Centro Civico Mexicano on Salt Lake City's west side.

On May 9, Rodríguez traveled to Price, Utah where he spoke to 15 students at College of Eastern Utah. Some students there asked if democracy really existed in Cuba.

That evening 35 people attended the Salt Lake City-city wide meeting here at the YWCA. Nancy Winitsky chaired the meeting and described the April 20 national Day of Defense in Cuba where rallies, demonstrations, and military training exercises were held throughout the country.

Rodríguez described the 1992 reforms that were implemented in response to the dramatic cut in trade with the Soviet Union. Most state

farms were transformed into cooperatives, joint ventures with foreign capitalists were encouraged and individual businesses was legalized in some instances. He said, in response to a question, "Our goal is socialism. We prefer not to have any aspects of the free market. The reforms were forced on us by tough conditions. Our social programs have all been kept alive."

In criticizing the Helms-Burton law, Rodríguez said, "Cuba is a sovereign state and has every right to nationalize property within its borders."

In response to a question on recent events in Peru, Rodríguez called President Alberto Fujimori's massacre of 14 rebels there "immoral and inhuman.... The Cuban government was trying all along to resolve the hostage situation through peaceful methods."

Rodríguez's tour was covered by *The Deseret News* and the *University of Utah Chronicle*. KRCL radio taped a two-hour radio interview with the Cuban diplomat.

Young people at all the meetings were encouraged to attend the 14th World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students in Havana, July 27 to August 6, 1997.

*Dan Fein
Salt Lake City, Utah*

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.

New Zealand gov't campaigns to expand military power in the Pacific

BY PATRICK BROWN

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Anzac Day celebrations here on April 25 were seized on by capitalist politicians and media commentators to glorify the past military adventures of New Zealand imperialism, and to gain support for the government's push to refurbish the country's armed forces in preparation for future conflicts.

Anzac Day is named after the Australia New Zealand Army Corps and commemorates the two regimes' Gallipoli campaign, a bloody eight-month conflict in Turkey during World War I.

At the War Memorial in the capital city of Wellington, Prime Minister James Bolger struck a common theme, saying "Our young people are aware the life we enjoy today owes much to the sacrifice of those who risked their lives."

Joining the chorus, Col. Timothy Brewer, a senior officer in the part-time Territorial Forces, bemoaned in a speech delivered in New Plymouth, "The regular army has been run down to the point where it is barely capable of carrying out the day-to-day activities required of it.... We will shortly sing the national anthem: 'God Defend New Zealand.' Well, let us hope that he will, because nobody else will." Brewer was censured for his remarks by Chief of General Staff Major General Piers Reid.

Since the Coalition Agreement between the National and New Zealand First parties was reached in December 1996, discussion of the alleged vulnerability of the military has occupied many news column inches.

An editorial in the February 19 *Christchurch Press*, for instance, stated, "Reports surfaced last year of soldiers buying some of their own equipment; the Air Force does not have sufficient crews for the six Orions; its Boeings break down; and there are other deficiencies. This is morale-sapping."

In an April 15 speech to the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs, Lieutenant-colonel Antony Hayward reported on his command of Kilo 2 Company, the second contingent of New Zealand's Bosnian forces. Hayward complained, "The army's 30-year-old armored personnel carriers, fitted with extra protective armor, were too lightly armed and too slow."

Defense Minister Paul East said, "It's the view of the government that there should be no further reductions in the defense force and we can see in the future at least modest

increases."

Much of Wellington's military equipment dates to the 1960s and 1970s. The New Zealand government has recently purchased two frigates from Australia, each costing more than NZ\$500 million (NZ\$1.44 = US\$1). The regime is under increasing pressure from its Australian counterpart to take up its option to buy two more.

New Zealand's armed forces, numbering around 10,000 service personnel, are designed to operate in partnership with those of Australian imperialism. This relationship is spelled out in the Closer Defense Relations agreement, signed in 1991.

While the discussion over military spending and priorities continued, the government announced a decision to buy four U.S.-manufactured Kaman Seasprite naval helicopters at a cost of NZ\$274 million. Secretary of Defense Gerald Hensley, reportedly said Wellington had deferred making a "decision last year on which helicopter to buy, to ensure both governments in New Zealand and Australia chose the same type."

Minister of Foreign Affairs Don McKinnon told Wellington's diplomatic corps in March, "a preparedness to be engaged and involved internationally in security issues" was a long-standing New Zealand characteristic, but that adopting such policy imperatives required "taking the people with us."

New Zealand's armed forces have been "involved internationally" in many of the imperialist interventions that have taken place under the banner of the United Nations since the Gulf War, just as they were involved in the aggression against Korea and Vietnam in previous decades.

Some of the military operations New Zealand forces around the world are involved in include Cambodia, Sinai, Angola, Mozambique, Macedonia, Iraq, Syria, Israel and Lebanon. Three successive contingents of 250 soldiers served under the United Nations in Bosnia. A small group of officers is now serving there in the British forces under NATO command.

The commitment of New Zealand forces to these recent imperialist military interventions is particularly important for the rulers here as they try to rebuild their alliance with U.S. imperialism.

In 1985 previously close military ties between Wellington and Washington were cut by the U.S. administration after the New Zealand Labour government, elected on an antinuclear platform, sought to prevent vis-

15,000 students protest cutbacks in Australia



Militant/Marnie Kennedy

The National Union of Students organized a march of some 15,000 students for a National Day of Action throughout Australia on May 8 against funding cuts to universities. The teacher's National Tertiary Education Union backed the protest against the attacks on education, which include an increase in tuition fees.

its by U.S., British and other nuclear-armed or propelled naval vessels. The move followed a decade of union and street protests against nuclear ship visits. Support for the antinuclear policy remains widespread.

Member of Parliament Rodney Hide, the finance spokesperson for the right-wing party ACT New Zealand, wrote in the Autumn 1997 *Defence Quarterly*, a publication of the Ministry of Defence, "I detect a greater willingness to commit New Zealand troops to hot spots to reprove a friendship that was once taken for granted. That may be no bad thing.... We need powerful friends, and who more logical an ally than the United States, to whom we are linked by blood, history, trade, and the traditions of democratic government."

Prime Minister Bolger implored Washington to resume joint exercises and training involving U.S. and New Zealand Defense forces during his speech to American Chamber of Commerce officials visiting Wellington in early April.

A sense of frustration is seeping into discussion of this issue among ruling class circles here. The March 15 *New Zealand Herald* referred to praise by the United States Fifth Fleet commander, Admiral Thomas Fargo, for the performance of the frigate *Canterbury* in the naval force intercepting vessels suspected of trading with Iraq in violation of the inhuman United Nations Security Council sanctions. The article complained that "glowing praise for New Zealand naval patrols in the Gulf has not cracked American opposition to resuming military exercises with this country."

In addition, the defense attaché at the U.S. embassy in Wellington, Captain Robert Houser, pointed to the increased dialogue with Washington since Bolger's meeting with U.S. president William Clinton two years ago. Bolger's visit to the White House was the first such invitation in more than 10 years, an event that was taken as a hopeful sign by the New Zealand rulers.

Houser noted, however, that the New Zealand imperialists "still have a stumbling block" from the antinuclear policy.

Serious differences have marked relations between Wellington and Paris over the French nuclear testing in the Pacific for the

past two decades, and especially since the French secret police's sinking of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland harbor in 1985.

Paris, Canberra, Wellington, and Washington are the dominant imperialist powers in the South Pacific.

For the New Zealand ruling class, joining with Washington in major conflicts remains the lodestar of its foreign and military policy. Similarly, they are dependent on their military partnership with their stronger Australian counterparts, despite sharpening competition between the two imperialist powers.

Meanwhile, New Zealand Skyhawk and Orion aircraft and the *Canterbury* took part in a major sea and air exercise around the Malay Peninsula at the end of April. Dubbed the "Flying Fish," the exercise was staged under the aegis of the Five Power Defence Arrangement, whose other members include the governments of Australia, Singapore, Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

Supposedly one of the scenarios for "Flying Fish" involved a hypothetical power using force to annex a hypothetical island. To the north of where "Flying Fish" took place, lie the Spratly Islands. Explorations have revealed the area to be rich in hydrocarbons.

In a press release on Anzac Day, Defense Minister East alluded to the disputes over the islands and the "increasing tensions in the South China Sea: The contenders — China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei; the chances of a major Asian war over the Spratlys in the next 10-20 years — moderate to low."

In the lengthy statement, East painted a picture of an increasingly unstable Asia-Pacific region. "What would be the response to an Asian war?" he asks. "It would probably be an international one — initiated by the UN Security Council — and possibly led by the Americans, as in the Gulf War. New Zealand could be asked to contribute ships and/or aircraft to a multinational force tasked to deter threats to the vital sea lanes of the South China sea."

Patrick Brown is a member of the Engineers Union in Christchurch.

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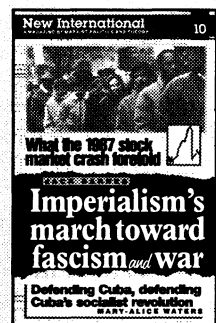
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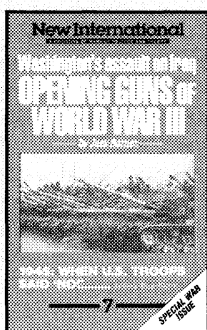
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