Protests across U.S. hit aid to ‘contras’

BY MARGARET JAYKO

"US CIA, out of Nicaragua!" This was a popular chant at emergency protests against the U.S.-organized war on Nicaragua that took place in more than 45 cities and towns on December 13.

They were called in response to the recent revelations about the extent of secret U.S. government funding and support for the contra terrorists. A theme of many of the actions was the need to start building the April 24-25 national antwar demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and the West Coast that are being widely discussed by many organizations.

The December 13 actions were initiated by the Pledge of Resistance and supported by the formation of a U.S. government intervention in Central America.

The national focus was a protest at Fort Walton Beach in the Florida panhandle. That is the site of Hurlbert Field, where the CIA is training 70 contra tribes.

More than 250 demonstrators from many states, including as far away as California, showed up to demand an end to training and all other aid to the mercenaries.

Bill Gandall told the youthful crowd, "As a 19-year-old Marine, I participated in the 1927 U.S. invasion of Nicaragua. We committed many atrocities there. The U.S. installed a puppet government there, a dictatorship. Now Nicaragua has a democratic government that the people support. This is what the U.S. government is attacking. Demonstrations by youth put an end to the Vietnam War, and youth can stop this one.

Eleven participants were arrested at the base for trespassing on military property.

Cheaperly, Danny Murphy, two veterans who had participated in a hunger strike in Washington earlier this fall to protest continued on Page 7

Nicaraguans gearing up to resist aggression

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — More than 500 union leaders and vanguard workers met here December 12 and resolved to take immediate steps to strengthen the defense and security of factories and other workplaces.

The meeting followed the December 7 bombing attacks against northern Nicaraguan bases by A-37 combat planes from U.S. bases in Honduras. The workers decided to establish 24-hour command posts for vigilance patrols in each plant. They projected strengthening civil defense and fire-fighting units in each plant and pledged to maintain the extra security throughout the Christmas and New Year’s holidays.

Meanwhile, citywide civil defense drills were held in Jinagua, in south central Nicaragua, and in Puerto Cabezas, on the country’s northern Atlantic Coast.

On December 10, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega gave a major speech on the military situation along the Honduras-Nicaragua border.

Nicaraguan troops have been fighting in the border area against the U.S.-backed mercenary forces that use Honduran bases to launch terrorist attacks into Nicaragua. Ortega said, "We will not give up one inch in the defense of our territorial integrity in preventing the mercenary forces from entering our country," he declared.

Responding to the charge that Nicaraguan troops had invaded Honduras, Ortega said, "We have no problem with Honduras. We are fighting against the mercenary forces that the U.S. government has established in Honduran territory.

The real invasion of Honduras is the invasion of U.S. troops, who have occupied all of its territory, and the invasion of the mercenary forces, who have been put in the territory bordering Nicaragua by the U.S. troops," Ortega continued.

"All that [Honduran] President José Azcona has to do is decide to remove those mercenary forces that occupy his territory, and the border area will cease to be a zone of conflicts," Ortega explained.

Five days earlier, the Honduran ambassador in Nicaragua personally delivered an official statement from his government to the Sandinista daily Barricada, asking the newspaper to publish it. Barricada did so December 12, with a short introduction stating that the statement contained "inaccuracies and omissions," but they were meant to "contribute to achieving a peaceful and civilized solution to the problems of Central America.

The statement denied that Honduran forces had bombed targets inside Nicaragua. It repeated Azcona’s charges that Nicaragua is under a US-bombing attack and the whole area will be a zone of conflicts, Ortega explained.

The call ends by urging people to work toward the goals of a national coalition of unprecedented breadth — based in the religious communities, the labor movement, and in community, peace, and anti-intervention organizations — have come together with goals and a program that are in concert with two of the aims which unite our Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice.

The call states, "The issues which brought tens of thousands to demonstrate in San Francisco in 1985 and 1986 have intensified.

"Now," the call continues, "a national coalition of unprecedented breadth — based in the religious communities, the labor movement, and in community, peace, and anti-intervention organizations — have come together with goals and a program that are in concert with two of the aims which unite our Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice: End U.S. intervention in Central America. End U.S. support for South African apartheid.

The call ends by urging people to join us in a mass march and rally in San Francisco, California, and in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, April 25, 1987.

A meeting has been called for San Francisco on Tuesday, January 13, to begin to organize for the march.

New crackdown in S. Africa

BY ERNEST HARSCHE

Five days before the start of a new protest campaign against South Africa’s repressive state of emergency, the apartheid authorities initiated yet another sweeping crackdown on political dissent.

Claiming the need to combat a "revolutionary onslaught," the Pretoria regime imposed severe press censorship and other restrictions December 11. It almost immediately began a round-up of political activists, trade unionists, journalists, and community leaders.

South African government commandos, meanwhile, launched a raid into the neighboring country of Swaziland December 12, killing two people and kidnapping four anti-apartheid activists.

The people of South Africa have already been living under a draconian state of emergency since June 30. Some 22,000 political activists have been detained in that period. Over the past two years of mass popular mobilizations, more than 2,300 people have been killed, the bulk of them Blacks shot down by the police.

Despite this, protests have continued in many parts of the country, including rent strikes, boycotts of schools and businesses, opposition to military conscription of white youths, labor actions, and campaigns for the release of political prisoners.

The United Democratic Front (UDF), an anti-apartheid coalition of more than 2 million members, called for the launching of a "Christmas Against the Emergency" campaign on December 16 to focus opposition to the regime’s repressive policies. This call was backed by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and other labor organizations.

December 16 is a significant date in South Africa. The governing National Party and its involvement in the Day of the Covenant, the anniversary of a military victory against the white settlers against Zula fighters in 1938.

Among Blacks, on the other hand, December 16 has become a traditional day of protest against apartheid. It was on that date, exactly 25 years ago in 1961, that the first armed action were launched by Umkhonto we Sizwe.
THE MILITANT
December 26, 1986

U.S. spy captured near Nicaraguan air base

Philippine unionists tour Chicago

Nicaeguan prepare to resist increased military attacks

The Militant tells the truth — Subscribe today!

The Militant is written in the interests of workers and farmers. Every week it tells the truth about the war in Central America and the employers are waging against working people at home and abroad. We provide firsthand coverage of important struggles in other countries, such as Angola, Haiti, and the Philippines. We also report on the fruits of the celebration of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the Party of the Nicaraguan people.

If you already have a subscription, by renewing now for six months or a year you’ll receive a free issue of New International (cover price $5.00), a magazine of Marxist politics and theory published in New York. The current issue features the article, “The Coming Revolution in South Africa,” by Jack Barnes. 

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The Militant is the voice of the international socialist movement.

By DEBORAH LAZAR

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rail workers at the Militsnt and Parking Plant in Amtrak’s maintenance yard, where we had weekly sales meetings as part of the campaign. Coworkers bought anywhere from four to seven copies of the Militant each week at a total of about half a dozen subscriptions were sold on the job. And hundreds of camp

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

track during our socialist election campaign. We’ve added a donation goal. By December 16, Nicaraguan security forces captured a U.S. spy, Sam Hall, in the vicinity of the Punta Fuerte air force base near here. Hall has a long history of CIA-linked terrorist activities in Latin America and Af

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — On De­cember 12, Nicaraguan security forces captured a U.S. spy, Sam Hall, in the vicinity of the Punta Fuerte air base near here. Hall has a long history of CIA-linked terrorist activities in Latin America and Af­rica.

When captured, Hall initially claimed he was a “writer” interested in learning about Nicaragua. But authorities found a hand­drawn sketch of the air base hidden in his socks.

According to Nicaragua’s Ministry of the Interior, Hall then said he belonged to the “Phoenix Battalion,” a “private” es­pionage group that passes spy information to the U.S. Air Force.

In addition to the sketch of the air base, Hall was carrying maps of Corinto and Tipitapa, Nicaragua’s major port, and was the target of CIA-organized sabotage attacks in 1983 and 1984. Tipitapa is an island town on the northern outskirts of Managua.

Hall’s U.S. passport showed that he had been to Israel, Salvador, and South Af­rica during the past four years.

U.S. election campaign got rail sales back on track

ON DECEMBER 16, Nicaraguan security forces captured a U.S. spy, Sam Hall, in the vicinity of the Punta Fuerte air force base near here. Hall has a long history of CIA-linked terrorist activities in Latin America and Af­ric

Continued from front page

Nicaraguans prepare to resist increased military attacks

arguing.”

Ortega said that prominent individuals who had expressed opposition to the Reagan administration’s war policies had asked for Hasenfus’ release. These in­cluded Gov. Anthony Earl of Wisconsin; U.S. Senators Thomas Harkin and Christ­opher Dodd of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and several bishops. Ortega noted that no one from the U.S. ambassador in Managua, Brazil or Germany, asked a pardon for Hasenfus. The 38-year-old spy was at a press conference here, where he appeared along with Sally Hasenfus, wife of the CIA operative, and Nicaragua’s former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Miguel D’Escoto. The proposal went to the National Assembly, which approved the pardon by a vote of 69 to 2.

Nicaraguans prepare to resist increased military attacks

The bosses ordered the cafeteria to be cleaned and made coworkers take their lunch before Channel 7 arrived. After the interview, a half­dozen workers and I sat around talking politics. Several Socialist Workers Party campaign platform blank by plank, and we had a lively discussion. One coworker wondered what was going on. “Black co­ worker told me, “You know, you gave me a leaflet a couple months ago and I never read it.” But now he was reading it. Another coworker I had never met before told me he had read it. I was running for mayor of D.C. the day before and I was doing well. Then he saw me on TV and realized I was not black enough and he wanted a much larger number of co­ workers to be introduced to socialist ideas now. Nearly every day in the cafeteria there was someone new who heard about the campaign and wants to know what socialism is all about. Now we need to sell them all subscriptions!

Deborah Lazar is a hostler and a member of United Transportation Union Local 1522.
Cuba festival celebrates art from 3rd World

BY MIKE ALEWITZ
HAVANA, Cuba — With the opening of the Second Havana Biennial November 26, this city has been transformed into a festival of visual art.

Dozens of galleries, museums, institutions, schools, and neighborhood centers are hosting special programs from the Third World. This is the first joint exhibition of present-day work from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. It will continue until December 31.

The red and white banners of the biennial are flying throughout the city. Their logo is formed from a drawing of primitive writing by the Cuban artist Wilfredo Lam.

The biennial was initiated and organized by the Wilfredo Lam Center, founded in 1983. Its primary purpose is to promote theAsian, African, and Latin American art.

Although initiated in Cuba, the biennial is a truly international event, sponsored by artists and other individuals from around the world.

One highlight was the International Conference on Visual Arts of the Caribbean, which took place November 27-29 at the Convention Hall. Several hundred art critics, historians, and administrators met for a three-day discussion and debate conducted in Spanish, English, and French.

Nineteen papers were presented, many dealing with the African influence in Cuban art.

The presentation by Robert Ferris Thompson, director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, was a significant highlight of the conference. Thompson talked about the importance of African culture and art.

Another highlight was the conference on the U.S.- Cuba relations. The conference was organized by the Afro-Cuban community in Havana. The meeting was attended by about 200 people and was the first of its kind in Cuba.

The meeting was organized by the African National Congress of the United States, which is a civil rights organization that was founded in 1969. The meeting was held in the city of Lusaka, Zambia, which is the capital of Zambia.

The meeting was attended by about 200 people and was the first of its kind in Zambia. The participants included African National Congress delegates from the U.S., as well as delegates from other countries in Africa and the Americas. The meeting was sponsored by the United Nations and the African National Congress.

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Subscription renewal campaign builds on gains of sales drive

BY MALIK MIAH
Los Angeles. San Francisco. Boston. In these cities I heard the same comments: “a great success”, “what a shot in the arm”, “a big victory”, “best political discussions I’ve had in years.”

These were the reactions of participants in the fall circulation campaign that netted new subscribers to the Militant and the Spanish-language monthly Perspectiva Mundial.

Militant and PM readers sold subscriptions to workers, farmers, and students across the country and internationally. A total of 11,043 subscriptions (8,673 Militant and 2,378 PM) were sold — 10 percent above the national goal of 10,000.

Most new subscribers to the Militant bought a 12-week introductory subscription, or a five-month subscription to PM. As our letters page has reflected over the past few weeks, many of these first-time subscribers are political discussions with their subscriptions by six months or a year.

But the bulk of new readers, those who began subscribing in October and November, are just beginning to receive renewal notices from our business office. PM subscribers will receive their first notices in January and February.

To take advantage of the success of the fall campaign the Militant and PM are urging their readers to resubscribe. We want to especially encourage new subscribers, so there will be no interruption in getting the publications.

Seven-week effort

As part of this renewal effort, the Militant and PM are asking their supporters to meet and organize a seven-week campaign in January and February to contact readers about extending their subscriptions. This renewal campaign will run from January 10 through February 28.

No specific target (for example, getting 10 or 20 percent of the readers to renew) has been set. But, if we are able to catch every new subscriber at least once, or possibly more times — in person or by mail.

The full circulation campaign offered an opportunity for PM and the Militant to contact readers about extending their subscriptions.

The campaign is the result of a group of five subscription enthusiasts who were determined to fly home rather than continue working under the conditions imposed by the Okeelanta Sugar Company here. The majority were from Jamaica. The rest came from St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Grenada, and Dominica.

The canecutters are part of a work force of some 12,000 workers recruited each year with the collaboration of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association.

The FFVA, working with an outfit called the British West Indies Labour Organization, contracts workers to harvest crops in Florida. More than 9,000 of the 12,000 migrant workers end up in the sugarcane fields in southern Florida.

In mid-November, workers at the Shelton Land Co. and the Atlantic Sugar Association, put on a work stoppage to demand higher wages. In both cases the British West Indies Labour Organization intervened and negotiated higher pay for the cutters.

But when 300 workers at Okeelanta went on strike, the owners called in the local police. Hundreds of cops arrived at the labor camp and attacked the workers who were demanding higher pay. Several workers were hospitalized, some with dog bites. Two of the workers were arrested for “inciting a riot” and “resisting arrest.”

Almost all of the striking workers decided to extend their subscription and help the workers working under existing conditions.

A worker at the Atlantic Sugar Association here described to us the kind of conditions imposed on canecutters in the area.

Showing us his pay stub, he said, “We work eight hours and they pay us for four to five. Sometimes we get only $15 or $20 a day. “We also have to pay for room and board,” he added. “Some of the inexperienced cutters end up with nothing on their paychecks. Many of us feel it’s not worth it.”

The contract the workers sign states that the company will pay them $5-$30 an hour. One cutter explained that after eight days, the company starts paying by the row rather than by the hour. A “row” is two rows of cane cutters.

One of the cutters explained, “If you complain they send you back home and you are not able to return.”

FFVA pays for the round-trip air fare only if the cutters complete their contract, which lasts for the six-month harvest season.

Cutters also have to pay for their medical expenses in the company clinic, although the company claims they will be reimbursed if they complete their contract. This will be a problem because the accident rate is increasing.

All of the cutters who work for the Atlantic Sugar Association, the plantation we visited, live in two local barracks with no privacy. Many of the other workers at other plantations live in similar housing, some with no running water.

The conditions are getting worse. “This is like slavery,” we were told.

Special offer for ‘New International’ if you renew your ‘Militant’ subscription

BY CAMILO COCO AND LARRY LUKECART
BELLE GLADE, Fla. — Nearly 300 Caribbean canecutters returned home rather than continue working under the conditions imposed by the Okeelanta Sugar company here. The majority were from Jamaica.

The canecutters are part of a work force of some 12,000 workers recruited each year with the collaboration of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association.

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Miners discuss unemployment, apartheid

Unionists from over 30 countries at international conference

By Kipp Dawson and Kathy Mickells

London — Representatives of miners’ unions in more than 30 countries met here November 22-23 to discuss unemployment in the mining and energy industries. The conference was sponsored by the International Miners’ Organization (IMO) and hosted by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in Britain.

Founded in 1965, the IMO brings together miners’ unions that are affiliated to both the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, headquartered in Brussels, and the Prague-based World Federation of Trade Unions.

Official delegates or observers attended from miners’ unions in France, Greece, Cyprus, the Soviet Union, and most of the East European countries; a dozen African countries, including South Africa; India; Australia; and Vietnam.

At the request of the South African National Union of Mineworkers, the conference adopted a resolution to “support the call by the African National Congress, South African trade union movement, anti-apartheid organizations, and the United Nations Assembly for comprehensive maximum economic sanctions to be imposed upon South Africa.”

Unemployment

Alan Simons, the IMO’s general secretary, gave the keynote paper on the struggle for jobs in the mining and energy industries.

Simons said recent miners’ struggles in South Africa, Bolivia, France, and Britain show growing resistance of workers to shouldering the consequences of the capitalist economic crisis.

He added that “the struggles to promote peace and disarmament which all peoples are engaged in on the five continents are intensifying” and that “a peace and disarmament-oriented policy” would push towards “world peace and economic development.”

Much of the discussion during the two-day meeting centered on the Simons report. NUM President Arthur Scargill also addressed the gathering. He said that 2,500 jobs have been lost in South Africa since the mid-1980s. The figures include 400 mining jobs over the past two years.

“The government, in order to push through its policy of mass unemployment [unemployment] and having failed to deal with the needs of their union and their members, it imposed reduction-acceptance sanctions in which a large number of cases are in excess of a person’s wage,” he said.

“Let us remember,” Scargill continued, “that the real price of this policy is that the sons and daughters of redundant workers have no job and are destined for a life of helplessness and hopelessness.”

A pamphlet on meat-packers’ struggle

The 1965-66 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota presents the facts about the strike. A pamphlet that was distributed at the Austin plant, and about how the meatpackers have fought back from unionists and farmers across the country.

A pamphlet containing exposition of the meatpackers’ strike that may be obtained by writing to Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y., 10014. Please add $0.75 handling.

Federal judge sentences Missouri farm activist to 8 months in prison

By Jeff Powers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — On December 2 Marvin Porter, a farmer from Kidder, Missouri, was sentenced to eight months in prison by Federal Judge Howard Sach. Porter, who had sentenced Porter to three years’ probation to be served after he is released from prison. The judge ordered him to go to the court to the Processor Credit Association (PCA), a federal farm lending agency. The judge said he wanted Porter to serve the sentence to serve as “a deterrent” to farmers who might be tempted to challenge the PCA.

Porter is a well-known farm activist. In 1985, he was one of the central organizers of two big protests against the foreclosure of Perry Wilson’s farm in Plattsburg, Missouri. These protests helped draw national attention to the plight of working farm families.

In 1986 Porter and his wife Teresa were indicted by the government. The first 19 charges were for “conversion” — that is, selling mortgaged property, in this case hogs. They were also charged with hiding a mortgaged tractor and with conspire to defraud the U.S. government. The charges against Teresa Porter were later dropped.

The PCA had loaned the Porters hundreds of thousands of dollars. When the price of hogs fell, the Porters were unable to repay their loans. Eventually, the PCA took over their farm.

In an attempt to save the farm, Marvin Porter told the judge that he would put the farm back into the operation.

As late as July, the Porters’ lawyers argued that they could not be held accountable for their actions, because the stress of trying to keep the farm put them in an untenable position.

The FBI spent the better part of three years preparing the indictments against the Porters. And an FBI agent sat with the government attorney, directing him during the trial.

The case attracted a lot of attention. Farmers, civil rights activists, and trade unionists came to the trial to show their support.

The government repeatedly attempted to brand Marvin Porter as a right-winger, trying to drive a wedge between him and other progressive farmers and their allies in the civil rights and labor movements.

The defense lawyers explained that Porter was initially attracted to right-wing groups like the Posse Comitatus, because it offered them a way to be simple solutions to the problems facing farmers. How­ ever, their ideas about American views became clear to him, Porter rejected the organization.

Porter is scheduled to begin the jail sentence on December 29. Donations to his legal defense effort and other messages of support can be sent to the North American Farm Alliance, P.O. Box 2502, Ames, Iowa 50010.

December 26, 1986 The Militant 5
The big lie about ‘torture’ of opposition prisoners in Cuba

Armando Valladares vs. Amnesty International

Against All Hope. By Armando Valla­

BY HARRY RING

In this memoir of his Cuban prison ex­perience, Armando Valladares rails against the common prisoners. They did the starvation rations, they should have welcomed the added protein. They did the cockroaches, they should have extracted starch from macaroni, at least according to our author. The prisoners, he asserts, were forced to work regardless of their condition. One of them complained of an injured hand. The doctors, he claims, ‘Listened, for your other hand, which he had somehow saved in the search . . . you’ll have to cut off one of your fingers.’

What happened? You guessed it. ‘Not long afterward, the prisoner came back. Dr. Agronmate saw something in the man’s expression that frightened him. The prisoner raised his closed fist, opened it, and, with the tips of his fingers, the doctor saw blood on his other hand, which he had somehow saved in the search . . . he had broken both his legs as well. At this point the most gullible reader will read — no pun intended — ‘Man, gimme a break.’

Valladares undercuts his own story

Besides the preposterous tales, there are anecdotes which unintentionally undermine the attempt to paint Cuban prisons as hellholes.

For example, Valladares describes the first prison he stayed in as having open cell blocks, where the inmates free to choose their own quarters and ‘stroll’ throughout the block. One of his pals chose a spot on the sixth floor of this ‘hellhole,’ because, ‘He liked to sleep late in the morning.’

Nevertheless, Valladares insists life was harrowing. On page 161, we’re offered a rather Freudian recollection of a mass search for contraband. ‘The order was for us to form into files, each person standing [asked] with his hands in his pockets, and then we would let the prisoners into the cell blocks, and the inmates free to choose their own quarters and “stroll” throughout the block.’

Meanwhile — just two pages later — it occurred to some of his buddies to start a club of the inmates’ cell mates. ‘We managed to collect several burlap bags . . . and we joined them all together to make a rug the size of the cell . . . then we took empty cans and made tea cups.’

The next step was to get hold of some teabags, which came into the prison with some mail in those days. ‘Then from 5 o’clock until 9 o’clock at night, barefooted (we always left our shoes in the hallway), we would sit yoga-style on the rug and sip tea and have readings from one of the few books that had been spared in the search . . . We ended our meetings at 9 o’clock at night, the hour the corret was played for lights out, and each of us went back to his own cell.’ No doubt to gird for the next day’s beatings and torture.

Amnesty International reports

To bolster his sweeping indictment of Cuba’s penal system, Valladares cites the authority of Amnesty International with concerns itself with prisoners worldwide. In its latest reports, ‘Valladares asserts, “Amnesty International has documented cases of executions of dozens of political opponents of the regime, the physical mistreatment of political prisoners.” That’s not precisely the fact. In a 1973 report on torture in various countries, Amnesty International noted “a wealth of allegations of physical and psychologic torture” by Cuban prisoners and their families.

However, the report conceded these allegations could not be confirmed..Added its own view that there were “strong indications” of torture-prisoners in the early years of the revolution.

The organization’s most recent report on the question, “Torture in the 20th Century: 66 countries in which there were allegations, and evidence, of torture of prisoners.” That’s not mentioned in the report.

Further, it’s useful to check out the organization’s annual international reports. Its major yearly report on Cuba focuses on the plantations, and Amnesty International’s concern that they are “unjustly” dealt with. But a key Amnesty International report on Cuba — the one from 1977 — provides a damning indictment of the campaign of lies about the Cuban penal system.

That report flatly states: “Amnesty International has received no information to indicate that prisoners have been tortured during the period covered by this report. That was 1977. About what since then? Read the nine annual reports that follow and, despite the deploiting of the allegation that torture was a problem, it never got a single report suggesting any need to revise the 1977 finding that torture was ‘deliberately and systematically prevented.’

In those subsequent reports, the issue of torture is not even raised.

Surprisingly, an important confirmation is that Amnesty International funding was offered recently by a top official of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The September 17, 1986, Times included a feature story related to the release of 67 Cuban prisoners.

The report stated: “Most of the Cuban prisoners released to the United States were members of the Cuban armed forces under Fulgencio Batista and fought against Fidel Castro’s revolutionary forces, the American official who interviewed them today said.”

A paper quoted Perry Steele, director of the INS for Latin America and the Caribbean.

He said, “Very few of them were in private business. Most of them were in the military, the police, or something like that.”

The report said Steele spent three weeks interviewing the prisoners who were released, and was accompanied by a U.S. vice-consul and a State Department lawyer.

In each case, the Cuban government provided a written account of the charges under which the prisoners had been convicted.

“My job primarily,” Steele said, “was to establish that the information they had given us was credible, or whether the person in front of us was credible.”

The charges against the prisoners, he said, ranged from conspiracy to murder.

The Times reported, “He said he would tell people accused of murder of the charges and the specifics been given, and then asked the prisoner what happened.

‘He said that some explained that they were in ambushes in which forces on both sides were firing.”

The Times added, “Mr. Steele said that in the interviews he found the prisoners in good health and spirits. “We remarked among ourselves,” Steele told the paper, “that some seemed ill in health or mistreated or emaciated.”

That single report is sufficient to expose the Valladares book for the hoax that it is.

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Washington not ‘neutral’ in Iran-Iraq war
CIA gives satellite intelligence to Iraqi military

BY ERNEST HARSCHE

For weeks, since the revelations that Washington has secretly sold arms to Iran, a virulent propaganda campaign against that country and its people has been under way in the United States.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13 — Iran’s government has been bewailing the outbreak of the secret U.S. arms sales as the end of its isolation on the world stage, while the United States-and other countries-believes that the Iranian revolution of 1979, which overthrew the U.S.-backed shah, was a victory for the oppressed masses throughout the Middle East.

In mid-1984, unidentified U.S. sources told the Post, Washington authorized a CIA “intelligence exchange” with Iraq. After the restoration of diplomatic ties between the two countries later that year, the provision of U.S. satellite intelligence mounted. This helped the Iraqi forces pinpoint bombing targets in Iran, as well as to more effectively use poison gas against concentrations of Iranian troops.

In addition, the Post reported, “CIA Director William J. Casey met twice this fall with a Middle East director to try to keep the opposition from making a significant decision to use chemical weapons against Iraq. But the facts point to the opposite conclusion.”

All these facts point to the opposite conclusion, which is that the U.S. government has been giving satellite photos and other sources of military intelligence to the Iraqi regime. This is in line with the CIA’s policy of providing intelligence to all the parties in the Middle East war.

The U.S. government has been giving intelligence to all the parties in the Middle East war, but it has not been giving intelligence to the Iranian government, which is the target of a Miami picket line on December 26.

The Nov. 19 Washington Post reported that the CIA has also given millions of dollars in aid to monarchical and other right-wing Iraqi exile groups seeking to overthrow the Iranian government.

Hated of revolution

Overall, U.S. policy toward Iran is rooted in a determined opposition to the Iranian revolution. The overthrow of the shah was a victory for the Iranian people, and the U.S. government has not been able to prevent it.

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New Nicaragua constitution: advance for revolution
Codifies gains of workers and peasants

BY CINDY JAQUIT

Managua, Nicaragua — In 1969 the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua issued a political program called the "Declaration of the Popular Revolution" to overthrow the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. The FSLN stated that its goal was to replace the Somoza tyranny with "a revolutionary government based on the working people, which will guarantee the fulfillment of all the patriotic, anti-imperialist, and anti­

Rights were illegal and even opposition newspapers were closed. The Sandinista People’s Revolution,” said the FSLN, “will establish a revolutionary government that will eliminate the reactionary structure that arose from rigged elections and military coups, and the people’s power will create a Nicaragua that is free of oppression, exploitation, and backwardness; a free, progressive, and independent country.”

It was to take another 10 years before Nicaragua would begin to look back at the kind of government Nicaragua had before the 1979 revolution and the tasks posed by the Sandinistas when they took power in 1979.

Struggle for national independence
Nicaragua won its independence from Spain in 1821. But it was never free from interference by other countries. Nicaragua suffered U.S. military attack four times between 1854 and 1927, as Washington or its agents sought to impose serve regimes on the country. The U.S. government feared a government free of foreign domination became a central demand.

While some Nicaraguan merchants and landlords played an important role in early battles, revolutionary strikes by the 1920s, Nicaraguan peasants and the small working class that was emerging began to take the lead in this struggle. Led by Gen. Augusto César Sandino, in 1933 a peasant­

Washington responded by organizing the assassination of Sandino and installing the Somozas in power.

Somoza dictatorship
The Sandinistas ruled over Nicaragua for 40 years. But it was never free from interference by other countries. Nicaragua suffered U.S. military attack four times between 1854 and 1927, as Washington or its agents sought to impose serve regimes on the country. The U.S. government feared a government free of foreign domination became a central demand.

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Workers’ right to participate in factory management and unions, for example, was organized from the Nicaraguan port of Puerto Cabezas.

The constitution imposed under Somoza’s rule served to entrench a capitalist government dominated by a small clique of businessmen and landlords. Sandino and loyalists to Washington. With the help of the CIA to overthrow Somoza, the government turned a blind eye to the atrocities of the forces outside the Sandinista’s tight little circle.

The Sandinistas gang stole elections through fraud, at gunpoint, or “legally.” Somoza’s 1950 constitution, for example, automatically gave his Liberal Party 66 percent of the seats in the national legislature. He later graciously reduced his margin to 60 percent.

Even Somoza’s last constitution, adopted in 1974, maintained class inequal­

sity in citizenship rights. Nicaraguans with an education — the wealthy and some from the middle class — became citizens at 18 while everyone else had to wait until they were 21.

In the 1970s, in other words, had never consolidated bourgeois democratic rights and national sovereignty. Thus, when they took 27 percent of the votes in 1979, the Sandinistas faced the task not only of creating the economic and social transformation needed to overcome Nicaragua’s extreme poverty and end class exploitation, but also of carrying out the national, democratic tasks that decades of capitalist rule had failed to accomplish.

Due to an agreement between the National Assembly and the Sandinista parties, the 1979 elections were held to choose a new junta to replace the Somoza dictatorship. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), the Social Christian Unity Party (PLC) and the Democratic Party (PD) were the only political parties to contest the 1979 election.

The elections took place in the context of Nicaragua’s war against the United States. Nicaragua entered the war on the side of the United States against Cuba in 1956. Since 1979, the United States has been providing economic and military aid to support the counterrevolutionary forces in Nicaragua.

The elections were fraudulent. The Sandinista victory was announced by the National Assembly, which was controlled by the FSLN. The election results were announced on national television and radio as official. The election results were also published in the local and national newspapers.

The elections were boycotted by most of the political parties in Nicaragua. The only political parties that participated in the election were the FSLN, the PLC, and the PD. The election results were announced on national television and radio as official. The election results were also published in the local and national newspapers.

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constitution, but the revolution itself has

The basic character of the constitution rests upon a document drawn by a democratic, independent republic with a government responsible for advancing the interests of Nicaragua's majority, the workers and peasants.

The document reflects the contradictory character of the current stage of the revolution. While working people hold political power, some property relations continue to exist.

This is all summed up in the five "fundamental principles" at the beginning of the document.

The first principle establishes Nicaragua's right to "national independence, sovereignty, and national self-determination"; rejecting "all foreign interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs."

Article 2 declares that the exercise of national sovereignty rests with the people, who freely decide "the construction of the economic, social, and political system that conforms to their needs."

In Article 3 the constitution says that Nicaragua is committed to the "struggle for peace and for a just international order," and therefore condones "all forms of domination and colonial and imperialist exploitation."

The final two principles deal with the nature of the current Nicaraguan state. Article 4 explains that this state is "the principal instrument of the people to eliminate all forms of subordination and exploitation of man;" being to push forward the material and spiritual progress of the nation, and to guarantee that the interests and rights of the majority prevail.

The state, explains Article 5, "guarantees the existence of political pluralism, united economy, and nonalignment."

Defining these terms, the article explains that political pluralism is the right of political groups to exist and participate in political life "without ideological restrictions," except for those attempting to return to a Somozaist-type system.

Mixed economy is defined as "the existence of different forms of property, both public and private, and associating the democratic, cooperative, and communal." All this property, it continues, must be used to "contribute to the creation of wealth to satisfy the needs of the country and its inhabitants."

Nonalignment is defined as a commitment to peace, respect for the sovereignty of all nations, and opposition to all forms of colonial, imperialist, or racist oppression.

The constitution establishes four independent branches of government — executive, legislative, judicial, and electoral. This government is responsible for assuring every Nicaraguan their right to an education, a job, health care, decent housing, recreation, and a host of other rights.

Democratic rights
The section on democratic rights is quite far-reaching, going significantly beyond the U.S. Constitution. In addition to guaranteeing freedom of speech, assembly, and religion, and other basic rights that are in the U.S. Bill of Rights, the Nicaraguan Constitution guarantees the right to political asylum, outlaws the death penalty, establishes the right to individual privacy, and declares that the goal of the prison system is to reeducate prisoners, advance their schooling level, pay them a decent wage for prison labor, and reintegrate them into society. No prison sentence may be more than 30 years and beatings or torture are completely prohibited.

Provisions for declaring a state of emergency — such as the one currently in force, under which Washington's army has been suspended in Nicaragua due to the war — are also in the constitution. But they have been moved from the section on permanent powers of the government to a final section outlining extraordinary measures for suspending or amending the constitution.

Washington pushed for boycott
The U.S. government did everything in its power to prevent the constitution from being completed and adopted. It placed heavy pressures on opposition parties to pull out of the constitution discussion in the hopes of delegitimating the document and the Nicaraguan government as a whole.

Nicaragua's capitalistic parties were divided over Washington's attempts to derail the constitution. Because they also were under the pressure of the Nicaraguan masses, who saw it as a patriotic duty to any serious political party to take part in the discussion.

The Democratic Conservatives also fought over whether to boycott. They too rejected that course.

In the end all seven parties participated in the final debate. Forty-six of the 202 articles were approved unanimously.

Preamble
On the last day of the constitution debate, the Sandinistas managed to defuse a controversial debate over whether the constitution should be invoked in the document's preamble. This was insisted upon by the capitalist parties. The FSLN proposed, instead, adding to the preamble a clause wording the rule of Nicaraguans who are Christians and who "through their faith in God" fought to overthrow the Somoza dictatorship. The capitalist parties accepted the clause.

Assembly President Carlos Núñez, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, explained afterward that he had turned a deaf ear to this point because he would have only foisted Washington's propaganda that the Sandinistas persecute religion. Moreover, he pointed out, it would have created an unnecessary rift between Nicaraguans who are religious and those who are not.

Rafael Sobli, National Assembly secretary-general for the FSLN deputy, explained that the Sandinistas' overall approach to the constitution. With its majority, the FSLN could approve any constitution language it wanted to. But "that would be a political error," he explained.

"Rather, we will seek consensus. It is essential that the constitution promote National Unity among Nicaraguans and strengthen the very defense of the revolution, in the broadest sense. If we approve a constitution by majority vote, that would only exacerbate the differences between the FSLN and other political parties, which also represent many Nicaraguans."

Party divisions
Many times, the various party factions did not vote as a bloc. In the Democratic Conservative Party (PCD), for example, a hardline rightist group of three deputies known as the Sicilian faction, was dead opposed to land reform being in the constitution. (One of these was Enrique Soloto, the lawyer for CIA man Eugene Hasanfuris, the sole survivor of the plane shot down over Nicaragua last October.) Other PCD members were embarrassed by their behavior. One People's Social Christian Party deputy from a peasant background, Leoncio Raya, began voting with the FSLN on some questions. He said PSC leaders were not representing his class interests. PPSC head Mauricio Diaz angrily branded him a "Sandinista infiltrator."

The FSLN fraction voted as a bloc on major political questions, but its deputies also expressed some different viewpoints and occasionally voted differently. When Sandinista deputy Daniel Aguirre, assistant director of the city El Nuevo Diario, proposed that the constitution say the state "promotes marriage," quite a few other FSLN deputies strongly disagreed with him. The proposal was not included in the final language on the family, with Aguirre's agreement.

Mixed economy debate
The most active of the ultraleft groups in the debate was the Marxist-Leninist Party. It offered proposals on virtually every article and drew respect for its consistent, serious participation in the town meetings and drafting commissions. But while PML deputy Carlos Cuadra voted in favor of many FSLN motions and collaborated with the Sandinistas in drafting some of them, he voted against the constitution as a whole, objecting to the "political pluralism/mixed economy/nonalignment" axis.

The PML argued that this "establishes capitalism" and that including it in the constitution, the FSLN "renounced the constitution of socialism in Nicaragua." The constitution, the PML's view, thus became a roadblock to the workers' fight against exploitation.

But as Carlos Núñez explained in the debate one day with the PML, "Socialism is not established by decree."

The constitution codifies that which has already been conquered by the Nicaraguan masses. It recognizes the fact that the revolution remains — first and foremost — in a war for its life against the largest military power in the world.

It does not and cannot decree into reality what has not yet been won in the unfolding class struggle or in the consciousness of the masses. Nor can the constitution try to leap artificially over the current level of productive forces in Nicaragua, still one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with a tiny industrial base.

At the same time, the document firmly establishes the kind of state needed to lead the Nicaraguan masses to the economic transformations that will end class exploitation.

The next step in the constitution process will be for each party to sign the final edited document. Then, as the constitution mandates, municipal elections will be organized. In addition, some 30 laws currently on the books — including the war laws, and parts of the labor and penal code — have been made obsolete by the new constitution and will have to be redrawn by the assembly. 
West Bank protests defy brutality of Israeli occupiers

BY HARRY RING

Spurred by brutal repression, Palestinians have been conducting major protests throughout the Israeli-occupied West Bank of the Jordan River. The actions were touched off December 4 when Israeli soldiers killed two students and wounded at least 11 more at the Palestinian.United List Bir Zeit University north of Jerusalem.

With 3,500 students, the university has long been a center of opposition to the Israeli occupation of the area. The West Bank demonstrations have also registered solidarity with the guerrilla fighters of the Palestine Liberation Organization. In Lebanon, PLO forces are offering stubborn resistance to a military drive against them.

In the 1985 period, Israeli troops killed four young people on the West Bank. Some two dozen more have been wounded and scores arrested. Seventy were jailed in a single day of protests. But in recent years the troops have been unable to quell the protests. In the city of Nazareth, Israeli soldiers participated in a protest rally. In communities throughout the West Bank, protesters marched and rallied, threw up street barricades and in general situations had nothing more than stones to defend themselves against Israeli occupiers.

Despite the threat of victimization, a general strike of Palestinian merchants shut down the roads between East Jerusalem and for at least several days.

The initial attack on the Palestinian students came when Israeli occupation forces set up a roadblock set up near the university. After several days of this, an angry mob of Palestinian students rioted against the troops. When the soldiers moved to arrest one of the students, others tried to protect him and a pitched battle ensued with teargas.

A larger number of students then rallied on campus and were charged by the Israeli troops who fired directly into the gathering, killing the two and wounding 11 others.

Now in its 19th year, the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem is strongly opposed by the Palestinians all along. But recent moves to tighten the military repression have alienated further their resistance.

300,000 Palestinians, and 60,000 Israeli colonial settlers, now live in the West Bank.

In a 1986 concession to the Palestinians, the Israeli government formally suspended arbitrary deportation of Palestinians deemed subversive, as well as arbitrary shootings. But in January 1985, both deportations and arbitrary shootings were reinstated.

Since then a reported 35 people have been deported and more than 130 jailed under a law that authorizes imprisoning people for up to six months without charge.

Two recent deportation orders have generated particularly strong protests in the West Bank and in other countries.

One of the most widely reported is the case of Dr. Mohammad Sheikh, a Palestinian physician who was commissioned by the World Medical Association to do a poll in the West Bank of attitudes toward the PLO and its leadership. The poll showed that 93 percent of the Palestinian people support the PLO and 71 percent look upon PLO head Yasser Arafat as the leader of the Palestinian people.

The publication of the poll, Sheikh was banned from his teaching post and ordered to get out of the West Bank.

A second case that has created much anger has been the ordered deportation of Shatilla has been destroyed in the Amal stronghold, it was reported that food and water were low and fever spreading.

Yet the stubborn resistance continued, with the PLO capturing the town of Majdouneh, after a fierce battle. This was said to be the biggest military operation carried out by the PLO since it was driven from Lebanon in 1982.

The hilltop town has strategic importance because it overlooks the area of the Rashid family's compound and permission for the PLO response to the Amal forces that have been shelling the camp.

The impassioned Amal-Palestinian peace plan was said to have been negotiated with representation of Iran, Libya, and Syria. Earlier, the Soviet ambassador in Beirut announced that his government was also working to help mediate an end to the fighting.

Dispatches from Lebanon indicate that the Amal onslaught has served to bring to the attention of the PLO forces, the need for it to wage an armed revolt against the majority of the PLO, headed by Arafat.

The Associated Press reported a statement by the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) branding Amal's assault on the camps as a "massacre" similar to the one committed by the Phalangists in 1982.

The AP dispatch said: "The Front, a coalition opposed to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, has joined forces with Arafat loyalists to defend the camps in Beirut and South Lebanon.""The Christian Science Monitor added that all of the Palestinian factions united in the battle to win control of the town of Majdouneh.

Meanwhile, as Arafat focused its firepower on the Palestinian liberation fighters, working people in Lebanon have been confronting worsening conditions.

In a war-torn country that depends on imports for nearly 90 percent of its needs, a drastic drop in the value of the Lebanese pound has brought further slashes in living standards.

A December 2 dispatch to the New York Times reported the workers' response: "A few days, a one-day strike brought Lebanon to a standoff today. "Shops, banks, businesses and schools were closed, and only emergency services operated. "The strike, the second in six months, was called by the Federation of Trade Unions, representing both Moslem and Christian workers, to protest inflation and a continuing decline in the value of Lebanese currency."

Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

Interview with ANC youth

Che Guevara is the pseudonym used by a young member of the African National Congress, the organization leading the fight against apartheid. In his native language, he's an approximation of the name of guerrilla commander Che Guevara. The young ANC fighter adopted this name while taking part in the historic Soweto uprising.

"This was one of the many expressions," explained the young activist, "of how South African youth have been inspired by the Cuban revolution, in particular after Cuban internationalist combatants, together with the Angolan Army Forces for Popular Liberation, defeated [apartheid's] racist occupation forces in Angola."

The December issue of Perspectiva Mundial features an interview with Che Guevara about the student movement and the current upsurge in South Africa.

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The Militant stays on top of important developments in the world movement. Our correspondents work in the mines, mills, and shops where events are breaking. You won't miss any of it if you subscribe. See the ad on page 2 for subscription rates.

West Bank protests defy brutality of Israeli occupiers

BY HARRY RING

PLO refugee camps in Lebanon have been under fire from a Lebanese military force known as Amal. The upsurge of the murderous attack is to drive out guerrilla fighters of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In a statement, Amal said the reason for a new Israeli aggression to justify its attacks against the camps as a "massacre" similar to the one committed by the Phalangists in 1982.

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Angola's peasants make gains despite war

BY SAM MANUEL

UIGE, Angola — In the northern prov-

cence of Uige (bearing the same name as its capital province), some 430,000 people live.

Most of them are subsistence farmers, growing food for their own consumption.

The main commercial crop is coffee.

The vast plantations were nationalized

when the Portuguese fled the country in 1975, when Angola won its independence from Portugal.

In an effort to increase coffee production for international markets, the government has established two processing plants in the area, just to the north of the capital, to ensure that they have the capacity to process 6,000 tons of coffee per year.

Much of the coffee is supplied by state-owned farms. There are some 500 workers at the resolves 11, which I visited. The

director had spent seven years in Cuba, which has similar soil and climate conditions, producing coffee for domestic consumption.

Housing is provided for the workers and their families. There is also a school and nursery for the children. A full-time nurse provides medical attention, and a doctor makes regular visits. None of this existed under Portuguese colonial rule.

Gains for farmers

In addition to the state farms, the coffee is also supplied by cooperative farms and smaller, private producers. Since independence, the government is working to increase production and incorporate growers into the commercial markets.

The vast plantations were nationalized when the Portuguese fled the country in 1975, which has made it difficult for local farmers to sell their product. What roads existed were geared to serving the large plantations. The African farmers were mostly at the mercy of Portuguese traders who paid little for their products, exploiting the traders' profit margins. Now the farmers sell directly to the government at a fair price.

More and more small farmers are joining cooperatives. Membership is voluntary. Some 790 families farm the land on the Benga-Kingueua cooperative. In addition to corn, coffee, yuca, potatoes, and other crops grown here, they have developed processing plants for milk, eggs, pigs, and other nutritional sources of food. The project enables the government to provide technical and financial assistance more efficiently to the farmers.

Big efforts are being made in education here. Since independence, Angola still faces a shortage of teachers. Before the revolution, most of them were Portuguese, and the government lacks trained teachers or the money to hire new ones. The government must also hire non-Angolans.

Jose Mario da Silva worked as a teacher for the FNLA in one of its encampments. He explained that he taught basic math, science, and some Portuguese history.

They survived by smuggling goods between Zaire and Angola. Da Silva explained, "One day I heard about the army and said yes. I accepted with my heart and went there to help them in the fight against the enemy."

Angelo António Varga was a medic for the FNLA. "The conditions were harsh and supplies were few," he said. "Often I would improvise traditional medicines and give injections to those who were sick or wounded. Many died due to the lack of adequate medicines."

Ulian da Silva Alves was a former FNLA commander. He is now a commander in the Angolan army, assigned to a command unit. He told me, "UNITA is the enemy of our people. They have refused the amnesty offer and continued to murder defenseless people. For us, there can be no negotiation. We will fight them step by step until they are destroyed."
El Salvador: weekly action in support of the stranded refugees

Virgin Islands: The U.S. government's war on the people of the Virgin Islands.

Grenada: The people's struggle for freedom.

Santa Barbara: weekly meeting of the U.S. Socialist Party.

Puerto Rico: weekly action in solidarity with the people of El Salvador.

Puerto Rico: the people's struggle for freedom.

Cuba: the people's struggle for freedom.

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Behind media campaign for marriage and motherhood

BY MARGARET JAYKO

Singing the praises of marriage and motherhood—or bemoaning the fate of women workers—is such an odd topic for the评议 of a large and increasing number of newspaper articles, magazine stories, television programs, and books. They range from the ridiculous to some that are slicker and more carefully presented.

On the ridiculous side of things were articles, columns, and magazine stories last year that promoted the notion that childbearing improves the performance of women workers.

Mary Decker Slaney, who set the women's world record for the mile in 1984, was given to commenting on the fact that women take longer to recover from childbirth than from other surgical operations.

"When the blasting cap exploded and set N.Y. Manhattan targeted in the latest violent attack on abortion clinics, cops refused, saying that if they did it for administrative offices of the employers, the police to station officers around the building. "The Feminization of work is nothing but a way of paying women through their work in the home and weaken part time."

The marriage and motherhood push has meant big bucks for those with enough capital to take advantage of it. Marketers are beginning to hold lucrative "singles nights." As described in one account: "In Cherry Hill, N.J., the local market has literally become the most market. Every Tuesday night at the Shop-N-Bag, as many as 2,000 men and women flock to a single room in the back of the store. I had checked over the broccoli and detergent, hopeful that a magic encounter in the aisle could lead them down the aisle."

Dating businesses are also flourishing. Prof. Perls of the Chicago dating service, a "supermom," says that for $4,600 you guarantee you’ll be engaged or married in three years. "Bottom line: profits."

What’s behind this zeal?"The Feminization of loneliness?"

"Are These Old Maids?" asked the cover of the March 31, 1986, People magazine over an image of the queen's birthday celebrators. And the June 2, 1986, Newsweek ran a graphic story on its front cover with the headline: "The Marriage Crunch: If You’re a Single Woman, Here Are Your Chances of Getting Married"

Both had feature stories on a "study" about the marriage prospects for white, college-educated women in the 1980s. If you’re still single at 30, it said, you have only a 20 percent chance of marrying. If you’re married at 30, you’re still more likely to be married than a female whose unmarried status is "a social stigma." "Another study, coming out of the University of California, Berkeley, was titled "The Feminization of Loneliness."

A three-hour-long ABC news show, "After the Sexual Revolution," which aired the same day, laid the blame for this on women. It made sure to include lots of scenes of women crying about how lonely they were because they didn’t have a husband. And "supermom"—who tries to do the "impossible" (which is defined as working and having children)—has been debunked by just about everybody.

The justification? "You stewardesses and girls aren’t breadwinners."

As for the 15 percent of flight attendants who are pregnant, the FAA bosses told them to "look for a real job."

The flight attendants’ response says something about the increased pressure on the employers in using prejudices against women to advance their austerity drive against women to advance their austerity move to save money by replacing the flight attendants’ labor power below that of other airline workers.

"Wives and mothers first and foremost"

The ruling circles whose ideas are disseminated by the mass media are pushing marriage to underwrite working-class women’s new-found self-confidence and measure of independence from men.

The more dependent women are, the more likely they are to take any job, at any cost under any conditions. The more women are convinced that a male is the only person good in life, the more they’ll be to adopt the submissive, passive attitudes that can make the hunt more success. The men are making rules seek work that women that they want to be dependent on a man with the second-class status that en--

Likewise, the ruling class applauds the virtues of motherhood as part of convincing women that their real worth springs from their childbearing and rearing capacities. The employers hope to make women workers less likely to stick up for their rights by convincing them to view themselves as mothers, and not as "marginal workers."

They want to keep women workers out of union activity and out of politics.

The employers’ efforts to reintroduce housework in several industries, and to increase the already large number of temporary workers, are being sold partly on the basis that they are good for mothers. Both homework and temporary work yield large profits because they mean low wages, few or no benefits, and difficulties for union organization.

This simply underlines the need for the union movement to champion the rights of women on and off the job as a necessary part of countering the employers’ offensive against the entire working class.

Waging a serious fight to defend and extend affirmative action programs, for federally funded child care, paid parental leaves, raised wages for women workers, and defense of women’s right to abortion is all part of countering a working-class solution to the problems facing women to the reactionary propaganda and actions of the employers and their government.

10 AND 25 YEARS AGO

December 24, 1976

On December 7 the Supreme Court told employers they don’t have to take women working women disability pay during pregnancy.

A front-page New York Times article heralded it as a "major setback to the women’s rights movement." The Wall Street Journal heralded it as "a big victory for employers."

Fidel Castro’s December 2 nationwide television speech declaring his adherence to Marxist-Leninist doctrine is now the subject of a major campaign in this country, pivotal around the assertion that Castro declared he had been a "communist" since his university days but had concealed his views in order to gain power. This is a flat lie.

The running theme of the speech is that his experience since coming to power had convinced him of the correctness of Marxist-Leninist theory and that he was convinced that the united revolutionary party now in process of formation in Cuba must be based upon a Marxist-Leninist program.

The three principal organizations involved in the creation of the new party are the July 26th Movement, the Communist, or Popular Socialist Party (PSP), and the Revolutionary Directorate.

All of the members of the various revolutionary organizations are eligible to enter the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, with equal rights and considerations, "Castro declared." A government "based on a revolutionary vanguard, democracy and striking through a collective leadership" is best, he said, because such a government "does not aspire to be eternal, but simply transitional."
EDITORIALS

‘Contra’ war behind U.S. crisis

Continued from front page

Washington began preparing the contra war soon after the July 19, 1979 overthrow of the dictatorial regime of Anastasio Somoza on July 19, 1979. The U.S. rulers had installed the Somoza dynasty and had supported its oppressive actions in Nicaragua.

The tyrannical regime was replaced with a popular workers’ and peasants’ government led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. From the outset, the Sandinistas could not be bought, bullied, or blackmailed into following their adversaries’ dictates. The Nicaraguan people turned to the tune of Somoza’s National Guard, who had fled into neighboring Honduras.

The first attack was carried out five years ago. It was called “Red Christmas.” The contras murdered, raped, and tortured dozens of people who lived along the Rio Coco, according to the pattern ever since — terrorist attacks on unarmed civilians.

Washington hoped the contra attacks would spread Honduran soldiers to the Nicara­guan border to undermine support for the revolution and sow demoralization and divi­sions.

If the contras could have taken a town long enough to raise the flag of a “liberated” Nicaragua, Washington could have sent in its own troops and those of neighboring countries under the guise of defending the new “gov­ernment.”

Soldiers of fortune, CIA operatives, and other U.S. personnel aided the contra killers.

The Pentagon poured arms and military aircraft into Honduras and staged an invasion of Nicaragua on the night of December 7. U.S. troops based in Costa Rica, to the south, also got U.S. aid.

And the frequent use of military bases and personnel in El Salvador and Nicaragua by the U.S. military has been ex­posed in the latest round of revelations.

December 7 was followed by one significant battle with the Sandinista People’s Army, never mind capture a town or some territory.

Many peasants or soldiers were kidnapped by the contras are now taking advantage of the Nicaraguan government’s amnesty program, which lets contra deserters who turn themselves in to their families and communities.

And the Somozist merchants have gained no popular support. The pro-contra opposition inside Nicaragua is small, isolated, and divided.

The past few years have seen a qualitative weakening of the contras. An increasingly effective Sandinista Army pushed most of the raiders out of the country and shut down their infiltration routes.

Although the contras have killed more than 150 Nicaraguan civilians this year, they have been unable to launch large-scale military attacks. From January to Oc­tober, seven contra soldiers were killed in the fighting compared to 800 Sandinista soldiers killed or missing.

The attempt by some 1,500 mercenaries to enter Nica­ragua from Honduras in late November was a debacle.

The Sandinistas repelled them, inflicting heavy losses.

Another reason Washington can’t simply rush in where contra forces have failed is that there is widespread opposition in Latin America to the imperialist gunboat diplo­macy.

An invasion of Nicaragua would become a region­al conflict the same way that the U.S. aggression against Vietnam did.

And the true outcome for Washington: military and political defeat.

Since Vietnam, the U.S. rulers face another problem which has serious ramifications for them. The massive sentiment of the people in the United States against the use of the Pentagon’s arsenal to wage wars of plunder.

This has precipitated disputes in the ruling circles about the best way to accomplish the commonly agreed upon goal — getting rid of the Sandinistas. And it is be­cause of the antiwar sentiment at home that some of the truth about the character of Washington’s war has come out.

It’s working people — of Nicaragua, Latin America, and the United States — who make the political and mil­itary price Washington is paying for any invasion very high indeed.

The job of antiwar activists in the United States is to make it too high, to make it impossible for Washington to send troops to Nicaragua as it did in Vietnam.

And to force Washington to recognize that the only people carrying out terrorist attacks on the Nicaraguan people.

The crisis rocking the White House is an unprec­edented opportunity for antiwar fighters. Millions of working people, angry about being lied to, are more open to arguments against U.S. intervention in Nicaragua.

And many can be convinced to participate in antiwar ac­tions.

Emergency protests have been held around the country to demand an end to the contra war.

The most meaningful and the most national antiwar dem­onstrations where thousands and thousands of working people and students — representing millions of others —

can get together to demand and organize the time, from all over the country, and demand an end to the war.

Such actions are an important impact and help build a truly massive, truly effective move­ment to stop this dirty war.

This is the first time antiwar activists around the country are beginning to act on — national demonstra­tions in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco on April 24 and 25. Rallies were planned and leafletting was planned to be printed.

The call for a Western states mobilization in San Fran­cisco has been made. The next crucial step is for the coali­tion that initiated discussion on these actions, the April Ac­tion Committee (the umbrella organization of the D.C. action committee, to take a national call.

Such a call can be taken to the labor movement; or­ganizations that fight for the rights of Blacks, women, and Latin Americans, and the workers fighting the drug cartels, so that the voice of working people in the United States can be heard loud and clear across the country and across the world: Stop the contra war! Stop the lies! Let Nicara­gua live!

A program to build tens of thousands of new public housing units must be part of any housing program that will benefit working people.

Today, however, public housing is a miniscule part of the country’s housing, and the number of units being built has declined in the past 15 years from 1983 and 1984, respectively, to 5.3 per­cent and .3 percent, respectively, of the total new hous­ing starts, the lowest figures since 1947. In the peak years of 1982, the figures were 10.4 percent and 15 percent. This was in the wake of the labor upheaval that led to the organization of millions of industrial workers into unions.

A good share of the public housing built more than 25 years ago is deteriorating because it hasn’t been main­tained.

The material and human resources exist to launch a major drive to construct affordable and decent housing for everyone. It will cost millions of dollars to build and maintain.

There is plenty in the Pentagon’s budget. It’s expected to get more than $290 billion next year. Even a portion of that would be a long way toward providing decent, affor­dable and adequate housing.

To help individual homeowners, the federal govern­ment should declare a moratorium on all foreclosures. Taxes on homeowners’ property should be abolished and interest on mortgages was called for.

The above proposals for dealing with the housing problem are neither very complicated nor unreasonable. They have already been agreed to by the government.

But the government refuses to carry them out. The reasons are simple. The major landlords, insurance com­panies, construction firms, and other contractors don’t want to solve the housing problem. They profit too much from land values and from the continuing refusal of the government doesn’t want. Because the government is nothing more than the organized collective power of the exploiters, the organizations against the exploited classes, the work­ers and farmers.

As long as the capitalists remain in political power, the housing problem will not be resolved. Public economic downturns will continue to displace workers with little or no prospects for a better future. The government’s interests will continue to concentrate on building luxury housing and office buildings, which are more profitable than low-in­come public housing.

Only by waging a struggle to replace the government’s government with one of their own can working people fi­nally achieve decent housing as a democratic right of everyone.

Affordable and decent housing is everyone’s right.

By DOUG JENNES

Now that cold weather has come to much of the coun­try, local governments are under increasing pressure to find some kind of shelter for hundreds of people without homes. The homeless and their defenders are pressing to establish their legal right as aggrieved citi­zens to safe and suitable shelter and other immediate as­siduosity, such as food, clothing, and medicine.

Armories, vacant buildings, churches, and other facil­i­ties are being put to use around the country to provide soup kitchens. In general, the aid is stingy and inad­equate. Moreover, it is not linked to meeting the long-term housing needs of the homeless.

How can displacement of low-income people from their homes be halted and adequate housing found for the homeless and those living in substandard buildings?

For one thing, the government should immediately come up with a decent housing for as many of the home­less as possible.

Then, rents should be reduced to no more than 10 per­cent of the tenant’s income. And all evictions ceased.

That would give immediate relief to millions of low-income people, many of whom are now paying more than 30 per­cent of their monthly income on rent.

If the scrooges living off the rents they collect compl­ain that they can’t keep up with the expenses on their buildings, the government should subsidize them to make it possible for low-income people to live in them.

While the city continues to collect rents, it makes only enough repairs to prepare the buildings for sale to private landlords, who will jack up the rents or convert them to fast food eating places.

A just housing policy would use public funds to fix up or renovate old structures, maintaining them as low-in­come public housing. And it would replace those beyond repair with new buildings.

A program to build tens of thousands of new public housing units must be part of any housing program that will benefit working people.

Today, however, public housing is a miniscule part of the country’s housing, and the number of units being built has declined in the past 15 years from 1983 and 1984, respectively, to 5.3 per­cent and .3 percent, respectively, of the total new hous­ing starts, the lowest figures since 1947. In the peak years of 1982, the figures were 10.4 percent and 15 percent. This was in the wake of the labor upheaval that led to the organization of millions of industrial workers into unions.

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LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

December 26, 1986

The Militant
Auto workers discuss implications of GM closings

BY MACEO DIXON AND JEFF ROGERS

The Militant has received a steady stream of discussion on the importance of organizing auto workers at the General Motors Doraville assembly plant near Atlanta about the recent announcement that the company will close the plant and eliminate 10,000 jobs.

The Militant has always maintained that the 5,000 or so workers at the Doraville plant are of the utmost concern to workers in the United States. The同心(67696696) plied with GM is a trade-off, not a personal one. They are not fools.

In fact, four months of “down time” is planned next year when the plant is scheduled to be retooled to produce the new “GM-10” car. Building the new car may have kept Doraville off the company’s “hit list” for the time being. But many workers feel the restructuring and automation involved in producing the new model is supposed to result in the loss of 900 jobs here. If business is so bad now, shouldn’t we expect additional down time or cancellation of a shift at the plant? And isn’t it possible that by next summer, the company might consider fewer plants are needed to build the new model?

Although there is no way to answer these questions, it has become clear to many of us that GM is going to reduce the work force as much as possible at the same time as it tries to weaken the union.

The company is going to try to dilute provisions for job protection won by the union over the years.

One worker said, “Sub pay ran out quick in the last recession. I bet it won’t last even that long next time around.”

The Job Bank program, which is supposed to help retrain workers laid off because of new technology or plant conversions, will in all likelihood also run out of money because of the number of workers in the program. If the company shuts down a plant for “market” or “economic” reasons, no one there is eligible for the “bank.”

We are all feeling the effects of more harassment on the job. Line speed has been increased and seniority weakened as job assignments become more and more ar­bitrary. Sexual harassment of workers has become a serious issue. The punitive attendance program has been introduced to try to keep people in line out of stressed working conditions. The wrist support strap worn by victims of carpal tunnel syndrome has become a familiar sight.

We know that more of the same can be expected when the plant resumes production at the end of next summer under a new local agreement. Although we’ve been told

we will be able to vote on the new rules, there will be tremendous pressure to accept more concessions.

Most workers, on the surface, are not expressing a great deal of concern. “Our plant isn’t on the list,” or “They’re just using this to soften us up for the next contract” are comments often heard.

But a few are truly angered at the long list of concessions already imposed and feel we should do something about it. “This is crazy,” declared one longtime union member. “Not too many years ago, if GM closed this many plants, we’d have closed the next one.”

No one expects the union to call a national strike over the proposed loss of jobs, but the strike at the Delco parts plant in Kokomo, Indiana, not only saved 900 jobs, it demonstrated the importance of fighting back. We shared the latest news of the strike up and down the line.

The proposed plant closings were the main topic of discussion at the last round of union meetings. Unfortunately, the local leaders had to report this news in the way of a fightback from the International union.

As unionists, we need to stick together and tell GM we’ve had enough. We should begin now to hold meet­ings in every local to discuss the best way to organize a fight for our jobs and to figure out what allies we need to help us win. Other workers facing similar problems and working farmers would be at the top of the list.

Maceo Dixon and Jeff Rogers are members of United Auto Workers Local 10 at the Doraville, Georgia, GM plant.

LETTERS

From our readers behind bars

The Militant receives many letters from our readers who are in prison. Unfortunately, space permits us to publish only a portion of these letters, and some of them are abridged.

We receive letters from prisoners on a wide range of subjects, from letters of apprecia­tion to letters expressing concern, which is made possible by our Prisoners Fund, money paid by prisoners engaged in struggles against the system to defend their basic democratic rights. These letters present the pro­lific worlds of our readers.

This week we devote the entire letters column to the prisoners and brothers be­hind bars.

The Militant special Prisoners Fund makes it possible to send subscriptions to prisoners who can’t afford them. Where possible the fund also tries to fill prisoners’ requests for other literature. As a result of this new pro­gram, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Sub­scription Service, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Get on the ball! When you write to any newspaper, whether as a subscriber and supporter of the Militant, I was appalled at a brief item in the letters section of your November 28, 1986, edition titled “Golf,” signed N.W., Paul Min­nesota.

It seems to respond to the blatant ignorance of N.W. It is said that ignorance is kind and to tolerate such ignorance as N.W. thinks it is a waste of time to print a full story on the true side of the story. You have no time to gather any stones, for there is nothing new under the sun. There is a time for “casting stones!” and there is a time for “gathering stones.” And you have no time to gather any stones, for you are too busy casting them.

Peace!

A prisoner

Jefferson City, Missouri

NICE GIRL LIKE YOU

I’m presently in jail and am for my release. While reading the November 28, 1986, issue of the Militant, I came across an advertisement that was both interesting and inviting.

I wish.

Send to “What’s a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Joint Like This?” 2144 Shattuck Ave. #504, Berkeley, Calif. 94704.

Prisoners

Frontiera, California

True side of the story

I’m presently in jail and am for my release. While reading the November 28, 1986, issue of the Militant, I came across an advertisement that was both interesting and inviting.

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Prisoners

Frontiera, California

Fervor to fight

I am held captive at Attica Correc­tional Facility in the State of New York, and I wish to receive the Militant as an adopted pris­oner. I am an indigent person, possess­ing a fervor to fight against the ra­cist oppression of the neocol­onialist European. I evolved to this consciousness of self-determi­nation, which I will prohibit from being eroded by the worker of imperialism — consciously or unconsciously.

A prisoner

Attica, New York

December 26, 1986

The Militant
Iowa meat-packers end Swift strike
Company to recall unionists ‘as needed’ as 250 scabs continue working

BY KATHLEEN KELLY AND CURTIS MARTIN
MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa — Meat-packers here have voted to end their 10-week strike against Swift Independent Packing Corp.

On December 14 members of Local 50 of the National Beef Workers (NBPW) approved a contract offer similar to the one that had been rejected by union negotiators.

Although no vote totals were announced, union leaders told the media that the vote was in favor.

Under the contract, wages will be cut by up to 80 cents an average of $8.00 an hour. The three-year agreement also lowers the number of guaranteed hours in the work-week from 36 to 32 for 13 weeks of the year.

Pension payments to retired meat-packers and union officers will now have to pay $600 in medical-care deductibles out of pocket.

Swift dropped the demand to institute a “flexible workweek” that would have given the company the right to force the meat-packers to work on Saturdays and Sundays without overtime pay.

But John Morrell goes on to guarantee that any of the striking meat-packers will get their jobs back. Two hundred fifty workers have been given the job of unloading freight on a shift basis called back “as needed” and that recall will not be based on seniority. Instead the company will pick and choose who it will allow back.

Swift had been saying that 20 or 30 of the strikers would be recalled in the next few weeks if the contract was ratified.

The strikers were not receivng any benefits during their more than three months on the picket line and many were facing extreme hardships.

At the union meeting where the vote was taken, some meat-packers told reporters they that they had no choice but to try to return to work. Others, however, did agree to settle until all the workers got their jobs back.

NBPW Local 50 President Jim Aalfs thanked unionists and community supporters who had aided the strikers.

Union Secretary Rita Lewis spent a week at the Hormel meat-packing plant in Austin, Minnesota. Lewis said she would have liked to have seen more of the Marshalltown strikers get to Austin.

More than 800 of the Austin workers were prevented from getting their jobs back at the Hormel packing plant because of terms under a contract the union rejected.

But the Austin meat-packers and their supporters “are still determined and we are going to win,” Lewis said. “They made a helluva impression on me,” Lewis added.

The United Support Group decided to bring a truckload of food to the Austin brothers and sisters in Marshalltown December 10. “It just damn surely made the people already on strike in Austin and Ot­tumwa [Iowa] would come here to give to our struggle,” Lewis said.

A hardship fund has been set up for the Marshalltown strikers. Contributions can be sent to P.O. Box 143, Union, Iowa 50258.

Workers locked out after rejecting contract

BY MARK MICHAELS
AUSTIN, Neb. — Again the bosses are using a lockout as a weapon against workers. This time the victims are meat-packers at the Iowa Beef Processors, Inc. (IBP) plant here.

The members of United Food and Com­mercial Workers (UFCW) union Local 222 were locked out December 14 after they voted 2,250 to 50 against a contract proposal from the company. The offer included a four-year wage freeze and a lower pay scale for workers hired in the future.

The unionists had voted to continue negotiating with the company. They had not decided to strike.

There have been four strikes at the plant since it opened in 1969, the longest lasting 14 months. The meat-packers were out for six months for the Dakota City IBP workers and are being starved to death. Now IBP wants them to go another four years without a wage increase.

Levie Anderson, director of the UFCW’s Packinghouse Division, stated, “There has been no increase in five years for the Dakota City IBP workers and they are being starved to death. Now IBP wants them to go another four years without a wage increase.”

Anderson said IBP management was re­fusing to address plant safety during negotiations. Some 8,000 injuries requiring medical attention have occurred at the plant, he noted.

Around-the-clock pickets

Local 222 immediately set up around-the-clock picket line following the lockout.

Spouses and children held a march and rally in front of the plant on December 15. Signs were carried reading, “IBP says no Christmas this year” and “IBP are Santa­busters.”

The meat-packers on the picket lines explained why they had rejected the company’s proposal.

Three workers who had been in the plant from its 12 to 15 years emphasized that giving in to IBP has got to stop.

“In 1982 we took a big pay cut,” one of them said. “It’s time they gave some of it back for they could not have made all that profit without us,” he said.