

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Review of 'Pombo:
A Man of Che's Guerrilla'

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NATO approves eastward expansion

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

A summit of heads of state of the 16 countries that belong to NATO invited Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join the Atlantic imperialist alliance. The three governments are supposed to complete negotiations by December and join NATO as full members by April 1999. The decision to expand NATO into these workers states of Central and Eastern Europe, orchestrated by Washington, provoked an immediate hostile response from Moscow.

"Despite the fact that we have signed a broad, balanced agreement with NATO, we still consider expansion the biggest mistake in Europe since the end of World War II," Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov said in Moscow after the agreement was reached in Madrid on July 8.

Primakov was referring to the "Founding Act," which Russian president Boris Yeltsin and U.S. president William Clinton signed in Paris May 27. That accord left open the possibility that NATO may deploy nuclear weapons and build military bases in the new member countries. In the case of Poland, this could bring U.S. forces up to the border of the former Soviet Union. Yeltsin, who was invited to the NATO summit, decided to stay away and instead sent V. M. Serov, a deputy prime minister.

The Madrid decision was the formal

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Celebrations greet return of Hong Kong to China

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

At the crack of dawn on June 30, a parade of 4,000 Chinese soldiers marched through the streets of Hong Kong, marking the end of 156 years of British colonial rule. Some 100,000 people jammed into Tiananmen Square in Beijing, 10,000 packed Shanghai's waterfront, and in the United States, 4,000 people in New York City joined in the celebrations of the former colony's return to Chinese sovereignty.

Thousands of Hong Kong residents waved and shouted welcome to the troops. On Possession Street, the site where the British colonizers first raised the Union Jack on Jan. 26, 1841, a 72-year-old Hong Kong resident declared, "It's a good thing we can finally get rid of the imperialists. We're all Chinese... This land belongs to China."

"From Argentina, Britain took away the islands, but China is very powerful," said Mandy Li, a secretary who took the day off along with others from her job, including the boss, to participate in the celebrations in New York's Chinatown. Li was referring to the British seizure of the Malvinas in 1833, which London renamed the Falkland Islands.

Other participants in the Chinatown event included a contingent of 300 people from the Fuzhou United Friendship Association. There were also celebrations of the return

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Irish nationalists battle rightists, British troops

BY PAUL DAVIES

MANCHESTER, England — A wave of anger swept nationalist communities across Northern Ireland following the decision of the British government to allow the rightist Orange Order to march down the mainly Catholic Garvaghy Road in the Drumcree area of Portadown on July 6. Before dawn that day, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) blockaded the area and dragged nationalist Catholics from the road to allow the march to pass. British soldiers fired rubber bullets at the nationalists.

Since that evening, hundreds have taken to the streets nightly to protest across Northern Ireland in any way they could find. At the Girdwood army base 30 shots were fired at troops. In west Belfast, British troops were confronted with a crowd of 200 throwing stones and petrol bombs. In the days that followed the Portadown march, the RUC and army were blocked from entering many Catholic areas. The cops have taken to wearing military-style, fire-proof riot gear in these confrontations.

As of July 7, more than 100 people had been injured. This includes 46 RUC cops and many residents hit by plastic bullets. One 14-year-old boy who was hit in the head with a plastic bullet is in a coma. In the first two nights of fighting, the cops fired more than 1,500 rounds of this ammunition.

The nationalist outrage was fueled when a document leaked July 8 showed the British secretary for Northern Ireland, Marjorie Mowlam, had reached an agreement with the RUC chief more than two weeks ahead of time to allow the Orange Order to march down the Garvaghy Road. The Orange Order is a rightist organization that supports the continued British rule in Northern Ireland. Until they began dragging protesters away from the road, the authorities had insisted that they had not made a final decision on whether to let the parade pass.

"The Brits thought that we would lie down and take it. No chance. What did they expect when they pen people into their own homes," one of the residents of the Garvaghy Road, identified as Michael, told the *Guardian* newspaper.

The annual Orange Order marches are



Residents of Catholic area in Portadown, N. Ireland, throw rocks at British troops July 6, after soldiers forced rightist Orange Order march through neighborhood.

triumphalist processions through nationalist areas in the British-occupied six counties of Northern Ireland. They are aimed at preserving the system of domination through which Protestants are treated preferentially to Catholics, the cornerstone of British rule in Ireland.

The government claims it is defending religious freedom when it allows Orange Order marches through Catholic areas. Yet the RUC stopped Catholic residents from attending mass on the day of the march on the pretext that they might organize a street protest against the Orange Order march. Defiant Catholics held mass in the streets.

At last year's march, after a several-day stand-off, the RUC allowed 40 rightist thugs with bricks, bottles and sticks to come into the Garvaghy Road. Local resident John McKeown described how "six houses had their doors broken open and loyalists ran through them, smashing anything in sight and shouting, 'Get out ye's Fenian bastards.'" This year, as the Orange Order

marched through loyalist areas they were greeted with banners such as, "There are no nationalist communities in Portadown. Only areas temporarily occupied."

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, speaking before the parade, argued that the Garvaghy Road "was originally a Protestant area. The Protestants have been driven out." Trimble did not join the Orange Order march as in previous years, however.

Resident's Associations are preparing to stop Orange Order actions on the weekend of July 12, traditionally the height of the marching season in Belfast's Lower Ormeau Road and in Derry. Anger at the British government's decision not to reroute the march in Portadown was reflected in the decision of Gerard Rice, a leader of the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community association, not to attend a meeting with Mowlam. London has dispatched 400 additional army troops to Northern Ireland, bringing the total number in the occupied territory to 17,500.

Socialist runs for mayor in Seattle

BY JEFF POWERS

SEATTLE — The Socialist Workers Party has announced a slate of candidates for local elections here. Scott Breen, an assembly mechanic at the Boeing Co. and a member of International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 751, is the party's candidate for mayor. Robbie Scherr is running for Seattle city council. She is also a member of IAM District 751 and works at Boeing. Chris Rayson, a switchman at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad and member of United Transportation Union (UTU) Local 845, is running for King County Port Commission.

Campaign supporters are petitioning to place all three candidates on the ballot. They plan to gather a total of 3,300 signatures, well over the 2,000 required, and submit them by the August 1 filing date.

Breen explained that "during the petitioning effort our campaign will urge the broadest participation possible in the August 10 farm workers support rally in Mattawa, Washington." The rally has been called to support the United Farm Workers campaign

to organize apple pickers in the Yakima valley. Farm workers at the R.T. Perry and King Fuji ranch in the Mattawa area struck and won raises up to \$1 an hour in June.

Supporters intend to aggressively petition throughout Seattle — at factory plant gates, rail yards, docks, shopping areas, college campuses, political meetings, and protests.

"We intend to present an action program to win jobs and defend wages and working conditions," Breen said. "A campaign by the labor movement to shorten the workweek with no cut in pay and to support affirmative action to end discrimination against women, Black, and Latino workers is the way to provide jobs with decent wages for all of us." The candidates will be presenting an international perspective, speaking out against Washington's war moves, including the U.S.-led occupation of Yugoslavia and the Clinton administration's moves to expand NATO.

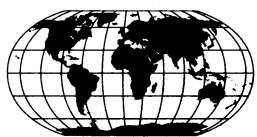
A public meeting to launch the socialist election campaign will be held Saturday, July 19, 7:30 p.m., at the Pathfinder Bookstore, 1405 E. Madison, in Seattle. Call the



Militant/Carole Lesnick

SWP mayoral candidate Scott Breen

Socialist Workers Campaign at (206) 323-3429 for more information or to help with the petitioning effort.



U.S. probe provokes Moscow

Moscow has warned the government of the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan in central Asia not to go ahead with a joint US-Kazakh scientific project the Russian government describes as spying. The project includes a U.S. Navy Orion aircraft, painted bright orange and equipped with high tech scanners, sensors, and radar, that is supposed to collect ground data flying over a former nuclear weapons test site in northern Kazakhstan, near Russia. The aircraft, already in the Kazakh capital Almaty, is accompanied by two other U.S. Navy C-130 cargo planes and roughly 50 scientists and support personnel. "We expect that the flight of the American Orion P-3 airplane close to Russian borders would be stopped immediately," the Russian foreign ministry said.

New prime minister in Turkey

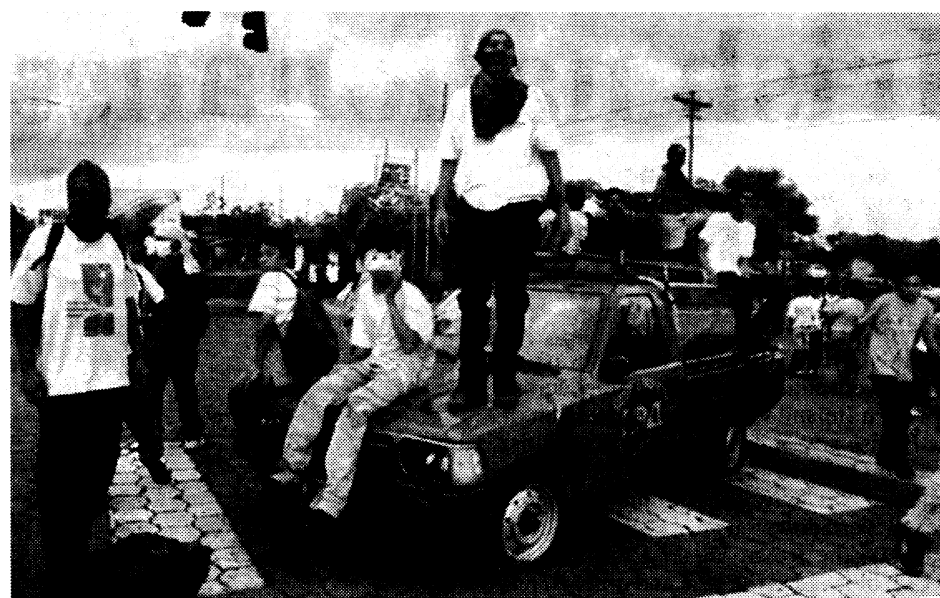
Mesut Yilmaz, of the conservative Motherland Party, was appointed Turkey's new Prime Minister June 30, replacing Necmettin Erbakan who resigned two weeks earlier. During his one year in power, Erbakan of the Welfare party, described in the media as "pro-Islamic," tried to forge closer ties between Ankara and the governments of Iran and Libya. He also took steps to allow women who wish to do so to wear Islamic head scarves in public buildings and change office hours to fit fasting time. Erbakan came under heavy pressure from the country's top military officers and other ruling-class figures to resign recently.

The new coalition government includes the social democratic Democratic Left party and the conservative Democratic Turkey party. Yilmaz was prime minister twice before, in 1991 and 1995, but both of his governments collapsed within months. Instability in Turkey, a NATO member, has worried Washington and other imperialist powers.

Palestinian resistance causes crisis in Israeli government

Demonstrations spread at the end of June in the Gaza Strip, where an Israeli soldier killed a Palestinian youth after firing on Palestinians protesting over land that Zionist settlers had tried to confiscate. In the West

Nicaraguan students protest government cuts



July 4 marked the eighth day of student protests against the decision by Nicaragua's National Assembly to authorize \$9 million in university budget cuts. Above, students in the capital Managua capture a truck from state-owned electric company. Cops have attacked the actions with tear and mustard gases. Students responded with an array of explosives, torching at least five government vehicles and leaving 45 cops injured. Students have won support from transport workers in their fight.

Bank town of Hebron, Palestinians threw stones and petrol bombs against Israeli troops. They were enraged by offensive anti-Muslim posters pasted on the front of Palestinian shops in Hebron. The posters depicted a pig in Arab headdress with the word Mohammed written on them. The pig, regarded as an unclean animal by Muslims, was portrayed stomping with one foot on the Koran, the holy book of the Islamic faith, while holding a pen in the other. The arrest of Tatiana Suskin by Israeli police as a suspect of putting up the posters did not diffuse the Palestinian anger.

On June 24, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu narrowly survived a no-confidence vote in the Israeli parliament. A faction in the ruling Likud party, led by foreign minister David Levy, refused to take part in the vote. Levy had threatened to resign from

the cabinet after Netanyahu indicated he might appoint Ariel Sharon as finance minister and include him in a three-person "inner cabinet" group governing talks with Palestinian authority president Yassir Arafat. Dan Meridor, the former finance minister, had resigned earlier. Sharon, who refers to Arafat as a "war criminal," was demanding to be placed in charge of negotiations with Palestinians over the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. To avoid a split with Levy, Netanyahu named Yaakov Neeman, a former justice minister and corporate lawyer, for the post of finance minister on July 7.

Civil war looms in Cambodia

Cambodia teetered toward civil war when fighting intensified for two days, July 5-6, between the forces of the country's two rival prime ministers Hun Sen and Prince Norodom Ranariddh. Hun Sen's troops spread out across Phnom Penh, the country's capital, with tanks and armored vehicles as he declared July 6 that he had deposed Ranariddh. Ranariddh, who fled the country July 4, called Hun Sen's actions a "straightforward coup" in statement released from Paris. "My generals advised me to leave Cambodia," he said. "They wanted me to leave them a free hand to organize a resistance."

In June, Hun Sen accused Ranariddh of linking up with 1,500 Khmer Rouge guerrillas to bolster his military forces. From 1975 to 1979, the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot ruled Cambodia with a reign of terror, slaughtering up to two million people. The Pol Pot regime received backing from Wash-

ington. Hun Sen came to power after the Khmer Rouge was ousted from the government with the help of Vietnamese troops. The coalition government of Hun Sen and Ranariddh had been in place since 1991.

On July 7, Washington dispatched some 2,200 Marines and three warships to the coast of Cambodia, saying they could be used to evacuate U.S. citizens.

Thailand's economy is reeling

Facing a debt crisis, the government in Thailand freed the national currency, the baht, from tight exchange controls July 2. The baht immediately plunged more than 17 percent against the U.S. dollar. The investment house Asia Equity Ltd. reported corporate profits could drop 60 percent this year, and with a devalued currency Thai companies could fall further behind on debt payments. Government officials hope the baht will stabilize and international investors will pump more capital into Thailand.

Thai corporations owe some \$45 billion in short-term debt that comes due in the next 12 months. An article in the July 3 *Wall Street Journal* noted that "the Thai crisis has some similarities to the Mexican meltdown in late 1994." Some investment officials assert that Bangkok will need a "rescue package" like the \$50 billion deal extended by the International Monetary Fund and the U.S. government to the Mexican regime to pay off international capitalist investors.

Tyson faces 18-month suspension

The Nevada State Athletic Commission voted July 1 to continue the interim suspension of heavyweight boxer Michael Tyson, who was disqualified after twice biting the ears of Evander Holyfield in their June 28 World Boxing Association championship match. According to media reports the boxer could be banned from the ring for 18 months or more. He is also likely to be fined 10 percent of his nearly \$30 million purse from the fight.

Going on television to try to explain his action, Tyson said he was responding to being head-butted by Holyfield. "I thought I might lose because of the severity of the cut above my eye.... I reacted and did what many athletes have done and paid the price for. You have seen it in basketball with fist fights on the floor and even spitting in the face of an official."

Death penalty in 'Megan' case

On June 30 a New Jersey jury voted that Jesse Timmendquas, earlier found guilty of the rape and murder of 7-year-old Megan Kanka, should be put to death. This case was used as the pretext for the passage of legislation dubbed "Megan's Law" — both in New Jersey and nationally — that enables authorities to keep a public record of the names of people convicted of sex offenses.

— BRIAN TAYLOR AND
MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

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Weak prospects for the euro fuel rift between Paris, Bonn

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — "Franco-German strains at EU talks," read one headline in the June 26 *Financial Times* of London. "Kohl yields to hard-liners on EMU," said another. In the weeks since the June 16-17 Amsterdam summit of the European Union, the competing interests between the capitalists in France and Germany on how to proceed in the projected European Monetary Union (EMU) have continued to be at the fore.

With elections coming up next fall in Germany, the strength of the euro — as the projected currency is called — has become a central issue. The French government's acknowledgment it will not meet the EMU criteria of having a budget deficit no higher than 3 percent of the gross domestic product this year sparked a flurry of declarations from German politicians.

"A controlled delay [to EMU] would certainly be better than a weak European currency," declared Edmund Stoiber, the prime minister of Bavaria. He insisted that every government entering the monetary union must meet the 3 percent criteria. Stoiber belongs to the Christian Social Union (CSU), which is led by German finance minister Theo Waigel and is the main coalition partner to Chancellor Helmut Kohl's conservative Christian Democratic Union.

Similar statements have been issued by Gerhard Schröder, the prime minister of Lower Saxony and most likely Social Democratic Party candidate for chancellor in the upcoming elections.

The Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, is also warning of the danger of a weak euro. Reimut Jochimsen, a senior member of the Bundesbank's central council, com-

plained June 27 that the agreement signed at the EU summit in Amsterdam, known as the stability pact, "lacks teeth." Jochimsen warned that the euro's "inadequate economic and political foundations" and unresolved economic policy differences between Paris and Bonn "may lead to the disaster of political disintegration" in Europe.

The German government is dependent on a strong currency to be able to attract capital in the international markets to finance the enormous costs of the reunification. Speaking at the Bundestag, the lower house of parliament, June 27, Kohl said he was "certain" the euro would be introduced on schedule on Jan. 1, 1999, as a stable currency in full compliance with the Maastricht treaty criteria.

Meanwhile Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the French monetary affairs commissioner in Brussels, argued that there should not be a "brutal" interpretation of the criteria. Nevertheless, both Paris and Bonn have made plain they intend to carry out further austerity measures in the name of meeting the budget targets.

Finance minister Waigel said June 25 that Germany's 1998 federal budget would involve cuts in nearly all departmental spending plans, and some ministers would see their budgets decline in cash terms. The German government also plans to sell a third of its shares in Deutsche Telekom AG to a state-owned bank over the next two years. The sale, which has the approval of Deutsche Telekom's management, could raise as much as 25 billion marks (\$14.5 billion). Other possible sales discussed by the German government include its 36 percent stake in Deutsche Lufthansa and its stakes in five airports.

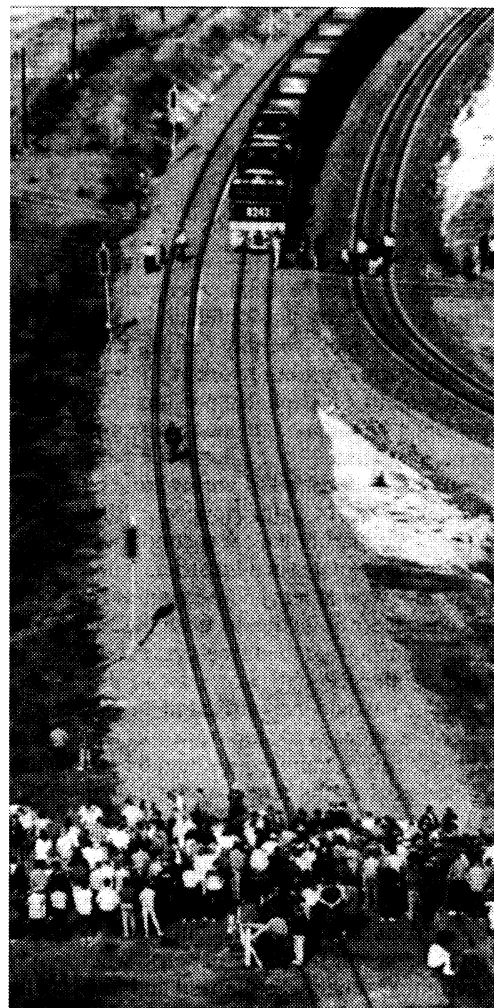
At a July 7 meeting with Waigel, French minister of finance and industry Dominique Strauss-Kahn indicated that the new Socialist Party government in Paris was planning to take more austerity measures following an audit of public finances due to be published July 21. He would not commit to meeting the deficit criteria in 1997, however.

For now, some capitalists in Sweden, Denmark, and the United Kingdom are benefiting from tensions between Paris and Bonn. In an article headlined "The EMU crisis can raise Swedish bonds," the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* stated June 27, "The main conclusion is that the union's currency, the euro, will be relatively weak. This prognosis weakens the D-mark and strengthens the US-dollar. But it has also strengthened the Swedish krona." On June 3 the Swedish government decided not to participate in the first round of monetary union, although it will meet budget deficit criteria.

Both London and Copenhagen are expected to stay out of the first round of EMU. The British pound and the Danish krona have also got a boost lately. This is a serious threat to the stability and strength of the D-mark, as capitalists tend to flee it for safer havens when the German currency is identified with a "French" weak euro.

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

Australia miners stop bosses in their tracks



On July 4 striking coal miners and supporters in Singleton, Australia, succeeded in blocking a coal train from being loaded, despite the cops' attempts to remove them. Two rail crews honored their 300-strong picket line. Some 440 miners have been out on strike since June 10 against Rio Tinto, the world's largest mining company. They are fighting the company's moves to cut 229 out of 570 jobs at the mines, while maintaining production levels. In addition, the bosses want to scrap seniority provisions and force all the workers to reapply for their jobs.

French gov't backs off election pledges

BY DEREK JEFFERS
AND RAFIK BENALI

PARIS — "Frankly, I'm disappointed," said Thierry, a 34-year-old temporary worker at a Renault auto parts plant near Paris, referring to the first month of the new Socialist Party (SP) led government of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. Thierry didn't want his full name used because of his temporary status. "I had too much confidence in the government. Jospin hasn't honored his promise to keep the Renault Vilvoorde plant open. He says he only promised to 'reopen the Vilvoorde dossier' and that this was done. But the plant is being closed anyway."

Renault announced June 28 that it was maintaining the planned closing of its assembly factory, which employs 3,100 workers in Vilvoorde, Belgium, after receiving the report of an expert named a few weeks earlier due to pressure on the Jospin government. Tens of thousands of workers in Belgium and France have mobilized repeatedly against the plant closing since Renault announced its plans in February. Belgian unions negotiated an agreement with

Renault on July 3 to limit the effects of the job losses. It provides for early retirement for workers over 50, maintaining 400 jobs in Vilvoorde and paying the remaining 1,600 workers 78 percent of their wages for two years. However, Vilvoorde workers meeting in a general assembly July 4 were critical of the plan.

Another of the new government's first moves was announced in Jospin's presentation of its program before the National Assembly June 19 — cutting off family benefits for households earning over 25,000 F per month (US\$4,237.1). The move has sparked a real debate. At GEC-Alsthom, Gerard Gasino called the 25,000F limit, "not too bad." But Michel Heimann disagreed. "Everyone pays for family benefits. I think they represent a right."

The SP-led government is also clearly moving to at least partial privatization of the state-owned telecommunications giant France Télécom, reneging on promises made during the electoral campaign to end attempts to sell off state-owned industries.

Meanwhile, the government has postponed action on Jospin's main election campaign promises — creating 700,000 jobs and reducing the workweek to 35 hours with no cut in pay. In a July 3 television interview, Jospin assured that the first of these new jobs would be created in the fall, while a government minister would only pledge that discussion on a law concerning a new workweek would begin before 1998. Unemployment grew by 32,400 in May, the largest increase since October 1993, according to the Jobs Ministry, leaving 12.5 percent of the labor force without work.

In his June 19 programmatic speech, Jospin did make certain concessions to the workers who voted him into office June 1. He confirmed that the government would regularize a large number of immigrants living in France to whom legal status had been previously denied. Government sources claimed this would affect between 10,000-40,000 immigrants without documents, the *sans papiers*. A year-long fight has been waged by various collectives of *sans papiers*, including occupations of churches and demonstrations of tens of thousands. Several thousand people demonstrated again for immigrant rights in Paris July 5. On July 2 the government also announced it would

submit legislation allowing citizens of one of the other 14 member countries of the European Union (EU) residing in France to vote in local elections. France is the last of the EU nations to apply this proviso of the Maastricht treaty.

Jospin also proclaimed a 10 billion franc increase in certain benefits for low-income families June 19, as well as a 4 percent increase in the national minimum wage.

Eleven percent of the workforce earns minimum wage. Conservative president Jacques Chirac, upon his election as president in 1995, also increased the minimum wage by 4 percent.

Derek Jeffers is a member of the CGT at GEC-Alsthom in Saint Ouen. Rafik Benali is a member of the Young Socialists in Paris.

Ruling party suffers a defeat in Mexico election

BY BARRY FATLAND

LOS ANGELES — The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has ruled Mexico for nearly seven decades, was handed a resounding defeat in the July 6 elections. In Mexico City voters elected Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Solózano of the liberal bourgeois Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) with 48 percent of the vote. The capital has a quarter of the country's population and is the national center of politics, culture, banking and manufacturing.

This was the first time since the 1920s that residents of the Mexican capital were allowed to choose their mayor. Previous ones had been appointed by the president. The PRI candidate received 26 percent of the vote and the candidate of the conservative National Action Party (PAN) received 16 percent.

Thousands of people celebrated the election results in the streets of Mexico City. Supporters of the PRD also rallied in front of the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles.

Cárdenas, who was the PRD's presidential candidate in 1988 and 1994, focused his campaign on denouncing government corruption. The PRD leader said he would not take up "general economic policies" as mayor of the capital. His party speaks for a wing of the ruling class that stands to lose out from greater penetration of U.S. capital in Mexico and as a presidential candidate he campaigned for revising the North American Free Trade Agreement to give greater protection to the Mexican bourgeois-

sie. Many workers, therefore, have expectations that a PRD regime will act more in their interests than the PRI.

The months leading up to the elections saw strikes by teachers, sugar workers, and others, as well as protests against government austerity measures. Following the collapse of the Mexican currency at the end of 1994, unemployment and inflation shot up dramatically. Although the jobless rate has gone down since then, average real wages for industrial workers remain 20 percent lower than in 1993.

The PRD also won nearly all of the seats in the Mexico City legislature, a body similar to a large city council.

In nationwide elections for Mexico's lower house of congress, the House of Deputies, the PRI lost its majority for the first time. The ruling party won 39 percent, the PAN 27 percent and the PRD 26 percent — a jump from the 17 percent vote for the PRD in the 1994 presidential election.

The results were similar in balloting for the upper house of the legislature, the Senate seats, but as only a quarter of the seats were open for election the PRI will maintain a clear majority.

The PAN gained ground in several state elections, and now holds the governorship of 7 of the country's 31 states; the PRI holds the rest. Until 1989 all governorships were held by the PRI.

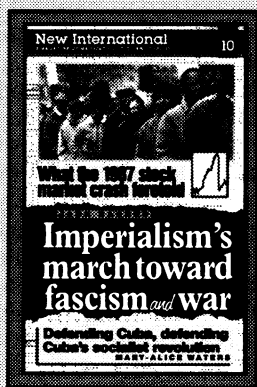
The main index of the Mexican stock market rose 2.1 percent the day after the election.

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Procapitalist regime is soundly defeated in Albania elections

BY TONY HUNT
AND BOBBIS MISAILIDES

SARANDE, Albania — On June 30 President Sali Berisha acknowledged that his Democratic Party was defeated in elections that took place the day before, causing celebrations among working people here. The openly procapitalist president said subsequently he will resign once a new government is formed.

During the first round of voting June 29, the Socialist Party of Fatos Nano won 80 of the 155 seats in parliament. A second round took place a week later in 34 districts where no candidate won at least 50 percent of the ballots cast. Unofficial results from the July 6 voting indicate that the three-party coalition led by the SP will win a two-thirds majority in parliament, sufficient to oust Berisha if he refuses to step down. In a simultaneous referendum, more than 64 percent voted against the return of the monarchy in Albania.

The elections were organized after an armed rebellion by workers and peasants against Berisha's pro-imperialist regime and the disastrous effects of its "market reforms." The revolt began in January, when the "pyramid" schemes collapsed and hundreds of thousands of working people lost life savings they had deposited in these fraudulent investment funds.

Under pressure from the occupation forces of Italy and other imperialist powers, the Democratic Party and Socialist Party called the elections hoping to put an end to the working-class uprising. The voting took place under the watchful eye of thousands of foreign troops.

Workers welcome Berisha defeat

Most working people in Albania welcomed the defeat of Berisha and his Democratic Party. "It is a great victory if Berisha goes," said factory worker Niko Kirko at a rally of 3,000 people June 30 in Vlore's Square of the Flag. It had been called by the Committee for the Salvation of Vlore, one of the popular citizens councils that emerged during the upsurge in February and March. This southern port town has been at the center of the working-class resistance. "Without the revolt there would have never been elections," commented Alberti Shyti, a leader of the Vlore council, in an interview.

Many indicated great expectations from the soon-to-be-formed SP administration. "We expect democracy and jobs for all from a Fatos Nano government," construction worker Niko Vasilaki said in an interview at the June 30 rally in Vlore. Referring to the arms seized by the rebels to defend themselves, Vasilaki noted, "We will keep the weapons until Berisha and his people actually go."

A hotel worker who identified himself only with his first name, Helidon, was jubilant. "After three months sleeping with Kalashnikov rifles to defend ourselves against Berisha's men we are now free," he said. He was referring to daily violence by gangs loyal to the president that has taken a

heavy toll on working people over the past three months, leaving 1,500 people dead.

In a desperate attempt to hold on to power, Berisha ordered the republican guard, which he thought remained loyal to him, to surround the capital Tirana July 1. But a good portion of this unit obeyed counter orders from the current prime minister Bashkim Fino of the Socialist Party. As Berisha tried to delay the counting process between the two rounds of voting, leading figures in his party deserted the sinking ship. Interior Minister Belul Celu, presidential guard commander Xhahit Xhaferri, and other officials left the country. Democratic Party chairman Tritan Shehu resigned after losing his seat in the second round.

Meanwhile, other rightists attempted to intimidate working people. Leka Zogu, son of Albania's former monarch, who is today an arms dealer in South Africa, led 300 heavily armed thugs to the Central Election Commission in Tirana July 3 after his bid to become king had been rejected. One of the royalists' supporters was killed in the gun battle that Zogu provoked.

Pro-Berisha gangs have tried unsuccessfully for months to beat back rebellious workers and farmers since the revolt reached a standstill in March.

Crisis of ruling caste

Between mid-January and mid-March, street protests and battles between working people and the army and police led to the effective dissolution of the armed forces and many police units. Workers seized weapons, agents of the hated secret police, SHIK, were killed and police stations burned down. Berisha faced being ousted by revolutionary means as he lost control of a third of the country.

The revolt by the Albanian toilers deepened the crisis of the ruling bureaucracy in this workers state. Most army officers deserted Berisha and ordered troops to go home. Hundreds of officers dismissed by Berisha earlier joined rebel councils in the south.

Berisha had promoted the pyramids, offering interest rates of up to 50 percent a month, as an easy and quick way toward personal enrichment and capitalism. This was part of his policies aimed at undermining the nationalized foundations of the Albanian economy. The noncapitalist property relations in Albania are a result of a profound socialist revolution after World War II, during which workers and peasants defeated the occupying Nazi armies and then took power and expropriated the capitalist rulers.

In the decades that followed, the Stalinist leadership of the Albanian Workers Party (or Communist Party) under Enver Hoxha alienated working people from politics and ruled in the interests of a privileged social caste. Both the Socialist and Democratic parties come from the former CP.

In the middle of a working-class revolt at the opening of this decade, coinciding with the toppling of Stalinist regimes elsewhere



Militant/Natasha Terlexis

April 24 rally in Vlore. Thousands demand resignation of President Sali Berisha and heckle Leka Zogu, son of former Albanian king who made an unsuccessful bid for return of monarchy in June 29 elections. Celebrations were held in Vlore and other Albanian cities when Berisha's party was defeated in parliamentary ballot.

in Eastern Europe, the Communist Party changed its name to SP. Some of its leaders split off and formed the Democratic Party.

SP chairman Nano worked in Albania's Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies under Hoxha and was prime minister just before the 1992 elections that brought the Democratic Party to power. Nano was imprisoned under Berisha's rule on allegations of embezzling state funds.

During the election campaign, Nano presented himself as a social democrat with views between French premier Lionel Jospin and British prime minister Anthony Blair, as he put it. "The philosophy of privatization, social assistance, denationalization, and decentralization of power is the future of my country," Nano said. He also promised to refund "as much as possible" of the \$1.2 billion Albanians lost to swindlers in the pyramid schemes.

Nano's reference to "social assistance" reflects widespread sentiments among working people for reversing the deep cuts in the social wage Berisha instituted. The polyclinic in Vlore is an example of the state of social services today. The fourth floor of the four-story hospital has been "privatized," and dentistry is no longer free there. The dentists use the same office and equipment as before, but now charge the patients and pay rent to the state. "Health care is free," said the wife of a dentist who asked that her name not be used. "But if you don't pay something, no one pays attention to you."

Despite the economic dislocation caused by Berisha's "market reforms," though, the economic foundations of the workers state still exist. According to the Greek daily *Eleftherotypia*, very few medium-size companies were sold to private investors in 1995, plans to privatize large state-owned enterprises have been put on hold, and foreign investment is minimal.

Berisha, formerly Hoxha's personal physician and a Communist Party member, broke with the CP at the end of the 1980s and became one of the founders of the Democratic Party. His regime was backed by Washington and other imperialist powers until this year's revolt. Berisha secured re-election last May by vote-rigging and intimidation.

On March 11, Berisha saved his neck by conceding to the opposition's demand for new elections and inviting the SP into a coalition government. SP leader Fino became prime minister and began calling for the rebels to disarm and for imperialist intervention.

The Socialist Party's involvement made possible the deployment and occupation of Albania by 7,000 troops from Italy, France, Greece, and other countries.

Reaction by imperialist powers

The foreign troops have been deployed throughout the country under the pretext of delivering humanitarian aid and guaranteeing "free and fair elections." Following the ballot, the imperialist Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said voting was "adequate and acceptable." The occupying troops displayed a considerable show of force during the elections in patrolling the cities and escorting the 400 OSCE "observers."

In Vlore, Italian tanks and armored personnel carriers crisscrossed the streets on election day, as well as the next day when

the population gathered to celebrate Berisha's defeat.

"I know they say they are here to protect us," said a teacher at the June 30 rally who asked that her name not be used. "But I can't help but feel that they seem like invaders every time I see them on the street."

After listening to speeches at the gathering she commented, "We are not going to let the politicians fool us again. We will be watching them closely to make sure they keep their promises."

Spokespeople of most imperialist governments welcomed the outcome of the elections, hoping that the ballot will mark an end to the toilers' resistance to their plans to restore capitalism in Albania. Yiannos Kranidiotis, Greek deputy foreign minister, said he was pleased at the "calm atmosphere" during voting and added that "Greece wants Albania soon to become a developed, prosperous and stable country and play an important role in efforts for stability in the region." A German foreign ministry spokesman welcomed the return to "orderly relations."

The Italian government — one of the most solid supporters of Berisha — was less satisfied, arguing that the SP regime should include the Democratic Party in a new cabinet. "The prevailing situation would demand governments that have the broader consensus of all forces," stated Italian foreign minister Lamberto Dini June 30.

The international capitalist media immediately offered advice to the new Socialist Party government. Above all, the big-business press insisted that the Nano regime lower the expectations of workers and disarm the population and the rebel councils.

"Mr. Nano is now faced with building a new country," said an editorial in the July 2 *New York Times*. "He must first disarm the militias and restore security. That may require European troops to stay longer than their planned withdrawal date of mid-August."

Working people continue to resist

Today the revolt in Albania has lost momentum. The June 30 rally in Vlore was smaller and less youthful than previous gatherings attended by *Militant* reporters. But the workers and farmers are not defeated and remain the main obstacle to the objectives of imperialism and the would-be capitalists here.

Kirko, an emigrant factory worker in Greece who had returned for the election, said, "I think people voted for the SP to get rid of Berisha.... Fatos Nano promised to return the money and we expect that he will do it. If not, then we will be back in the streets protesting."

Foti Russi, a fisherman in Sarande, stated, "We don't want big taxes on us. We need help from the state such as loans for spare parts for our boats and nets. If they don't return our money this government will fall as well. People will not give the arms back." Russi and other fishermen now moor their boats in the former naval base in Sarande that was abandoned during the revolt.

Arkat Stekke, a leather cutter at the Rekor shoe factory in Gjirokaster commented, "We expect the new government to bring order and normality and return the money Berisha stole. We will keep the arms until Berisha and his people go."

"It's good that the SP won," stated

Continued on Page 5

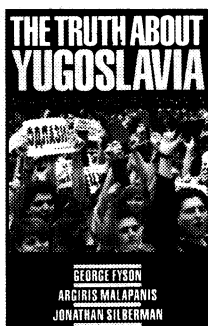
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SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

New titles are a must-read for fighters

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Over the next few months, supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* will be participating in a campaign to sell two new publications by Pathfinder Press: *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Cuban Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas and the *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos: La política obrera y los sindicatos*, the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics — Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes.

These books, which are both available in English and Spanish, present the same perspective — how ordinary working men and women can build revolutionary organizations capable of leading the toilers to overthrow capitalism and in the process transform themselves through struggle. Promoting these books on the job, at campuses, picket lines, political meetings, and at other events will aid in recruiting young fighters and workers to the communist movement. Readers can use the review of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* in this issue of the *Militant* to discuss this book and map out a campaign to sell it along with *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. Selling these books along with the *Militant*, the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the array of books by revolutionary and working-class leaders that Pathfinder publishes will be a central part of socialist election campaigns in cities across the country over the next several months.

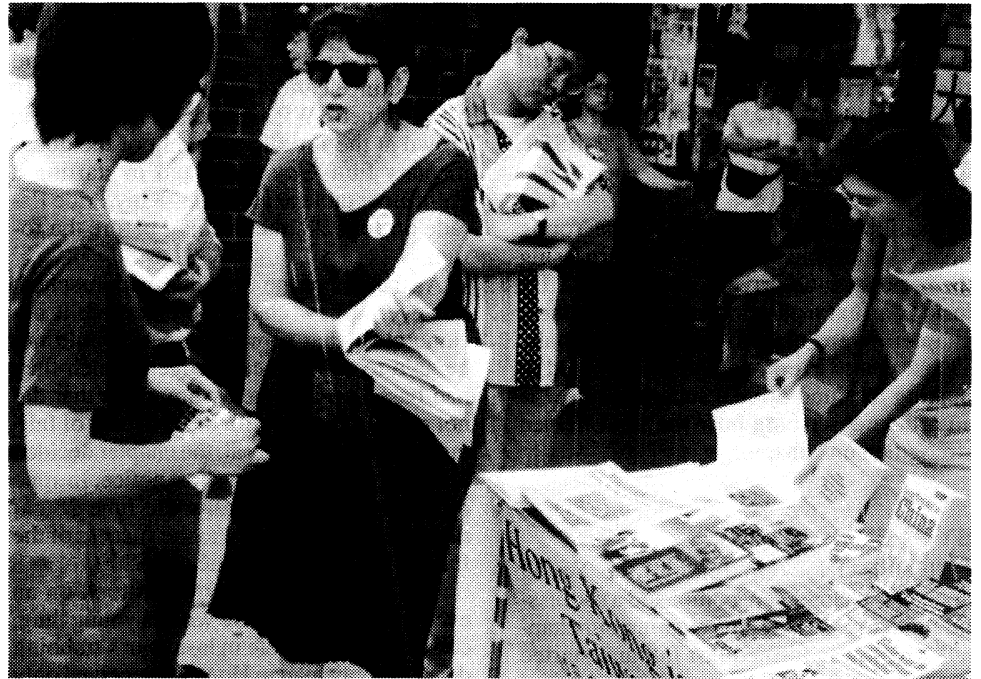
Increased resistance by working people and others provides opportunities to reach out to those participating in struggles, get these books into their hands, and win them to socialist ideas. From California to Maine, farm workers throughout the United States are pressing for union rights and better working conditions. The farm workers' struggle is being boosted today — as it was in the 1960s and early 1970s — by a rise in

Chicano and Latino nationalism and increasingly attracting more youth. At the Decoster Egg Farm in Augusta, Maine, workers are battling to organize a bargaining unit and to eliminate unsanitary conditions on the workplace.

In mid-April the United Farm Workers union organized a rally of 25,000 to support efforts to unionize California's 20,000 strawberry pickers. At that event in Watsonville, socialist workers and members of the Young Socialists sold 123 Pathfinder books and pamphlets, 32 subscriptions to the *Militant*, and 31 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. In Quincy, Florida, a *Militant* sales team from Atlanta joined a June 28 rally in solidarity with mushroom workers where they sold nine papers.

"We sold 29 single issues of the *Militant*, two subscriptions, and 24 Pathfinder titles at the July 4-6 annual convention of the National Organization for Women in Memphis, Tennessee," said Cindy Jaquith, a member of the United Steelworkers from Birmingham, Alabama. Jaquith said some of the books participants at the meeting purchased included five copies of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, four copies of *Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family*, two copies of *How Can the Jews Survive: A Socialist Answer to Zionism*, and one copy of Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War: 1956-58*.

"At the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty Conference in Houston held June 20-22, we set up a literature table as part of the conference," said Lea Sherman a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 15. "More than 100 activists from the United States and Europe who are fighting against the death penalty participated in the event. We sold nine books, including two copies of *Blacks in America's Wars: The Shift in Attitudes from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam*, two cop-



Militant/George Chalmers

Sales in New York's Chinatown at June 30 celebration of return of Hong Kong

ies of *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, and copy each of *Fighting Racism in World War II* and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, as well as a *Militant* subscription and eight single issues of the paper."

At two recent marches celebrating the return of Hong Kong to China, socialist workers in New York sold a total of more than 60 *Militants* and a copy of the Marxist magazine *New International*. Supporters of the *Militant* sold 25 Pathfinder books at the June 21 solidarity rally in Detroit where tens of thousands of people marched to support locked out newspaper workers.

"I participated with a sales team in the Coal Employment Project [CEP] conference in Edmonton, Alberta, where we sold five subscriptions to the *Militant*," wrote Joanne Pritchard from Toronto. "Two of these subscriptions were part of a special offer with a discount on *Mother Jones Speaks: Speeches and Writings of a Working-Class Fighter*. We also sold five singles of the *Militant*, two catalogs, and several Pathfinder titles including *The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists*, two

copies of *Genocide Against the Indians*, and *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis: A Program for International Working-Class Struggle Today*.

The people participating in these kind of events are precisely those who need books like *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* and *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*.

Just a few of the sales opportunities over the next few weeks include the NAACP convention in Pittsburgh July 13-17; a rally against police brutality in that city July 15; protests against the antiabortion group Operation Rescue in Dayton, Ohio, July 13-19; a United Farm Workers rally in Washington state August 10; and send-off events that are taking place across the country for participants going to Cuba for the World Festival of Youth and Students.

Socialists kick off N.Y. campaign

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEW YORK — The Socialist Workers Party announced its slate for the city elections here at a July 6 parade of 10,000 people celebrating Hong Kong returning to China. Olga Rodríguez, a member of the International Association of Machinists and the editor of the book *The Politics of Chicano Liberation*, is the party's candidate for mayor of New York City. The other candidates are Wendy Lyons, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, for comptroller; Young Socialists member Shoghi Fret for public advocate; Brian Taylor, a staff writer for the *Militant* and a leader of the YS for Manhattan borough president, and rail worker Margrethe Siem, a member of the United Transportation Union, for Manhattan district attorney.

In a statement released to the press at the parade, the socialist candidates said, "We join with billions of workers and farmers throughout the world in celebrating the end of 156 years of British colonial rule in Hong Kong and the reversion of that territory back to Chinese sovereignty."

The statement continues, "We condemn Washington's efforts to portray China's sovereign right to replace British troops in Hong Kong with its own soldiers as a military threat. It is Washington that has over 100,000 troops stationed in Asia. A U.S. military force of 37,000 is stationed on the south Korean border to maintain the partition imperialism imposed on that nation when its army failed to defeat the workers state established in the north."

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Campaign will be petitioning from July 8 to August 12 to get Rodríguez, Lyons, and Fret on the ballot. Thousands of people will be introduced to a working-class alternative in the elections as supporters of the socialist campaign fan out across New York City to collect 12,000 signatures, well over the 7,500 required. Anyone who would like to volunteer to be a part of this effort can call the campaign office at (718) 399-7257.

Regime is defeated in Albania vote

Continued from Page 4

Markos Tsambiris, 27, a taxi driver who was on the front lines during the uprising in Sarande. "The new government should give our money back and pay the interest on it as well. Berisha should face trial and pay for his crimes, although no party is demanding this."

The daily violence most believe has been orchestrated by the Berisha regime has posed the biggest challenge to rebellious workers and accounts for the ambiguous attitude towards the occupying troops. If anything, most workers interviewed by the *Militant* complained the troops were not doing anything to stop the violence.

Tsambiris explained how the violence dealt a blow to morale. In Sarande, he said, "for four to six weeks we were at the roadblocks at the entrances of the city defending it from attacks by Berisha. Our morale and our passion was high. We could have brought real change in this country by bringing down Berisha then. But while we were guarding the city, gangs of thieves linked to the secret police began to rob our homes and attack our families." Fighters began to leave the roadblocks and return home to defend their neighborhoods, he said.

This violence has been exploited by the big-business press to portray the participants in the revolt as gangsters and bandits. Some of this violence is openly political. A Vlore resident, who did not want her identity disclosed, told of a young SP supporter being beaten nearly to death for his views. But reports of armed robberies and fatal shootings on the roads, travel between towns in the south has become more difficult and risky, *Militant* reporters found. In particular, Vlore and Tepelene, where the mobilization of working people was the

strongest, are among the hardest places to get to. Those towns are falsely depicted in the media as the most dangerous.

Evolution of leadership of the revolt

Defense committees from rebel towns in the south, and some in the north, had formed a National Front for Salvation of the People on March 12, effectively replacing the government's authority in parts of the country. The committees comprised individuals of different social origin and political outlook, including ex-generals from Hoxha's time. As a stalemate developed in the struggle by mid-March, the Front began taking political initiatives aimed at forcing the SP and other parties to support working-class demands.

In a June 30 interview, Alberti Shyti of the rebel council in Vlore said the committee there no longer organizes food distribution or armed defense. The council provided unarmed observers for the election. Recently the committee led 200 residents in a march to confront one of two criminal gangs operating in town. The gangs had staged a widely publicized gunfight the week before the election. Shyti said the Front leadership had recently concluded, "Either we would support the Fino government and move towards elections or we would not work with the political parties and continue the fight as the committees.... You can't push forward the struggles of the people without the parties."

Shyti and two other committee leaders stood in the election as candidates. Shyti stood for the Social-Democrats, one of the SP's coalition partners. He was not elected. Another committee member who stood on the SP ticket did win a seat in parliament.

Economic activity in Vlore had picked

up by the end of June, with more cafes and shops open and more trucks and other traffic on the streets.

Minella Bala, the retired truck driver who led the committee in Sarande, said that at its June 24 meeting the National Front decided "to organize resistance if Berisha stole the elections." He also said the Sarande committee met subsequently and decided to stop functioning, although the individuals on it will keep in touch.

The government is now making an effort to reconstitute a police force in Vlore, Sarande, and other towns in the south in collaboration with the rebel councils. In Vlore the committee appointed the new chief of police.

The attitude of Pericli Beziani, 43, from Gjirokaster, typical among many workers, illustrated the challenge pro-capitalist forces still face. Beziani traveled as a guard in a taxi taken by *Militant* reporters from that city to Sarande July 2. He was a supporter of Nano, he said. Pointing to his Kalashnikov, he added, "If we don't get our money back we will use these again." He kept an alert eye on the mountainous slopes for armed robbers.

Beziani said he had been imprisoned under Hoxha's regime and opposed restrictions on democratic rights but he talked enthusiastically about some about the social gains workers and farmers won through the 1944-46 revolution. "If foreign investors come here," he said, "the government should get a percentage of the profits. But it would be better if the government made the investments."

Natasha Terlexis, member of the Foreign Airlines Workers Union in Athens, Greece, contributed to this article.

— YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD —

YS fund goes over the top, strengthens chapters

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, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

As of the deadline of June 30, the Young Socialists has raised \$4,483.16, surpassing the national fund drive goal of \$4,400. By making an extra push in the last weeks, most chapters were able to reach their goals. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making the fund drive a success. Below is an article describing how the fund helped strengthen one chapter.

BY PAUL COLTRIN

HOUSTON — On June 30 the Young Socialists chapter here completed a successful fund drive. That same evening our chapter, which was formed last fall and started out this year with four members, recruited its eighth member. These gains reflect the significant advances we've made in the last several months.

Members have been taking an active part in various struggles unfolding in the region. The bipartisan attack on immigrant rights has been acutely felt in Houston, where large Latino and immigrant populations live. Most recently, a series of protests were organized against the federal anti-immigrant legislation that went into effect in the middle of last year.

Anti-death penalty activity has surged in the face of this year's stepped-up pace of executions in Texas, including that of Mexican immigrant Irineo Tristán Montoya. Protests have taken place both in Houston and outside the prison in Huntsville, some 70 miles away, where death row inmates are held and executed. The YS has participated alongside the Socialist Workers Party in these fights and others, bringing its communist politics and propaganda. "These protests are great opportunities for us to get across our ideas and win others to our point of view," said YS member Alejandra Rincón. "People want to know why we're there."

The fund drive promised to be a litmus test of the YS's ability to be an independent, self-financed organization. The Houston chapter adopted a goal of \$600, based mainly on aggressive pledges made by each member. Just as the fund drive was about to kick off, however, Lief Gutthiudaschmitt accepted an assignment on the YS National Executive Committee in Chicago, and the chapter was forced to withdraw his pledge.

In this situation, the response might have been to lower the chapter's goal accordingly. Instead, we decided to leave the goal intact and find a way to compensate for the lost

pledge. In addition to an ongoing YS food sale, members voted to hold a YS forum on gay rights in late June, timed with Gay Pride activities taking place at that time. Members began building a panel for the forum and distributing leaflets around the city. Also, YSers joined SWP members in leafleting the crowd at the June 15 showing of the documentary film *Gay Cuba* and in staffing a Pathfinder table at Houston's Gay Pride Parade on June 28, the evening before the forum.

As the end of the fund drive approached, however, a new challenge emerged: it became clear that some members would not be able to fulfill their pledges, which they had based on income assumptions that did not pan out. Faced with the prospect of falling well short of its goal, the chapter decided to hold a garage sale on short notice. In spite of limited time to prepare, the June 28 garage sale proved crucial to the success of the fund drive, bringing in nearly \$200.

The YS forum on gay rights took on an even more timely nature when a young thug, convicted for his role in last year's stabbing death of a gay man in Houston, received only a probated sentence on June 27. Speaking on the panel were Ray Hill, longtime gay rights and prisoners' rights activist in Houston; Lori Dietzler of the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; and Paul Coltrin of the Young Socialists.

The forum and dinner raised nearly \$100 for the fund drive, and even more importantly, allowed the YS to reach new people with its politics.

The money raised from the garage sale and forum was added to the \$260 collected in member pledges. Including money from the food sale and donated by YS supporters, the Houston YS chapter raised a total of \$616



Militant/Lea Sherman
Houston chapter has been involved in fight against death penalty and for immigrant rights. Above, June 18 protest against execution of Irineo Montoya in Huntsville, Texas.

— ratifying its decision not to lower the original goal of \$600.

On June 30 — the last day of the fund drive, coincidentally — two YSers met with Nicole, a high school student who has been attending forums and reading the *Militant* and various Pathfinder books. She first attended a YS forum on women's liberation, held prior to the YS national convention in March, and said that the discussion at that forum sparked her interest in the YS and its ideas. Following a broad discussion on the YS and on politics in general, including a

careful review of the YS pamphlet, she said that she would like to join.

This is just one example of the seriousness with which members have taken the task of attracting other young people to socialism. "Socialism not only offers young people an explanation of the everyday problems they face, from the youth curfew to conflicts at home, it offers a solution as well," said YS member Robert Guerrero. "Young people can see that we don't have to live in the dog-eat-dog world that we know today."

Protests demand right to travel to festival

BY MEG NOVAK

CHICAGO — Across the country, delegations planning to attend the World Festival of Youth and Students have launched a protest campaign against the U.S. Department of Treasury's denial of licenses for young people planning to attend. The festival will take place in Havana, Cuba July 28 — August 5.

Nearly 8,000 delegates from 126 countries are expected to participate in the festival. Topics of discussion will include anti-imperialist and antiracist struggles, women's liberation, protection of the environment, and how to stand up to rising fascist movements.

Over the last two years, the Clinton administration has tightened restrictions on travel to Cuba, banned direct flights from Miami to Havana, and made it easier to impose administrative fines on people the government claims violated its regulations. In this case, Treasury officials claimed that the youth festival is not "within the scope of clearly defined educational activities," and on that grounds denied travel licenses to 50 youth who applied.

The committee building the festival in Minnesota called a July 8 news conference at the state capitol in St. Paul to demand the government reverse this decision. Local and national newspaper reporters attended from Associated Press, the St. Paul *Pioneer Press*, and the *Minnesota Daily*, as well as National Public Radio, KITS New Radio, and the local television station KSTP Channel 5.

They heard representatives from different student and political organizations speak out against the denial of the licenses. Gary Prevost, a professor of political science at St. John's University in Collegeville, Min-

nesota, stated, "This kind of opportunity to see Cuba firsthand represents the kind of policy that should exist. They should be able to travel to Cuba freely and see that society, and make their own judgments."

As well as Prevost, the panel included April Knutson, representing Pastors for Peace; Jamil Salam from the Africana student cultural center; Heather Wood from the Minnesota Organizing Committee for the festival; and Jenn Udelhofen of the Progressive Student Organization.

In Miami, the Spanish-language daily *El Nuevo Herald* printed an AP story on the denial of travel licenses in its July 8 issue.

Jahannah Sistrunk, a 23-year-old student government senator at the University of Illinois in Springfield, Illinois, is planning to go to the festival. She attended the July 4 — 6 national conference of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in Memphis, Tennessee, where she helped to circulate petitions protesting the denial of licenses. "The NOW convention was a good opportunity to speak with people about the relations between Cuba and the U.S., and how the blockade restricts travel and violates civil rights," Sistrunk stated. "Every human being should have the right to travel."

Cynthia McKinney, a U.S. congresswoman from Georgia, and Rosemary Dempsey, the outgoing vice-president of action for NOW, both signed petitions to support the fight against the denial of the licenses, as did dozens of the convention delegates.

On July 10, the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California will be hosting a press conference in Los Angeles to protest the travel restriction. Sam Mistrano, the legislative director for the ACLU, will be speaking along with Debra Antscherl, the Cuba Youth Conference Coordinator; William Paparian, the former mayor of Pasadena; Joe Harvey, chair for Irish Northern Aid in Orange County; and students from the area who are planning to attend the festival. The press conference will include the reading of statements from actors Ed Asner and Martin Sheen, and from Los Angeles City Council member Jackie Goldberg.

As of July 9, more than 1,100 people had applied to attend the festival from the United States, including 550 with the U.S. Organizing Committee for the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students and more than 300 with the National Preparatory Committee, initiated by the Young Communist League and Communist Party.

About 60 people are planning to go to Havana with the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange to attend the International Workers Conference Confronting Neoliberalism and the Global Economy. The trade union meeting, sponsored by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers, will take place August 6 — 8 immediately following the festival. Many of those traveling to the Labor Exchange will participate in the youth festival as well.

The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Asset Control says it is reviewing the decision to deny the travel licenses.

| YOUNG SOCIALISTS NATIONAL FUND DRIVE Final Total — \$4,483 | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| CITY | GOAL | SENT IN | % |
| SAN FRANCISCO | \$100 | \$193 | 193% |
| CLEVELAND | \$150 | \$262 | 175% |
| LOS ANGELES | \$100 | \$162 | 162% |
| TWIN CITIES | \$400 | \$443 | 111% |
| CHICAGO | \$500 | \$533 | 107% |
| HOUSTON | \$600 | \$616 | 103% |
| DES MOINES | \$400 | \$406 | 102% |
| BIRMINGHAM | \$75 | \$75 | 100% |
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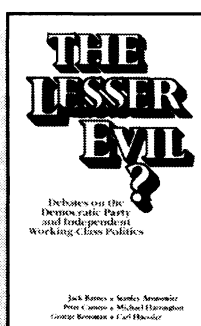
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Auto workers battle Fiat in Argentina

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND DAVID CORONA

CÓRDOBA, Argentina — "There is a war at Fiat." This was the comment of several fired auto workers in a June 7 interview at the union hall here. The workers at the giant auto plant were victimized for their union activities and are fighting to be reinstated.

The unionists were quick to add, however, that this is a two-sided war. "Fiat was degrading our dignity and jeopardizing our jobs. We said 'Enough,'" said Víctor Pineda, one of the fired workers. "If they succeed in imposing these conditions here, the bosses will do the same in other auto plants and other industries."

Since September, the Fiat plant in this industrial city has been the scene of one of the most important labor battles in Argentina in a number of years. The auto workers are fighting for recognition of their union and resisting the company's attempt to take major concessions in wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Córdoba is the center of the auto and aerospace industry of this South American country. Besides the Italian-based Fiat, General Motors, Chrysler, Volkswagen, and Renault all have auto assembly or parts plants in the metropolitan area, and they are rapidly expanding their manufacturing capacity. Chrysler, for example, opened a new plant here in late April that makes Jeep Grand Cherokees. U.S., European, and Japanese automakers are pouring a hefty \$18 billion into new factories in South America, primarily in Brazil and Argentina. They are driven by increased world competition, the attraction of lower wages and regional trade barriers, and the hope of expanding their market share in the region.

Auto boom in Argentina and Brazil

Auto executives point to a new rise in economic output in Brazil and Argentina — more than 7 percent growth is projected in Argentina this year — and a relatively large middle class in these industrially advanced semicolonial countries. Auto sales in Brazil in the first quarter of 1997 ran at an annual rate of 2.2 million vehicles, triple the level five years ago. Sales in Argentina are at an annual pace of 400,000 vehicles. Profit-giddy auto manufacturers have brushed aside warnings of an auto glut or of another crisis like the 1994 Mexican peso collapse, which rocked the region's economies.

Auto giants like GM and Fiat are cashing in on the antilabor policies of the capitalist governments in Argentina and elsewhere in South America. The government of Argentine president Carlos Menem is pushing to pass a sweeping "labor flexibilization" bill. The measure would make it easier for employers to fire workers, extend probationary periods, hire temporary workers, change work schedules more freely, peg wages to productivity, and gut collective bargaining by allowing plant-wide or even so-called individual contracts with workers instead of agreements for all workers in an industry or company as a whole.

"Fiat is already trying to implement the labor flexibilization here," noted Eduardo Mulhall, one of the fired workers. He explained that last year the old Fiat plant in Córdoba, which has changed owners and names several times, was bought back by the Italian company from the local capitalist Macri family. Fiat immediately took a hard-nosed stance.

Management refused to bargain in good faith with the metalworkers union, UOM, and signed a sweetheart contract with SMATA, the machinists union, which has contracts with other major auto companies. "They signed the contract behind the backs of the workers," said Carlos Gallo, another fired worker and the main leader of the union activists in the plant.

"When it took over, Fiat terminated all workers, with severance pay, and rehired them as new employees with no seniority rights. They imposed a 50 percent pay cut, from about 400 pesos every two weeks to 400 pesos a month," said Marcelo Zárate. "Rents in Córdoba, for example, are 300-400 pesos a month. Prices for many consumer goods in Argentina are comparable to those in the United States."

"In the name of 'competitiveness,' the company imposed much worse conditions in the plant," Gallo added. "The workday was reduced from 8 to 7 hours, but you have to work Saturdays. If there is lost produc-



Inset: Militant/Martín Koppel
Auto workers occupied Córdoba Fiat plant late last year in response to company offensive. Inset: Eduardo Mulhall (left) and other fired Fiat workers tell Militant reporters their struggle.

tion from a blackout, say, employees are forced to work weekends. Vacation pay was cut from 135 hours to 85 hours. The lunch was moved to the end of the workday, with only a 12-minute break per shift. And the line speed was brutally jacked up."

Meanwhile, Fiat has built a \$600 million auto assembly plant adjoining the old factory, which makes engines and gearboxes. The modern plant, which operates on a "just-in-time" basis, produces a new "world class" car every two minutes and is projected to increase output to 200,000 units a year for sale in the Mercosur countries, which include Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

"The company is using 'work teams,' 'quality circles,' and competitiveness awards. It pays bonuses based on plant-wide absenteeism to try to get workers to control each other," Mulhall explained. "Management holds big events where workers and their families are invited, to try to control our lives and free time. These work norms and methods may already be common in the United States, but they are new for us in Argentina and we're trying to find ways to fight them."

First factory occupation

Gallo recounted workers' response to Fiat's offensive. "On the first day the plant came under new ownership, Sept. 19, 1996, we occupied the factory. Workers protested the contract and the fact that we had no say in the matter. There was big participation among the 1,700 workers in the takeover, which lasted five days."

"The plant occupation was important — it was one of the first signs that something is changing in Argentina. You have to remember that we are still recovering from a period where the best working-class leaders were killed and disappeared. That was a major defeat," Gallo emphasized.

The unionist was referring to the U.S.-backed military regime that ruled Argentina in 1976-83. The dictatorship was the capitalist class's brutal response to the prerevolutionary upsurge that had begun in the late 1960s. A high point of that upsurge was the 1969 *Cordobazo*, an uprising in Córdoba led by the industrial working class in which the Fiat workers played a central role. Vanguard workers there were murdered, jailed, or driven into exile by the military regime.

The return of civilian bourgeois rule was accompanied by devastating hyperinflation, followed by record unemployment — now officially at 17 percent — which instilled fear of economic instability. But the new generation of workers entering the plants is not marked by these past blows and defeats, and their readiness to fight is inspiring some of the veteran workers.

"What's changing is a new willingness to fight," Zárate said. "Today we also see the popular rebellions in Cutral-Có, Jujuy, and Salta," which have been led by unemployed workers and youth.

After the occupation of the Fiat plant, an agreement was reached through compulsory arbitration. "We won some important concessions," Gallo said. The company agreed to restore the previous workweek and bring pay back up to 95 percent of the previous

rates for two years by adding a monthly bonus that is not folded into the basic wage.

Workers also elected a new local leadership of nine, with Gallo as the union secretary. They then undertook a series of moves to organize a union that would answer to their needs. After SMATA refused to let them organize their own local and elect their leadership, the FIAT workers voted overwhelmingly to establish an independent union, SITRAMF (Union of Machinists in Ferreyra), which was open to all industrial workers in Ferreyra, the area on the outskirts of Córdoba where Fiat and many auto parts and other factories are located.

Victimization of unionists

The company and the government refused to recognize the independent union. "We were not going to give in, so Fiat began to victimize workers," said Roberto Ramos, a 28-year-old worker and one of the elected leaders. "In response, a second factory occupation took place January 22. The company then fired 42 workers, including the elected representatives." Other union militants have been eliminated through forced "resignations."

The Fiat workers continued to organize marches and rallies outside the plant gate to press their demands, including reinstatement of the victimized workers. They were joined in several mobilizations by workers from the CIADEA (Renault) factory and nearby parts plants.

To get around the government's refusal to grant legal recognition to their union, workers then decided to join the UOM.

"We carried out a number of mass actions — a 24-hour strike, a march of 1,000

workers, then another one-day strike," Gallo reported.

Gallo himself was fired May 23. Six days later, the Fiat workers blocked Highway 9, which runs in front of the plant, to protest Gallo's firing and commemorate the anniversary of the Cordobazo.

Meanwhile, the unionists are awaiting official recognition from the General Workers Confederation (CGT), the country's main trade union federation, to which the UOM is affiliated.

Massive hiring of young workers

"The company is trying to create an atmosphere of terror in the plant," Juan Cortiz remarked. "New workers who attend union meetings or openly associate with union members are fired. Even so, there is sympathy for the union among many of the young workers."

As part of its plant expansion, Fiat hired 1,800 workers, overwhelmingly in their late teens and twenties, on top of the 1,700 workers from the old plant. They continue to hire at a rate of 150 a week, aiming for a workforce of 5,000.

Zárate added, "Fiat's goal was to hire young workers with technical skills, hoping they would be favorable to the company and easier to exploit. When the young workers didn't play their game, the company then began hiring workers in their 40s. Because of the victimizations, we have to function underground. To reach the young workers, we visit them at their homes."

In face of the brutal speed-up, even some of the recently hired workers have carried out job actions in the new facility.

The struggle at Fiat reflects moods developing among other industrial workers. Workers at the CIADEA plant have also been fighting an attempt to gut their union. On November 12, some 3,500 auto workers there occupied the plant in support of the 500 maintenance workers, who faced being rehired as new employees of the French-based Polymont company.

"Our fight is part of the struggle against the government's labor flexibilization bill," Gallo said. "The bosses have already begun to implement it at Renault and Volkswagen, and it will be used against the whole labor movement."

Mulhall added, "The Menem government already sold the [state-owned] oil company, railroads, airlines, and telephone company to foreign capitalists, who have laid off tens of thousands of workers. This is one of the results of the foreign debt and the squeeze by the International Monetary Fund."

The unionist made an appeal to workers in other countries. "We've met auto workers from Brazil and Italy. We want to reach auto workers and other unionists in the United States and other countries."

"We're being attacked by the same bosses. So we have to learn from each other and fight together," Mulhall said.

250 protest Maryland execution

BY MAGGIE PUCCI

BALTIMORE — Two crowds gathered on a Baltimore street near the Maryland Penitentiary — called "Supermax" — on the night of July 1 as the execution of Flint Gregory Hunt drew near. On one end of the block in front of the castle-like prison were people protesting the execution, including Hunt's sister and niece, activists against the death penalty, and area residents. At the other end of the block were those gathered to cheer the execution, including members of the family of the Baltimore cop Hunt was convicted of killing and several city police officers.

Hunt was the 82nd man to be executed in Maryland history. Sixty-three of these prisoners were Black, as are 13 of the 16 inmates currently on death row in Maryland.

A series of rallies and vigils opposing the pending execution and death penalty began June 28. A midday rally of about 100 people protested that day, and nightly vigils began the next night.

The biggest crowd by far gathered on July 1, as word filtered out that this was to be the night of the execution. By 11:30 p.m. the crowd had swelled to about 250. A large percentage of the people were students and other youth. One young Black woman held a sign that read "Death Penalty Unfair to African-Americans." Another sign read

"Mother of Murder Victim Against the Death Penalty."

A loud and angry picket line marched for hours, chanting "Hey hey, ho ho, the death penalty has got to go." Prisoners inside the penitentiary also got in on the action, shouting, "They say death row," to which protesters responded, "We say hell no!" The inmates gave many words of encouragement to the crowd below, telling protesters, "What you're doing down there is really important," and "Let the world know they're about to kill another Black man!"

The group of protesters stayed on the street until 1:30 a.m., an hour after the execution, many discussing what to do next to fight capital punishment. One woman encouraged those present to not vote for Maryland governor Parris Glendening as a way to struggle against the death penalty. Others called for more protest actions. Upcoming events in Philadelphia to demand a new trial for death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal were announced.

Supporters of Socialist Workers candidate Mary Martin for Washington, D.C. Council Chair distributed a statement urging working people and youth to oppose Washington mayor Marion Barry's bill to reinstate the death penalty there for anyone convicted of killing a public safety worker, including cops, firefighters, and probation officers.

Bolivia, 1960s: 'Conditions were ripening for continent-wide revolutionary battles'

Cuban general, in new book, sheds light on Cuba's internationalism

Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla': With Che Guevara in Bolivia 1966-68 by Harry Villegas; Pathfinder Press, 1997; New York; 365 pp. **At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas (Pombo);** Pathfinder Press, 1997; New York; 39 pp.; in English and Spanish.

BY STEVE CLARK

Like most good stories, this one by Cuban Brigadier General Harry Villegas loses a lot in the retelling. In reviewing Pathfinder's newly released English-language edition of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla,'* my goal is not to retell Villegas's story but to present a few good reasons to pick it up and read it for yourself.

The book is a diary and account of the 1966-68 guerrilla campaign in Bolivia initiated by Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born revolutionary leader who had been forged politically in the crucible of the Cuban revolutionary movement since the mid-1950s. The author, Harry Villegas — also known by his *nom de guerre*, Pombo — was a member of Guevara's general staff in Bolivia. As a teenager in 1957, he had joined the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains and fought under Guevara's command in the popular war to



Fighters in Che's guerrilla in Bolivia, Dec. 2, 1966. From left to right: Urbano (partially obscured), Miguel, Che, Marcos, Chino, Pacho, Pombo, Inti, Coco. Chino was from Peru, Inti and Coco from Bolivia, and the others were veterans of the revolutionary struggle in Cuba.

proimperialist regime. It was there that Guevara — who had resigned all leadership posts in Cuba before taking up this internationalist mission — gave Villegas the Swahili pseudonym "Pombo Pojo," which he was to use throughout the Congo and subsequent Bolivian campaigns.

Following the end of the Cuban volunteer effort in the Congo in late 1965, Villegas collaborated with Guevara in preparations to launch the revolutionary effort in Latin America's Southern Cone. He was part of the team that traveled to Bolivia in June 1966 to lay the political and logistical groundwork for the guerrilla nucleus there. He served on the general staff of the unit, functioning as its chief quartermaster, and fought in numerous battles.

On Oct. 8, 1967, Guevara was wounded and taken prisoner by Bolivian military forces, who had been tightening their encirclement of the guerrillas and inflicting more fatalities. The next day Guevara and two of his captured *compañeros* were murdered inside a schoolhouse in the village of

La Higuera, on orders by the Bolivian government, following consultation with Washington. After taking an oath with the remaining combatants to continue the struggle, Villegas commanded the group of five who eluded the combined efforts by Bolivian and U.S. government forces to track them down (a sixth survivor of the October battle was killed the following month).

'Why we fight'

Since his return to Cuba in March 1968, Villegas has served in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, including in the high command of the 375,000 internationalist volunteers who fought in Angola between 1975 and 1989 to combat invading South African troops and U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary bands. He participated in the 1988 battle at Cuito Cuanavale. There, Angolan, Cuban, and Namibian fighters dealt the decisive blow to the apartheid army inside Angola and gave a powerful new impulse to the struggle within South Africa to bring down the white supremacist regime.

Villegas's account of the internationalist mission in Angola is told in a pamphlet entitled *At the Side of Che Guevara* released by Pathfinder, in English and Spanish, to accompany publication of his book. "Cuba's aid to Angola was not only worthwhile," Villegas says there, "but if we were capable of doing it again, we would do so...."

"If we did nothing more than indirectly help defeat apartheid, our effort was unquestionably worthwhile. Millions of human beings have been given the possibility to realize their human potential. This is why Che fought, why all progressive humanity has fought, why men and women of dignity have fought everywhere. This is what Fidel is fighting for. This is why the Cuban people resist."

The pamphlet includes two 1995 interviews with Villegas spanning his lifetime of revolutionary activity, from the Cuban revolutionary war, to the Congo, Bolivian, and Angolan campaigns, to today. One of the two interviews was initially given to *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* correspondents Luis Madrid and Mary-Alice Waters; Waters is the editor of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* and author of the publisher's preface to the English edition. The other interview, from the Cuban newspaper *Trabajadores*, was conducted by Elsa Blaquier Ascaño.

Brigadier General Villegas is currently head of political education for the FAR's Western Army. He is also vice president of the National Commission organizing the commemoration this year of the 30th anniversary of the death of Che Guevara and his fellow combatants. The Cuban publisher Editora Política released the original Span-

ish edition of Villegas's book, *Pombo: Un hombre de la guerrilla del Che*, in 1996 in anticipation of this anniversary, aiming to shed additional light on these events and their place in the revolutionary past, present, and future of the Americas.

Revolution in Southern Cone

What was the goal of Ernesto Che Guevara, Harry Villegas, and their Bolivian, Cuban, and Peruvian comrades in launching the Bolivian campaign?

"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," Villegas writes in his introduction to the English edition. "Later on it would give birth to new guerrilla columns extending outward toward the Southern Cone of Latin America, giving continuity to a battle that would become continent-wide in scope...."

Guevara was "totally convinced that the political conditions were ripening and that this perspective was realizable," Villegas says. "In his view, victory was certain to the degree that the struggle extended as far as possible throughout Latin America." It was with that broader revolutionary perspective in mind that "Che chose Bolivia as the place from which to initiate his strategic course in Latin America."

Among the reasons for Guevara's decision, Villegas says, was "Bolivian people's combative traditions." In 1952 a revolutionary upsurge in Bolivia, led by tin miners, toppled a military regime and forced the bourgeois-nationalist government that replaced it to nationalize the largest tin mines, legalize trade unions, initiate a land reform, and extend voting rights to the country's indigenous majority. Just prior to the launching of the guerrilla front in the 1960s, Villegas notes in his introduction, "students, peasants, miners, and workers all fought heroically" in face of stiffening government repression.

Bolivia's geographical location in Latin America — sharing borders with five countries, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Peru — "was involved from the beginning in Che's strategy," Villegas adds in his interview with Madrid and Waters. Guevara's aim "was not to lead the Bolivians. His aim was to coordinate the whole movement in the Southern Cone. That was his aim. Sooner or later Che aimed to go to Argentina."

Fact vs. fiction

The reliability of Pombo's account has been challenged by journalist Jon Lee Anderson, author of one of several new biographies of Guevara being released this year on the 30th anniversary of his death. According to Anderson, there was little objective political basis to the choice of Bolivia. Following the Congo mission, Anderson writes in his book, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life*, Cuban leader Fidel Castro wanted Guevara to return to Cuba, but Guevara "wanted to go 'directly' to Latin America. But where?"

Other Cuban leaders "drawn into the dilemma" of selecting a location "found that Che was not an easy man to deal with," Anderson writes. But they finally "dissuaded Che from his plan to go straight to South America in favor of Prague. There, he would be safer and could 'wait things out' until Cuba found somewhere for him to go."

Anderson continues: "There is enduring controversy over the true target of Che's next — and last — war making effort.... This is perhaps the most crucial single question about the life of Ernesto Che Guevara to remain unanswered. Who decided he should go to Bolivia; when and why was that decision made?"

The mystery, however, is in Anderson's imagination. A decision of such scope and consequences clearly involved discussions

BOOK REVIEW

overturn the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. That revolutionary war culminated in a triumphant insurrection in January 1959.

Following the victory, Villegas shouldered numerous responsibilities — from serving as head of Guevara's escort; to working under Guevara's direction in the initial efforts by the workers and farmers government to restructure industry on new, proletarian foundations; to participating in the formation of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR); and in the commission that planned the founding congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in 1965.

In early 1965 Villegas was one of more than 100 Cuban volunteers who joined Guevara in assisting revolutionary forces in the Congo fighting to overturn that country's

From Pathfinder

Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla

by Harry Villegas Tamayo (Pombo)

A never-before published story of the 1966-68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara. Regular price \$21.95

Also available in Spanish, *Un hombre de la guerrilla del Che*, Editora Política. \$18.95

At the Side of Che Guevara

INTERVIEW WITH HARRY VILLEGAS (POMBO)

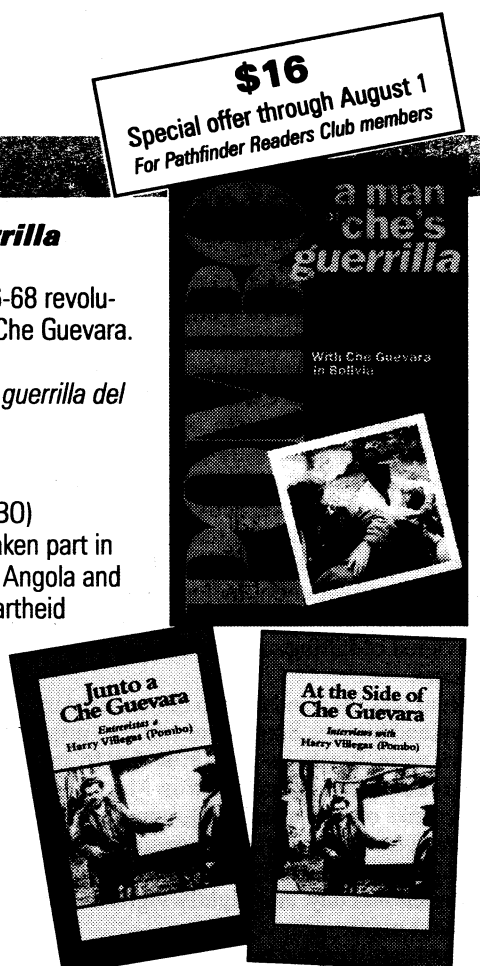
Villegas talks about the struggles he has taken part in over four decades — including the war in Angola and the historic defeat of the South African apartheid army at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. Above all, he explains the importance of Guevara's political legacy for new generations of fighters the world over. Available in Spanish and English. \$4.00

The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara

Guevara's account of the 1966-67 guerrilla struggle in Bolivia.

Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. \$21.95

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by Guevara with long-time revolutionary collaborators in Cuba, including differing viewpoints and shifting assessments. Historians and biographers can and will debate the details ad infinitum.

No more damning charge could be made against a revolutionary leadership, however, than Anderson's implication that the decision to launch the Bolivian operation was largely lacking in serious political grounds, that it was an adventure — that confronted with a man "not easy to deal with," Cuban leaders "found somewhere for him to go."

Such a charge, in fact, is ultimately more damaging to the Cuban revolution than the slanders that have circulated ever since Guevara's death that Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders wanted Che out of the country because of political differences, and that they rejected steps that could have rescued him and his comrades from death in Bolivia. These smears are so much at odds with the proven record of the Cuban leadership that they are less and less likely to be taken seriously by revolutionary-minded workers and youth.

The most recent attempt to give new life to this tall tale has largely fallen flat, even in bourgeois public opinion. That was the publication in France last year of the "memoirs" of one of the two other Cuban survivors of the Bolivian campaign, Dariel Alarcón Ramírez, who fought under the pseudonym Benigno. Alarcón turned against the revolution and defected from Cuba in 1996.

Benigno's book was intended as an authoritative rejoinder to Villegas's account. Its falsifications were so numerous, its sensationalism so flagrant, and its author's self-serving rancor so transparent, however, that the book's political impact reverberated little beyond circles of openly counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles and handfuls of middle-class apologists for imperialist "democracy." It isn't necessary to be a partisan of Cuba's socialist revolution and communist leadership to recognize that Alarcón has neither the personal integrity nor the earned political standing of Harry Villegas, Ernesto Che Guevara, or Fidel Castro.

Anderson's cleaned-up account is, if anything, more insidious. Eschewing wild claims that have stood neither the tests of time nor truth, he places a question mark over the political seriousness and responsibility of the Cuban leadership, including Guevara himself. Where the lives of dozens of revolutionary cadres are at stake, as well as the future of toilers across Latin America, light-minded adventurism and utopian schemes are not political misdemeanors.

Nothing in the facts of the Bolivian campaign or preparations for it, however, corroborates Anderson's treatment.

Second Declaration of Havana

From the outset of the Cuban revolution at the opening of the 1960s, its leaders made no secret of their aim to do everything within their power to set an example for — and provide active solidarity with — others in the Americas and around the world engaged in struggles against imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation.

In an uncompromising public response to Washington's intensifying drive to crush the first socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere militarily and economically, more than a million Cuban working people filled the streets of Havana in February 1962 to issue a call for a continent-wide struggle against imperialism.

"What is it that is hidden behind the Yankees' hatred of the Cuban revolution?" said that document, which became known as *The Second Declaration of Havana* (available from Pathfinder in English, Spanish, French, and Greek editions).

"What unites them and stirs them up is fear," it said. "... Not fear of the Cuban revolution but fear of the Latin American revolution."

The Second Declaration of Havana directly challenged the decades-long course of the Stalinist Communist parties and So-



cial Democratic parties alike in Latin America. These parties had subordinated the interests of working people to bourgeois political misleaderships that repeatedly betrayed their struggles for land, national sovereignty, and labor rights and repressed their social movements and organizations.

"In the actual historic conditions of Latin America," the declaration said, "the national bourgeoisie cannot lead the antifeudal and anti-imperialist struggle. Experience shows that in our nations that class, even when its interests are in contradiction to those of Yankee imperialism, has been incapable of confronting it, for the national bourgeoisie is paralyzed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the cry of the exploited masses."

Encouraged by the victory in Cuba, workers and peasants across Latin America were beginning to take up the struggle against the U.S.-backed regimes of the exploiters, the declaration said. "That wave is composed of the greatest number, the majorities in every respect, those whose labor amasses the wealth and turns the wheels of history. Now they are awakening from the long, brutalizing sleep to which they had been subjected."

"For this great mass of humanity has said, 'Enough!' and has begun to march."

Message to the Tricontinental

In January 1966, not long after Guevara's departure from Cuba to take up internationalist duties, the Cuban leadership organized a conference in Havana of anti-imperialist fighters from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The gathering established an organization that became popularly known as the Tricontinental, and Guevara sometime that year addressed his last major political article to it. The article was first published in April 1967 in the inaugural issue of the organization's magazine, under Guevara's title, "Create two, three . . . many Vietnams — that is the watchword." Often referred to as the Message to the Tricontinental, Guevara's 1966 article is included in the opening pages of the book under review.

In the interview with Madrid and Waters, Villegas underlines the importance of this document for the fighters in Bolivia. "As combatants we studied the world situation that Che evaluates in his 'Message to the Tricontinental,'" Villegas says. "That was part of the school, the training of future leaders. Above all, the world situation was marked by the genocidal war being waged against the people of Vietnam," and by their ultimately victorious struggle against imperialist domination.

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

Just as Vietnam's struggle was giving the Cuban revolution greater maneuvering room to resist Washington's military probes and



Wide World Photos (above)

The combative traditions of the Bolivian working class were among the reasons Che Guevara chose that country to launch revolutionary effort in Latin America's Southern Cone. The impact of the powerful 1952 revolutionary upsurge in Bolivia continued to be felt in the 1960s. Above, mine workers and supporters receive weapons during a general mobilization in the Catavi-Siglo XX mining area, December 1963. Following Guevara's death in October 1968, revolutionary struggles spread throughout Latin America well into the next decade. Left, striking auto workers rally in Argentina, 1970s.

threats, Guevara explained in the 1966 message, so too the most effective solidarity Latin American revolutionists could extend their Indochinese brothers and sisters was "the creation of the world's second or third Vietnam, or second and third Vietnam."

Thus, in acting to advance the growing revolutionary wave in Latin America's Southern Cone, Guevara and his co-combatants were putting into practice the course presented at the close of the Message to the Tricontinental — "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."

Preparing for battle

Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla' is a valuable companion piece to Guevara's own *Bolivian Diary*, also published by Pathfinder in English translation. The story Villegas tells consists of two parts.

The first is the diary he kept from the time of his arrival in Bolivia in July 1966 through May 28, 1967. That notebook, as he explains in his introduction, was "captured together with Che's diary and other documents" in October 1967, during the battle in which Guevara was wounded and taken prisoner. The following year, Villegas says, Bolivia's minister of the interior sent a retyped copy of it to Cuba. "The original, which I did not receive a photographic copy of, remained

in Bolivia, in the custody of the army high command."

The second part of the book, covering the period from May 1967 through Villegas's return to Cuba the following March, is based on a series of talks he gave in Havana's La Cabaña military fortress.

In the diary's initial entries, written in July and early August 1966 just after Villegas had arrived in Bolivia, he describes the political and logistical preparations for the campaign by a nucleus of Cuban and Bolivian cadres. This included discussions with Peruvian revolutionists about why Guevara and the Cuban leadership had decided against launching operations initially in Peru, which they had previously considered.

"We explained that for the moment conditions are better in Bolivia, given the turn of events [in Peru] following the defeat of the armed struggle there." Between October 1965 and January 1966, several guerrilla fronts in Peru had sustained heavy blows, including the deaths or imprisonment of their central leaders. Despite initial hesitations over this decision, three Peruvian revolutionists joined the forces gathering in Bolivia.

Villegas also describes the negotiations he and other members of the preparations team conducted with the leadership of the Bolivian Communist Party, in particular its general secretary Mario Monje. Seventeen

Continued on Page 15

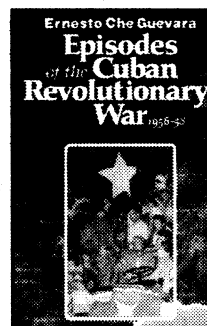
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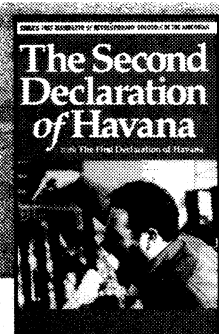
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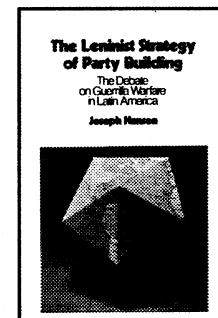
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by Joseph Hansen **\$26.95**



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History of socialists' work in coalfields

BY ESTELLE DeBATES
AND DAVID SALNER

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Forty-five people gathered June 28 at the Pathfinder Bookstore here for a meeting that marked the reorganization of the Socialist Workers Party's political work in the coalfields of West Virginia and western Pennsylvania. This reorganization includes the decision to close the branch of the SWP and the Pathfinder Bookstore in Morgantown.

Longtime supporters of the party and a number of young people who met and worked with the socialist movement here in the recent months attended the meeting. More than \$350 worth of books at 75 percent off were sold that day, as activists continued to stop by as late as 10 p.m. to make some final purchases. Throughout the week, fighters for Black rights, woman's rights, and union activists had stopped by the bookstore, cleaning off the shelves. Two high school students from Washington, Pennsylvania, and one young worker from Pittsburgh bought a total of 80 books. They spent an entire afternoon talking with SWP and Young Socialist members while picking out additions to their libraries.

Diana Newberry, a member of the Young Socialists in Morgantown, opened the program by introducing the featured speaker, Paul Mailhot, a member of the National Committee of the SWP. Mailhot lived in Morgantown during much of the 1980s and was active in the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union at the Morgan Shirt Factory, which closed last year.

"We may be leaving Morgantown, but not our work here," said Mailhot. The political work among miners, youth and other working people in the coalfield area will continue through the work of the Pittsburgh branch of the SWP, located just one and a half hours north of Morgantown. The party members from Morgantown will be reinforcing that branch, as well as those in Birmingham, Chicago, Cleveland, and Seattle.

Mailhot noted that the party earlier had a branch in Morgantown from 1947 to 1951. Its members included coal miners. The SWP and the *Militant* newspaper championed the exemplary struggle of the miners during World War II, who stood up to the bosses and the government, taking strike action several times in spite of the no-strike pledge agreed to by the union officialdom. The party won respect and recruits among mine workers for its stand in solidarity with these struggles.

The decision for the party to expand into Morgantown and other areas was based on the postwar upsurge by labor that culminated into a strike wave in 1945-46, bringing hundreds of thousands of workers into political activity. Despite this upsurge, the petty-bourgeois labor officialdom was able to consolidate its hold on the unions by 1950, a process that was hastened by the capitalist economic expansion coming out of the war. The good times made it possible for workers to win modest but real wage increases and "fringe benefits" without increasing conflicts with the employers. In the early 1950s the socialist movement carried out a necessary regrouping that meant retreating from a number of cities and also eventually giving up a national structure for socialists doing work in the trade unions.

Political openings

"Today we are also consolidating our forces," Mailhot said, "but what we face is

a completely different political situation. The openings to do political work, to attract workers and youth to communist politics, and to build the Socialist Workers Party are greater than they have been in decades. But in this region of the country and some others we are spread too thin to take advantage of them.

"We live in a world today where the capitalists' confidence in their ability to rule has been shaken," the speaker said, "as they are driven to continue their assault on the working class through austerity and war. However, this is also a world in which the working class has started to make its own moves." He pointed to the recent elections in France, Britain, and Canada where workers went to the polls to "vote no to the idea that sacri-



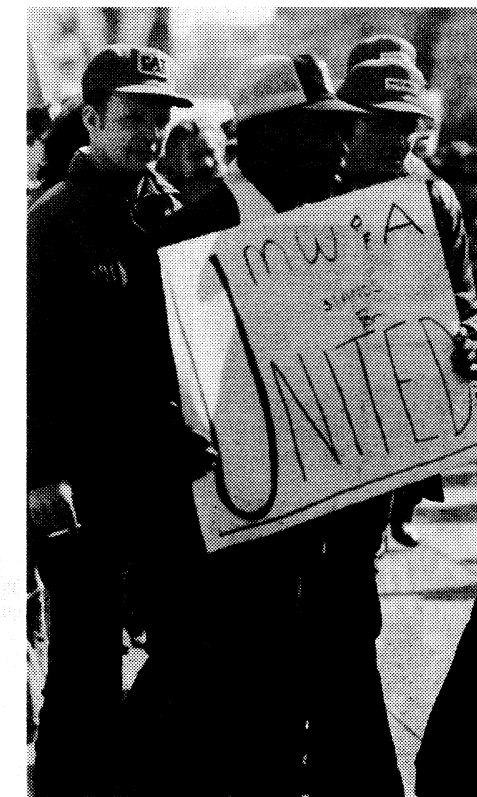
At meeting in Morgantown, SWP leader Paul Mailhot described how miners were strengthened in 1977-78 strike (top) because they had fought for union democracy.

ifice will lead to prosperity" as evidence that the working class is not defeated.

"When you look around the world from Europe, to Argentina, to the ending of 150 years of British rule of Hong Kong, you see a trend. The United States is part of the same trend line," asserted Mailhot. "When workers are given an opening to fight, you can see the potential," he said, pointing to the June 21 rally of tens of thousands of workers in Detroit to support newspaper workers whose strike was led to defeat by the labor officialdom. That rally was a magnet for workers who had been involved in strikes across the country, including UMWA members who struck at Pittston Coal Co. in the early 1990s. He also took note of the strike currently under way at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, where 4,500 workers have maintained solidarity on the picket lines for nine months without a single crossover. Mailhot went on, "These are small but important developments where workers can get experience for the bigger battles that lie ahead." A number of people in the audience had just come from the picket lines at Wheeling-Pitt that day. The SWP organizes itself to be in the best position possible to join these struggles and to build the type of party that can help lead the working class to power and begin to run society in the interests of the toiling majority.

Mine workers' history of struggle

"We came to Morgantown in 1977 to become part of a showdown that was shaping up in the nation's coal mines," Mailhot said. In response to the 1974-75 worldwide re-



Militant photos by Nancy Cole (top) and Rich Suart

cession, the rulers dealt blows to the rights and living conditions of working people.

In 1977 the coal bosses association provoked a fight with the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), counting on "the desperately weak position" of the union as one Wall Street magazine put it at that time. What resulted, however, was a 110-day strike in which the ranks of the mine workers voted down two concession contracts. The miners also stood up to President James Carter's aid to the coal bosses when he ordered them back to work using the Taft-Hartely Act, declaring a "national emergency." The miners' slogan was "Taft can mine it — Hartley can haul it," reminiscent of the militancy of the 1943 strike slogan, "You can't mine coal with bayonets."

The strikers reached out for and found solidarity from others and were able to block a concerted union-busting assault and strengthen their union. Mailhot pointed out that the strength of the 1977-78 strike resulted from a revolution in the UMWA. This revolution was made by rank-and-file miners in what became known as the Miners for Democracy, which developed out of the battles in the late 1960s and early '70s to protect miners' health and safety.

For miners, the mid-1960s marked the beginning of the end of a 15-year period of devastating unemployment and mine mechanization. The workforce dropped from 400,000 in the late 1940s to 125,000 by 1964. The miners were also saddled with one of the most corrupt bureaucracies, headed by UMWA President W. Anthony Boyle. The death of miners to black lung disease or in mining accidents was considered entirely acceptable.

By the early 1960s hiring began to pick up in the mines. Increasingly this hiring included young veterans who had been in Vietnam. "The rank-and-file's aspirations began to surface as confidence grew that a fight could be waged to improve the health, safety, and standard of living of the miners," said Mailhot.

Struggle for union democracy

The 1968 Farmington Disaster, in which 78 miners died in a Consolidated Coal Co. (Consol)-owned mine close to Morgantown was a turning point in this development. The day after the blast, while the families of the trapped miners kept vigil, Boyle congratulated Consol for being "one of the better companies as far as cooperation and safety are concerned."

The UMWA president's response convinced many that they would have to take

the fight into their own hands. Rank-and-file miners went out on a series of strikes and rallies led by the Black Lung Association. Through their actions they forced through important legislation. This victory gave confidence to miners and others. It gave momentum to the developing fight in the UMWA for health, safety, and union democracy.

Mailhot pointed out that when the party came to Morgantown in 1977, "We joined in the fight of the miners. We did this most effectively by getting hired in the mills, garment shops, and eventually the mines and being active in the unions." This was an important part of the SWP rebuilding a national structure to organize socialists in the trade unions.

"Members of the SWP and the Young Socialist Alliance came here to be part of a struggle and openly campaign for it as socialists. From the moment we set up the branch we supported the mine workers' strike by getting speakers on campus and at union meetings. We rallied support for mine workers in the *Militant*, and we ran socialist election campaigns."

Mailhot pointed out how the response by mine workers to one campaign showed the Socialist Workers were able to win a place and win respect in the union, even when their ideas weren't always popular. "Bill Hovland was the party's candidate for statewide office in 1982 at the Kitt mine, when the company fired him," Mailhot said. "The company thought they could use the fact that a lot of workers opposed Hovland's socialist views to fire him and deal a blow to the union. Hovland won his job back as part of a fight by the miners against this attack and others by the coal bosses."

"Today we often take for granted the fact that supporters of the *Militant* can stand in front of a mine portal and distribute the paper," Mailhot said. "But this was a right that we along with other miners had to fight for against the coal companies and some conservative-minded workers."

"The SWP was part of efforts by women to win and defend their rights to jobs in the mines. These struggles led to the formation of the Coal Employment Project, in which we remain active today," said Mailhot. That weekend, party members from Morgantown and elsewhere were attending the 19th CEP-sponsored National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters taking place that same weekend in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. A collection at the meeting and a dinner beforehand raised \$380 toward their expenses.

Mailhot pointed out that mine workers contributed mightily to the demise of nuclear power in the late 1970s and early 1980s. "The capitalist class had plans," he said, "to build nuclear reactors across the United States to increase their profits and erode the bargaining position of the mine workers union. Many environmental activists would be surprised when we would tell them that the largest antinuclear organization was the United Mine Workers."

He pointed out that by the early 1980s, the SWP had been able to use the strength and experience it had gained in Morgantown to expand to other coal centers — Charleston, in the southern West Virginia coalfields, and Price, Utah in the Western coalfields. From its base in Utah, socialist workers and youth traveled to talk to miners and sell subscriptions to the *Militant* throughout the Western coalfields. In Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming they met up with miners who are Navajos, Chicanos, and who came from the eastern coalfields in search of work.

"Today nearly every member of the SWP who has worked in the mine has been laid off," said Mailhot. Northern West Virginia has been hit particularly hard by mine closings in the last two years. "Miners are aging, but coal remains an important industry," Mailhot noted. "So the coal bosses will need to reach for young workers who can handle the working conditions they intend to impose. But they don't want the traditions of the UMWA intact when the youth come in. They will continue to go after the union and try to tame it."

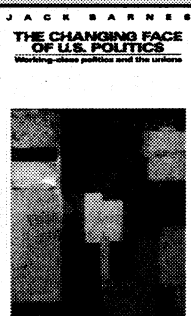
"We leave here with a pledge," the speaker concluded, "that we will continue to be a part of all the struggles of the miners and other workers in the region. And that when the new generation is hired into the mines we will be part of that just as we were in the past."

From Pathfinder

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Activists back independence for Puerto Rico at UN

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

UNITED NATIONS, New York—"We have come to denounce the colonial and imperialistic policies that the United States has imposed on Puerto Rico for the last 99 years," said Raquel Rivera June 19 at the UN Special Committee on Decolonization. She spoke for the Puerto Rico Collective, a group of Puerto Rican youth here who support independence for the U.S. colony.

Rivera's remarks were echoed by Cuban ambassador Bruno Rodríguez, who stated, "Cuba reiterates its solidarity with the brother peoples of Puerto Rico." He noted that "next year will mark 100 years of colonization by the United States of Puerto Rico." He said the Special Committee "has a duty to remain vigilant" and not forget the plight of Puerto Rican political prisoners. Both Rodríguez and Rivera spoke against the U.S. military presence on the island.

The June 16-20 hearings of the UN Commission on Decolonization were marked by the participation of unionists from Puerto Rico and young Puerto Ricans in the United States, who were demanding the release of 15 Puerto Rican political prisoners held in jails across the United States, as well as the decolonization of that Caribbean nation. Debates over the colonial status of East Timor and opposition to the British government's control of the Malvinas Islands were also a highlight of the hearings.

"Colonialism is a crime against humanity and in this case, a crime against us, the Puerto Rican people," declared Celso Hernández Mojica, an organizer of the General Workers Union in Puerto Rico and a member of Ofensiva 92, a coalition fighting for the release of the imprisoned Puerto Rican activists.

"At the close of the century, the power that talks the most about democracy and freedom lives with the shame of still having a colony and maintaining the sons and daughters of that colony confined to its continental jails and committing atrocities and brutality against them," stated Juan Antonio Robles, of the General Workers Council of Puerto Rico. Robles is also a member of the Central Workers Federation Local 481, which is affiliated with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

Other speakers in favor of independence included Julio Muriente Pérez, president of the New Movement for Puerto Rican Independence (formerly Puerto Rican Socialist Party); Noel Colón Martínez, leader of the Hostosian National Congress; and Gilma Carmargo, representing the Center for Con-

stitutional Rights. Anibal Acevedo Vila, president of the Popular Democratic Party, addressed the UN committee defending the island's current colonial status as a commonwealth. Miriam Santiago de Crespi of Puertorricans Pro-Statehood was among those who spoke for Puerto Rico to become a U.S. state.

As has been the case for the past several years, no resolution on Puerto Rico was introduced for debate, only testimony from groups promoting the three main political currents: independence, statehood, and commonwealth. From 1972 until 1991, the UN committee adopted resolutions supporting the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence.

José Joaquín Rivera of Statehood 2000 testified in support of a bill introduced in the U.S. Congress in March 1996 by Rep. Donald Young, who is also pro-statehood. The measure, titled the "United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act," calls for a referendum on Puerto Rico's political status to be held "not later than December 31, 1998," the centennial of colonial domination by Washington. The bill is also being pushed by the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (PNP), led by Puerto Rican governor Pedro Rosselló.

Among other provisions, the Young bill asserts that "Congress has the authority to expand existing English language requirements in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.... It is anticipated that upon accession to Statehood, English would become the official language of the Federal Government in Puerto Rico." Only 20 percent of the island's 3.5 million residents speak English.

U.S. Rep. Luis Gutiérrez, a Democrat from Chicago, sent a statement to the hearing that criticized the Young bill as being a pro-statehood measure "dressed up as self-determination."

'Malvinas belong to Argentina'

In other developments, the UN Special Committee on Decolonization passed a resolution urging the British and Argentine governments to resume negotiations over the status of the Malvinas, a group of islands off the coast of Argentina that were seized by British forces in 1833 and renamed the Falkland Islands. When Buenos Aires briefly resumed sovereignty over the islands in April 1982, London went to war to resume colonial domination. With the backing of Washington, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher sent a fleet of more than 50 warships and established a naval block-

Solidarity with strawberry pickers' union drive



Militant/Osborne Hart

Some 60 United Farm Workers members and their supporters picketed the offices of Miles Reiter in Watsonville, California, July 2 to protest unfair labor practices against the UFW's efforts to organize. Reiter is a member of the board of Driscoll's ranches, the largest strawberry company in the state. The action was part of an ongoing organizing drive among strawberry workers.

ade of the Malvinas using nuclear-powered submarines. The islands have remained under British control since then.

Guido Di Tella, Argentine minister for foreign affairs, told the committee June 16 that the restitution of Hong Kong to China on July 1, and of Macao in 1999, demonstrated that change cannot be stopped.

Other representatives from Latin American governments including Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Venezuela spoke in favor of Argentina regaining control over the territory. Cuban diplomat Pedro Nuñez-Mosquera affirmed Havana's support for the Argentine government in the dispute and co-sponsored the resolution that was adopted.

A debate broke out at the UN session over the status of East Timor, a former Portuguese colony for 500 years, which won independence in 1975. The Indonesian military in-

vaded East Timor in December of that year, overthrew the independent government, and annexed the territory on May 3, 1976. East Timor is currently Indonesia's 27th province, although it is not officially recognized by the United Nations. Portuguese government officials claim Lisbon supports the right of East Timorese to determine their future, but retired Gen. Carlos Galvao De Mello of the Portuguese Air Force told the Special Committee that if Jakarta relinquished the territory it would be a "crime with catastrophic consequences."

Several participants called on the Indonesian regime to withdraw its troops from East Timor. Helena Pires of the Timorese Democratic Union denounced Jakarta's claim that the East Timorese people had already exercised their right to self-determination, despite the military occupation.

Rally backs farm workers in Florida

BY MIKE ITALIE
AND FLOYD FOWLER

QUINCY, Florida — Dozens of spirited Quincy Farm workers and their families, waving United Farm Workers (UFW) banners and a large Mexican flag in the blazing afternoon sun, marched with hundreds of supporters to press their fight for a union. The June 28 march and rally in support of mushroom workers at Quincy Farms was organized by the UFW and backed by the AFL-CIO and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

A large number of the 600 Quincy Farms workers have signed union authorization cards. The workforce is divided roughly in half between pickers, who are largely immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador, and packers, most of whom are African-Americans. Pickers earn \$1.42 per 20-pound box, and packers with over 10 years seniority receive only \$5.50 per hour. One picker, Ezequias, described how "workers often fall while picking mushrooms in the damp, dark conditions. I know of workers who didn't report injuries because they were afraid."

In March 1996, Quincy Farms fired 85 workers in an attempt to break their struggle.

As the June 28 rally was underway, company radio ads claimed that the "workers are happy" and that people in town should not listen to the "outsiders" promoting the union. Unionists from Atlanta, New Orleans, Tampa, Gainesville, and other cities came to show their support. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) filled a bus from New York and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists filled another from St. Louis. Several unionists from an International Association of Machinists local that won a strike in 1995 against the Miller Company Brewery in Albany, Georgia, came, as one member explained, "because we understand their battle, and to show our solidarity."

Groups of students from campuses in Tallahassee and Gainesville, Florida, decided to come to Quincy after participating in the march in solidarity with newspaper workers in Detroit on June 21. Quincy Farms workers were glad to accept a poster signed

by dozens of members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) at Wilen Manufacturing in Atlanta. The sign supporting the farm workers was written in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Creole, and Amharic.

UFW president Arturo Rodríguez reported on the union-initiated boycott of Prime Label mushrooms, which is being promoted by the AFL-CIO. Other speakers at the rallies that preceded and followed the march included Rev. Joseph Lowery, national president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFL-CIO executive vice president; and representatives of Florida National Organization for Women and the Florida NAACP State Conference.

One of the fired workers, Juana, received loud applause from her co-workers when she stepped to the microphone. "Last year I was fired for leading a lunchtime demonstration. I want to ask you to keep on giving us support until we get a union contract!"

Mike Italie is a member of UNITE in Atlanta.

UFW March for Fair Wages in Apple Orchards

Join the farm workers in a march to demand increased wages for apple pickers.

**Sunday, August 10
11:00 a.m.**

Mattawa, Washington

March begins in Desert Aire and ends at the park in Mattawa.

For more information, call
UFW (206) 443-7645.

New black lung regulations are 'not miner friendly'

BY DAVID SALNER

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Over 300 mine workers and their supporters gathered in Charleston, West Virginia, June 19 at the Civic Center for a hearing on new regulations to determine eligibility for black lung benefits. Black lung is an occupational disease affecting workers, primarily miners, who breath coal dust. A powerful social protest movement centered in West Virginia won governmental recognition of the disease in 1969.

The stated aim of the new regulations is to streamline the process, lower costs, and reduce waiting time for recipients. But Mike South, president of the National Black Lung Association, termed the proposed changes as "not miner friendly" in a telephone interview following the hearing.

United Mine Workers of America president Cecil Roberts was also at the hearings and warned about the rule changes.

Of the 6,000 who will apply for benefits this year, only 440 — 7 percent — will receive them. "The coal companies have all of the money to hire lawyers and consultants and supposed experts to say the miner has something wrong with him except black lung," Imajean Price said at the hearing, the *Charleston Gazette* reported. Price's hus-

band Halbert died a year ago of black lung disease from 38 years in the mines. Price is still fighting for her husband's benefits.

One of the rule changes would require miners to submit all their evidence at the first stage of the application process, a requirement that South pointed out few disabled miners could afford. In contrast, he said, coal companies will often spend between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to defeat one black lung claim. "According to the NIOSH [National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health] figures, 2,100 miners die a year from black lung. That's six every day," said South, a miner who is disabled with black lung. "The coal industry calls black lung benefits 'welfare for coal miners.' I'd like them to spend one day in the shoes of this welfare recipient."

South pointed out that black lung benefits are on the chopping block because they're considered entitlements. Other proposed cuts will hit black lung victims also, including the projected raise in the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67. Oxygen bottles that black lung patients need are often paid for out of these funds

David Salner is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 3-276.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Crisis-ridden Capitalism: Cuba Points the Way Out. Speaker: Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union. Fri., July 18, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460

FLORIDA

Miami

Railroad Profits vs. Railroad Safety. Speakers: Kay Sedam, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union, and others. Fri., July 18, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Hong Kong Returns to China: A Victory over Colonialism. Speaker: Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers Party, member of International Association of Machinists. Fri., July 18, 7:30 p.m. 803 Peachtree St. NE. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Rebellion in Argentina. Speaker: David Corona, Socialist Workers Party, member of Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers. Firsthand account from recent *Militant* reporting team. Fri., July 18, 7:30 p.m.

Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today. Speaker: Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers Party, activist in Chicago Cuba Coalition. Fri.,

July 25, 7:30 p.m. Both events at 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

IOWA

Des Moines

Speak Out Against Police Brutality. Speaker Ardy Blandford, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Auto Workers. Sat., July 19, 7:30 p.m.. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 2724 Douglas Ave. Donation: \$4, cost of dinner additional Tel: (515) 277-4600.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

No to British and Right-wing Violence in Ireland! Fri., July 18, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Ave (corner of Bergen St.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

WASHINGTON D.C.

The Worldwide Crisis of Capitalism: Working-class Politics in the 21st Century — from D.C. to Hong Kong. Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers candidate for D.C. Council Chair. Sat., July 19, 7:30 p.m., reception 6:30 p.m. 1930 18th St. NW (entrance on Florida St.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

New Zealand

Christchurch

Compulsory Savings: An Attack on Retirement Pension Rights. Speaker: Stuart Needham, Communist League. Fri., July 18, 7 p.m. 199 High Street (corner of High and Tuam). Donation: \$3. Tel: (03) 365-6055.

Hong Kong return to China celebrated

Continued from front page

of Hong Kong by more than 1,500 people in Atlanta, 1,000 in Boston, as well as in Los Angeles, London, and other cities around the world.

On July 6 another 10,000 people gathered in New York City to commemorate the hand over. "Chinese people felt humiliated about Hong Kong," asserted King Liu, president of the Chinese Student Association at City College of New York. He said the long British rule of Hong Kong was an international insult that dated back to the Opium Wars of 1839 to 1842, when British forces imposed opium trading and addiction on the Chinese people and annexed Hong Kong.

'Complete reunification of the country'

Chinese president Jiang Zemin spoke before a rally of 50,000 the day after declaring sovereignty over Hong Kong, where he called for Taiwan authorities to "take concrete steps" towards the "complete reunification of the country." He said the "one country two systems" formula "works for Hong Kong and can also work for Taiwan." Chinese capitalists and landlords fled to Taiwan after the workers and peasants overthrew the imperialist-backed regime of Chiang Kai-shek in 1949 and opened the door to establishing a workers state there.

Shipping magnate Tung Chee-hwa, recently chosen as Hong Kong's chief executive, is the son of one of the tycoons who fled the mainland. Beijing also set up a new body of lawmakers after abolishing Hong Kong's old legislature, which was elected in 1995 under the supervision of the British government. Until 1991, the Hong Kong legislature was entirely appointed. Up to the transfer of power June 30, the British-appointed governor remained the chief executive and commander-in-chief of territory.

British prime minister Anthony Blair, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, and U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright refused to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Tung and the provincial legislature. No Chinese official attended the program where Hong Kong's last governor, Christopher Patten, delivered his final speech.

London failed to rally the rest of the governments of the European Union (EU) to support its boycott. The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* chastised Paris for "setting a

new standard for kowtowing" after that regime backed down along with other capitalist governments in Europe from supporting the annual EU-sponsored UN resolution condemning alleged human rights violations in China. The financial daily also noted that the retreat came right before French president Jacques Chirac clinched a \$1.2 billion deal for Airbus Industrie in Beijing.

With London's power on the wane, Washington has moved to assert a greater role in Hong Kong. "We're not seeking to replace Britain as the guardian of Hong Kong," the *New York Times* quoted a Clinton administration official as saying July 2. "But it's a role we cannot avoid."

"Our relationship with China is the most challenging issue we'll face over the next 25 years, and Hong Kong now becomes an important part of it," declared State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

With 6.3 million people, Hong Kong is the world's eighth-largest trading economy and the 11th-largest export market for U.S. capitalists. U.S. investments there total \$14 billion and bilateral trade is more than \$24 billion. Hong Kong business investments in China amount to more than \$100 billion.

Albright met with Chinese government officials prior to the reunification, to push for policies protecting the U.S. rulers' economic interests. While there she criticized the deployment of Chinese soldiers in Hong Kong, stating, "I do not think this is the best



Above: Militant/Hilda Cuzco
There were celebrations in the streets from Beijing (right) to New York (above).

way to start off, and I think we have to watch this very carefully."

Albright's trepidation over the Chinese military and nervousness around the turn of events in Hong Kong was echoed throughout the bourgeois media. A "First Impressions" editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* on the day after the hand over lamented that the entry of the 4,000 troops into Hong Kong was "a calculated decision to show everybody's who's the boss now." The article reiterates Zemin's pledge to "keep the previous socioeconomic system and way of life unchanged" in Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, the big-business press and U.S. politicians are pressing a smear cam-

paign alleging that high-level Chinese government officials contributed "substantial sums of money" to influence the U.S. elections. Without presenting any details, U.S. Senator Frederick Thompson claimed July 8 that investigators from his Government Affairs Committee found evidence of a Chinese plan subvert U.S. politicians.

Thompson's charge came as John Huang, a former Democratic National Committee official, offered to testify before the Senate in exchange for immunity from prosecution for election law violations. Huang was an executive at the Indonesian-based Lippo Group, which donated more than \$700,000 to the Democratic Party since 1991.

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—CALENDAR—

IOWA

Des Moines

Socialist Educational Weekend. Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party sponsor two classes: **The Origins of Women's Oppression and the Fight for Women's Rights Today** will take place at 10 a.m.

Anarchism vs. Revolutionary Marxism: Two Strategies in the Fight against Capitalism begins at 1 p.m. Both classes on Sun., July 20. 2724 Douglas Ave. (one block west of Martin Luther King Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (515) 277-4600

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

March for Justice for Jonny Gammage. Tues., July 15. Assemble at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center at 5:30, then march to the City/County Building for a rally. Sponsored by Campus Coalition for Peace and Justice and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Hey Dilbert! — Buell Motorcycle of Milwaukee scrapped a program giving “underperforming” employees a day off to write an “action plan” on how they could im-



Harry
Ring

prove. Declared Human Resources director Bruce Champion: “Most of us didn’t favor that touchy-feely stuff. Now, you just get fired.”

‘Trust us’ — At a seminar of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents, Thomas Busey, a supervisor, discussed the agency’s database

on firearm registration. He said that in court, “we testify that the database is 100 percent accurate.... As you probably well know, that may not be 100 percent true.” He added that a review showed the error rate was about 50 percent. Later the agency said Busey recognized that his comments were incorrect and requested reassignment.

Isn’t that un-American? — Russia’s security service opened a hot line so folks working as spies for other countries could become double agents, permitting them to continue pocketing payments from abroad. And at the same time avoiding the risk of being caught and executed.

A pious bank — Employees at Chase Manhattan Bank’s British

headquarters sign an agreement requiring such things as “tonal respect for each other.” Like, perhaps, Yvette Davis, a compensation expert who took a stress-related leave and returned under threat of being fired. She was then required to inform her supervisor each time she left her desk, be it for the copy machine or the toilet. An industrial tribunal is considering her case.

Robert’s Rules of Law ‘n Order — We reported the increased use of film surveillance by British cops. This drew a note from a German reader who adds, “I was reminded that the famous Speakers Corner in London’s Hyde Park is also under continuous video surveillance. The newspaper reporting this quoted a cop that this helped to drastically reduce heckling.”

Reversing the empire’s decline — A major consulting firm says the UK needs to sharpen its tired image. Like getting rid of the overlapping crosses of St. George, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick on the Union Jack and putting the word “Britain” on it. (Forget the “Great,” they suggest.) Also, stop asking God to save the Queen and sing an anthem about green fields and sea shores.

And don’t leave home without it — The Agriculture Dept. says use a thermometer when cooking hamburgers because, they find, color is not a reliable gauge of doneness. To ensure destruction of dangerous bacteria, cook to 160 degrees F. In 1993 hundreds were sickened and, four children killed by *E. coli* bacteria in fast-food burgers.

Check if the jail food’s as bad — A food fight occurred the last day of classes at a junior high school in Lowell, North Carolina. Seven students were busted. Six will be dealt with in juvenile court. The seventh, age 16, faces a possible jail term. Commented a reader who sent us the item: “At the school I thought the food itself was at least a misdemeanor — possibly a felony.”

The last fools? — London producer-director Lord Lloyd Webber sold 8,000 bottles from his wine collection at auction for \$6 million plus. Are these vintage bottles drinkable? Not necessarily, says one wine writer. Then why do people shell out for them? To resell them at the next rise in the market which, he suggests, may not be on the horizon.

Cannon: prize fighting is ‘grisly business’

The following excerpts are from the articles “Murder in the Garden” and “A Dead Man’s Decision,” by James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the Socialist Workers Party. They first appeared in the *Militant* on September 17 and 24, 1951, respectively, and are published in *Notebook of an Agitator: From the Wobblies to the Fight against the Korean War and McCarthyism*. The book is copyright © 1958, by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

BY JAMES CANNON

This begins as a straight news story with the who, what, where and when right up at the front. The why and the wherefore come later, after the bare facts are set down in proper order. The who in this story is, or rather was, Georgie Flores, 20-year-old Brooklyn welterweight. He was knocked out in the semi-final bout with Roger Donoghue at Madison Square Garden August 29. He collapsed in his dressing room a few minutes after the knockout and died in the hospital five days later without ever recovering consciousness. Georgie leaves a wife, Elaine, 18 years old, who was at his bedside when he died, and a month-old baby son who hasn’t heard about it yet.

Other technical information, as reported by the experts at the ringside: The fatal blow was a sharp left hook which floored the young boxer just 46 seconds after the opening of the eighth and final round of the bout. His head hit the canvas hard and he was counted out by the referee as he lay flat. Cause of death, as reported by the medical experts at the hospital, was a brain hemorrhage resulting from a torn blood vessel. Two operations were unsuccessful. His last hours were spent in an iron lung.

Georgie Flores didn’t die of old age or incurable illness, and there was no suspicion

of suicide. He was killed. Murdered, if you want the truth unvarnished. And he was not the first to die that way. Sudden death is an occupational hazard in the prize-fight business. Six boxers have been killed in the U.S. already this year, if you count only those who died more or less immediately, as a result of blows in the ring. The score would be much higher if you include those who were badly hurt and had their life expectancy sharply cut down in this grisly business, which is sometimes described by fools or cynics as “the sport” or “the game.” This sort of thing goes on all the time. As a rule, the killing of a prize fighter doesn’t rate more than a few paragraphs in the news, a few floral offerings from the fight mob, and a small purse scraped up for the widow....

Dead men tell no tales; but sometimes, as is well known, the memory of what they did, or the way they died, exerts an authority over the living and affects their actions and decisions. The continuing influence of great men needs no argument. And once in a while, in exceptional circumstances, the lowly, too, speak from the grave. Even the lowliest of the lowly. Georgie Flores, the young boxer who was killed in the ring at Madison Square Garden just recently, cast a long shadow over the Turpin-Robinson fight for the middleweight championship at the Polo Grounds last Wednesday, and most probably determined the outcome of this million-dollar affair.

Turpin was on the ropes, but not out, when the referee stopped the fight with only eight seconds to go in the tenth round of the scheduled 15-round bout, and gave the decision to Robinson on a technical knockout. But it is highly doubtful if Robinson was the winner on actual merit. The fight was scored even up to the tenth round. Robinson was bleeding like a stuck pig from an eye cut; and Turpin, with the stamina of youth in his favor, figured to recuperate during the intermission between rounds and take charge from there on. Turpin and his manager protested the referee’s action on these grounds, and subsequent evidence seemed to bear out their contention. Turpin, according to all reports, was fresher and stronger than Robinson in the immediate aftermath of the fight....

Georgie Flores’ tragic and most untimely death was just another nine-day sensation. That’s all. It lasted just about long enough to influence the decision in the Turpin-Robinson bout. The echoes of the uproar are already fading away. The jitters have yielded to the sedative of time — it didn’t take long — and the boxing business is just about back to normal, back to business as usual. All that the hullabaloo produced, while it lasted, were a few proposals for better supervision of boxing bouts in the future; for some more elaborate rules and regulations; for what Governor Dewey, in his humane wisdom, called “precautions” which might keep boxers from getting hurt when they get hit.

It is a commentary on the times and the social environment out of which the boxing business rises like a poisonous flower from a dunghill, that nobody came forward with the simple demand to outlaw prize fighting, as it was outlawed in most of the states of this country up the hill the turn of the century.

Cock-fighting is illegal; it is considered inhumane to put a couple of roosters into the pit and incite them to spur each other until one of them keels over. It is also against the law to put bulldogs into the pit to fight for a side bet. But our civilization — which is on the march, to be sure — has not yet advanced to the point where law and public opinion forbid men, who have nothing against each other, to fight for money and the amusement of paying spectators. Such spectacles are a part of our highly touted way of life.

The “precautions,” advocated during the brief excitement over the killing of Georgie

Flores, simmered down to a few piddling suggestions that fighters not be over-matched; that they be required to train properly and enter the ring in good condition; that the boxers’ gloves and the ring canvas be padded a little more; and that each boxer’s head be thoroughly examined by X-ray before each bout to see if he had suffered a previous brain injury. “Boxing can be made a safe sport,” said Dr. Frank R. Ferlino to Milton Gross, sports writer for the *New York Post*, “if these regulations are observed.” The doctor, of course, is talking through his hat.

The precautions, which are supposed to take care of everything, in reality take care of nothing. When you get inside those ropes your head is a target for self-propelled missiles known as fists, and there is no way of making that safe. As the soldier said, when he was asked why he ran away from the front lines: “You can get hurt up there.” Blows over the head never did anybody any good. And if anybody ever got any fun out of it, he hasn’t been heard from yet. The “sport” in prize fighting is strictly for the spectators and the managers and promoters.

The incomparable Joe Louis himself testified to this in a notable statement at a newsreel press conference when he renounced his title to turn promoter. A reporter asked: “Which do you think you like best, Joe, fighting or promoting?”

Joe, a man of few words, answered: “I like promoting.”

“Why is that, can you explain it?”

“Sure,” said Joe. “They can’t hit you when you’re promotin’.”

Those words belong in the Book of Proverbs.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



July 21, 1972

BOSTON — About 20,000 construction workers rallied at the State Capitol here on June 28 to protest Governor Sargent’s veto of a multimillion-dollar renewal project that would create several thousand new jobs.

The demonstration was called by the Buildings and Construction Trades Council of Greater Boston. Busloads of workers came in from outlying construction sites to join workers from city construction projects. Many risked losing a day’s pay.

As the demonstrators assembled at City Hall, a few blocks from the capitol, the workers began to chant, “We want jobs!” As the marchers proceeded to the capitol, nearly everyone picked up the chant. A dummy with the word “unemployment” written on it was hung in effigy.

When the marchers gathered at the capitol, the union officials attempted to speak. But even though they were using sound equipment, they were drowned out by the chant “We want jobs.”

Sargent finally emerged from the capitol and was greeted with a loud chorus of boos. When he attempted to address the crowd every statement was met with increasingly louder boos. Even when he said, “You want jobs; I want jobs too,” the sound

of boos drowned him out. The union officials tried to dampen the militancy but were also drowned out by the chanting.



July 21, 1947

Harvey Jones, 23 year old farmer and war veteran of Ahsokie, North Carolina, bought a \$1 lottery ticket for a \$3,200 Cadillac offered by the local Kiwanis Club at a festival “to help the underprivileged.” Jones won the lottery but he didn’t get the Cadillac because he was a Negro. Instead he was given back his dollar.

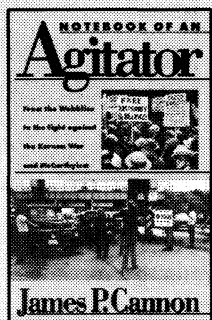
At 1:30 in the morning Jones was awakened by Sheriff Charlie Parker, who told him his name had been drawn as winner of the Cadillac, but there had been some mistake. According to the sheriff, Jones was not eligible to attend the Kiwanis festival dance so he should not have been sold the ticket in the first place.

The ticket stated: “You do not have to be present to win.”

Another drawing was then held, and the big Cadillac sedan was given to a retired white doctor.

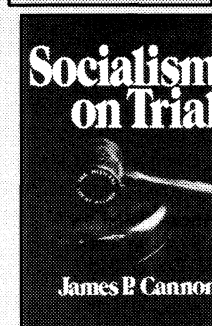
Now, after a nation-wide storm of protest, the Kiwanis Club has promised to give Jones another Cadillac.

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British troops out of Ireland!

In response to the violence by British imperialism against the people of the Garvaghy Road and other nationalist neighborhoods in Northern Ireland all working people should demand the British troops get out of Ireland now — just like they were forced to get out of Hong Kong. In line with the call of Sinn Fein and other republicans for people to go and defend the nationalist communities in Derry and Ormeau Road, Belfast, working people in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere should get in the streets to shine a light on and protest British colonialism, which is once again venting its rage in Ireland.

The capitalist media tries to show only the anger and retaliation of the oppressed. But every worker who has been on a picket line, every youth who's been arrested on a Saturday night, every farmer who's come into court against the banks can see the truth — it is the occupying troops and armed police force organized by London that are the source of violence in Ireland.

British secretary for Northern Ireland Majorie Mowlam, who unleashed the troops and their thousands of plastic bullets, whines that she represents some third side in the conflict just as every colonial servant has done. The game, as always, is to present the oppressor as a disinterested party shouldering enormous pressures to keep the uncivilized tribes apart. No one should buy such arguments for one minute. Mowlam did not bow to the pressure of a bunch of lawless Unionist hoodlums. Her government organizes the most powerful Unionist hoodlums — the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). She calculatedly carried out the decision made two weeks earlier to allow the rightist march to go through and to 'make the croppies lie down.' The Unionists may wear sashes not hoods, but no one should doubt that they march in order to plant their burning cross on the lawn — much like the Klan.

But the nationalist people of Northern Ireland refuse to lie down. The crisis of the British ruling class is that they have been unable to quell, split, or corrupt enough of the Irish fighters and their leaders. So London will not negotiate with them. The rulers of the United Kingdom understand what the recent election results in Britain revealed: working people in Scotland, Wales, and England do not accept the attacks on their wages, living standards, and working conditions. The workers at British Airways on strike this week are the first, not the last, to fight back.

Joining the Irish peoples' fight for independence, and their resistance to the attempted insult to their dignity by the Orange marches, will only aid the struggles of workers in Britain and elsewhere.

Grant licenses for festival

We urge all our readers to join young people across the United States who have been waging a campaign to protest Washington's decision to deny licenses to youth who want to go to the world youth festival in Havana, Cuba.

The U.S. Treasury Department has denied licenses to 50 young people who have applied for permission to travel to the Caribbean island later this month to take part in this international conference of youth. Hundreds of others who also wish to apply for a license are waiting the outcome of this fight before they submit their applications to the government.

Washington's unconstitutional move is aimed at impeding and intimidating young people from participating in this exchange of ideas and experiences.

Another goal of the Clinton administration is to push for further enforcement of draconian travel restrictions to Cuba, as part of an intensifying U.S. economic war against the Cuban people. The "crime" of the Cuban toilers and their revolutionary leadership is that they refuse to submit to Washington's dictates and steadfastly defend their sovereignty, independence, and the socialism they freely chose — setting an example for the exploited and oppressed around the world.

Those involved in the protest campaign will find that the new books published by Pathfinder — *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*; *At the Side of Che Guevara*; and the Spanish-language-edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* — are indispensable political tools in explaining and understanding the truth about the Cuban revolution and its interrelationship with the fight for democratic rights inside North America. Selling these books can be an integral part of the protests against Washington's denial.

Organizing to convince elected officials, trade unionists, defenders of civil rights, and others to call and send letters demanding the decision be reversed can make a difference. Press coverage of this fight, which is spreading across the country, can also help. Government officials have indicated they are reconsidering the initial decision. Even if the government sticks with the denial, a successful protest campaign will maximize the chances of defending young people from possible government harassment upon their return from Cuba.

Join the protest campaign now!

NATO approves enlargement

Continued from front page

implementation of a U.S. foreign policy shift carefully worked on by the Clinton administration since it came to power, and announced in 1994. In the early 1990s, a majority among the rulers of the United States, Germany, and other capitalist powers hoped that the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the USSR would easily bring capitalist restoration and the domination of those countries by the imperialist system. As the initial euphoria quickly wore off, growing layers among these capitalist classes decided they had to use their military might to reestablish capitalist property relations in that part of the world.

Since NATO was founded in 1949 its goal has been to defeat the Soviet Union. Washington is driving to redeploy U.S. forces in Europe, placing them in a stronger position vis-à-vis Russia, with the same goal today.

"The enlargement of Nato cannot fail to be seen as aimed at Russia," said an article in the July 9 *Financial Times* of London. "It is unavoidably a shift in the strategic balance of power against Russia."

U.S.-French row

NATO expansion is also aimed at strengthening U.S. military and economic domination in Europe, exacerbating rifts among NATO members. This was also reflected in Madrid.

"This is a very great day, not only for Europe and the United States, not simply for NATO, but, indeed, for the cause of freedom in the aftermath of the cold war," crowed Clinton after the agreement was announced in Spain's capital city.

The *New York Times* editors made a different point. "The grand declarations... yesterday," began an editorial in the July 9 *Times*, "could not obscure the serious differences within NATO over how far and fast it should grow."

In Madrid, the French and Italian governments pushed to include Romania and Slovenia in the invitations for NATO membership. Paris and Rome wield more influence in each of those workers states respectively. This proposal had been rejected by Washington outright before the summit. In Madrid, the French and Italian proposals had the support of nine of the 16 NATO members, but Washington prevailed. "The deal was no surprise," said an article in the July 9 *Financial Times*. "Much of the dispute had a ephemeral, almost phoney, flavour to it. In the end, everyone knew that the US would get its way in limiting a first enlargement to the central European troika, because the US superpower remains predominant in the alliance."

The agreement reached at the NATO summit states that Romania and Slovenia would be considered top candidates in a future NATO expansion.

British prime minister Anthony Blair was Washington's most ardent supporter in the debate, reflecting London's ongoing effort to hang onto its "special relationship" with U.S. imperialism. "NATO is a military alliance not a political club," said Blair in arguing against the French proposal. Taking in three new members — the first to join since Spain entered NATO in 1982 — is "a bold step, not a conservative one."

The governments of the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, and Iceland lined up with the U.S.-British bloc.

At the Madrid meeting, French president Jacques Chirac reiterated Paris's position that it will not rejoin NATO's military command structure. Former French president Charles de Gaulle pulled France out of NATO's military command in 1966 over developing conflicts with Washington. Chirac had stated two years ago that Paris would rejoin. But when the French government demanded that NATO's southern command be turned over to a European, possibly French, officer, the U.S. rulers said decisively no. The southern command, based in Naples, Italy, is run by a U.S. general. It controls NATO's sixth fleet in the Mediterranean, which provides Washington with a major advantage in naval power over its imperialist competitors in the region.

Citing U.S. intransigence, Chirac said, "Our alliance would not durably survive with an unbalanced Euro-American relationship, both in the sharing of power in the military structure and in the political decision-making process."

French prime minister Lionel Jospin has made repeated statements recently about Washington's "tendency toward hegemony."

Bosnia and the Baltic states

Reflecting the weakening position of German imperialism, and a step further away from earlier attempts at a Franco-German military alliance that could counter U.S. dominance in Europe, the government of Germany took a wishy-washy position. "Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany managed to straddle both positions, saying he was ready to embrace five new members, but adding in almost the same breath that he would be quite content just with early inclusion of the three central Europeans," said the July 9 *Financial Times*.

At the same time, Kohl has made clear he does not favor the U.S.-led effort to invite Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania — the three former Soviet republics in the Baltics — and possibly Ukraine to join NATO. As the Russian government has made clear, such moves would be considered a direct military provocation against Moscow. German imperialism has more to lose in a flare-up with the Russian government, since Bonn has extended

more loans and attempted more investments in Russia than other capitalist powers.

At the insistence of the Clinton administration, the Madrid agreement included this statement, "We recognize the progress achieved toward greater stability and cooperation by the states in the Baltic region who are also aspiring members."

Washington has also made it clear that the recent NATO expansion is only the beginning in its drive to reposition its forces closer to Russia. U.S. defense secretary William Cohen is slated to visit Ukraine soon to sign a military cooperation agreement with the republic's government. On July 3, U.S. Marine Corps General John Sheehan, supreme NATO commander of the Atlantic, arrived in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for a meeting of the defense ministers of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The four are to discuss joint military maneuvers in the region in September that are slated to include 500 troops from the elite U.S. 82nd airborne division.

A June 29 front-page article in the *New York Times* indicated that NATO enlargement will unfold along with a renewed U.S. militarization drive. "Arms makers see bonanza in selling NATO expansion," was the headline of that article, which interviewed Bruce Jackson, president of the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO and director of strategic planning for Lockheed Martin Corporation, the world's biggest weapons maker and Joel Johnson, vice president for Aerospace Industries Association. "The stakes are high... Whoever gets in first will have a lock for the next quarter-century" on arms sales in Eastern Europe, said Johnson.

In Madrid, U.S. officials reiterated threats of broadening the use of NATO troops occupying Bosnia and other parts of Yugoslavia.

Washington's role in fueling the 1992-95 Yugoslav war and the subsequent U.S.-led invasion unfolded hand-in-hand with NATO's expansion eastward. U.S. officials in Madrid repeated demands that Serbian authorities hand over chauvinist Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, whom an imperialist tribunal in The Hague has charged with "war crimes."

"The point here is, on Karadzic and Mladic, that there is no statute of limitation on their crimes, and their day will come," said U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright.

Debate within U.S. ruling circles

Within U.S. ruling circles, the Clinton administration position on NATO expansion is clearly the dominant view, though the debate over its merits continues.

Senate majority leader Trent Lott has indicated he backs the president on this issue.

Others are more worried about the implications. "Tinkering with the map of Europe is not something to be done lightly," said an editorial in the July 6 *New York Times*. "NATO expansion seems a gratuitous risk."

The most blunt recent arguments against those who criticize the administration's course were presented by conservative columnist William Safire in an op-ed piece in the July 9 *New York Times*. "The essential reason for bringing the formerly captive nations of Eastern Europe into the successful European-American military alliance is to deter any future move into Europe by a resurgent Russia," Safire said. "Russia is down but far from out; with its literate population and unlimited resources... it will regain superpower status soon."

He also argued for unabashed defense of U.S. hegemony in Europe. "Does enlarging the NATO club get us into European affairs more deeply? Yes. And we'll be denounced as 'hegemonists' for our much-wanted presence. Charles de Gaulle may have said 'France cannot be France without greatness,' but Europe can no longer be Europe without America — as evidenced by the dithering of European and U.N. leaders in the Balkans until the U.S. exerted military muscle through NATO."

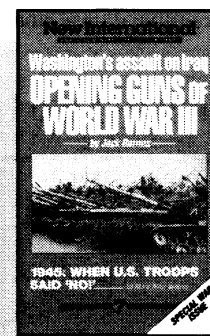
Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq

JACK BARNES

The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New International no. 7*. Also includes "Communist Policy in Wartime as well as in Peacetime" by Mary-Alice Waters. \$12.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.



Conditions were ripening for revolution

Continued from Page 9

members of the CP and its youth organization were among the 29 Bolivians who joined in the revolutionary operation. Among them was Inti Peredo, who survived the Bolivian army encirclement in late 1967 along with Pombo and others and wrote an account in early 1969 entitled *My Campaign with Che*. (It is included as an appendix to Pathfinder's edition of Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*.) Peredo was murdered later that year after resisting an assault by Bolivian cops on the house in La Paz where he was living clandestinely.

The actions of the Bolivian CP leadership were another matter altogether. The Jan. 1, 1967, entry in Pombo's diary recounts the political showdown with Monje at the guerrilla's base camp in southeastern Bolivia, following Guevara's arrival in the country the previous November. Monje laid down a series of preconditions for supporting the struggle, first and foremost that political and military leadership be in the hands of the Bolivian CP.

Guevara rejected this ultimatum and called the fighters together to explain what had happened. "I explained that I could not accept the position of adviser," Villegas quotes Guevara as saying. "I told him I believed that I was more qualified than he was, both militarily and politically, since I have had the advantage of going through a revolutionary process in which I acquired the necessary experience, and that false modesty served no purpose. I explained that I did not aspire to lead the revolutionary struggle in Bolivia but to collaborate in the continent-wide struggle."

Villegas reports that Monje "then held a meeting with the Bolivians [who had joined the guerrilla unit] and told them that the party is not going to join in the armed struggle. He told them they must go back to the city. If not, they would be expelled from the party and payments to their families would be stopped inasmuch as they had leadership standing." Monje's appeals to desert were to no avail. But the Bolivian CP leadership henceforth urged its followers not to join Che's guerrilla.

Cuba's unstinting support

The effort to advance the developing revolutionary situation in the Americas from a base in Bolivia had the active backing of the leadership in Cuba. "In all honesty," Villegas says in the interview with Madrid and Waters, "we must say that the Cuban revolution supported this course entirely. This is what Fidel was teaching too...."

"And for this reason," he added, "we also participated. We had Cuban comrades in Venezuela at the time; others were in Guatemala, or on their way to Colombia. The Cuban revolution gave support to all these movements that sought liberation for the world's hungry masses."

This internationalist record is documented in another new book published in Cuba earlier this year, entitled *Secrets of Generals*. It contains 41 interviews with top officers of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, including information never before made public about their experiences fighting alongside revolutionary movements in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. A review of the book appeared in the May 26 *Militant*.

The oath Pombo and other combatants took following Guevara's death to continue the struggle, says Mary-Alice Waters in the publishers' preface to Villegas's book, "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."

'We believed in Che's course'

Fidel Castro himself clearly explained the Cuban leadership's attitude toward the Bolivian operation in his June 1968 "A Necessary Introduction" to Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*. There, Castro condemns those who "call themselves Marxists, Communists, and other such titles" but label "Che a mistaken adventurer, or, when they speak more benignly, an idealist whose death marked the swan song of revolutionary armed struggle in Latin America...."

"That is how they justify those who do not want to fight, who will never fight for the people and their liberation," Castro said. "That is how they justify those who have made a caricature of revolutionary ideas, turning them into an opium-like dogma with neither content nor message for the masses; those who have converted the organizations of popular struggle into instruments of conciliation with domestic and foreign exploiters." The Cuban leader continued: "In all epochs and under all circumstances, there will always be an abundance of pretexts for not fighting; but not fighting is the surest way to never attain freedom...."

"Che conceived of the struggle in Bolivia not as an isolated occurrence," Castro pointed out, "but as part of a revolutionary liberation movement that would rapidly extend to other countries in South America."

Castro returned to this question on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Guevara's death in combat, in a 1987 interview with Italian journalist Gianni Minà. It was Guevara himself that conceived of the Bolivian operation, Castro said. "The idea, the plan, everything was his." But "we believed in what [Che] was doing, and we believed he could carry out what he proposed," Castro added. "What we did was help him. We helped something we thought was possible."

And help they did, unstintingly.

A journey through the useful glossary of names and organizations in *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* — based on that in the Spanish-language edition prepared by Editora Política — paints a striking picture of the 16 Cuban cadres who volunteered to join the effort and were released from other duties to do so. Each of them was a veteran of the Rebel Army campaigns that overthrew the Yankee-backed Batista dictatorship (that story is told in Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58*, also published by Pathfinder). Many were officers of the FAR or the Ministry of the Interior, and one had been the head of G-2, the counterintelligence division of the Cuban police. Five fought with Guevara in the Congo. Three, not including Guevara, had been members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

What's more, between July and September 1966, the Cuban leadership established



Marchers in Chicano Moratorium demonstration of 30,000 in Los Angeles protest the Vietnam War, Aug. 29, 1970. Guevara called for confronting imperialism with many more Vietnams.

a clandestine training ground for Che and his co-combatants in the Pinar del Río province in western Cuba.

Guevara based his perspectives for the Bolivian campaign on the judgment, as he put it in the Message to the Tricontinental, that "rebellion is ripening at an accelerated rate" in Latin America and "will in due time acquire continental dimensions."

Revolutionary perspectives

How was this judgment borne out in the aftermath of the defeat in Bolivia in October 1967? Villegas's account ends with his return to Cuba in March 1968, but the chronology, photos, and captions in the book take the story forward a few years.

In Bolivia itself, efforts to renew the guerrilla struggle in 1969-70 were brutally crushed by the regime. In late 1970 and early 1971, however, the armed forces divided in face of rising popular mobilizations and an armed uprising by workers, peasants, and students. A People's Assembly — an incipient workers' parliament — was formed in February 1971. When workers' leaders failed over several months to organize the toilers in fighting to establish a workers and

peasants government, however, rightist forces reasserted their dominance and unleashed murderous repression.

In May 1969 massive worker-led uprisings in the Argentine industrial cities of Rosario and Córdoba — the latter imprinted to this day as the *Cordobazo* — in the consciousness of millions of workers in that country — ushered in some seven years of sharpening class struggle. As in Bolivia, however, the class-collaborationist political course of the workers' leadership paved the way for a military coup in 1976 and the notorious "dirty war" in which more than 10,000 Argentines were killed or "disappeared."

In Chile rising working-class and peasant struggles created the conditions in which Socialist Party leader Salvador Allende was elected president of the country in September 1970. The working class continued to mobilize over the next several years. Disarmed both literally and politically by the Socialist Party and Communist Party leaderships, however, the workers' movement was dealt a decisive defeat by a rightist coup in September 1973.

Today, as the 30th anniversary of the death of Che and his comrades approaches, there is once again a rise of struggles in Latin America's Southern Cone. In Argentina, in particular, there has been an explosion of working-class and student revolts in recent months against the devastating consequences of joblessness and government belt-tightening, following similar rebellions since the end of 1993.

In Bolivia tens of thousands of workers and peasants took to the streets last year to resist the government's sell-off of the national patrimony, protest cop murders, and demand land reform. In Chile coal miners and copper miners have waged strikes and protest actions. In Brazil peasants and rural workers are fighting for land rights.

These struggles are part of a broader pattern of resistance today by working people to the consequences of world capitalism's depression conditions, including, to a growing degree, in the imperialist countries of Europe and North America.

Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla' is a must reading for youth and workers engaged in the struggles that are now under way and will increase in the years ahead. It describes the kind of disciplined, politically conscious, and self-sacrificing men and women who can forge revolutionary organizations capable of leading these struggles to victory, and of opening the road to the socialist future Ernesto Che Guevara and his *compañeros* fought and died for.

At the close of the introduction to his book, Brigadier General Harry Villegas says that in preparing his diary and account for publication, he had in mind its usefulness "to young people who wish to study the life and work" of Che Guevara. "It is my hope," Villegas says, "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."

— LETTERS —

Coal disaster correction

The *Militant* of May 5, 1997 contains an important factual error. In an article on 20 years of the socialist movement in Utah states that "an explosion and fire devastated the Wilberg mine near Price killing one person...." (no year or date is given). Twenty-seven people were killed on Dec. 19, 1984, in the Wilberg disaster. It was a horrible example of how dangerous coal mining still is when the capitalist profit drive is allowed to run its course.

Emery Mining Company had projected a helluva run at Wilberg with the aim of setting a longwall production record. MSHA helped their murderous course by authorizing the unsafe two-entry system and by ignoring blocked escape routes. Emery had crammed the 27 work-

ers into the section because of their drive to set the record—only 12 would normally have been working in the section where the fatal fire occurred.

This was the worst disaster in U.S. coal mining since the Farmington disaster of 1968. It occurred during a time when unions in general, including the mineworkers, had been pushed back and surrendered much ground including on safety and other concessions.

Wilberg showed, like the rash of rail and airline accidents today, that when unions give ground to the employers, deadly accidents are likely to follow. The mine workers union has set an example on safety, transforming their union in the years following the Farmington disaster into an organization that could fight for

workers safety. Following the Wilberg disaster, mineworkers had a sober discussion of how this occurred and what needed to be done about it. The *Militant* was part of these discussions.

Today, when workers once again face deteriorating safety conditions, we can be sure that mineworkers are once again looking for ways to press forward on the question. "How can we lead a movement to fight for safety and dignity on the job?"

David Salner
Morgantown, West Virginia

Involuntary servitude

Prior to my incarceration, I had many incorrect preconceptions of what incarceration meant. For example, I thought that there only a few geographic areas of the country where prisoners were forced to

labor in violation of their 13th amendment rights. Since incarceration, I have unfortunately learned the hard way that is not true. Involuntary servitude exist even in New York state within the correctional system of the country with the largest prison population in the world. The D.O.C. requires work of its prisoners.

In many states prisoners are required to labor though in *Graves v. Watson*, 909 Federal Reporter 2nd. p. 1549, the court held that prisoners who were not sentenced to hard labor retain their 13th amendment rights against involuntary servitude. Some may think that because a lot of prisoners collected disability benefits that in prison they are not required to work. I was classified by the Social Security Administration as disabled between 1981-97

and I am now required to work regardless of the facts of handicaps. Some may think that if one is a prisoner, and that prisoner has legal needs to access the courts, that prisoner can spend all day doing only their legal work in their cell. That is not correct. I have requested an exemption from work/mandatory programming on the grounds of a medical history of disability and legal access to the courts, which my restricted time does not permit.

A prisoner
Gouverneur, New York

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

Activist speaks across U.S. on fight for land, against frame-up in Brazil

BY NATHALIA POSES
AND ROLLANDE GIRARD

MIAMI — José Brito Ribeiro, a national leader of the Movement of the Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil, visited Miami as part of a speaking tour of seven U.S. cities. The MST organizes peasants to fight for land in Brazil. During his three days in Miami, Brito met with farm workers, union activists, members of immigrants rights, and Haitian rights groups.

He was also interviewed by CNN in Spanish, the monthly *Brazilian Florida Review*, and the radio program of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), "Dignity and Respect." Brito started his tour by meeting with farm workers in Homestead, Florida, and addressing a reception of 35 people at Tap Tap Haitian Restaurant in Miami Beach.

He spoke about the struggle for land in Brazil at a public meeting of some 50 people at the UNITE hall. Union staffer Lily Díaz chaired the meeting, which was sponsored by UNITE, the Committee for Dignity and Justice for Immigrants, and Veye-Yo, a Haitian rights organization.

"In Brazil, 90 percent of the land is owned by 20 percent of the population," Brito stated. "In our country, 32 million people suffer from hunger and the majority of agricultural land is not cultivated or is cultivated for exports." He explained that the MST not only organizes demonstrations and occupations of land but also organizes education, health-care, security and production in the occupied areas. Lucas Benitez, a member of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, which organizes farm workers in that Florida city, said "It is very good to hear how peasants in Brazil organize themselves, because it is also an example for farm workers in the United States."

Bruto explained that the MST "has confronted cops and armed thugs" and many of the MST members were imprisoned and tortured. "We persisted and we won some rights and gained strength. But the attacks are not over." He spoke about the killing of 19 activists in one occupation last year and the recent frame-up of José Rainha, Jr., a central leader of the MST.

On June 11, Rainha was convicted for the murder of two men during a land occupation in the state of Espírito Santo in 1989. At his trial five defense witnesses testified that at the time of the incident Rainha was in the state of Ceará. Photographs taken by the military police, two video tapes, and press clippings introduced at the trial also show that he was in Ceará. "The only reason José Rainha was convicted was because he participates in the MST," Brito said. More than 65 people in Miami have signed letters of protest on Rainha's behalf.

The last day of his tour, Brito addressed 50 people at a meeting of Veye-Yo.

Nathalia Poses is a member of the Young Socialists. Rollande Girard is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7609.

BY JOAN PALTRINERI

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — "The MST is a parallel struggle worlds away," said Marcus Tillery, speaking to the 60 people who turned out here June 20 to hear José Brito of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers of Brazil. Tillery was representing those who are fighting to stop foreclosures on Black family farms in North Carolina. Among those attending the meeting were environmental activists, members of UNITE Local 2603 at the Kmart distribution center, and supporters of framed-up Black activist Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Bruto described the mobilization earlier this year, where peasants from three different regions in Brazil converged on the capital demanding land, jobs, and justice and

were joined by tens of thousands of students, unemployed workers, homeless people from the cities, unions, political parties and church groups. "This was an important show of support," said Brito.

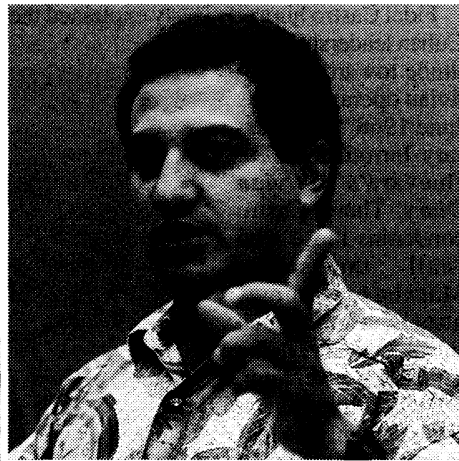
The next day Brito spoke to a meeting of 21 people in Tillery, sponsored by the Black Land Loss Fund and the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, two organizations that are challenging the racist practices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which has led to large numbers of foreclosures of Black family farms. The Brazilian activist also visited the farm of Matthew Grant, 78, one of the Black farmers fighting foreclosure.

Joan Paltrineri is a member of UNITE Local 2603.



will on the part of the government."

One participant at the meeting asked about the role of women in the movement. Brito responded, "Women play a big role in the resistance. We organize the work in the settlements so that women can also participate, both in production and in the leader-



Above: Militant

Bruto (above) described how landless toilers from across Brazil marched to the capital, Brasilia, earlier this year to press their demands (left).

ship and organization."

Another participant in the meeting said he had just visited a group of African-American prisoners in Baltimore, Maryland. The prisoners were interested in Brito's tour and wanted to know the extent of poverty in Brazil and also about struggles of Afro-Brazilians. Ribeiro said 63 percent of all Brazilians live below the official poverty rate. He also described prison overcrowding and a prison rebellion last year that left 111 people dead. "In recent years Black consciousness has grown," Ribeiro said. "We have begun to reconquer and create more awareness of African values and culture. In our movement it is a majority of Blacks who struggle for land."

Leslie Salgado, of the Howard County Friends of Central America, chaired the event and gave a fund pitch. Twenty people wrote letters protesting the frame-up of MST leader José Rainha.

Bruto also met with 20 participants in the "Justice for Janitors" campaign organized by Local 82 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

Radio Boriquen broadcast an interview with Ribeiro and the Washington D.C. weekly *El Tiempo Latino* sent a reporter and photographer to a press conference chaired

by Mauricio Vazquez of SEIU Local 82.

Candace Wagner is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27.

BY RUTH ROBINETT

NEW YORK — About 60 people turned out for a June 27 meeting at the headquarters of Hospital Workers Union Local 1199 to hear José Brito speak on the fight for land and justice in Brazil. José Mata, from the union's Adult Education Department, welcomed people to the event.

Alissa Pines, an organizer for the United Farm Workers Union in New York City is gathering support for the UFW's efforts to organize strawberry workers in California. She closed the program with an appeal for funds. "Listening to José I understand the importance of people in the cities participating in the struggle in California and Brazil. We must rise up on behalf of workers when they are fired, harassed, or refused a contract," Pines said.

At the invitation of Father Castle, Brito addressed the Spanish-language mass at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Harlem on June 29. He also visited the office of District Council 17 of AFSCME, one of the unions that sponsored his meeting, and spoke to staff members about the struggle for land in Brazil and the case of Jose Rainha, Jr.

Ruth Robinett is a member of the United Transportation Union.

BY FRED FELDMAN

NEWARK, New Jersey — Brazilian peasant leader José Brito concluded his U.S. speaking tour June 30, addressing a meeting at the Comunidade Cristã Presbiteriana church attended by 30 activists and others from the growing Brazilian community here. Cibele Kuss, a Brazilian student, chaired the meeting. Rev. Renato Bernardes introduced Brito and provided translation. "Why are we hosting this?" Bernardes asked. "The main reason is that we don't know enough about this struggle."

Bruto also got a warm welcome when he addressed several hundred people at a parish festival at St. James Church. Some members of the church belonged to the MST or the Workers Party of Brazil before emigrating to the United States. Nine people there signed up to help in defending framed-up MST leader José Rainha.

Articles announcing Brito's tour appeared in *Luso Americano* and the *Brazilian Voice*, Portuguese-language papers that are widely read in the area. The bi-weekly *Luso Americano* published a follow-up article on Brito's tour and the Rainha defense case.

'Justice for José Rainha'

Below are excerpts of a few of the letters written in recently protesting the frame-up of José Rainha Jr., a central leader of the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil. Rainha was sentenced to 26 and a half years in prison on false charges of killing a landlord and a cop during a 1989 peasant land occupation. Under Brazilian law, he is free pending a second trial, which is set for September 16.

The MST is urging all those who oppose this frame-up to send protest messages to: Juiz de Pedro Canário, prédio do Fórum, CEP 29970-000. Pedro Canário, Espírito Santo, Brazil. Fax: (011) 55-27-764-1478. Copies should be sent to: MST, Rua Ministro Godoy 1484, CEP 05015-900, São

Paulo, SP, Brazil. Fax: (011) 55-11-871-4612.

"This charge was clearly politically motivated and obviously intended to harass members of the landless rural workers' movement. If José Rainha is imprisoned, we will consider him a prisoner of conscience and demand his immediate and unconditional release.... It is intolerable that such groundless criminal charges are being used against José Rainha and other rural activists as a form of political intimidation."

Statement released by Amnesty International

"The failure of the Brazilian judiciary in this case raises serious concerns about the right to due process and an impartial

tribunal, general principles of law recognized universally in the legal systems. The credibility of Brazil's justice system is tarnished by the gross injustice in Mr. Rainha's case. I urge that you carefully review the facts, procedures, and conclusions of law in Mr. Rainha's case and take appropriate remedial action."

*F. Michael Willis
Georgetown University Law Center
Washington, D.C.*

"I demand justice for José Rainha. He has been falsely accused and the just people of the world will not accept this immoral act."

*Matthew Grant
Farmer
Tillery, North Carolina*